

News Release

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FSA BRINGS HOME THE BACON IN USDA FOOD DRIVE

WASHINGTON, February 24, 1998 -- Farm Service Agency (FSA) Administrator Keith Kelly today announced his agency's victory in the 1998 USDA Food Drive.

Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman presented Kelly with a plaque recognizing the agency for its overwhelming response to the food collection effort. FSA collected 277,628 pounds of food, more than twice as much as its goal of 100,000 pounds, and more than any other USDA agency.

"I'm very proud of the way FSA team members put their hearts and souls into this effort," said Kelly. "It's just one more example of the way our people go the extra mile in everything."

The Department-wide food drive, which ran from January 7 to February 13 was part of Secretary Glickman's Anti-Hunger and Nutrition Initiative. The Initiative aims to increase food recovery 33 percent by the year 2000, enough additional food to feed 450,000 people a day.

FSA's Washington, D.C., headquarters staff raised 2,176 pounds of food by hosting a variety of creative events to collect food and cash contributions for the D.C. Capital Area Food Bank. Events included a luncheon featuring homemade venison stroganoff and chili, another offering Louisiana red beans and rice, and a "From the Heart" pre-Valentines Day bake sale. One employee singlehandedly collected 40 pounds of donated food by offering donors pieces of her homemade fudge.

Members of FSA field offices responded just as enthusiastically. With the help of producers and agribusinesses, the agency's field staff raised 275,452 pounds of food for donation to food pantries, churches, homeless shelters, and soup kitchens across the country.

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Among the Agency's many outstanding efforts, Pennsylvania employees, working with farm organizations such as the Grange, Farmers Union and Farm Bureau, collected nearly 12 tons of food for a Harrisburg shelter program, the Bethesda Mission. New Mexico staff and volunteers collected 100,000 pounds of potatoes for 30 Navajo Nation chapters, to be used by needy families in New Mexico, Arizona, and Utah. Members in Kansas City collected over 20,616 pounds of food, including apples from the orchard of a generous farmer.

"This shows the dedication FSA employees bring to every effort," Kelly said. Ever since I came to the Agency not so long ago, I've been impressed by their can-do spirit. I offer my congratulations to all who helped in this impressive effort, and my hearty thanks!"

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NOTE: Farm Service Agency (FSA) news releases and media advisories are available on the World Wide Web at FSA's Home Page: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov>