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Farms to Food Banks Program Bellingham Food Bank Project Description - 2009

The Whatcom Food Bank Fresh program will be working with local food producers to deliver some of the best local milk, eggs, and produce to nine food banks located throughout Whatcom County. Edaleen Dairy, Dairy Distributing, Hopewell Farm, Broadleaf Farm, Nooksack Nine, and Alm Hill Farm will participate in this new initiative to provide low-income families with essential milk, eggs, and fresh produce in 2009 and beyond.

Whatcom Food Bank Fresh will utilize bulk purchasing and an innovative Food Bank CSA strategy to ensure all products will be purchased below wholesale costs. Establishing amounts in advance, working with local producers, and asking for a food bank donation, enabled the program to purchase each product at below wholesale costs. Milk and eggs have established price points and will be delivered to food banks twice a month. Whatcom Food Bank Fresh and the participating farms have created a food bank CSA program that will begin providing food in April and continue through October.

Bellingham Food Bank is participating in this project because it is always looking for ways to increase the amount of fresh, non-perishable food it can make available to food bank clients. Client visits are on the rise, up 25% in 2008! This initiative will connect local producers to the food bank network and act as a small but important infusion of cash for the producers. By the end of the year the project will provide the following additional food:

- 39,000 pounds of produce
- 5,175 dozen eggs, and
- 6,261 ½ gallons of milk

Eggs and milk will be provided twice a month throughout the pilot program, while produce will be available from April to November.

Contact: Mike Cohen, Executive Director, Bellingham Food Bank/Alternatives to Hunger, bfbanked@openaccess.org.