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DHS FFA Helps Pack Meals for Families at Missouri State Fair

AUGUST 26TH 2019 BY DEE LOFLIN

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Dexter High School FFA joined more than 700 FFA members and agricultural leaders on Tuesday, Aug. 13, for the third annual Missouri FFA Food Insecurity Service Day held at the Missouri State Fair. Together, members packed 128,460 meals to feed families of up to six people. The meals were distributed to Missouri's regional food banks across the state.

"FFA Food Insecurity Day was once again a great success at the State Fair. Students noticed a need in our state and took action, which is what FFA is all about," said Brenden Kleiboeker, Missouri FFA Association President. "I have confidence that students will go back to their communities with these needs in mind and continue making an impact in our state."

The Service Day recognizes the efforts of Missouri FFA members and enables members to experience the State Fair. The food packing event and food drive are components of Missouri Farmers Care's Drive to Feed Kids, presented in partnership with Bayer and Brownfield Ag News with support from the Missouri State Fair, Missouri FFA and Missouri Department of Agriculture, along with many organizations and individuals across Missouri agriculture.

"The last line of the FFA motto is 'Living to Serve'," said Dan Cassidy, secretary of Missouri Farmers Care and chair of the Drive to Feed Kids. "FFA Food Insecurity Day plants this seed as hundreds of FFA students and their advisors came together, some on

the last day of their summer break, to prepare meals for fellow Missourians in need. They did so with a smile on their face and a sincere desire to make a difference. We are proud to partner with Missouri FFA and Feeding Missouri on this event, knowing we are working together to prepare not only meals but an appetite for service."

In addition to meals packed by FFA members, 1,740 backpack meals were packed at the fair by farmers, ranchers, agribusinesses and legislators. FFA members also collected donations from fairgoers of more than 15,000 pounds of canned food for Missouri children facing hunger. The Drive culminated Saturday, Aug. 17, with a check presentation of \$175,000 to Feeding Missouri.

"Missouri farmers are stepping up and saying, 'not in our state' when it comes to childhood hunger," said Scott Baker, State Director for Feeding Missouri. "Thousands of children in Missouri will have something to eat this year because of Missouri Farmers Care and their partners. The pairing of expertise with compassion shows exactly what can be done to address hunger when we work together."

Sponsorship of Missouri FFA Food Insecurity Day and Missouri Farmers Care's Drive to Feed Kids was provided by: Brownfield Ag News, Bayer, American Family Insurance, Missouri Farm Bureau, Missouri Farm Bureau Insurance, MFA Incorporated, FCS Financial, Missouri Corn Merchandising Council, Missouri Soybean Association, Missouri Soybean Merchandising Council, Missouri Department of Agriculture, Missouri State Fair, National FFA Association, Missouri FFA Association, Country Vet Pet Foods, Nutrablend, Forrest and Charlotte Lucas – founders of Protect the Harvest, CoBank, A Better Way to Farm, Sydenstricker Implement Company, Missouri Pork Association, Missouri Cattlemen's Association – The Beef House, Missouri's Electric Cooperatives, Missouri State Fair Foundation, Tyson and the contributions of many Missouri farmers, ranchers and agribusinesses.

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