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Governor Bill Richardson Announces Nearly \$700,000 in Emergency Food Assistance Being Delivered in New Mexico

American Recovery and Reinvestment Funds Add to the USDA Emergency Food Assistance Program

ALBUQUERQUE— During a news conference at the Roadrunner Food Bank in Albuquerque today, Governor Bill Richardson announced nearly \$700,000 worth of food through the USDA Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) is being delivered to food banks across the state. The additional food is funded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and will be shared with communities through the New Mexico Association of Food Banks.

“Thousands of New Mexico families rely on The Emergency Food Assistance Program and this additional funding will bring in nearly 600,000 pounds of additional food that will go on dinner tables across the state,” said Governor Richardson.

Today’s delivery to the Roadrunner Food Bank included 868 cases of applesauce and 552 whole chickens. This represents \$26,000 of the nearly \$700,000 worth of food funded through the ARRA that will go Roadrunner and six other food banks in New Mexico. The others include the Food Bank of Eastern New Mexico in Clovis, the Food Depot in Santa Fe, the Salvation Army in Hobbs, Echo Food Bank in Farmington, the Community Pantry in Gallup and the Community Action Agency of Southern New Mexico Las Cruces Food Bank.

Early in Governor Richardson’s administration the Human Services Department, which administers TEFAP in New Mexico began partnering with the NM Association of Food Banks to provide more food to more people more often. This partnership has allowed the food banks to deliver TEFAP food along with other food collected by their association to more locations throughout New Mexico.

“This partnership has been instrumental in the fight against hunger in New Mexico,” said Pamela Hyde, Human Services Department Secretary. “Instead of monthly deliveries to homeless shelters, community centers and faith-based institutions our regular deliveries to Food Banks turn into weekly deliveries across the state.”

During this current budget year, approximately 5 million pounds of TEFAP commodities have been used to supplement nearly 345,000 food boxes and meals provided to low-income persons through the food banks and soup kitchens across the state.

Food banks are seeing an increased need for emergency food and are thankful for the additional funding for TEFAP. “Some of our partner agencies are telling us the increased need for food is as high as 50 percent,” said Melody Wattenbarger, Roadrunner Food Bank Executive Director. “We are grateful and thankful to have this tremendous program as a resource for the hungry in New Mexico.”

To learn more about how the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act is benefiting New Mexico visit www.recovery.state.nm.us.