



Continuation and Expansion of Partnership with the State of Ohio

FY 2008-2009 BUDGET REQUEST

The Ohio Association of Second Harvest Foodbanks (OASHF) has requested \$28 million over the 2008-2009 biennium to support continuation and expansion of a grant agreement for the purchase of food and grocery products, capacity building grants and distribution of these products through the 12 foodbanks to agencies participating in the emergency food distribution program. OASHF, Ohio's largest charitable response to hunger, and ODJFS have worked together for more than a decade to support the Ohio Food Purchase and Agricultural Clearance Programs (OFPACP), unique statewide purchasing programs that link farmers, growers, processors and food producers with ODJFS, the Ohio Department of Agriculture and foodbanks and allow for the purchasing of wholesome shelf-stable food and surplus agricultural commodities for pennies on the pound. This is a modest and humble request representing one dollar per person, per month, served by the emergency assistance network.

- What we do:** OASHF represents 12 foodbanks, which distribute food to more than 3,300 member charities, including food pantries, soup kitchens, homeless shelters, and other food assistance organizations, located across Ohio in all 88 counties. In 2006, OASHF distributed **more than 92 million pounds** of food and grocery items through the Ohio foodbank network, with more than 20.4 million pounds of this food being provided through OFPACP programs.
- Who it will serve:** More than 1.2 million Ohioans, including more than one-third who are children, receive food assistance through our network – more than 207,000 individuals in a given week. Nine percent of those being served are seniors, 35 percent are under the age of 18 and one out of 10 is under the age of five. Many are employed but cannot make ends meet; one out of three households surveyed have at least one adult who is working.
- How it will benefit poverty-stricken Ohio families:** Under this proposal, we estimate that more than four million low-income Ohioans will receive nutritious food as a result of this funding; 85 percent of whom have incomes below the poverty level. More than one-third of the individuals served with this food will be children, and almost one-third will be low-income elderly or disabled persons.
- What will be accomplished from funding:** OASHF will acquire **more than 87.2 million pounds** of highly nutritious protein items, shelf-stable foods, fruits, and vegetables, representing more than 68.2 million meals for hungry Ohioans. We will purchase at least 7.5 million pounds of personal care, hygiene and household cleaning products that low-income Ohioans need and can't purchase with Food Stamps. A portion of the funds will be designated for administrative purposes, including partial compensation to foodbanks. The highly effective Capacity Building Grants Program will be re-established, and small incentive grants will be awarded for innovative programs that help address the changing needs of hungry Ohioans, such as Food Stamp Program outreach or nutrition education. Child nutrition programs, such as Kids Cafes and Backpack programs, also will be expanded. In addition 85 percent of funds received go directly to Ohio farmers, processors and manufacturers, directly benefiting local economies by the purchase of farm products and increasing employment demand in processing and manufacturing plants.

• **How it will benefit ODJFS and the State:** The data we track from our clients may benefit ODJFS by allowing the agency to utilize these service statistics and a portion of the in-kind and privately funded services to help meet the state's TANF "maintenance of effort" requirement. Additionally, by increasing the overall nutritional intake of hungry Ohioans and providing some stability to these families, the State of Ohio could experience a reduction in expenditures for related programs, such as health care, child care and other welfare programs. The investment also has the potential to improve educational outcomes for the state's children and reduce malnutrition among our elderly population.

• **What the impact will be if this proposal is not included in the budget request:**

Hunger, malnutrition and food insecurity among children, working families, elderly and disabled Ohioans will increase. For every 10 percent reduction in funding, OASHF estimates a net loss of 8.7 million pounds of food, representing more than 6.8 million lost meals. This will result in food shortages across Ohio, which must be offset by other publicly funded programs, causing a subsequent increase in expenditures for health care, social welfare, education and nutrition assistance. In addition, Ohio farmers, manufacturers and processors will not see a potentially significant increase in jobs and dollars flowing to local economies.

Expanding the state's investment in programs that have proven results, directly benefiting hungry Ohioans of all ages, and indirectly benefiting farmers, communities and taxpayers makes good sense and is a fiscally responsible choice to be included in the 2008-2009 budget.



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