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TENNESSEE CATTLEMEN'S DONATES BEEF TO SECOND HARVEST FOOD BANK

CALHOUN, TN – The Tennessee Cattlemen's Association (TCA), along with other industry partners, recently donated over 1,600 pounds of beef to Second Harvest Food Bank of Middle Tennessee, as part of TCA's Second Harvest Initiative. This program's goal is to provide those in need with a fresh source of protein, while building financial support for students in the junior beef project and creating a culture where students are encouraged to give back to their communities across the state.

The Second Harvest Initiative began at the University of Tennessee Junior Beef Expo in July in Murfreesboro. This is the annual "Super Bowl" of cattle shows for kids across Tennessee. In addition to TCA providing \$10,785 of premium money for winning animals, showmanship & Skill-a-thon events, TCA also offered to buy four of the top placing steers and donate the beef to Second Harvest Food Bank. TCA engaged several partners across the state to raise \$15,500 to buy these four calves. Those partners included:

- \$5,000** **Yearwood Equipment, Hardin County Stockyards**
(Grand Champion: Shelley Rowlett of Weakley County)
- \$4,000** **Farm Credit Mid-America**
(3rd place: Callie Fisher of Lawrence County)
- \$3,500** **TriGreen Equipment and My Team Insurance**
(4th place: Morgan Lehnert of Lawrence County)
- \$3,000** **Athens Stockyards & Mountain Farm Equipment**
(5th place: Katie Plowman of Henry County)

The University of Tennessee's Animal Science staff then transported the steers to Blankenship Farms Meat Processors in Calhoun, TN and where it was harvested. Blankenship Farms donated half the cost of the processing while TCA funded the other half of the cost.

"This kind of thing is something we don't have to think twice about," said Steven Blankenship. "We were glad to sponsoring the processing because it's a great cause."

In August, after the meat dry-aged, students from McMinn County FFA helped to load the 1,626 pounds of ground beef, roasts and steaks into Second Harvest Food Bank's van.

David Cloniger, representative from Second Harvest Food Bank, was there to transport the beef. “We never get fresh meat direct from the processor. It is always from the grocery store, so this is a really special thing for us. We are getting the best we can get which means needy people are too.”

After the meat was loaded in the van, it was then taken to Abundant Life Assembly of God in Winchester, TN to be given away at their food pantry.

“It brings joy to our hearts that through teaching our students how to care for their livestock ultimately ends with feeding the hungry,” said Gary Daniel, president of TCA.

TCA hopes that this program can continue next year and feed even more of Tennessee’s people in need.

For more information on how you can become a sponsor or on the program, please visit: www.tncattle.org.

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TCA was founded in 1985 and has nearly 7,000 members from across the state. The organization works to provide the cattlemen of Tennessee with an organization through which they may function collectively to protect their interests and work toward the solution of cattle industry problems and to build the necessary goodwill that will bring both governmental esteem and recognition to the industry.

For more information visit www.tncattle.org, email info@tncattle.org or call (615) 896-2333. Be sure to follow the TCA on our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/tncattle and Twitter account: @TennesseeCattle.