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## **San Antonio Food Bank Recognized as 2007 Food Bank of the Year**

*Award Presented at America's Second Harvest Annual Conference*

**San Antonio—October 5, 2007—** The city of San Antonio is nationally renown for several things. Great Basketball. Great Tourist Attractions. Great People. Add to that list, a great non-profit organization as the San Antonio Food Bank has just been recognized as the "Food Bank of the Year."

America's Second Harvest—The Nation's Food Bank Network has selected the San Antonio Food Bank as its 2007 Member of the Year. The award honors the most outstanding food bank or food-rescue organization in the America's Second Harvest Network for going beyond its core mission of feeding the hungry. Award recipients play an instrumental role in improving the communities they serve through creative, efficient and successful programs and services, serve as a strengthening force for the entire America's Second Harvest Network and exemplify the highest standards of operations. In a network of 203 food banks across the country, the San Antonio Food Bank was chosen the winner.

The San Antonio Food Bank is recognized for its outstanding hunger-relief efforts. Over the last six years, the food bank has seen incredible expansion in all aspects of its operation – from food distribution, staff size and operating budget – culminating in the completion of a new 104,000 square foot facility that will increase efficiencies and capacity.

"We are committed to excellence and efficiency. It is great to be recognized by our peers who truly understand what we deliver," said Eric Cooper, Executive Director of the San Antonio Food Bank.

In addition to the award presented by America's Second Harvest, the San Antonio Food Bank will receive a \$10,000 prize sponsored by H-E-B Grocery Stores. "This is a great opportunity for H-E-B to recognize at a national level the outstanding work of the Food Bank of the Year" says Eddie Garcia, H-E-B consultant for the Food Bank Assistance Program.

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Since fiscal year 2001, distribution at the San Antonio Food Bank has grown by 65 percent, to over 29 million pounds. Financial success includes an increase of its operating budget over 329 percent in just seven years. Additionally, the San Antonio Food Bank has increased current national programs such as Kids Cafe®, and established new programs, such as the Integrated Eligibility Outreach, a Community Kitchen®, Nutrition Education and a Community Garden, which will not only be a place to grow food, but will also be used as a forum for education and community awareness.

Since 2002, the San Antonio Food Bank's Food Stamp Outreach program has grown into a team of 18 outreach workers assisting with applications for more than six federal assistance programs in its sixteen-county service area, with food bank staff processing more than 1,000 applications a month.

"Executive Director Eric Cooper and his staff at the San Antonio Food Bank are an incredible asset to the America's Second Harvest network," said Vicki Escarra, President and CEO of America's Second Harvest.

The San Antonio Food Bank has established itself as the leader in the fight against hunger in Southwest Texas, with its new building and enhanced service to its clients. They continue to fight hunger and feed hope to 25,000 individuals each week.

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The **San Antonio Food Bank** is a 501 c 3 non-profit organization providing millions of pounds of food to over 375 charitable organizations in Southwest Texas serving those in need. In addition to food distribution, the San Antonio Food Bank provides numerous programs that not only solve the immediate problems of hunger, but help individuals and families gain long-term food security. In addition to fighting the daily disaster of poverty, the San Antonio Food Bank provides assistance to victims of natural disasters such as hurricanes and tornadoes. For more information about the San Antonio Food Bank, visit our website at [www.safoodbank.org](http://www.safoodbank.org).

**America's Second Harvest — The Nation's Food Bank Network** is the largest charitable domestic hunger-relief organization in the United States. Through its network of more than 200 member food banks, America's Second Harvest annually provides assistance to more than 25 million people in need, including more than 9 million children and nearly 3 million seniors in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. Each year, America's Second Harvest secures and distributes more than 2 billion pounds of food and grocery products to support feeding programs at approximately 50,000 local charitable agencies, including food pantries, soup kitchens, emergency shelters, after-school programs, and Kids Cafes. To learn more, please visit [www.secondharvest.org](http://www.secondharvest.org).