



AFBF, soybean checkoff launch Food Check-Out Facebook page

WASHINGTON, D.C. (February 22, 2010)—The American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) and the soybean checkoff recently launched a new joint Internet Facebook page to promote national Food Check-Out Week, February 21-27. The week recognizes and celebrates the commitment of America’s farmers and ranchers to producing safe, healthy and abundant food. The week’s theme this year is “Stretching Your Food Dollar with Healthy, Nutritious Food,” in recognition of the current economic conditions.

During Food Check-Out Week, AFBF has committed to donate \$1 to Ronald McDonald House Charities for every person who becomes a fan of the new Facebook page (www.facebook.com/NationalFoodCheckoutWeek), up to \$5,000.

By lending support to this important cause, the soybean checkoff will help demonstrate that America’s soybean farmers remain committed to producing a safe, healthy, abundant and affordable supply of soy, used as a leading protein source to produce such things as nutritious meat and as healthy oil used in hundreds of foods. Food Check-Out Week allows U.S. soybean farmers the opportunity to share with consumers that both groups face similar issues—putting nutritious meals on the table while sticking to a tight budget.

“We are thankful to have partners such as the soybean checkoff as part of this new awareness effort, which will benefit the Galveston Ronald McDonald House directly while also raising awareness about Ronald McDonald House Charities overall,” says Terry Gilbert, a Kentucky farmer and chair of the AFB Women’s Leadership Committee.

United Soybean Board (USB) farmer-leader Mary Lou Smith, a soybean farmer from Petersburg, Mich., says the partnership is an important link educating consumers on the importance of U.S. animal agriculture and the role of America’s farmers in providing other safe and nutritious foods.

“The checkoff plays a key role in educating dietitians, health professionals, schools and the entire food chain that the American farmer produces the safest food in the world,” says Smith. “It’s important consumers understand the importance of supporting U.S. animal agriculture for continuing to have access to the highest quality meat and dairy but also in sustaining the U.S. soybean industry and other interrelated industries.”

The Galveston Ronald McDonald House in Texas sustained major structural damage during Hurricane Ike, which devastated southern Texas in 2008. The Facebook fan page contains valuable

information about how the Galveston facility and others around the nation help families with seriously ill children undergoing medical treatment. The fan page also includes photos, articles, videos and links to related Web sites about nutrition, smart grocery shopping strategies and animal agriculture.

AFBF promotes the week through activities involving Farm Bureaus at local and state levels across the United States. On the national level, the AFB Women's Leadership Committee will staff sampling stations at supermarkets and distribute educational information to shoppers. The committee also will make cash and food donations to Ronald McDonald Houses in Wichita, Kan., this year in addition to going to a local school to teach children about nutrition and who produces the food they eat.

Noting the nearly universal need among consumers to stretch their food dollars in today's economy, Gilbert and Smith says that a number of economic studies have shown that higher retail food prices during the past few years resulted primarily from rising energy costs for processing, packaging and transportation.

The third week of February was selected for Food Check-Out Week as a bridge to National Nutrition Month in March. For more information on Food Check-Out Week go to <http://www.fb.org/index.php?fuseaction=events.foodweek>.