

FEATURE – ARRA HELPS NEVADA FOOD BANK GET TRUCK

INTRO: Getting perishable food to food banks can be a challenge in sparsely populated part of the country. The USDA's Bob Ellison has more on an effort help a food bank meet this challenge. (1:36)

THE FOOD BANK OF NORTHERN NEVADA IS ABLE TO PROVIDE MORE FRESH PRODUCE TO ITS CLIENTS THANKS TO A TRUCK PARTLY PAID FOR BY THE U-S DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE'S RURAL DEVELOPMENT. THROUGH THE AMERICAN RECOVERY AND REINVESTMENT ACT, U-S-D-A HELPED THE FOOD BANK GET A REFRIGERATED TRUCK TO TRANSPORT FRESH PRODUCE. A WESTERN NEVADA BOYS AND GIRLS CLUB HOSTS THE FOOD BANK AND CAN NOW PROVIDE FRESH FRUITS AND VEGETABLES TO THOSE IN NEED.

Travis Crowder, Chief Professional Officer, Boys and Girls Club of Mason Valley, NV: In all the years that we've been with them we've been limited for the most part in getting non-perishables because we haven't safely been able to bring them the distance that we drove today about an hour and a half. We haven't been able to safely bring any perishables that far because we don't have any refrigeration. So now we can safely bring the perishables and the fresh produce and the vegetables and bring them out here and be able to get fresh food to these folks instead of just your typical box goods.

HELPING THE FOOD BANK PROVIDE FRESH PRODUCE IS PART OF A GREATER U-S-D-A EFFORT TO ADDRESS THE LACK OF GROCERY CHOICES IN PARTS OF THE COUNTRY DURING TOUGH ECONOMIC TIMES.

Cheryl Cook, USDA Deputy Under Secretary for Rural Development: What we are starting to see now is that the basic availability of food is something that we can no longer take for granted. Whether it's an urban area, a tribal area or many rural communities, grocery stores are gone. You just don't have the access to food that we used to have that you used to be able to take for granted.

Sarah Adler, USDA RD: This recession has impacted the availability of food to people in rural communities just as it has in urban communities, even more so.

THROUGH U-S-D-A, THE RECOVERY ACT PROVIDED FORTY EIGHT THOUSAND DOLLARS TOWARD THE TRUCK'S EIGHTY-EIGHT THOUSAND DOLLAR PRICE TAG. FOR THE U-S DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, I'M BOB ELLISON.