



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Contact:**

**Laura Buxenbaum**

**(919) 345-7253**

**[lbuxenbaum@thedairyalliance.com](mailto:lbuxenbaum@thedairyalliance.com)**

## **Grant Makes More Dairy Products Available to East Tennessee Families**

*The Milk2MyPlate initiative brings nutrient dense dairy to the food insecure*

**MARYVILLE, TENN. (June 20, 2019)** — Thousands of Tennesseans who struggle to buy nutritious foods for their families now have greater access to fresh Tennessee-produced milk thanks to a \$15,000 grant from The Dairy Alliance to The Second Harvest Food Bank of East Tennessee.

The Second Harvest Food Bank used the grant to purchase seventeen refrigerators for food pantries located in the East Tennessee counties the food banks serve. The grant was awarded by The Dairy Alliance and the *Milk2MyPlate* initiative.

“The refrigerators funded by this grant enable The Second Harvest Food Bank of East Tennessee to store fresh milk for seventeen of our affiliate food pantries,” Kathy Prince, Director of Administrations said. “This allows families across East Tennessee to have access to nutrient rich milk on a regular basis.”

The 2014 Hunger Study, the most comprehensive survey of food pantry clients, found that 40% of respondents said they would like access to more dairy products in their local pantries. Due to lack of cold storage, providing milk through the food bank networks in Tennessee has been an underlying issue.

“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,” Elane Streno, Executive Director of The Second Harvest Food Bank of Tennessee said. “Since these refrigerators have been in place, we’ve witnessed so much joy and excitement through a cold glass of milk. Hats off to The Dairy Alliance, Prairie Farms and our amazing Tennessee dairy farmers for helping us begin to imagine what’s possible through a growing *Milk2MyPlate* Program.”

“On behalf of the dairy farm families of Tennessee and the Southeast, The Dairy Alliance is proud to partner with Feeding America to help nourish families across East Tennessee,” said Doug

Ackerman, CEO, The Dairy Alliance. “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 initiatives to help Tennessee’s dairy farmers.”

The *Milk2MyPlate* Program was created by Northern Illinois Food Bank and Prairie Farms Dairy Inc. in 2012. This model has created opportunities for food banks, processors and dairy farmers across the country to replicate and better serve their communities.

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### **About The Dairy Alliance**

On behalf of dairy farm families, The Dairy Alliance, a non-profit, works with schools, health professionals, retailers, dairy processors and the public to promote dairy foods. For more information, visit [thedairyalliance.com](http://thedairyalliance.com).

### **About the Second Harvest Food Bank of East Tennessee**

Second Harvest Food Bank’s mission is to lead the community in the fight to end hunger. It is the East Tennessee region’s largest hunger-relief charity, operating programs in 18 counties. The food bank secures and distributes more than 18 million pounds of food and grocery products annually through a network of over 500 partnering nonprofit organizations such as food pantries, soup kitchens, emergency shelters and schools. For more information visit, [secondharvestetn.org](http://secondharvestetn.org).