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Roadrunner Food Bank Partners with Expo New Mexico/State Fair To Help Feed the Hungry While Reducing Waste

The leadership of the New Mexico State Fair and Roadrunner Food Bank have initiated a partnership that is reaping extraordinary results. This year for the very first time, Roadrunner worked with Expo New Mexico to haul away recycling materials, bale and sell the materials as a new way to generate funds for the Food Bank. Funds earned from these recycling efforts will support the mission of Roadrunner Food Bank and help provide important meals to nearly 40,000 hungry people every week.

Recycling collection barrels were placed throughout the grounds at this year's New Mexico State Fair. When guests placed aluminum, plastic or cardboard in any of the 42 recycling bins, located in and around the fairgrounds, they helped Roadrunner Food Bank address hunger. The recycling project expects to bring in between 27 and 29 tons of materials for the Food Bank. The recyclables are taken back to the Food Bank to be baled and then sold to local recycling companies.

The program represents a meaningful social enterprise venture for which the New Mexico State Fair is pleased to be a partner. According to the Social Enterprise Alliance, the movement is mainly used by non-profits as a way to generate ideas and activities that provide non-profits with an earned income to pursue their mission. Roadrunner Food Bank pursues social enterprise ventures as a way to earn funds that complement its existing activities. The Food Bank already handles and recycles large volumes of cardboard and plastic within its warehouse on a daily basis. Providing recycling services to Expo New Mexico was a natural fit.

Teresa Johansen, chief operating officer at the Food Bank said, "The State Fair was looking to enhance their recycling efforts during the twelve day event. The Food Bank has a recycling service in place and already handles recyclable materials from locations such as the US Forest Service. This new venture worked out for both the Food Bank and Expo New Mexico. We're thrilled because in the long run it means we will be able to obtain more food for hungry people."

According to Dan Mourning, the general manager of the New Mexico State Fair, the collaboration is a win-win. "I can't think of a better recipient or cause to benefit from our recycling program than Roadrunner Food Bank. We are grateful for their willingness to help us enhance our recycling program and extremely pleased that the combined effort will result in more families in our community and state getting access to much needed food resources."

For more information on other green activities the Food Bank is involved in, visit www.rafb.org/green.

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