



Second Harvest Food Bank
Greater New Orleans and Acadiana

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA ADVISORY

**Second Harvest Food Bank to Commemorate the Fifth Anniversary of Hurricane Rita
and Kick Off September as Hunger Action Month**

Who: Second Harvest Food Bank of Greater New Orleans & Acadiana

Natalie Jayroe, president and CEO of Second Harvest Food Bank will be joined by Joey Durel, Mayor of Lafayette; Representative Rickey Hardy; Amy Fuselier, Second Harvest Food Bank Lafayette Branch Manager; Bill Preston, Cargill; and Tim Acosta, Rouses

What: Commemoration of the Fifth Anniversary of Hurricane Rita and Hunger Action Month Kick Off

Community leaders, dignitaries, Second Harvest Food Bank member agency representatives, and others will gather to reflect on the achievements of the greater Lafayette community and Second Harvest Food Bank in the five years following Hurricane Rita, and share the outlook for the fight against hunger in south Louisiana.

Second Harvest Food Bank will also kick off **Hunger Action Month** with the help of Cargill and Rouses. **Cargill** will announce the donation of two trucks to help Second Harvest expand its food collection and distribution efforts in the Lafayette area and across the Louisiana Gulf Coast. **Rouses** will deliver a truckload of food, the equivalent of approximately 27,000 meals, and encourage the community to raise food through a community-wide food drive in celebration of Hunger Action Month.

When: Tuesday, August 31, 10:30AM

Where: Second Harvest Food Bank of Greater New Orleans and Acadiana

215 East Pinhook Road, Lafayette, LA 70501

Why: Immediately following Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in **September 2005**, Second Harvest Food Bank of Greater New Orleans and Acadiana became the largest food bank in history with the help of Feeding America and more than 70 skilled food bank volunteers from all over the country. In the first month, Second Harvest Food Bank distributed 8 million pounds of food and grocery products. This represented a six-fold increase over its pre-Katrina distribution of 1.2 million pounds of food monthly or 14.5 million pounds annually.

The need for emergency food services grew more critical when Hurricane Rita made landfall on September 24, 2005 devastating the western parishes of the food bank's service area. By the end of May, 2006, Second Harvest Food Bank of Greater New Orleans and Acadiana had distributed more than 44 million pounds of food and grocery products across south Louisiana.

In October 2006, Second Harvest Food Bank opened a second warehouse facility in Lafayette, LA to better serve the western parishes in its service area.

In the five years since Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, Second Harvest Food Bank has distributed more than 136,740,000 pounds of food, the equivalent of 105,187,000 meals, across 23 south Louisiana parishes – from the Mississippi border to the Texas state line.

Hunger Action Month is part of a national movement to raise awareness and take action to fight hunger. Throughout the month of September, Second Harvest Food Bank, and Feeding America food banks nationwide, will take action through the **Hunger Action Month 30 Ways in 30 Days** campaign. Individuals are asked to pledge their “way” to make a difference and fight hunger in their local community. Daily “ways” to take action are posted on the Hunger Action Month website, www.hungeractionmonth.org.

Cargill’s gift of two refrigerated trucks will help support Second Harvest Food Bank’s retail store pick-up program. The donation will allow Second Harvest Food Bank to increase outreach efforts in areas with limited access to emergency food assistance including Vermilion and St. Martin parishes.

Rouses donation of a semi trailer of non perishable food items is the equivalent of approximately 27,000 meals and will help stock Second Harvest Food Bank’s shelves. Rouses launched the Rouses Stop Hunger initiative in December 2008. Since the start of the program, Rouses has donated more than 528,000 pounds of food, the equivalent 406,000 meals.

Media Contacts:

Leslie Doles, 504.442.8983, ldoles@secondharvest.org

Linzy Cotaya, 504.473.6494, lcotaya@secondharvest.org