



## Media Release

For Immediate Release  
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For More Information, Contact:  
Matt Petcoff, (417) 865-3411

### **11<sup>th</sup> Annual HUNGERTHON scheduled for June 5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup>**

#### **Nation's largest food bank radiothon returns with Yakov, Springfield Mayor Jim O'Neal**

SPRINGFIELD, Mo. – Ozarks Food Harvest and Alice@95.5 FM are hosting HUNGERTHON 2009 this weekend in support of The Food Bank's Weekend Backpack Program.

Beginning Friday morning (June 5<sup>th</sup>), the 11<sup>th</sup> annual HUNGERTHON will go on air for almost 30 hours throughout the weekend. Last year, the event wrapped up after more than \$116,000 had been raised.

This year's four day long event comes at a critical time for Ozarks Food Harvest. The Food Bank is currently serving a record number of clients, upwards of 53,000 each month.

So, The Food Bank has set a goal of \$120,000 for HUNGERTHON 2009. This amount would feed 400 children throughout the coming school year. Backpacks are given out on Fridays to students on the free and reduced lunch list who often have little to eat outside of the classroom.

Recently, more schools are looking into joining the program as more families feel the strain from the economic downturn. More than 19,000 backpacks were given out during the 2008-2009 school year.

One huge supporter of HUNGERTHON will again be the Springfield Independent Restaurant Association, with many of its members donating both money and food to the event. Plus, Springfield Mayor Jim O'Neal, Yakov Smirnoff, elementary school principals from participating schools and other community figures are scheduled to attend throughout the weekend.

As in year's past, Kevin Howard and Liz Delany from Alice@95.5 FM will host the four day long event, which will take place outside of the Tower Theater at Glenstone Avenue and Sunshine Road. HUNGERTHON's hours are Friday 6 am–7 pm, Saturday 9-4 pm, Sunday 10–3 pm and Monday 6–10 am.

Ozarks Food Harvest works with more than 350 hunger relief organizations, reaching upwards of 53,000 people each month in 29 southwest Missouri counties. Ozarks Food Harvest distributes more than seven million pounds of food annually to its network of agencies and offers direct relief through its Kids Cafe<sup>®</sup>, Food for Thought<sup>™</sup>, Club F.U.N.<sup>™</sup> and Mobile Food Pantry<sup>™</sup> programs.

For more information, contact Matt Petcoff with Ozarks Food Harvest at (417) 865-3411.

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Transform Hunger into Hope<sup>™</sup> at [ozarksfoodharvest.org](http://ozarksfoodharvest.org)

Ozarks Food Harvest | 615 N. Glenstone | Springfield, MO 65802 | P 417-865-3411 | F 417-865-0504