



NEWS



Kentucky Department of Agriculture

RYAN F. QUARLES, Commissioner of Agriculture

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Milk 2 My Plate Grant Makes More Dairy Products Available to Kentucky Families

Quarles Announces \$30,000 Award from The Dairy Alliance to God's Pantry for Milk Coolers

WINCHESTER (May 29, 2018) — Thousands of Kentuckians who struggle to buy nutritious foods for their families now have greater access to fresh Kentucky-produced milk thanks to a \$30,000 grant from The Dairy Alliance to God's Pantry Food Bank, Agriculture Commissioner Ryan Quarles announced today.

God's Pantry used the grant to acquire seven milk coolers for its Winchester and Lexington-Fayette County food pantries. The grant was awarded in conjunction with The Dairy Alliance's Milk 2 My Plate initiative and the Kentucky Department of Agriculture's (KDA) Hunger Initiative.

"The coolers funded by this grant enable God's Pantry to store fresh milk for four affiliate food pantries," Commissioner Quarles said. "As a bonus, our hard-working dairy farm families will get a new market for their products. This is one small step that hopefully will lead to more such initiatives to help Kentucky's dairy farmers. We are extremely grateful to The Dairy Alliance for its support."

"On behalf of the dairy farm families of Kentucky and the Southeast, The Dairy Alliance is proud to partner in the vision of Commissioner Quarles," said Doug Ackerman, CEO of The Dairy Alliance. "His leadership during these difficult and changing times serves to provide hope for the people of Kentucky and the hard-working dairy farmers out there who work 365 days a year to nourish all American families."

Winchester Farms Dairy delivered milk to God's Pantry as part of Tuesday's presentation. The pilot project currently provides 60 gallons of milk a week to the food bank, but God's Pantry CEO Michael Halligan is hoping to increase volume over time.

"Hungry families, particularly those with young children, often lack calcium-rich milk in their diet. This pilot project will help us establish a consistent, sustainable flow of milk to those in need," Halligan said. "In the first few weeks, we've witnessed so much joy and excitement through a cold glass of milk. Hats off to The Dairy Alliance, Winchester Farms Dairy, the Kentucky Department of Agriculture, and our amazing Kentucky dairy farmers for helping us begin to imagine what's possible through a growing Milk 2 My Plate program."

The Dairy Alliance launched Milk 2 My Plate early this year to build an infrastructure for getting dairy products from Kentucky farms to Kentucky homes while developing relationships between processors and food banks. For more information about The Dairy Alliance and Milk 2 My Plate, go to thedairyalliance.com.

Commissioner Quarles unveiled the Kentucky Hunger Initiative two years ago to bring together farmers, charitable organizations, faith groups, community leaders, and government entities to look for ways to reduce hunger in Kentucky. To find out more about the Hunger Initiative, go to kyagr.com/hunger.

Map the Meal Gap 2017, an annual study by Feeding America, revealed that one in every six Kentuckians – including one in five children – was food insecure in 2015, meaning that consistent access to adequate food is limited by a lack of money and other resources at times during the year.

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