

'FEDS FEED FAMILIES' WITH 33,500 POUNDS OF DONATIONS

September 7, 2011



USDA agencies in California worked together to raise more than 33,500 pounds of fresh and non-perishable food to donate to local food banks across the state. Feds Feed Families is a national food drive led by USDA, the Office of Personnel Management and other federal agencies to raise food for Americans struggling with hunger across the country.

"I am extremely proud of the dedication by all USDA employees to raise this incredible amount of food to help their fellow Americans in need," said Ed Burton, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service state conservationist for California. "I am also deeply grateful for the generous donations by our partners and friends to this food drive."

The food drive ran from June 1 through Aug. 31, 2011. USDA offices throughout the state had a collection box at their front door and held local events to help raise food items. Furthermore, many employees brought in fresh food from their backyard gardens and some donated pet food to local animal shelters.

"The poor economy has resulted in much hardship for many communities; hunger and malnutrition should not be among these," said USDA Rural Development California state director Glenda Humiston. "USDA understands the importance of donating to a very worthy cause and encourages others to do the same."

In addition, many county offices reached out to local farmers and other partners to donate excess crops and food items to this worthy cause. In particular, Pacific Coast Producers in Oroville donated 4,400 pounds of canned peaches to the Butte County Food Bank, California Family Foods in Willows donated 2,500 pounds of rice to the Willows Food Bank, and a farming family in Northern California donated 10,000 pounds of dried beans to the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano.

"My hat goes off to everyone that participated in this year's food drive," said USDA Farm Service Agency California state executive director Val Dolcini. "USDA employees, farmers, ranchers, friends, families and local businesses have all contributed to this phenomenal effort."

Feds Feed Families began in 2009 as part of President Obama's United We Serve campaign and was designed to help food banks and pantries stay stocked during summer months, a time when they

traditionally encounter decreases in donations and increases in the need for assistance. In the first year, federal employees across the country donated 1 million pounds of food to local food banks and agencies. In 2010, they donated 1.7 million pounds. This year, USDA and OPM set the goal at 2 million pounds nationwide.

-from press release