

Feds Feed Families Recognizes USDA Texas State Office

USDA agencies in Temple, Texas, along with counterparts throughout the State, worked together to raise almost 2,000 pounds of fresh and non-perishable food to donate to those in need, as part of the Feds Feed Families program this year. Together, the USDA State Office of Rural Development and NRCS (Natural Resources Conservation Service) donated over 300 pounds of food to Helping Hands of Belton and an additional 2094 pounds of hygiene and personal items. Throughout the state an additional 1600 pounds of food were donated to local churches and nonprofit organizations.

"The response from our employees to the Feds Feed Families program this year will go a long way to support those who have been affected by job loss and the recession," said Paco Valentin, Rural Development State Director. "I am extremely proud of the generosity of all USDA employees who donated to their fellow Americans in need."

"Feds Feed Families" is a national food drive led by USDA, the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) and other federal agencies to raise food for Americans struggling with hunger across the country. This is the fourth annual food drive and the donations have continued to grow with each passing year. The food drive ran from June through September, 2012. Federal employees at the USDA State office donated the items which were then delivered monthly to Helping Hands.

"Helping Hands provides food, clothing and hygiene items to almost 7,000 individuals each year, several receiving items on a weekly basis," said Rucker Preston, Executive Director, Helping Hands. "Donations, such as this one from USDA, will help provide for those in need while they get work to get back on their feet."

Supporting individuals and families throughout the Belton ISD, Helping Hands offers a variety of programs to help those in need. Helping Hands utilizes food donations in its Client Choice Food Pantry, where clients are able to "shop" by choosing their own foods once per week. According to Preston, "this provides freedom for the client and also reduces waste, you chose what you need and prefer, rather than receiving a bag of items you may not need or use." Helping Hands also offers education classes, prayer sessions and counselors, holiday meals, clothing for adults and children, supplies for school children and babies and emergency financial assistance. Helping Hands accepts donations of food, clothing and household items year-round. Volunteers are always welcome and appreciated.

In its third year, the program donated 1,791,393 pounds of food nationally this year to food banks, nonprofit organizations, shelters and churches. Feds Feed Families began in 2009 as part of President Obama's United We Serve campaign and was designed to help food banks and pantries stay stocked during summer months, a time when they traditionally encounter decreases in donations and increases in the need for assistance.



United States
Department of Agriculture

Certificate of Appreciation

Awarded to

USDA Texas State Office

*In Recognition of Exceptional Contributions to the
2012 Feds Feed Families Summer Food Drive*

Date November 2012


Thomas J. Vilsack
Secretary

*In November 2012 the USDA Texas State Office received a Certificate of Appreciation for
Exceptional Contributions to the 2012 Feds Feed Families Summer Food Drive.*