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**MEDIA CONTACT:**  
Rhonda Sanders  
501-416-3801 cell  
[rhondas@cfproduce.org](mailto:rhondas@cfproduce.org)

## **Feeding America®, Feeding Texas and the Collaborative for Fresh Produce Announce Exciting Partnership to Fight Food Waste**

**DALLAS (June 10, 2019)** -- Feeding America®, Feeding Texas and the Collaborative for Fresh Produce (Collaborative) have announced an exciting partnership to address hunger and food waste in the Southwest and develop a regional model that can be scaled nationally.

Beginning June 14, 2019, Feeding America, through a grant to Feeding Texas, which launched the Collaborative in 2018, will become the newest investor in the Collaborative for Fresh Produce. Feeding America's investment will support the Collaborative as it hones a sustainable model to partner with commercial farmers and food banks to efficiently collect and distribute donations of imperfect and surplus produce to hungry families in Texas and across the Southwest region.

"At Feeding America, we are regularly searching for innovative approaches to solve hunger and ensure that more people have access to fresh produce, crucial for a healthy lifestyle," said Anne Swanson, vice president of fresh produce sourcing at Feeding America. "We believe strongly in the potential of the Collaborative for Fresh Produce and, as a result, are very pleased to provide significant funding and resources to Feeding Texas to support the Collaborative's great work."

The Collaborative for Fresh Produce was founded because one in eight Americans struggles with hunger yet an estimated 20 billion pounds of edible fresh produce are wasted each year. To tackle this issue, the Collaborative uses state-of-the-art technology and optimizes supply-chain logistics to offer growers, shippers and wholesalers an outlet to address large-scale quantities of surplus produce and to provide a low-cost option to food banks as they source fresh produce for their communities. The Collaborative funds its operations through the generosity of its donors in addition to a 1 cent per pound processing fee paid by food banks.

In fiscal year 2019, the Collaborative for Fresh Produce anticipates distributing approximately 60 million pounds of fresh produce donated by more than 65 growers and shippers, mainly located in Texas. This produce will then be accessed by more than 25 food banks in a six-state region: Arkansas, Colorado, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Tennessee and Texas. These food banks supply thousands of non-profit agencies and pantries serving millions of people struggling with hunger in their communities.

"We're so pleased that Feeding America has recognized the Collaborative's pioneering work and wants to take a leadership role in developing a national model for our country's agricultural community and its nationwide network of food banks," said Lyda Hill, of Lyda Hill Philanthropies and the founding funder of the Collaborative for Fresh Produce. "Our goal from the outset was

to work in tandem with food banks across the nation to create a scalable model, and Feeding America is ideally positioned to do just that.”

To avoid confusion with donors and food banks, the Collaborative for Fresh Produce, in partnership with Feeding America, will now take a supporting rather than a leading role in developing a national model and will continue to operate with a focus on the recovery of Texas-grown produce. Feeding Texas, the statewide network of Feeding America food banks in Texas, will support the Collaborative in developing the model and be its liaison to Feeding America.

“Feeding Texas was very honored to have piloted this program in Texas before spinning it off to become the Collaborative for Fresh Produce,” said Celia Cole, CEO of Feeding Texas. “We are committed to sustaining the long-term health of the organization and are now proud to shepherd it into this growth phase.”

Due to these changes, Simon Powell, president and CEO, and Jim Farley, CFO, of the Collaborative for Fresh Produce will step down from the day-to-day leadership and operations. Beginning June 14<sup>th</sup>, Dale Long, currently the Collaborative’s executive vice president of sourcing will become interim executive director. Rhonda Sanders, CEO of the Arkansas Foodbank and board member of the Collaborative, will lead the transition efforts.

“We are delighted to see this effort gather this critical support from Feeding America,” said Jim Bildner, CEO of Draper Richards Kaplan Foundation and chairman of the board of the Collaborative. “In addition, we would like to thank Simon and Jim who have been so instrumental in the formation of the Collaborative during this first year. Their dedication and passion to solve hunger and address food waste is to be applauded and we are extremely grateful for their service.”

To learn more about how to donate fresh produce to the Collaborative, contact Dale Long at [dale@cfproduce.org](mailto:dale@cfproduce.org) or 469-858-6190, or to make a financial contribution contact Celia Cole at [ccole@feedingtexas.org](mailto:ccole@feedingtexas.org) or 512-527-3624.

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### **About Feeding America**

Feeding America® is the largest hunger-relief organization in the United States. Through a network of 200 food banks and 60,000 food pantries and meal programs, Feeding America provides meals to more than 46 million people each year. Feeding America also supports programs that prevent food waste and improve food security among the people we serve; educates the public about the problem of hunger; and advocates for legislation that protects people from going hungry. Individuals, charities, businesses and government all have a role in ending hunger. Donate. Volunteer. Advocate. Educate. Together we can solve hunger. Visit [www.feedingamerica.org](http://www.feedingamerica.org), find us on [Facebook](#) or follow us on [Twitter](#).

### **About Feeding Texas**

Feeding Texas ([www.feedingtexas.org](http://www.feedingtexas.org)) is the statewide network of food banks. Its mission is to lead a unified effort for a hunger-free Texas. Feeding Texas works collaboratively to ensure adequate nutritious food for communities in Texas, improve the health and financial stability of the people served, and engage all stakeholders in advocating for hunger solutions in support of this mission.

**About Collaborative for Fresh Produce**

Founded in 2018, the Collaborative for Fresh Produce is a non-profit organization that is partnering with commercial farmers and food banks to fight hunger by fighting food waste. Through the use of state-of-the-art technology and optimized supply-chain logistics, the Collaborative created a sustainable model to efficiently collect and distribute donations of imperfect and surplus produce that can be accessed by our nation's food banks and the hungry families they serve. Founding funders include Lyda Hill Philanthropies, Draper Richards Kaplan Foundation and the Michael & Susan Dell Foundation. For more information, go to [www.cfproduce.org](http://www.cfproduce.org) or e-mail [FreshProduce@cfproduce.org](mailto:FreshProduce@cfproduce.org).