

Statewide Food Drive Campaign Aims to Raise 85,000 Meals for Kansas Families

The Neighbor to Neighbor statewide food drive launched today to support our neighbors in need and reduce hunger in Kansas communities. Harvesters-The Community Food Bank in Topeka, Kan. hosted state leaders, including Governor Sam Brownback and Secretary of Agriculture Jackie McClaskey, representatives of the food banks of Kansas, Dillon's Food Stores employees and members of the Kansas agriculture community.

The food drive is a collaborative effort by the Kansas Department of Agriculture, Dillon's Food Stores, Harvester's – The Community Food Network, Kansas Food Bank, Second Harvest Community Food Bank and the Kansas agriculture community. The goal is to raise 85,000 meals for Kansas families during the food drive, Mar. 1 – Mar. 31. Kansans can contribute to the campaign at Dillon's Food Stores statewide, at other community locations across the state or through the virtual donation portal, <http://ksn2n.harvestersvfd.org>.

Governor Brownback signed a proclamation declaring March and Kansas Agriculture Month and March 18 as Kansas Agriculture Day. He also stressed the importance of serving our neighbors in need as well as educating all Kansans about how the food they eat transitions from farm to fork.

"Hunger is everywhere across Kansas – in rural counties, suburban communities and urban neighborhoods," said Governor Brownback. "It is important to do all we can to help those in need because when Kansas families and children have enough to eat, our communities are stronger and our state is stronger."

Governor Brownback teamed up with staff from the three food banks, Secretary of Agriculture Jackie McClaskey and representatives from Dillon's Food Stores to pack meals to be distributed to families in need. Members of the Kansas agriculture industry, including Kansas FFA officers and commodity organization representatives also participated.

"At Dillon's, our number one community priority is to help bring food and hope to those living with less," said Sheila Lowrie, Dillon's Stores spokeswoman. "That's what makes the Neighbor to Neighbor Kansas Food Campaign especially meaningful for us. We are proud to continue this commitment with the wonderful support of our local food banks and the generosity of our Dillon's customers and associates throughout our stores in Kansas."

Dillon's Food Stores made an initial donation of 2,500 pounds of non-perishable food items at the kick-off event. To learn more about the Neighbor to Neighbor statewide food drive and ways to participate, visit agriculture.ks.gov/ksagday.