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FeedHV to Provide Dairy Products to Three Area Food Assistance Agencies

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Ronnybrook Farm, photo: John Halpern

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Collaborative Effort with Scenic Hudson will Benefit Youth Programs

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

HUDSON, NY – In collaboration with Scenic Hudson, FeedHV, the food rescue program operating in seven counties in the Hudson Valley, will be able to purchase and donate dairy products to three of the region's food assistance programs serving children: The Kingston YMCA Farm Project, Dutchess Outreach and The Friends of Hudson Youth. Dairy products will be provided by Hudson Valley Fresh and Ronnybrook Farm Dairy.

FeedHV is a regional food rescue and harvesting network operating throughout Dutchess, Orange, Ulster, Columbia, Greene, Putnam and Sullivan counties. It links donors of prepared, but unserved, food and fresh produce with nonprofits and food assistance programs. Through an app-assisted network of food donors, volunteers and feeding agencies, FeedHV facilitates the harvesting, processing and distribution of locally grown or produced agricultural products, shelf-stable food donations and prepared nutritious foods. Among the donors are restaurants, farms, food makers, stores, hospitals and universities. The food assistance programs include food pantries, soup kitchens and shelters.

With Scenic Hudson's support FeedHV will be able to procure milk from Hudson Valley Fresh farms bottled in Kingston. Milk, yogurt and butter will come from Ronnybrook Farm Dairy, located on the border of Columbia and Dutchess counties. In total, it is anticipated that the regionally distributed donation will

include more than 12,000 gallon and 1,800 half-gallon containers of milk, 1,250 containers of yogurt and 210 pounds of butter in eight-ounce packages. All of the dairies are selling their products at cost.

“Scenic Hudson has a strong history of supporting our regional food system and farmland preservation. At this time of extreme need, the support that they are giving FeedHV will enable us to contribute to thousands of meals in three counties – feeding our neighbors, mostly children, with fresh local products” said Todd Erling, Executive Director, Hudson Valley AgriBusiness Development Corporation (HVADC) which administers the FeedHV program.

“Scenic Hudson is delighted to partner with the Hudson Valley AgriBusiness Development Corporation’s FeedHV program by helping to provide locally produced food to youth programs in Kingston, Poughkeepsie and Hudson while simultaneously supporting those farm families supplying the fresh food. Conserving Hudson Valley farms has long been a vital part of Scenic Hudson’s mission. We also are committed to ensuring all valley residents, particularly those facing the greatest hardships in our cities, benefit from our work. This collaboration helps to accomplish both during these tumultuous times,” said Scenic Hudson President Ned Sullivan.

“Access to fresh food is especially acute right now, particularly in our cities. At the same time, valley farms face significant economic challenges. By collaborating with the Hudson Valley AgriBusiness Development Corporation to bolster FeedHV, Scenic Hudson is grateful to play a role in getting locally produced food where it’s most urgently needed, while helping to sustain the operations of hard-working farm families,” added Scenic Hudson Land Trust Executive Director Steve Rosenberg.

The Kingston YMCA Farm Project is a youth empowerment program working with pre-schoolers through high-schoolers, bringing young people to their farm where they grow food for its immediate community, to learn about growing, and running a farm stand. During the COVID-19 crisis, the Farm Project has been working with the Kingston Emergency Food Collaboration, packing meals to deliver throughout the Kingston school district – now upwards of 2,500 in a day, up from 175 a month in March.

In Poughkeepsie, Dutchess Outreach operates a food pantry, as well as The Lunch Box, which serves free, hot lunch and dinner meals to anyone in need, among other programs. Demand there is high and according to Dutchess Outreach's Director of Development, Sarah A. Salem in a recent post, "since the COVID-19 pandemic hit our area, our demand has doubled, and we are serving some clients who haven't visited the pantry in more than 20 years."

The Friends of Hudson Youth fortifies and enhances the City of Hudson's Department of Youth. The Youth Department is continuing to work, with a reduced staff and volunteers, to provide food to over 600 vulnerable people with twice-weekly deliveries of grocery boxes. The Friends of Hudson Youth is supporting the emergency efforts.

To learn more about FeedHV, its donor and volunteer programs, visit www.feedhv.org.

About FeedHV

For the past three years, FeedHV has been operating as a regional food rescue and harvesting network in New York's Hudson Valley, linking donors of prepared but unserved food and fresh produce to nonprofits with food assistance programs. The program is administered by Hudson Valley AgriBusiness Development Corporation (HVADC).

About Scenic Hudson

Scenic Hudson preserves land and farms and creates parks that connect people with the inspirational power of the Hudson River, while fighting threats to the river and the natural resources that are the foundation of prosperity in the Hudson Valley.

