

Neighbor to Neighbor Food Drive

The Neighbor to Neighbor food drive wrapped up today, March 19, with an announcement from Kansas Secretary of Agriculture Dale Rodman that 58,000 meals were raised statewide.

"Thank you to every Kansan who contributed to this important food drive. While the Neighbor to Neighbor food drive won't end hunger in Kansas, it will provide food to families in need across the state," Secretary Rodman said. "From raising animals and crops to sustain us, to producing energy and more, the Kansas agriculture community is dedicated to serving others. The first-ever Neighbor to Neighbor food drive gave us a unique opportunity to help our fellow Kansans, to reduce hunger across the state and to support our state's farmers and ranchers."

The Neighbor to Neighbor statewide food drive, which began Feb. 18, was jointly hosted by the Kansas Department of Agriculture, Dillon's Food Stores, Harvesters – The Community Food Network, the Kansas Food Bank, the Second Harvest Community Food Bank and the Kansas agricultural community. The groups hoped to raise 50,000 meals by Kansas Agriculture Day, March 19, 2013. The donated meals will stay in the areas from which they were donated.

Secretary Rodman was joined by leaders from the food banks, Dillon's and the Scott Technology Magnet School, and representatives from the Kansas agricultural community at the wrap-up event, where they participated in a "BackSnack" program volunteer project. [BackSnack](#) provides backpacks of food to low-income children for the weekend, to combat weekend hunger. The groups packed 400 backpacks for local students.

"From young children to elderly adults and all ages between, hunger can affect everyone," Secretary Rodman said. "More than 160,000 Kansas kids face food insecurity challenges. The BackSnack program is an important program to help ensure when kids go home over the weekend, they have food to eat."

The Neighbor to Neighbor food drive was just one activity held to celebrate Kansas Agriculture Week and Kansas Agriculture Day. In addition, at 3:30 today, March 19, a "Dialogue on Kansas Agriculture" will be held in the Old Supreme Court Chambers (346-S) in the Kansas State Capitol. The dialogue will bring together thought-leaders in the agricultural sector to discuss the hot topics of the day, including nutrition, animal care, food safety, environmental stewardship, serving the world, the economy and education and technology.

Panelists for the dialogue include the following: Doug Hofbauer, *President and CEO of Frontier Farm Credit*; Bob Petersen, *Executive Director of the Kansas City Agribusiness Council*; Dr. Mike Apley, *Kansas State University*; Brandi Buzzard Frobose, *young agricultural leader and author of Buzzard's Beat Blog*; Jay Armstrong, *Farmer*; Diana Floyd, RD, LD, *Kansas State Department of Education Child Nutrition Consultant*; and Sheila Lowrie, *Dillon's Food Store Spokesperson*.

The dialogue is open to the public and will be streamed live on the Kansas Department of Agriculture website at <http://agriculture.ks.gov>.