



## **Omega Protein Partners with Northern Neck Food Bank to Help Feed Virginia Families**

*Employees from Omega Protein Corporation's Reedville, Virginia facility partnered with Northern Neck Food Bank over the weekend, gleaning crops from local farms to help feed those in need. The company's efforts yielded nearly three tons of produce. It's a valued community service for the Eastern Virginia food pantry network, where access to fresh, nutritious produce is often rare for regional residents living at or below the poverty line.*

REEDVILLE, Va. (Omega Protein) – August 25, 2014 – On Saturday, Omega Protein employees teamed up with Northern Neck Food Bank, a charity that supports a network of local food pantries in Virginia's Northern Neck region, to glean corn from local farmers' fields. The crops will help feed those who experience hunger or malnourishment, as one-sixth of Americans do. Gleaning involves the collection of leftover crops from farmed fields after they have been commercially harvested.

These harvests can leave behind a large amount of crops that farmers generously donate, but volunteers are needed to get them from farm-to-food pantry. Partnerships like this collaboration between Omega Protein and the Northern Neck Food Bank fill that void and have enabled the distribution of over 2.1 million servings of fresh produce to Northern Neck Food Bank recipients over the past two years. The Food Bank distributes gleaned produce to over 3,000 people each month. Approximately 50 percent of the recipients are children or senior citizens.

"We're happy to help our community whenever we can, and this partnership is a perfect example of our dedication to helping families everywhere live healthier lives through better nutrition" said Monty Diehl, Omega Protein's Senior Director of Fishing Operations. "It feels great to know that we're helping to make sure that fresh food isn't wasted and is directed to those who really need it." In total, Omega Protein volunteers gleaned almost 6,000 pounds of corn for donation. Currently, 40 percent of farmed food that could help feed Americans ends up in landfills, but programs like this help reduce the waste.

Processed foods typically donated to food banks are often less nutritious than the produce gleaned by Omega Protein's employees and donated to Northern Neck Food Bank. Connecting the dots between farmers with leftover crops and Virginia families in need is crucial to battling tough economic conditions and the steep price of nutritious foods. Over 30 percent of the households served include a family member suffering from Type I or II diabetes, making the need for whole, real foods even more pressing.

Lance Barton, CEO and Director of Northern Neck Food Bank, emphasized the value of Omega Protein's participation, saying "Omega Protein did a fabulous job. The only way we get decent nutritious food into the food banks is when we have boots on the ground and volunteers in the field."

These volunteer opportunities also help raise community awareness about the Food Bank's work. Food banks are still an underutilized resource: almost 50 percent of those who qualify for food assistance do not utilize their local food pantry. With these types of partnerships, Omega Protein aims to inform the communities in which it operates about available food resources and encourage their neighbors in need to seek and receive support.

### **About Omega Protein**

Omega Protein Corporation (NYSE:OME) is a century old nutritional company that develops, produces and delivers healthy products throughout the world to improve the nutritional integrity of functional foods, dietary supplements and animal feeds. Omega Protein's mission is to help people lead healthier lives with better nutrition through sustainably sourced ingredients such as highly-refined omega-3 rich fish oil, specialty proteins and nutraceuticals.