



NEWS RELEASE

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FOOD LION HUNGER RELIEF DAY AT THE N.C. STATE FAIR

MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER

Drought a 'Quiet Disaster Within' for Food Bank of Central & Eastern NC

RALEIGH – The promise of free admission brought out more than 100,000 fair goers last year on **Food Lion Hunger Relief Day at the N. C. State Fair**. Attendees ended up feeding more than their senses by bringing in over 217,000 pounds of canned goods. They actually ended up providing meals for more than 183,000 individuals. This year, **The Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina** is depending on the thousands of fairgoers to choose **Thursday, October 18**, as the day to have “seriously twisted fun” because the ongoing drought has impacted more than local water supplies. It has affected the Food Bank’s ability to receive fresh, local produce to distribute to families at risk of hunger. Community participation during upcoming major food drives, like Hunger Relief Day, is more important than ever to supply nutritious food to those at risk of hunger. **Food Lion** returns as the sponsor of **Hunger Relief Day at the N.C. State Fair** for the fourth year.

There are more than 400,000 individuals at risk of hunger in the Food Bank’s 34-county service area. The drought, although not having the visual impact of a hurricane or tornado, may have an equally disastrous long term impact on these individuals.

The Food Bank received about 2.1 million pounds of produce during the summer of 2007. Produce donations are down about 1 million pounds from summer 2006 when local produce donations reached 3 million pounds.

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The Food Bank was still able to provide nutritious produce to its 870 partner agencies through the generous donations of local farmers, growers and packers. Due to the drought, these donors cannot possibly continue to provide this level of service.

Much of the shortfall was made up by relying upon sources of produce outside of our area to make up for the loss. Costs rose substantially in the form of increased transportation and fuel costs to meet the needs of our communities, using monetary donations to purchase a lot of the produce. In an effort to sustain the usual level of service, the Food Bank may have to dig deeper and search wider for additional financial resources.

For every dollar donated, the Food Bank is able to provide on average eight dollars worth of food.

“Nearly a quarter of the food we distribute is fresh produce”, said Peter Werbicki, President & CEO of the Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina. “The support of the community on **Hunger Relief Day at the N.C. State Fair** would at least allow us to continue to provide nutrient-rich canned goods to those at risk in our 34-county service area.”

Food Lion Hunger Relief Day at the N.C State Fair provides a wonderful opportunity within the local community to help in supplementing and sustaining these services to those at risk of hunger.

The **Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina** has close to 450 volunteers and staff members scheduled throughout the day to collect the canned goods at all gates in exchange for admission tickets. The Food Bank will distribute the cans of food collected to families in need in its 34 county service area and other food banks across the state.

To be a part of daily hunger relief in the 34 counties served by the Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina, go to www.foodbankcenc.org to locate the branch in your neighborhood.

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About the Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina

The Food Bank of Eastern & Central North Carolina is a nonprofit organization that provides food for people at risk of hunger in 34 counties in central and eastern North Carolina. The Food Bank serves a network of 870 partner agencies offering soup kitchens, food pantries, shelters, and programs for children and adults. In fiscal year 2006-2007, the Food Bank distributed more than 32.6 million pounds of food and non-food essentials through these agencies. Sadly, hunger remains a serious problem in central and eastern North Carolina. In these counties, more than 400,000 struggle each day to provide enough food for their families. www.foodbankcenc.org.