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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**AFAN ANNOUNCES COLD STORAGE GRANT OPPORTUNITY FOR  
FOOD PANTRIES, REQUESTS DONATIONS**

LINCOLN - The Alliance for the Future of Agriculture in Nebraska (AFAN) today announced a grant program to assist food pantries in purchasing refrigerator and freezer units to store perishable food. AFAN is partnering with the Nebraska Department of Agriculture (NDA) and Nebraska's various commodity groups on this project.

"Midwest Dairy initiated this effort by granting funds for four refrigerators to store milk at food pantries," said Steve Martin, executive director of AFAN. "The Nebraska Department of Agriculture followed suit and a statewide effort emerged with the hope that more contributions will be collected."

"Milk is the number one requested item at food pantries," stated Kris Bousquet, Manager Farmer Relations Nebraska, Midwest Dairy. "One of the challenges food pantries have is the lack of funds to purchase refrigerators or freezers. This grant program addresses that need and allows food pantries to safely store milk, dairy products and meat that their clients want and need."

"We found many food pantries throughout Nebraska have the desire to distribute milk and dairy products, chilled or frozen meats and fresh produce. AFAN and its members are fulfilling this desire through proper storage and handling of these products," said Steve Wellman, Director of the Nebraska Department of Agriculture. "By providing funding for refrigerators and freezers we can help food pantries with equipment that will benefit their clients for years to come."

AFAN will be administering the program, purchasing units for food pantries and receiving donations from private entities for this project. Food pantries can receive up to \$4,000 for refrigerators, freezers and associated expenses through AFAN.

The demand for these units has already exceeded the funding that has been committed to this project and AFAN is seeking monetary donations to be able to assist more food pantries in obtaining equipment to ensure safe food products for everyone who needs it. Full details of the program can be found on the AFAN website at [www.becomeafan.org](http://www.becomeafan.org) or by calling 402-421-4472.

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