



Media Release

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Walmart Foundation makes major gift to The Food Bank

OFH & CFO offering to affiliate community foundations as 2nd annual *Ozarks Million Dollar Hunger Challenge*; new food insecurity levels enhance picture of need

SPRINGFIELD—Embargoed for March 24, 2011 Release—A \$125,000 gift to Ozarks Food Harvest from the [Walmart Foundation State Giving Program](#) will be utilized by The Food Bank as a challenge grant opportunity to raise funds with the aid of affiliate community foundations of the [Community Foundation of the Ozarks](#) to reach individuals who are not eligible for any government assistance, but need charitable help.

Ozarks Food Harvest and CFO named the program the “Ozarks Million Dollar Hunger Challenge”—as the \$125,000 will essentially be leveraged more than \$1 million worth of food—because for every one dollar donated to Ozarks Food Harvest, it provides \$10 worth of food distribution. This is the second year for the partnership between the two organizations, thanks to a gift from the Walmart Foundation State Giving Program.

“We couldn’t be more pleased to partner again with the Walmart Foundation and the Community Foundation of the Ozarks,” said Bart Brown, president/CEO at Ozarks Food Harvest. “Last year’s challenge provided our member food pantries with additional resources to help meet the increased need. The new challenge we now face is narrowing that gap between food insecurity and food security.”

According to a recent Feeding America® study, the food insecurity rate within Ozarks Food Harvest’s 28-county service area is 16.9 percent. While half of the 177,870 food insecure individuals are eligible for SNAP, WIC and other assistance and 26 percent are eligible for WIC and other assistance, 24 percent are not eligible for any government assistance, and must rely on Ozarks Food Harvest’s network of more than 300 member food pantries and feeding sites. Brown says the 24 percent is a bigger problem than once anticipated.

“Those who have recently lost their jobs are more effected by recent poverty than those who have been unemployed, underemployed or face serial unemployment,” Brown said.

CFO members will have the opportunity to partner with OFH member food pantries in each of their communities to raise funds which will be matched by the Walmart Foundation State Giving Program, according to Brown. Ozarks Food Harvest is leveraging gifts from both the Walmart Foundation State Giving Program and the Community Foundation of the Ozarks to help address agency and distribution gaps in its 28-county service area.

“This study and partnership supports Ozarks Food Harvest’s strategic three-year initiative to distribute 12 million pounds of food by our fiscal year 2012, and will allow us to address distribution gaps by increasing the number of pounds we distribute, adding new agencies to address gaps in service and growing our direct service programs to meet needs,” Brown said.

Brown says the board of directors at Ozarks Food Harvest is currently establishing the next three to five-year strategic business plan and that the second annual *Ozarks Million Dollar Hunger Challenge* will help address needs.

About Ozarks Food Harvest–The Food Bank

Ozarks Food Harvest is the Feeding America® food bank for southwest Missouri, serving more than 300 hunger relief organizations across 28 Ozarks counties. The Food Bank now reaches 20,000 individuals weekly and distributes nine million pounds of food annually—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 and at facebook.com/ozarksfoodharvest.

About Philanthropy at Walmart

Walmart and the Walmart Foundation are proud to support the charitable causes that are important to customers and associates in their own neighborhoods. The Walmart Foundation funds initiatives focused on education, workforce development, economic opportunity, environmental sustainability and health and wellness. From Feb. 1, 2009 through Jan. 31, 2010, Walmart and the Walmart Foundation gave more than \$512 million in cash and in-kind gifts globally, \$467 million of which was donated in the U.S. To learn more, visit www.walmartfoundation.org.

About Community Foundation of the Ozarks

The Community Foundation of the Ozarks is a public foundation serving the Missouri Ozarks. CFO is dedicated to working with its donors, nonprofit partners and affiliated community foundations in meaningful and purposeful ways. The Foundation’s mission is to enhance the quality of life in our region through resource development, community grantmaking, collaboration and public leadership. Founded in 1973, CFO has since grown to include 43 affiliate community foundations and nearly 2,000 charitable funds, with assets of \$172 million as of Dec. 31, 2010. For the first six months of the 2011 fiscal year, the Foundation gave back \$11.6 million in charitable grants and distributions and received more than \$28.7 million in charitable contributions. Since its inception, CFO has made more than \$100 million in grants and distributions. Go to www.cfozarks.org for more information.

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