



**Media Contact:**

Kylie Vonnahme, Vic Gutman & Associates: (402) 841-2560, kvonnahme@vgagroup.com

**CONAGRA BRANDS FOUNDATION SETS 1.5 MILLION MEALS GOAL  
FOR SHINE THE LIGHT ON HUNGER CAMPAIGN**

*All proceeds benefit Food Bank for the Heartland's COVID relief efforts*

(OMAHA, Neb.) Nov. 12, 2020 – For the 14th consecutive year, Conagra Brands and Conagra Brands Foundation invite the Omaha community to help “Shine the Light on Hunger” this holiday season now through December 31, 2020 in conjunction with the Holiday Lights Festival.

“Conagra Brands Foundation is proud to continue its longstanding support as lead sponsor of Shine the Light on Hunger,” said Robert Rizzo, Senior Director, Community Investment for Conagra Brands. “This year, more than ever, families in our community need our help.”

The Shine the Light on Hunger campaign is a rallying call to leaders, businesses and families throughout the local community to support front-line hunger relief efforts and provide meals for those in need. All proceeds benefit Food Bank for the Heartland and the work they do to support and empower the community.

Due to the impact of the pandemic, food insecurity across the Food Bank’s 93-county service area jumped from 207,000 to over 296,000 people – an increase of 43 percent. The Food Bank has distributed more than 18.8 million meals to children, families, and seniors in the Heartland facing hunger during the pandemic – this is a 72 percent increase over the average number of meals provided previously.

Conagra Brands Foundation set an ambitious goal of raising the equivalent of 1.5 million meals to support the hunger relief efforts led by the Food Bank, a goal which can and will be achieved with the support of the Omaha Metro’s very generous community.

“The Shine the Light on Hunger campaign truly makes a significant difference for families throughout Nebraska and western Iowa,” said Robert Rizzo. “As people enjoy Holiday Lights Festival events, they can also help their neighbors for whom consistent access to food is not a given. Shine the Light on Hunger also helps create awareness about the issues of hunger and food insecurity in our community and provides a meaningful way for everyone to take action, whether it be donating a can of food, making a monetary contribution, or volunteering at the Food Bank.”

Tackling the issue of hunger is a collective effort and there are many ways for members of the community to take action, including participating in the food drive, making a contribution, or by volunteering. Donation opportunities include:

- With a simple text, the public can make monetary donations by texting “FOOD” to 74121.

- In a unique partnership with Park Omaha, the public can make monetary donations through white parking meters located on sidewalks near businesses. The community is invited to feed the meter to help provide food for those in need. Specific locations can be found on the Holiday Lights Festival website.
- While grocery shopping at Baker's Supermarkets in Omaha, Bellevue, and Fremont, the public is encouraged to pick up extra nonperishable food items and drop them in the blue barrels as they leave.
- Local arts and culture organizations remain steadfast partners to collect nonperishable food. While attending a museum, concert or performance this holiday season, the public is encouraged to bring nonperishable food items. A full list of drop off locations can be found on the Holiday Lights Festival website.
- On Saturday, December 5 between 9 a.m. and noon, the public is invited to bring nonperishable food items to Food Bank for the Heartland (10525 J Street – Omaha, NE) during their Drive-up Community Food Drive. Attendees will remain in their vehicle and volunteers will collect the food.
- On Sunday, December 6 between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. bring the family to the KETV Drive-Through Family Festival at the Omaha Police Mounted Patrol Barn (615 Leavenworth Street – Omaha, NE) for free family fun. Attendees have the opportunity to donate nonperishable food items. Guests will remain in their vehicle and volunteers will collect the food.
- The Food Bank's most-needed nonperishable food items include macaroni and cheese, peanut butter, canned fruits and vegetables, rice (bags or boxes), beans (canned or bags), pasta, pasta sauce, pancake mix, canned tuna, canned chicken, and cereal boxed meals.

The Capitol District Ice Rink remains a committed partner in the campaign. However, out of an abundance of caution and for the safety of the community, the rink will not be open this year.

Leading organizations in the community are pitching in to raise awareness and donate food, funds, and volunteer hours through a communitywide hunger relief campaign. Hunger exists in every county in Nebraska and Iowa, and one in four heartland children is food insecure. Through donations, the community can help ensure children and their families have access to healthy and nutritious food this holiday season.

The Shine the Light on Hunger campaign reinforces the significant commitment by Conagra Brands and Conagra Brands Foundation to improve the quality of life for millions of families by taking action to impact the issue of hunger. Taking a year-round approach with nonprofit partners across the U.S., Conagra Brands contributes funds, donates food, engages its employees as volunteers, and helps raise awareness to mobilize the public to support food and meal programs for people when they need it most.

As part of the campaign, Conagra Brands Foundation will generously match all campaign funds up to \$100,000. Furthermore, Baker's Supermarkets has generously pledged \$20,000 on behalf of their Zero Hunger Zero Waste commitment.

For more information visit [www.holidaylightsfestival.org](http://www.holidaylightsfestival.org) and click on the "Shine the Light on Hunger" tab.

The Holiday Lights Festival is produced by Mayor Jean Stothert and the Downtown Omaha Inc. Foundation, with media sponsors KETV Channel 7 and STAR 104.5.

### **About Holiday Lights Festival**

The idea of decorating Omaha with holiday lights had been discussed by downtown advocates for many years. The occasion of the millennium provided the impetus for the project. In 1999, a coalition of city officials, corporations and foundations chose to present a legacy gift of holiday lights to the City of Omaha as the Millennium Lights celebration. That first year, more than 60,000 people came downtown to witness the lighting ceremony. The Downtown Omaha Inc. Foundation was established the following year to continue Millennium Lights as the Holiday Lights Festival. The Shine the Light on Hunger campaign, sponsored by Conagra Brands Foundation and in partnership with Food Bank for the Heartland, was added to the Holiday Lights Festival in 2007.

### **About Conagra Brands Foundation**

Conagra Brands Foundation believes everyone has a right to healthy and nutritious food, while recognizing that food insecurity exists in every U.S. county. The Foundation partners with exceptional national and local nonprofits with high-impact programs located in the communities where we live and work. By focusing our efforts within five areas: Direct Food Access, Cooking Skills, Nutrition Education, Healthy and Active Lifestyles and Urban Agriculture, we are able to be a leader in the fight against food insecurity in North America.

### **About Food Bank for the Heartland (a member of Feeding America):**

Food Bank for the Heartland is a private 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization in Omaha, Nebraska that acts as a central clearinghouse distributing food to nearly 600 network partners across 77 counties in Nebraska and 16 counties in western Iowa. Food Bank for the Heartland has distributed more than 28 million meals in FY 2020 helping thousands of children, families, seniors, veterans, and others in need. For more information, visit [www.FoodBankHeartland.org](http://www.FoodBankHeartland.org).