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Produce Pro Volunteers at Northern Illinois Food Bank

The fruit of their labor means food on the table for many in need

(St. Charles, IL) Volunteers from Produce Pro, Inc., based in Woodridge, IL, and Get Fresh Produce, Inc. based in Bartlett, IL joined forces to roll up their sleeves and help repack breakfast cereal at the Northern Illinois Food Bank (NIFB) on Tuesday, January 18th, 2011. This volunteer effort comes at a critical time as the Food Bank is seeing sustained high numbers of people in need of emergency food assistance.

“NIFB serves such an important role in our area, and it is a great way for our programmers (and sales people) to actually work in a food distribution environment.” says Dennis Ferrarelli, National Sales Manager of Produce Pro Inc. “We were joined by an enthusiastic team from one of our customers, Get Fresh Produce, Inc. They are a local produce wholesaler and donate their surplus products to NIFB on a regular basis. Their team was led by a frequent contributor to the Food Bank, Kristen Esposito, who handles Communications and Quality Control at Get Fresh Produce, Inc.” Esposito says, “Giving back to our local community is extremely important, and as members of the food distribution network throughout the Chicago metropolitan area, we feel it is our responsibility to help get the best quality of food onto the tables of people in need. With unemployment rates still high and so many families suffering from the long-term effects of the recent recession, showing our support for the 2010 Food Bank of the Year was a must!”

“We are always grateful to our corporate partners when they are able to volunteer with such a large group,” says NIFB’s CEO and President H. Dennis Smith. “Last year we had over 90,000 volunteer hours logged and we hope to surpass that number during this fiscal year. If it was not for the dedication of groups like Produce Pro, Inc., and others like them, we would not be able to process and distribute the amount of food that we do each month.” Smith added.

About Northern Illinois Food Bank:

Feeding America’s Food Bank of the Year, Northern Illinois Food Bank (NIFB) is a non-profit organization that provides food to all those in need through its 665 partner agencies in 13 counties. NIFB acquires, gathers, handles, and distributes donated, government, and purchased food to more than 61,000 different people each week through local food pantries, soup kitchens, shelters, youth activity centers and other food assistance sites. In Fiscal Year 2010, NIFB distributed over 35 million pounds of food. The Food Bank has launched a Capital Campaign to build a new Food Distribution and Community Nutrition Center to enable them to handle more food more efficiently to meet increasing demand.



Northern Illinois Food Bank