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LETTER CARRIERS FOOD DRIVE, NATION'S LARGEST, SCHEDULED FOR MAY 14

WASHINGTON – Saturday May 14 is the one day of the year letter carriers look forward to a busy day. In fact, they're hoping to break last year's record of 70.9 million pounds of packages—just as long as they're packages filled with non-perishable food items destined for local food banks.

Letter carriers in more than 10,000 cities and towns across America will collect non-perishable food items donated by postal customers on the second Saturday of May. They will be participating in the 13th annual National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC) Food Drive—the largest one-day food drive in the nation. Almost 1,500 local NALC branches in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam and the Virgin Islands will collect food donations left by mailboxes and in Post Offices and deliver them to local community food banks, pantries and shelters.

Postal customers in some New York City and Chicago Post Offices are asked to take their food donations to their local participating Post Office during the week of May 7-14. New York City and Chicago residents should contact their local Post Office for more information.

“The NALC Food Drive makes a difference for thousands of disadvantaged Americans, and we are proud to be a partner,” said Postmaster General John E. Potter. “The drive is a wonderful occasion for us to join forces and collect millions of pounds of food for distribution to community food banks and other charitable organizations.”

Long-time supporters of the drive include the U.S. Postal Service, Campbell Soup Company, America's Second Harvest, local United Ways throughout America, Valpak Direct Marketing Systems and the AFL-CIO Community Services Network. In 2004, the drive collected a record 70.9 million pounds of food for the needy, making the total amount of donations to community food banks and pantries from the NALC Food Drive over the last 12 years well over a half billion pounds.

In the past, Campbell Soup Company has donated a million pounds of food every year to help kick off the NALC National Food Drive. This year, Campbell is donating 10 million pounds of food, and has engaged 15-year-old soccer superstar Freddy Adu of the champion D.C. United to tape a Public Service Announcement (PSA) to be shown on television stations across the nation.

“We are proud to once again support the National Association of Letter Carriers Stamp Out Hunger food drive,” said Douglas R. Conant, President and Chief-Executive-Officer,

Campbell Soup Company. "Campbell is committed to the fight against hunger and we recognize the importance of 'Stamp Out Hunger,' as it helps replenish food pantries nationwide at a crucial time period."

Letter carriers have established a tradition of community service over the years. They have always been involved when something needs to be done, whether watching over the elderly through the Carrier Alert program, delivering the mail and assisting the American Red Cross during times of disaster, rescuing victims of fires, crime and other catastrophes, and collecting food for the NALC Food Drive. "Letter carriers are the heart and eyes of the community, walking and driving through every neighborhood and up and down every street," said NALC President William H. Young. "They see—first hand—the need, and recognize the hardship and despair that denies families even the basic necessities of life."

The NALC Food Drive has received numerous accolades, including two Presidential Certificates of Achievement, a Special Appreciation Award in 2003 from America's Second Harvest Food Bank Network, the annual Humanitarian of the Year Award in 2003 from Bon Appétit/Food Network and the annual World Hunger Year/Chapin Award in 2004.

More than 110 million postcards were mailed to customers in towns and cities throughout America letting them know how they can help. Customers who may not have received a postcard can check with their local Post Office to make sure it is a part of the drive this year, and then just place non-perishable food items next to their mailbox before the letter carrier delivers the mail on Saturday, May 14. The letter carrier will do the rest by taking the food to the Post Office where it is sorted and delivered to an area food bank or pantry.

An estimated 30 million people face hunger every day in America, including more than 12 million children. This drive is one way you can help those right in your own city or town who need help.

Since 1775, the U.S. Postal Service has connected friends, families, neighbors and businesses by mail. An independent federal agency, the Postal Service makes deliveries to more than 142 million addresses every day and is the only service provider to deliver to every address in the nation. The Postal Service receives no taxpayer dollars for routine operations, but derives its operating revenues solely from the sale of postage, products and services. With annual revenues of \$69 billion, it is the world's leading provider of mail and delivery services, offering some of the most affordable postage rates in the world. Moreover, today's postage rates will remain stable until at least 2006. The U.S. Postal Service delivers more than 46 percent of the world's mail volume—some 206 billion letters, advertisements, periodicals and packages a year—and serves seven million customers each day at its 37,000 retail locations nationwide.

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