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Livestock and Poultry Industries Applaud Governor DeWine and Legislative Leaders for Directing \$15 Million to Purchase Ohio Protein for Families in Need

COLUMBUS, OH – Ohio’s livestock and poultry industries applaud Governor Mike DeWine and the state’s legislative leaders for today’s Ohio Controlling Board approval of the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services’ request of \$15 million in American Rescue Plan Act State Fiscal Recovery Fund to address a shortage in supplies at Ohio’s 13 regional foodbanks.

This request directs the agency to work with Ohio-based producers and processors to purchase, transport, store and distribute livestock, dairy and poultry protein products. The funding will be administered through Ohio’s 13 regional foodbanks, and each will identify, purchase and procure products based on local needs and availability of protein-rich foods, including pork, beef, chicken, lamb, milk, cheese, yogurt, cottage cheese and eggs.

“Our state’s livestock and poultry industries thank Governor DeWine, President Huffman, Speaker Cupp, Minority Leader Russo and Minority Leader Yuko for their leadership in supporting this immediate funding to help Ohio’s foodbanks restock their shelves and the tables of the families they serve,” **said Scott Higgins, CEO, Ohio Dairy Producers Association**. “Foodbanks need sources of high-quality protein, and dairy foods like milk, cheese and yogurt are nutrient powerhouses packed full of protein, as well as calcium, vitamin D and potassium, three nutrients noted by the Dietary Guidelines for Americans as nutrients of concern – nutrients many Americans don’t get in their diets.”

“Older adults, parents and caregivers in Ohio struggle to provide balanced, nutrient-rich food for their families. The program provides complete protein - animal protein- packed with essential nutrients necessary to thrive,” **said Cheryl Day, Executive Vice President, Ohio Pork Council**. “Pig farmers stand ready to help meet the growing need for nutritious options for families in need.”

“The Governor and legislative leaders worked with Ohio agriculture to put locally sourced foods on the shelves of Ohio’s foodbanks and tables of the families they serve,” **said Elizabeth Harsh, Executive Director, Ohio Cattlemen’s Association**. “Ohio cattle families are proud to participate in a program where they can directly meet the immediate needs in our communities.”

"We appreciate the support of Sen. Bob Hacket, Sen. Vernon Sykes, Sen. Jay Hottinger, Rep. Scott Oelslager, Rep. Latyna Humphrey, and Rep. Jeff LaRe of the Ohio Controlling Board for voting to address food insecurity through the purchase of delicious and nutritious Ohio protein from Ohio farmers and processors," **said Jim Chakeres, Executive Vice President, Ohio Poultry Association.** "These critical resources will help children and families in need and work to stabilize and strengthen our agriculture industry in Ohio."

"There is a growing demand for lamb meat in Ohio, and the sheep industry is proud to be a part of this important program that connects Ohio farmers with families in need," **said Roger High, Executive Director, Sheep Improvement Association.**

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