



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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GOVERNOR DEWINE DEPLOYS NATIONAL GUARD TO HELP FEED FAMILIES
Second Harvest Welcomes National Guard Members Beginning March 23

LORAIN – Second Harvest Food Bank of North Central Ohio, along with the other 11 regional food banks in the state, welcome the help of Ohio National Guard members to help feed seniors, families, and displaced workers at food distributions. The National Guard members will assist Ohio's foodbanks in procuring, sorting, and packing food into bags and boxes; distributing that food through "no-touch" food distributions and deliveries; and supporting other logistical needs to protect public health and safety while maintaining foodbank operations.

On Wednesday, Governor Mike DeWine and Ohio Adjutant General MG John C. Harris Jr., at the request of the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services and in collaboration with the Ohio Association of Foodbanks and its 12 member Feeding America foodbanks, announced the deployment. "The action I've taken to activate the Ohio National Guard will provide support to food pantries that are low on staff and need help getting food to some of our most vulnerable citizens," said Gov. Mike DeWine. "By looking out for our neighbors and following proper health and safety guidelines, we will make it through this together."

Julie Chase-Morefield, President & CEO of Second Harvest Food Bank said, "We thank Governor DeWine and welcome these National Guard members as part of our foodbank family and thank them for their dedication and diligence in the weeks ahead." She continued, "Our staff and volunteers are working diligently to keep up with the tremendous need to feed our neighbors in the community who are vulnerable and are struggling. We are steadfast in our commitment to the community and are so grateful for the addition to our team."

Statewide, approximately 300 National Guard members will be deployed at the 12 foodbank warehouses across the state, which provide food to Ohioans in all 88 counties. "We have a responsibility to respond when our governor and fellow Ohioans need our assistance," said Maj. Gen. John C. Harris Jr., Ohio adjutant general. "We have a long history of supporting the state and nation during times of emergency. Our Guard members are coming from counties across the state to serve their own communities, ensuring their neighbors continue to receive food and pantry items." A portion of the allotment of guardsmen will be assigned to Second Harvest.

Second Harvest has implemented several key changes to respond to need while protecting staff, volunteers and clients by minimizing person-to-person contact. They have transitioned to "no-touch" food distribution using drive-through and delivery models, pre-packaged bags and boxes of food, and "to-go" meals.

Those looking to donate or volunteer or those seeking help with food can visit the Second Harvest Food Bank website at www.secondharvestfoodbank.org

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About Second Harvest:

As the area's largest hunger-relief organization, Second Harvest Food Bank of North Central Ohio Grows Hope in our community by creating pathways for nutritious food and visions a bright future for all by cultivating a healthy, hunger-free community. Second Harvest secures and distributes over 9.5 million pounds of food and grocery products annually; and works in partnership with 110 member agencies and 8 school districts including food pantries, soup kitchens, emergency shelters, School Pantries, after-school programs, Backpack Programs, Kids Cafes, Mobile Produce Pantries and Mobile Pantries.

With nearly 1 out of 6 people in our region receiving emergency food assistance from one of Second Harvest's agencies in Crawford, Erie, Huron and Lorain counties, the need for support has never been greater. Help bring the most basic of needs – food – to the table by visiting us online at www.secondharvestfoodbank.org.

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