



## Media Release

### For Immediate Release

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## Firearms deer season begins this weekend, deer hunters have easy way to feed hungry

*Share the Harvest teams with Missouri's food banks, including Ozarks Food Harvest*

**Springfield, Mo.**—Ozarks deer hunters have an easy and inexpensive way to help feed the hungry in southwest Missouri this year. During this year's deer season, hunters can have their deer processed and donated to [Ozarks Food Harvest](#) for free, or at a very low cost through *Share the Harvest*, a program of the Conservation Federation of Missouri.

Hunters who want to participate simply take their deer to an [approved meat processor](#) and let the processor know how much venison they wish to donate. The processor will package the meat, which will be picked up by the local sponsoring organization and taken to Ozarks Food Harvest for distribution.

"Approximately sixty percent of all donations that come in to the *Share the Harvest* program are made during the first weekend of firearms season," said Scott Baker, director of the Missouri Food Bank Association (MFBA), a coalition of the six Feeding America® food banks in Missouri. "This obviously has the potential to be a big source of protein for the six food banks in the state, including Ozarks Food Harvest, but the challenge is making sure hunters are aware of the new ease associated with donating. Hunters simply have to transport the deer to a participating processor and the cost is either completely covered or mostly covered. In the past, donating a deer to the program actually cost the hunter about \$40."

Archery deer season is currently underway and runs until November 12. It resumes November 24–January 15. Firearms deer season is November 13–23. *Share the Harvest* is administered by the Conservation Federation of Missouri and the Missouri Department of Conservation. Hunters are responsible for transporting deer to the participating *Share the Harvest* processor. A listing of participating processors can be accessed at [www.feedingmissouri.org](http://www.feedingmissouri.org).

"Thanks to the Missouri Food Bank Association and the Department of Economic Development, we've set a goal of processing 10,000 deer this year, more than doubling the 4,200 processed last year," said Gary Van De Velde, chair of the Conservation Federation of Missouri's *Share the Harvest* committee.

The MFBA is a coalition of the six Feeding America® food banks in Missouri, serving every county in the state. Last year, Missouri's food banks distributed more than 84 million pounds of food to hungry Missourians through a network of over 1,500 pantries, shelters and kitchens.

Ozarks Food Harvest is the only food bank in southwest Missouri, serving more than 300 hunger relief organizations across 28 Ozarks counties. The Food Bank reaches more than 14,000 individuals weekly and distributes nearly 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](http://ozarksfoodharvest.org) and at [facebook.com/ozarksfoodharvest](https://facebook.com/ozarksfoodharvest).

For more information about *Share the Harvest* and the MFBA, contact [Scott Baker](#) at 573-355-7758.

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

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