



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Briana Gruenewald, Belmont Partners
briana@bellmontpartners.com, 651-366-1545

Second Harvest Heartland to Launch FOODRx Initiative Sept. 15

Project aims to connect food prescriptions and basic need services to low-income patients

SAINT PAUL, Minn. (Sept. 8, 2016) – To strengthen the effort to provide more food access and to reach more people, Second Harvest Heartland is launching FOODRx, a pilot project that connects food prescriptions and basic need services to low-income patients through the Minnesota healthcare system.

The project is structured in a way that will allow it to be replicated with future partnerships between the hunger relief and health care sectors focused on improving the health and food security of patients through three interventions, including:

- **Acute** – Immediately provide 72 hours worth of healthy food for acute care needs
- **Chronic** – Provide disease-appropriate foods at repeatable bi-weekly or monthly boxes
- **Prevention** – Connect patients to the existing community resources they need to be healthy & fulfill basic needs.

The project simultaneously creates a new channel to deliver food security to households not currently accessing the hunger relief system.

“Second Harvest Heartland is committed to connecting our hungry neighbors with the food they need, and that includes creating new opportunities for underserved communities to access healthy food,” said Rob Zeaske, Second Harvest Heartland chief executive officer. “For many people in our region, lack of food means a higher likelihood of chronic disease and poor health, and FOODRx is one innovative way of helping them manage their health.”

Second Harvest Heartland is officially kicking off the initiative with a box-packing event with the project’s partners and supporters at its Golden Valley location Thursday, Sept. 15. The project is currently in a pilot phase and is not accepting/open to new participants from the general public. However, to learn more about what Second Harvest Heartland is doing to treat food as medicine within the health care system, visit 2harvest.org/FOODRx.

According to a study commissioned by Boston Consulting Group for Second Harvest Heartland, integrating the health care and hunger relief sectors to increase food access could add 30-45 million meals for food insecure patients annually. This project has the potential to transform the way both hunger relief and health care are delivered.

“We’ve known for a long time that individuals who are hungry are predisposed to health, psychological and social challenges resulting in higher health care costs and poorer education outcomes,” said Dr. Dianna Cutts, a pediatrician with Hennepin County Medical Center, a partner in the FOODRx pilot program. “Collaboration between the health care



1140 Gervais Ave. • St. Paul, MN 55109 • 651.484.5117 • 2harvest.org

and hunger relief sectors offers an opportunity to improve outcomes for our low-income neighbors, but also reach new neighbors and treat them through a sustainable, dignified channel.”

###

About Second Harvest Heartland

Second Harvest Heartland is one of the nation’s largest, most efficient and most innovative hunger relief organizations. Second Harvest Heartland provides an average of 75 percent of all food distributed by its food shelf partners, and in 2015, provided more than 77 million meals to nearly 1,000 food shelves, pantries and other partner programs serving 59 counties in Minnesota and western Wisconsin. Second Harvest Heartland leads through innovation, finding efficient, effective solutions to connect the full resources of our community with our hungry neighbors. For more information, visit 2harvest.org or call 651.484.5117.



1140 Gervais Ave. • St. Paul, MN 55109 • 651.484.5117 • 2harvest.com