



NEWS RELEASE

CoBank, Farm Credit Associations Pledge \$100,000 To Alleviate Hunger In California's Farm Communities

Funds Will Support Food Banks In Areas Impacted By Drought

DENVER (March 26, 2014) — CoBank announced today that it and seven affiliated Farm Credit associations that serve California's agricultural sector have committed \$100,000 to alleviate hunger in drought-stricken farm communities throughout the state.

Joining with CoBank on the contribution are American AgCredit, Farm Credit Services of Colusa-Glenn, Farm Credit Services Southwest, Farm Credit West, Fresno Madera Farm Credit, Golden State Farm Credit and Yosemite Farm Credit. The seven associations together pledged \$50,000, which CoBank matched on a dollar-for-dollar basis. The funds will be directed to food banks in rural areas hurt by the historic drought, which has idled thousands of acres of farmland and left many farm workers unemployed.

"One of the many downside impacts of the drought has been increased food insecurity for the labor force that California agriculture depends on to be successful," said Robert B. Engel, chief executive officer of CoBank. "We hope this contribution by the Farm Credit organizations that serve the state will make a meaningful impact and help to reduce the level hardship for farm workers."

"We're enormously grateful for this contribution," said Andy Souza, president and CEO of Community Food Bank in Fresno, one of the food banks that will receive funds from the Farm Credit contribution. "California's farm communities literally put food on the table for the entire nation. I commend Farm Credit for recognizing the importance of farm workers to the success of the state's agricultural economy and stepping forward to help out people in need."

The Farm Credit System is a nationwide network of banks and lending associations that provide loans, leases and other financial services to agriculture and other rural industries. Farm Credit institutions are cooperatively owned by the farmers, ranchers, growers, cooperatives and other borrowers they serve, and governed by boards elected by their customer-owners. CoBank and the seven Farm Credit associations serving California have aggregate loan portfolio totaling more than \$17 billion and finance every sector of agriculture in the state, including citrus, nuts, vegetables, cotton, rice, livestock, wine and timber.

About CoBank

CoBank is a \$98 billion cooperative bank serving vital industries across rural America. The bank provides 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 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 and the nation's rural economy.

Headquartered outside Denver, Colorado, CoBank serves customers from regional banking centers across the U.S. and also maintains an international representative office in Singapore. For more information about CoBank, visit the bank's web site at www.cobank.com.

About Farm Credit

For nearly a century, Farm Credit has been a national provider of credit and related services to rural America through its cooperative network of customer-owned lending institutions. Farm Credit provides nearly \$200 billion in loans and leases to farmers, ranchers, rural homeowners, aquatic producers, timber harvesters, agribusinesses, and agricultural and rural utility cooperatives. For more information about the Farm Credit System, please visit www.farmcredit.com.

Contact

Sherry Johnson
Corporate Social Responsibility Manager
CoBank
(303) 740-6518 (office)
(720) 941-0905 (cell)
sjohnson@cobank.com