



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

COBANK COMMITS \$1 MILLION TO SUPPORT DC CENTRAL KITCHEN'S LOCAL FOODS INITIATIVES

Partnership Delivers Fresh, Local Produce to Urban Communities in Need

WASHINGTON, D.C. (February 4, 2016) — DC Central Kitchen, the innovative, Washington, D.C.-based workforce development nonprofit and social enterprise today announced a \$1 million commitment from CoBank, a cooperative bank serving agribusinesses, rural infrastructure providers and Farm Credit associations throughout the United States. DC Central Kitchen is dedicated to reducing hunger with recycled food, training unemployed adults for culinary careers, serving healthy school meals, and rebuilding urban food systems through social enterprise.

With this contribution, CoBank and DC Central Kitchen continue a partnership that began in 2011, when the bank funded the purchase of a refrigeration truck and delivery van, used to move produce grown by family farmers in Virginia's Shenandoah Valley to DC Central Kitchen's meal preparation and distribution facilities. Since then, the organizations have partnered to increase the use of fresh, locally grown produce in DC Central Kitchen's various nutrition and hunger-relief programs at Washington-area schools, homeless shelters, rehabilitation clinics, and corner stores located in DC neighborhoods without access to fresh fruits and vegetables.

"DC Central Kitchen's partnership with CoBank has been absolutely transformational for our organization, our community impact, and our capacity to work with local mid-Atlantic farmers," said Mike Curtin, Jr., DC Central Kitchen CEO. "When others saw us as a simple soup kitchen, CoBank recognized the potential of our unique integration of local sourcing, job training, and healthy food distribution to expand economic opportunity in both rural and urban communities at the same time."

Thanks to CoBank's investments in DC Central Kitchen's infrastructure, transportation fleet and human capital, the organization has become the only USDA-recognized permanent food hub in the District of Columbia and has invested nearly \$1 million in local farmers, purchasing approximately 1.2 million pounds of local farm products.

"DC Central Kitchen is transforming lives every day," said Robert B. Engel, CoBank's chief executive officer. "They have an incredibly powerful model that takes advantage of food grown by local farmers to help people in need in the inner city. We're delighted to partner with an organization that is doing so much good and having such a powerful impact."

About DC Central Kitchen

For 27 years, DC Central Kitchen has pioneered a new model of using food as a tool to change lives. The organization provides nutritious meals for 80 nearby nonprofit partners and 11 District schools, equips unemployed men and women to begin culinary careers, and engineers successful social enterprises that advance its mission and creates good jobs for those served by the program. Through job training, healthy food distribution, and local farm partnerships, DC Central Kitchen offers path-breaking solutions to poverty, hunger, and poor health. For additional information on DC Central Kitchen, please visit www.dccentralkitchen.org.

About CoBank

CoBank is a \$110 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 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 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.

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