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Giving Back: FAPC donates to Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma

(Stillwater, Okla. – May 26, 2010) “Five hundred thousand Oklahomans will wake up today and wonder where their next meal will come from. Oklahoma ranks as the sixth hungriest state in the nation, but thanks to donors, volunteers and advocates, the Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma is ‘Fighting Hunger...Feeding Hope.’”

This excerpt from the Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma tugs on the hearts of many Oklahomans, including specialists from Oklahoma State University’s Robert M. Kerr Food & Agricultural Products Center.

Thanks to the approval of the OSU/A&M Board of Regents, the FAPC can now donate perishable food products to the Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma and has since donated 600 pounds of ground beef to the non-profit organization.

This action allows the FAPC to forgo disposing the meat and other perishable food items through sealed bid or public auction and simply donate the surplus directly to the Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma.

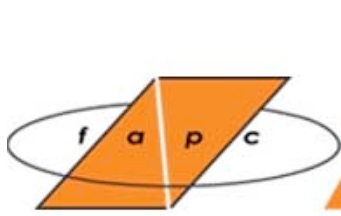
“The FAPC’s mission is to add value to Oklahoma,” said Chuck Willoughby, FAPC manager of business and marketing relations. “We are honored to have this opportunity to add value to people’s lives beyond our day-to-day activities of assisting manufacturers, processors and entrepreneurs.”

Most of the meat generated from FAPC and the department of animal science is sold through FAPC’s Cowboy Meats. However, before the OSU/A&M Board of Regents approval, if these products were not sold in a timely manner, they had to be discarded, according to OSU Policy 3-0126 – Disposition of Surplus Property.

The FAPC estimated a \$3,700 inventory loss in 2001 and a \$6,900 inventory loss in 2003 because of discarded items.

“All in all, we have done a pretty good job of selling meats from research and teaching activities, but we want to have this option to donate when the need or opportunity arises,” Willoughby said.

Because of this and a request from the Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma, the FAPC asked the OSU/A&M Board of Regents to consider the donation of perishable food items to the Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma but under strict guidelines that provide accountability and demonstrate responsible inventory management and stewardship of OSU resources.



“This OSU initiative will help many Oklahomans who are struggling to put food on their table, and for that, we are extremely grateful,” said Rodney Bivens, executive director of the Regional Food Bank. “Since the recession hit, we’ve experienced a significant increase in demand. In July 2009 alone, we distributed 3.1 million pounds of food - the most ever distributed in a single month in the 30-year history of the Regional Food Bank.”

Since its inception in 1980, the Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma has distributed more than 293 million pounds of food worth more than \$468 million. In fiscal year 2008, the Food Bank distributed 25 million pounds of food, enough to feed 63,600 Oklahomans every week. However, its greatest need continues to be protein products.

“This is a win-win situation,” said OSU President Burns Hargis, who helped establish the Regional Food Bank and has served as the organization’s president. “The FAPC will be able to make use of perishable food surplus in a timely manner and help meet a need in our statewide community, which extends the teaching, research and extension mission of the university.”

The Board’s approval also allows the FAPC to handle the meat processing for individuals and businesses that may want to make a donation to the Regional Food Bank.

“The Food Bank often will have individuals and business entities who are willing to donate live animals and/or meat in need of further processing but have difficulty finding processors to donate their services,” Willoughby said. “Thus, the FAPC would like to consider providing the processing services of live animals and/or meat donated to the Food Bank when such activity fits the current needs of the teaching, research and extension programs and does not over burden current FAPC resources.”

The Regional Food Bank is a private nonprofit organization that acts as a link through which the food industry and community may donate food and other goods. The products are then distributed to more than 700 charitable feeding programs and schools in 53 central and western Oklahoma counties. For more information about the Regional Food Bank, go to <http://www.regionalfoodbank.org/>.

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