



Press Release

For Immediate Release
Sept. 15, 2009

Media Contact:
Lindsey Neddenriep & Kelly Richard, OFH Public Relations
lneddenriep@ozarksfoodharvest.org
krichard@ozarksfoodharvest.org
(417) 865-3411, ext. 110 or ext. 106

Ozarks Food Harvest ready to feed more hungry Ozarks families *The Food Bank officially dedicates new facility*

SPRINGFIELD (Sept. 15, 2009)—Ozarks Food Harvest held a ribbon cutting ceremony today at 2810 N. Cedarbrook Ave., unveiling the O'Reilly Center for Hunger Relief, the new home of The Community Food Bank. Following the dedication, Ozarks Food Harvest's Board of Directors hosted tours of the facility.

The end of the five-year *Compassion in Action* capital campaign for a new food bank is the next era of hunger relief for Ozarks Food Harvest. At maximum capacity in its previous leased warehouse on E. Chestnut Expy., The Food Bank was often forced to turn away frozen or perishable food donations due to lack of adequate space. Ozarks Food Harvest's new 46,000-square-foot distribution center, which opened for its member agencies on July 1, 2009, allows for greater storage and distribution capabilities.

In just the first month in its new warehouse, The Food Bank accepted 220,000 pounds of refrigerated and frozen food and fresh produce—a 380 percent increase over the same month last year. The combined footprint of The Food Bank's cooler and freezer is nearly as large as the entire former warehouse.

The necessary move comes at a critical time for Ozarks Food Harvest, as it is now serving more than 55,000 unduplicated individuals each month. The Food Bank projects this may rise to nearly 65,000 individuals each month by the end of this year. Statistics are revealing new faces of hunger, according to Bart Brown, President/CEO of The Food Bank.

“What we're seeing is an entirely new population of clients who are requesting help. These are middle class workers who have been employed their entire adult lives, and are now trying to make ends meet on unemployment benefits,” Brown said. “If they can manage to hold on to their homes or cars, they still don't have cash coming in or access to help. That's where we must fill the void.”

—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



“It really takes the commitment of our community to help feed more than 55,000 people each month,” Brown said. “We simply could not do what we do without the hundreds of giving individuals, businesses and foundations who came together to make this project a reality.”

According to Brown, some of these charitable organizations and individuals include William and Virginia Darr, Gaynell and Jim Magers, The Daily Events, Empire Electric, The Herschend Foundation, The Pearl Foundation and the Sunderland Foundation. *(Editorial Note: For a complete listing, see Ozarks Food Harvest’s Honor Roll of Campaign Donors.)*

“All of those who made the new facility possible are recognized at our new location, and I encourage members of the community to come and take a look at their new food bank,” Brown said.

Ozarks Food Harvest’s new facility is equipped with “green” technology, including cooler and freezer compressors which operate independently, and are programmed to sense cooling needs continuously. According to Food Bank officials, when cooling needs decrease, individual compressors shut down, using 30 percent less energy than conventional systems. During the winter months, a heat exchanger reclaims heat removed from the cooler and freezer units to heat the rest of the warehouse, simply as a byproduct of running the unit. All lighting, appliances and equipment is Energy Star™ rated, and the entire facility envelope is covered with a high-density vinyl-backed insulation product, making the metal building as energy efficient as a block building.

Thanks to local Sam’s Club, Ozarks Food Harvest’s warehouse includes new pallet racking system—the system from the E. Sunshine store remodel, saving The Food Bank \$100,000 in project costs. The warehouse walls are also 28 feet high, allowing for two additional layers of pallet space growth.

Other features of The Food Bank which serves 350 nonprofit hunger relief organizations across 29 Ozarks counties includes a Training Kitchen, Member Services Center, Volunteer Services Center, larger Receiving and Outbound Docks, Food Holding Area and Sorting Room. Ozarks Food Harvest’s conference room is available for reservation to community supporters for offsite trainings or meetings. The space accommodates up to 50 individuals.

The O’Reilly Center for Hunger Relief is located at [2810 N. Cedarbrook Ave.](#) in the North Creek Business Park off of E. Kearney St. and N. Neergard Ave. The Food Bank will be open for facility tours from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. through the remainder of the week.

—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



O Z A R K S
Food Harvest

The Food Bank



“This is a beginning of a new journey for Ozarks Food Harvest, as we are challenged to meet unprecedented need in unprecedented economic times,” Brown said. “In order to meet the demand, The Food Bank is embarking on an ambitious Three-Year Strategic Initiative that will allow us to increase our food distribution to 12 million pounds of food annually by 2012.”

Ozarks Food Harvest embarked on its capital campaign for a larger, more efficient distribution center to feed more hungry Ozarks families five years ago. Today, the only food bank in southwest Missouri 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.

For additional information, call (417) 865-3411 or visit ozarksfoodharvest.org.

###

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