



Fresno Madera Farm Credit

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For Immediate Release

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FRESNO MADERA FARM CREDIT AND COBANK ANNOUNCE \$30,000 DONATION TO CENTRAL CALIFORNIA FOOD BANK'S FEEDING FAMILIES FUND DRIVE

Fresno, CA – Sept. 16, 2021 – Fresno Madera Farm Credit and CoBank announced today that they have made a \$30,000 donation to Central California Food Bank's Feeding Families Fund Drive. The donation will provide more than 210,000 meals to residents of Central California during a year when the food bank has seen a 25% increase in need in our community.

"Central California Food Bank went from serving 280,000 people per month pre-pandemic, to more than 350,000 people per month this year," said Denise O'Canto, Corporate Relations Manager with Central California Food Bank. "This generous donation will help us continue to meet that expanded need, especially as we move towards the holiday season when demand is at its highest."

This donation is part of CoBank's larger Sharing Success program which relies on the local knowledge and expertise of the bank's customers to identify nonprofit organizations that are truly making a difference in rural communities. As part of the Sharing Success program, and an additional California Food Bank program, CoBank matched Fresno Madera Farm Credit's \$15,000 donation, bringing the grand total to \$30,000.

"CoBank is humbled by the generosity of our customers and their commitment to support the rural communities they call home," said Leili Ghazi, senior vice president of CoBank. "We know this donation will support the Central California families who need a little extra support during this tough time."

According to the Food Bank, in 2020-2021 more than 25% of the families visiting the food bank were there for the first time. O'Canto attributes that increase to massive unemployment due to COVID and the closing of more than 57 local agencies which typically provided food to the community.

"When the pandemic started, schools closed, and then many of the churches and partner agencies that were providing food to families were operated by senior citizens who were told to stay home in order to stay safe," O'Canto said. "We had to fill that need and come up with new ways to distribute food."

O'Canto said over the past year the Food Bank has started making deliveries to seniors, setting up new distribution sites, and pre-packaging foods for added safety – all of which have required additional resources.

"Our staff and our customers are committed to supporting the communities in our region - and our partnership with the Central California Food Bank has always been an important part of our outreach,"

said Keith Hesterberg, President and CEO of Fresno Madera Farm Credit. "We know our donation this year will help to support the food bank's mission to address food insecurity in our area - at a time when area families need it most."

About Fresno Madera Farm Credit

Founded in 1917, Fresno Madera Farm Credit is a farmer-owned cooperative and a proud member of the national Farm Credit System. Located in one of the most productive agricultural areas in the world, FMFC provides credit and financial services to farmers, ranchers, and agribusinesses that grow, process, and market over 350 commodities that are shipped all over the United States, and the world. For more information about FMFC please visit fmfarmcredit.com, and for more information about the Farm Credit System, visit www.farmcredit.com.

About CoBank

CoBank is a \$158 billion cooperative bank serving vital industries across rural America. The bank provides commercial loans, leases, export financing and other financial services to agribusinesses and rural power, water and communications providers in all 50 states. The bank also provides wholesale loans and other financial services to affiliated Farm Credit associations serving more than 75,000 farmers, ranchers and other rural borrowers in 23 states around the country. CoBank is a member of the Farm Credit System, a nationwide network of banks and retail lending associations chartered to support the borrowing needs of U.S. agriculture, rural infrastructure and rural communities.

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