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Second Harvest Heartland and Partners Announce *Make Hunger History* Initiative with Goal to Cut Hunger in Half for All Minnesotans by 2030

BROOKLYN PARK, Minn. (Jan. 29, 2024) — [Second Harvest Heartland](#) announced today a bold goal to cut hunger in half for all Minnesotans by 2030. The *Make Hunger History* initiative will unite communities, policymakers, and business leaders to reduce hunger today by increasing access to emergency food and prevent hunger tomorrow through policy and partnerships, tracking shared progress along the way.

Minnesotans visited food shelves a record 7.5 million times in 2023, a clear indicator of the rising need in our state and the result of sky-high grocery, gas and utility prices coupled with the expiration of pandemic-era emergency relief programs. Second Harvest Heartland, along with an extensive network of local food shelves and hunger relief partners, is challenging community leaders to find the necessary urgency and creativity to tackle the issue of hunger once and for all.

“This is a defining moment in our mission to end hunger,” said Allison O’Toole, CEO of Second Harvest Heartland. “We’re not settling for short-term fixes anymore. Through new connections, advocacy and insights, we’re working together toward systemic change and a future where every Minnesotan has the food they need to thrive.”

To make hunger history, Second Harvest Heartland will work with neighbors and partners to:

- **Power up partnerships to get more of the right food, right where it’s needed most** – with new mapping capabilities to identify hunger hot spots, new delivery and pick-up methods and prioritizing in-demand produce and proteins.
- **Reimagine the emergency food delivery network to serve more neighbors** – the network will lean into mobile distributions and community identified pick-up sites, increase delivery efficiencies and keep food local whenever possible.
- **Make hunger less common by delivering one-on-one services** – Second Harvest Heartland’s new Care Center team will proactively work with neighbors to find grocery help and connect them with other economic and social services.
- **Increase economic stability across the region through coalition building and policy wins** – root causes of hunger like access to affordable housing, transportation and healthcare will be addressed by a coalition made up of food shelves and other nonprofits, community members and leaders, creating a shared legislative agenda to ensure every Minnesotan’s basic needs are met.
- **Track our progress to do more of what’s working, less of what isn’t** – with a clear, measurable goal to reduce Minnesota food shelf visits long-term, Second Harvest Heartland and partners will track progress publicly using new data sets and metrics that allow the food bank to track food insecurity with more accuracy and urgency.

Recognizing the rising community need, Minnesota-based companies Cargill and Target each pledged \$10 million in support of the multi-year plan to address food insecurity.

“As a global food and agriculture company based in Minnesota, our employees across the world work to nourish the world in a safe and responsible way. Access to safe, affordable and nutritious food is at the core of what we do,” said Michelle Grogg, Vice President Global Corporate Responsibility and Executive Director of the Cargill Foundation. “We bring that same focus on food to the Twin Cities through our investments and partnerships. That is why we partner with organizations like Second Harvest Heartland, who work tirelessly to ensure there is greater food access in our headquarters’ community.”

“Since our founding, Target has had an unwavering commitment to our hometown and to our home state,” said Kiera Fernandez, Executive Vice President and Chief Community Impact & Equity Officer, Target. “Our partnership with Second Harvest Heartland is deeply connected to that commitment, and to our company purpose to bring the joy of everyday life to all families. By joining the *Make Hunger History* initiative, we’re using our size and scale to help make sure every Minnesotan family can thrive.”

As a member of the Feeding America network, Second Harvest Heartland collaborates and shares best practices with hunger relief organizations across the country, working toward a shared mission to end hunger.

“The Feeding America network of food banks puts people facing hunger at the center of our work, and we are privileged to have Second Harvest Heartland food bank among our ranks,” said Claire Babineaux-Fontenot, Feeding America CEO. “People facing hunger have expressed time and again that hunger does not happen in a vacuum. We must ensure that people have the food they need to thrive today and work to address root causes to end hunger tomorrow. The goal expressed by Allison and the team at Second Harvest Heartland will require strong partnerships and systems level change, and that is precisely the approach they are taking. There is no better time than now to embrace this bold aspiration for the community.”

Through operational changes, new community partnerships, and active engagement in advocacy and policy change, Second Harvest Heartland and its partners are building on past efforts and leveraging these new connections and insights to *Make Hunger History*.

For anyone interested in getting involved, there are a number of ways to make a difference, including donating to a local food shelf, volunteering for a hunger relief program in your area, or lending your voice to statewide advocacy efforts. Learn more at 2harvest.org.

About Second Harvest Heartland

Second Harvest Heartland is a leading hunger-relief organization. In partnership with more than 1,000 food shelves and hunger-relief programs in Minnesota and western Wisconsin, we provided 128 million meals to neighbors last year. We also help families enroll in food assistance and provide prepared meals for people who need more than groceries. Second Harvest Heartland is a leader, convener and voice in hunger-related policy discussions. Learn more at 2harvest.org.

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