



## Media Release

**For Immediate Release**  
**August 13, 2008**

For More Information Contact:  
Matt Petcoff, Communications Coordinator, (417) 865-3411

### **Springfield Volunteers to Help Food Bank during United Way Day of Caring**

SPRINGFIELD – Two local groups of volunteers will donate their time to Ozarks Food Harvest to help The Food Bank fill backpacks with food for needy area children.

The entire day is part of the United Way National Day of Caring, where almost a dozen women, all members of Springfield's Female Leaders in Philanthropy (FLIP) group will be joined by more than 15 volunteers from the local CHASE customer service center.

The group of volunteers will begin filling backpacks around 10:30 a.m. Thursday morning, August 14<sup>th</sup> at Ozarks Food Harvest. The backpacks will be used for the *Food for Thought*<sup>™</sup> backpack program this coming school year.

As kids head back to school, the backpack program will be needed more than ever. For the 2008-2009 school year, Ozarks Food Harvest will distribute backpacks full of nutritious food to impoverished kids in 28 area schools.

Children in the program are on the free and reduced lunch list and receive a backpack on Friday before they go home for the weekend. Last year, The Food Bank distributed more than 17,000 backpacks to kids in the Ozarks.

FLIP plays a large roll in helping to fund the program. FLIP Chair Nancy O'Reilly has led the group's effort to raise funds to expand the backpack program in 10 Springfield schools annually.

This is the sixth year for the *Food for Thought*<sup>™</sup> backpack program. The program was implemented following the Community Focus report card pointing out the number of children living in poverty in the Ozarks, which is above 50,000.

Ozarks Food Harvest works with more than 350 hunger relief organizations, reaching more than 41,000 people each month in 29 southwest Missouri counties. Ozarks Food Harvest distributes more than 5 million pounds of food annually to its network of agencies and offers direct relief through its Kids Cafe<sup>®</sup>, *Food for Thought*<sup>™</sup>, Club F.U.N.<sup>™</sup> and Mobile Food Pantry<sup>™</sup> programs.

For more information contact Matt Petcoff with Ozarks Food Harvest at 417-865-3411. The Food Bank is located at 615 N. Glenstone.

To learn more about Ozarks Food Harvest and how you can help *Transform Hunger Into Hope*<sup>™</sup>, visit [ozarksfoodharvest.org](http://ozarksfoodharvest.org).

###

Transform Hunger into Hope<sup>™</sup> at [ozarksfoodharvest.org](http://ozarksfoodharvest.org)

Ozarks Food Harvest | 615 N. Glenstone | Springfield, MO 65802 | P 417-865-3411 | F 417-865-0504