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CONTACT: AARON SADLER  
(501) 682-0517

## AG GIVES SETTLEMENT MONEY TO HELP FIGHT HUNGER

LITTLE ROCK –Attorney General Dustin McDaniel announced today that three Arkansas hunger-relief organizations will receive a share of \$425,000 to help them fulfill their mission to provide food for Arkansans in need.

McDaniel will provide \$141,666 each to the Arkansas Foodbank, Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance and Arkansas Rice Depot. Combined, the agencies serve all 75 Arkansas counties.

The funding comes from proceeds of a 2010 settlement with The Dannon Company, Inc. Dannon's payment to the State settled McDaniel's claims that the company misrepresented the effectiveness of some of its dairy drinks and yogurt products. Because of the nature of the suit, McDaniel said it makes sense for hunger relief organizations to receive shares of the settlement.

"These organizations will use these funds to provide tangible, valuable nutrition to our most vulnerable residents. Hunger is a real and growing problem in Arkansas, and I hope this money makes a significant impact toward fighting the problem in every county," McDaniel said.

According to a USDA report released in November, Arkansas over a three-year period had a higher percentage of food insecurity than any other state. The report stated that, from 2007 to 2009, nearly 18 percent of the State's households were without reliable, consistent access to food.

The Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance includes the Food Bank of North Central Arkansas, Food Bank of Northeast Arkansas, Harvest Texarkana Regional Food Bank, Northwest Arkansas Food Bank and River Valley Regional Food Bank.

The Alliance and its members in 2009 provided more than 25 million pounds of food to Arkansans. "We are very appreciative of Attorney's General McDaniel for his support of hunger relief with the Dannon settlement," said Rhonda Sanders, executive director of the Alliance. "This funding will help the regional food banks of the Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance provide food and services to their 900-plus agencies in every county of the state. Our food banks have seen substantial increases in families and individuals accessing their agencies in the past two years. These are much needed dollars to help families in Arkansas."

Serving approximately 900 hunger relief programs throughout Arkansas, the Rice Depot focuses on four core programs: Food for Families, Food for Kids, Food for Seniors and Disaster Relief. It is the only statewide food bank network.

"This funding will allow us to keep our delivery vans on the road, pay the trucking that brings in donated food, and buy the food that fills up backpacks that are sent home with over 30,000 school children facing hunger at home. This is truly an answer to prayer for thousands of Arkansans facing hunger." Laura Rhea, president & chief executive officer of Arkansas Rice Depot said after learning of the Attorney General's donation.

The Arkansas Foodbank distributes food and grocery products to more than 400 member agencies, including food pantries, soup kitchens, shelters and after-school feeding programs, in 33 central and southern Arkansas counties.

"We try very hard to provide nutritious food to our food pantries and backpacks and summer feeding programs," said Phyllis Haynes, chief executive officer of Arkansas Foodbank. "Of course, healthy food tends to be more expensive. How wonderful to have this unexpected donation that will allow us to provide more good food to our children, families and older adults. We are very grateful to the Attorney General for designating the Arkansas Foodbank as a recipient of this settlement."

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