

June 25, 2002

The XYZ Foundation
123 Fourth Avenue
Seattle, WA 00000

Dear Mr. Blank,

Rotary First Harvest (RFH) is requesting \$10,000 from XYZ Foundation to help improve the diets, and thus the health, of the low income individuals and families who rely on food banks for assistance in the Puget Sound region and throughout Washington State.

Since our beginning, we have gathered nearly 70 million pounds of surplus produce from farmers and food processors in our state and beyond. If not for RFH, much of this food would have gone to waste - either being left to rot in the fields or being dumped into local landfills. Instead it was delivered to agencies such as Food Lifeline, Northwest Harvest Second Harvest Food Bank of the Inland Northwest and Emergency Food Network for re-distribution to local food banks and hot meal programs.

In the past RFH has salvaged an average of 4 million pounds of fruits, vegetables and other food items per fiscal year. This last year, with XYZ Foundation's assistance we launched the Food Recovery Project. We are pleased to be able to share with you the news that we collected over 5 million pounds this year.

The Food Recovery Project's goals are to:

- Expand Rotary First Harvest's operations by creating a more coordinated statewide collection and distribution infrastructure, which in the next 2-3 years will be capable of salvaging upwards of 10 million pounds of food annually.
- Offer fresh fruits and vegetables to regional food banks across the state on a coordinated, equitable, and consistent basis.
- Involve government agencies in locating, harvesting, and transporting surplus food.
- Involve more local farmers in food salvaging and distribution efforts.
- Involve Washington's Rotary Clubs and business community in hunger relief efforts.
- Enhance our state's stewardship of agricultural resources.

We are already achieving success in increasing the capacity of RFH and other food distribution agencies statewide to receive and distribute more produce and to do so equitably. We are also progressing in our efforts to work with government agencies and to make contact with Rotary districts and clubs outside of 5030. Our next focus will be on involving more farmers and food processors in our efforts.

During 2002, we will work with our partner organizations to expand our access to food resources in major agricultural areas in Washington State. Our field volunteer and office staff are currently building a strategy for enlisting the help of our current donors and Rotary contacts to identify potential new donors. The pilot phase of the FRP proved that reaching out to more farmers in this manner would also allow us to increase the quantity and diversify the range of foods we bring to local food banks. An example of this approach is our current work with Washington State apple growers, packers and Eastern Washington banks to identify lots within apple orchards that will not be harvested this season. Once those orchards have been identified, RFH will develop a strategy for harvesting these apples and distributing them to our partner hunger programs.

The beauty of RFH's work is that everyone involved benefits.

- The farmers and other food donors avoid disposal costs or pest problems (from produce left in the fields) and get the satisfaction of knowing the food isn't going to waste;
- Packing houses and processors are able to move food that can no longer meet stringent long-term shipping requirements;
- Storage companies can free up valuable storage space in their controlled atmosphere facilities;
- Unemployed pickers are sometimes used to harvest food, providing much needed additional income and maintaining their relationship with the local growers;
- Professional truckers who donate their services receive the satisfaction of making a difference in their community, while students at our partner trucking schools gain valuable "real-life" experience; and
- Food banks receive much-needed fruits and vegetables for distribution.

The most important beneficiaries, however, are the more than 1 million hungry people served by Washington state food banks each year- particularly the seniors on fixed incomes and the children whose parents rely on food banks to help feed their families.

The coming fiscal year (2002-2003) marks the 20th Anniversary of RFH. We intend to use this unique opportunity to highlight our work in the local, regional and national news media as well as agricultural industry-specific publications. Your assistance during this milestone year would enable us to really make a difference in the fight against hunger.

By 2004, RFH hopes to have a reliable and scalable program in place that will enable us to collect up to eight to ten million pounds of produce annually for distribution to hunger programs throughout the Northwest.

Funds from the XYZ Foundation would be used to support our food recovery efforts such as picking, packaging, storage, and/or transportation as well as indirect expenses related to food recovery including phone expenses (most of our work is done over the phone or fax lines) and travel costs (to meet with potential donors, inspect products and facilities, etc.). We are a very lean organization -- according to the Washington State Secretary of State's office, 98% of our resources go to program-related expenses.

We believe that XYZ Foundation is a strong match for supporting RFH and the Food Recovery Project because of your focus on low income children and their families. The XYZ Foundation website reports that children who live in poverty are twice as likely to experience both physical and mental disabilities.

For the past twenty years, RFH has been engaging farmers, packers and business people in its straightforward mission of salvaging nutritious produce for people -- especially children -- in need. Thanks to support from companies like XYZ, we have collected nearly 70 million pounds of food in that time. This year marks our twentieth anniversary and signifies the beginning of a new era for RFH -- one that we hope will bring significantly more food to those we serve. We invite XYZ Foundation to join us as a partner as we work to bring a healthier future to people living in poverty.

Sincerely,

David Bobanick
Executive Director