



For Immediate Release

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NEW YORK FARMERS DONATE RECORD AMOUNT OF FOOD TO REGIONAL FOOD BANKS

New York Farm Bureau kicks off 2015 State Annual Meeting with donation announcement

Albany, NY – It is another incredible year for farmer food donations all across the state. New York Farm Bureau members along with the Food Bank Association of New York State announced today that 11.6 million pounds of food and farm products have been donated by New York Farm Bureau members this year through the month of November. That translates to nearly 10 million meals being provided to New Yorkers in need. And with a month to go in the donation effort, the large number is expected to climb. In addition, the New York Farm Bureau Young Farmers Committee gave a \$200 contribution today to the Food Bank Association of New York State.

Today's announcement at the Regional Food of Northeastern New York is in conjunction with the start of New York Farm Bureau's 2015 State Annual Meeting in Albany. Members and agricultural partners give as part of a yearlong effort to feed the hungry across the state.

The food is collected through the "Harvest for All" donation program, a nationwide annual farm donation partnership linking Farm Bureau and Feeding America in each state. In New York, NYFB's Young Farmers Committee and the Food Bank Association of NYS administer the statewide donation partnership. The food is then distributed among the 10 Feeding America food banks throughout the state.

"I am proud of the farmers' generous efforts all across New York State. Increasing access to fresh, local food is a priority for New York Farm Bureau, and the efforts, in conjunction with Feeding America and our outstanding food banks, help connect low income New Yorkers with those who grow the food. On behalf of our members, I would like to thank the farmers who donated product and the Food Bank Association of New York State for this valuable partnership," said Dean Norton, New York Farm Bureau President.

"The Regional Food Bank of Northeastern New York and the New York State food banks are so grateful to New York Farm Bureau and its members for their enthusiastic support and continued commitment to

the Harvest for All program,” said Joanne Dwyer, the Regional Food Bank’s Director of Food Industry Relations & Business Development Representative. “Food donated directly from farms is the freshest, most nutrient rich food we receive. With more donations expected to come in during December, to date New York State’s food banks have received over 11.6 million pounds of produce, dairy, meat and eggs from farmers and producers, which in turn provides over 9.6 million wholesome, nutritious meals.”

“The Young Farmers Committee is proud to be a longtime supporter of the “Harvest for All” program. Each year our members not only donate to the effort, but also spend time volunteering at different Food Banks across the state. Today’s announcement just reinforces the giving nature of farmers and the demand for fresh food that exists year round in low income communities. We encourage every farmer to think of their local food banks as a place to turn to for donations,” said Nicole Rawleigh, New York Farm Bureau Young Farmers Committee Chair.

For more specific information, please contact your regional food bank.

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New York Farm Bureau is the State’s largest agricultural lobbying/trade organization. Its members and the public know the organization as “The Voice of New York Agriculture.” New York Farm Bureau is dedicated to solving the economic and public policy issues challenging the agricultural community. www.nyfb.org

The Food Bank Association of New York State is a statewide not-for-profit charity working on behalf of the ten Feeding America food banks located in New York State. In 2014, the food bank network in New York State distributed over 225 million pounds of food to more than 3 million people through 5,000 food pantries, soup kitchens, and shelters. The Association is headquartered in Albany. www.foodbankassocnys.org

The Regional Food Bank of Northeastern New York is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization that collects donated food from the food industry and distributes it to nearly 1,000 charitable agencies feeding the hungry in 23 counties of northeastern New York. The food provided by the Regional Food Bank helps to feed over 40,000 people each week. In 2014, the organization distributed over 32 million pounds of food to the hungry. The Regional Food Bank is a member of Feeding America. The organization is supported by foundations, private contributions and fundraising events. For information on services offered by the Regional Food Bank, call (518) 786-3691 or log on to www.regionalfoodbank.net.