



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
September 30, 2011

Contact: Justin Fissette, for Forgotten Harvest
248.254.6789

COMMUNITY LEADERS RALLY TO FIGHT HUNGER IN METRO DETROIT
Volunteers needed to help harvest area farms to benefit the hungry

OAK PARK, Mich. – On Tuesday, Sept. 27, Forgotten Harvest and several faith-based and community leaders gathered at the Northland Shopping Center parking lot in Southfield, with the purpose of mobilizing area faith-based organizations, businesses and volunteer groups to help Forgotten Harvest fight the hunger crisis in metro Detroit. During the rally, Forgotten Harvest issued a call for volunteers for the first annual Community Harvest Days, a partnership with local farmers to harvest corn, beans, peppers, melons and squash to feed hungry metro Detroiters. Harvest Days will be held on Saturdays from October through November.

Groups looking for volunteer opportunities can find more information at www.forgottenharvest.org or contact volunteer coordinator Krista Poole at kpoole@forgottenharvest.org.

The first harvest is Saturday, October 1 at the George VanHoutte Farm in Romeo. Parking for volunteers will be located at the CVS Pharmacy on 33 Mile Rd. just east of the intersection of 33 Mile Rd and VanDyke Rd. Harvesting will also be held at the Boyka/Decock Farm Stand in Macomb, located at 20555 23 Mile Rd. 48042. Parking will be provided at the Farm Stand location. Volunteers will gather at 9 a.m. at both parking locations.

In addition, leaders created a call to action and hunger pledge, encouraging Michigan residents to help fight the hunger crisis in our community through volunteering, cash donations and food collection.

“Gathering so many beneficial organizations is the first step toward attacking the hunger crisis,” said Russ Russell, director of development, Forgotten Harvest. “To continue the fight against hunger, we’re going directly to the source, the farmers, and harvesting surplus food to help feed the hungry. It’s one more way we can help metro Detroiters put food on the table this winter.”

Community leaders who participated in the rally are:

- Major Mark W. Anderson, General Secretary, Salvation Army
- Dr. Chad Audi, President, Detroit Rescue Mission Ministries
- Pastor Christopher W. Brooks, Evangel Ministries & Host, Equipped for Life, 1500 WLQZ - NC
- Ed Deeb, Board President, Project Hunger, President and CEO at Michigan Food and Beverage Association and Michigan Business & Professional Association
- Chet Decker, Executive Director, Hope Center Macomb
- Gilda Jacobs, President and CEO, Michigan League for Human Services

- Joel Jacob, International Chairman, MAZON and Founder and Chairman, The Bottle Crew
- William F. Jones Jr., CEO, Focus Hope
- *Imam* Mohamad *Mardini*, American Muslim Center
- Fr. Norman P. Thomas, Pastor, Sacred Heart Church
- Debra Ehrmann, Vice President, Centro, Multicultural La Familia, Inc.

Forgotten Harvest is working with local businesses, corporations and food delivery agencies to help feed the hungry. The organization is currently combating staggering poverty and hunger statistics in southeast Michigan, including:

- 1 in 5 face hunger or a lack of food, more than 800,000 people
- 1 in 4 children live in poverty
- 1 in 2 Detroit children live in poverty
- 41 percent of the food distributed by Forgotten Harvest is for children under age 18

Nationwide, **48.8 million Americans** suffer from food insecurity.

About Forgotten Harvest

Forgotten Harvest was formed in 1990 to fight two problems: hunger and waste. Forgotten Harvest “rescued” more than 23 million pounds of food last year by collecting surplus prepared and perishable food from 455 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 more than 200 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.

###