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FOOD INDUSTRY OF SOUTHEASTERN MICHIGAN BANDS TOGETHER WITH FORGOTTEN HARVEST AND THE SALVATION ARMY TO FIGHT HUNGER

"Project Hunger" goal: an additional one million meals and \$60,000 for food rescue in one year

OAK PARK, Mich. (April 19, 2011) – In Macomb, Oakland and Wayne counties, 20 percent of the population, or more than 800,000 people, are food insecure, according to the landmark study recently released by Feeding America. With 134 million meals needed each year to close the gap between the need for food and what is currently available through federal programs and charitable organizations, a new partnership has been formed to fight hunger.

The Michigan Food & Beverage Association (MFBA) has called upon its 3,200 members – along with the Michigan Business & Professional Association (MBPA), the Detroit Association of Grocery Manufacturers' Representatives (DAGMR) and several Eastern Market businesses – to make a commitment to the first food and beverage industry-wide food effort in Michigan: Project Hunger.

The set goal for the associations is to collectively raise an additional one million pounds of fresh, prepared and bulk foods and a minimum of \$60,000 for food rescue from April 2011 to April 2012. Edward Deeb, president and chief executive officer of the MFBA, head of the MBPA, co-founder of the Eastern Market Corporation and a 50-year veteran of the food industry, is spearheading the project.

"Because so many individuals and families go without enough food, the Michigan Food and Beverage Association in cooperation with The Salvation Army and Forgotten Harvest are partnering with each other to help generate additional food products to feed the needy and the hungry," said Deeb.

"With the dramatic rise in unemployment in Michigan in the past couple of years and not having enough food to feed all who are unable to fend for themselves, this coalition of three important organizations hopes to generate one million additional meals and \$60,000 to help rescue food

from existing establishments such as supermarkets, restaurants and catering halls,” Deeb added.

Forgotten Harvest, the second largest food rescue organization in the United States, will rescue all of the food donations for delivery to The Salvation Army of Metro Detroit – the largest private social services provider in the state of Michigan, according to former Michigan Governor Jennifer Granholm. Donations will be used to provide meals through the organization’s feeding programs.

“Although Forgotten Harvest has distributed nearly 56 million pounds of food, equivalent to 56 million meals since the local and national automotive and financial crisis, it will take the efforts of our entire community to fully address the issue of hunger,” said Russ Russell, chief development officer for Forgotten Harvest. “The Project Hunger collaboration is the type of community engagement we need to combat the staggering statistics of hunger in our area.”

Every week, in their feeding programs The Salvation Army uses more than 1,500 loaves of bread; 1,500 pounds of lunchmeat; 600 pounds of cheese; 360 gallons of soup; 10,000 snacks; 10,000 pieces of fruit; and 300 gallons of hot chocolate.

“Although Michigan’s economy has slowly begun to emerge from the economic crisis, hunger and homelessness is still widespread in our community with the number of individuals we are serving up 19 percent,” said Major Herb Fuqua, divisional secretary for The Salvation Army of Metro Detroit. “The food donated through Project Hunger will not only help feed the hungry, but offer them hope for a better tomorrow.

“We can’t thank the food industry of southeast Michigan and Forgotten Harvest enough for their support.”

MPBA currently has more than 21,000 business members that employ 160,000 people throughout Michigan. MFBA members at Eastern Market number some 100 businesses and vendors in Detroit’s Eastern Market area, the nation’s oldest and largest outdoor farmer’s market.

About the Michigan Food & Beverage Association

The Michigan Food & Beverage Association is a trade organization that represents 3,200 members that employ more than 40,000 persons throughout the State of Michigan. Membership includes independent grocers, convenience store operators, local food chains, restaurants, fast food establishments, taverns, gas station operators, food manufacturers, processors, wholesalers, brokers, jobbers, farmers, growers, food banks, etc. In 2003, the Detroit Association of Grocery Manufacturers’ Representatives (DAGMR), which represents food manufacturers and wholesalers, merged with MFBA.

About The Salvation Army

Founded by William Booth in London, England in 1865, The Salvation Army is a faith-based, non-profit organization dedicated to serving people in need without discrimination. This past year, The Salvation Army of Metro Detroit was involved in providing 3,194,802 meals and 687,203 nights of shelter for the homeless. The Salvation Army uses \$.85 of every dollar raised to provide direct services to people in need each and every day of the year. For more

information about The Salvation Army, please call 877-SAL-MICH, or visit us at www.salmich.org.

About Forgotten Harvest

Forgotten Harvest was formed in 1990 to fight two problems: hunger and waste. Forgotten Harvest is on track to rescue more than 24 million pounds of food this year by collecting surplus prepared and perishable food from more than 450 sources, including grocery stores, fruit and vegetable markets, restaurants, caterers, dairies, farmers, wholesale food distributors and other Health Department-approved sources. This donated food, which would otherwise go to waste, is delivered free-of-charge to 160 emergency food providers in the Metro Detroit area. Learn more about Forgotten Harvest and how to help drive hunger from our community at www.forgottenharvest.org.

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