



Press Advisory

For Immediate Release
Sept. 21, 2009

Media Contact:
Lindsey Neddenriep, OFH Public Relations
lneddenriep@ozarksfoodharvest.org
(417) 865-3411, ext. 110

Ozarks Food Harvest to announce three-year Strategic Initiatives and Goals at Press Conference Thursday

The Food Bank is preparing for increased need in southwest Missouri

WHAT: Press Conference to announce Ozarks Food Harvest's *Feeding Hope* Initiatives
WHERE: The Food Bank, [2810 N. Cedarbrook Ave.](#), Springfield, Mo.
WHEN: Thursday, Sept. 24, 2009 at 10:00 a.m.

SPRINGFIELD (Sept. 21, 2009)—Ozarks Food Harvest is unveiling its three-year strategic initiatives this month, and at a press conference Thursday morning, The Food Bank will announce its new *Feeding Hope* Initiatives to partners and members of the community.

The Initiatives—Feeding Children, Feeding Families and Feeding Seniors—will allow Ozarks Food Harvest to address the significant surge in demand for emergency food assistance over the past year, which has recently been driven by first-time clients due to record unemployment.

“More and more families are waiting in lines who had never had to ask for help before,” said Bart Brown, president and CEO of Ozarks Food Harvest. “These individuals never dreamed they would find themselves in this situation.”

Feeding America—the nation’s largest domestic hunger relief charity in which Ozarks Food Harvest is a member—recently stated that most economists project that unemployment lags the return of economic stability following a recession by one to two years, meaning that the incredible strain on the nation’s charitable food assistance network is not likely to dissipate any time in the foreseeable future.

—More—

Transform Hunger into Hope™ at ozarksfoodharvest.org

Ozarks Food Harvest | 2810 N. Cedarbrook Ave. | P.O. Box 5746 | Springfield, MO 65801-5746 | P 417-865-3411 | F 417-865-0504



Feeding America released a new survey on Sept. 14 illustrating the profound effect the economic downturn and continuing rise in unemployment is having on food banks and their ability to feed millions of Americans living at risk of hunger. The increase is nearly universal, according to the recently released survey—99 percent of all participating food banks reported a significant increase in requests for food assistance over the past year; the hardest hit states included Colorado, Florida, Minnesota, Mississippi, **Missouri**, North Carolina and South Carolina.

In taking a proactive approach, The Food Bank developed the initiatives to address the dramatic increase in need for food assistance in southwest Missouri. Taken together, Ozarks Food Harvest officials say these targeted initiatives touch each of the hungry populations that turn to The Food Bank's network for help.

Brown says achieving the goals of the *Feeding Hope* Initiatives will require \$9.5 million over the next three years, or by the end of Ozarks Food Harvest's fiscal year 2012.

Food Bank partners who support a number of Ozarks Food Harvest's services include organizations such as Female Leaders in Philanthropy (FLIP), a United Way initiative; the Springfield Public Schools Foundation and *Care to Learn*; the Community Foundation of the Ozarks; area Rotary Clubs; Ridewell Corporation; Walmart; Kraft; Associated Wholesale Grocers; the Musgrave Foundation, Roy W. Slusher Foundation and Heuer Foundation; Chase Card Services; Great Southern; and more.

Ozarks Food Harvest dedicated its larger, more efficient distribution center on Sept. 15, 2009. It is the only food bank in southwest Missouri and serves more than 350 hunger relief organizations, reaching more than 55,000 people each month in 29 Ozarks counties. OFH distributed seven million pounds of food during its last fiscal year—the highest distribution in The Food Bank's 25-year history—made possible due to its network of charities and direct-relief programs such as the Weekend Backpack Program™, Kids Cafe® and the Mobile Food Pantry™ program. Learn more at ozarksfoodharvest.org.

For details regarding next week's press conference, please call (417) 865-3411 or contact [Lindsey Neddenriep](#).

###

Transform Hunger into Hope™ at ozarksfoodharvest.org

Ozarks Food Harvest | 2810 N. Cedarbrook Ave. | P.O. Box 5746 | Springfield, MO 65801-5746 | P 417-865-3411 | F 417-865-0504