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***Potato Farmers Team Up To Tackle Hunger***

*Moses Lake-* The Washington State Potato Commission (WSPC) and Oregon Potato Commission (OPC) are once again teaming up to tackle hunger. In the second annual "Potato Bowl" potato farmers from each state are ensuring that the winning team of the football game between Oregon State University (OSU) and Washington State University (WSU) won't be the only victorious group.

Both commissions have once again placed a friendly wager on the outcome of Saturday's game in Pullman. This year's rivalry will again extend beyond the football field with the real winner being local food banks in Washington and Oregon.

"Last year the Oregon Potato Commission invited us to Corvallis to participate in the potato bar they host outside of the stadium, serving potatoes and collecting donations for local food banks," said Chris Voigt, Executive Director for the WSPC. "We decided to return the invite this year and we will be doing the same thing in Pullman on Saturday and see if the result of the game can once again bring home potatoes to Washington's food banks."

In addition to having a potato bar and collecting donations for Second Harvest before the game, the action on the field will determine whether a food bank in Washington or Oregon is also victorious. For every point scored in Saturday's matchup, 500 pounds of potatoes will be donated to a food bank in the winning team's state. The donation will be made by the commission and growers whose team ended up on the losing end.

"Last year WSU won the game 39-32 so we had a lot of potatoes to deliver to Washington foodbanks, 35,500 lbs. to be exact," said Bill Brewer, Executive Director for the OPC. "This year I'm sure that OSU will repay the favor and we can have Washington send their potatoes to food banks in Oregon. I just hope the total score is more than last season's 71 points."

The organization from the winning state will select the food bank to send the potatoes to. The delivery will be made in the upcoming weeks just in time for the holiday season, one of the busiest times for food banks in our region.

"Second Harvest distributes over 2 million pounds of donated food each month throughout 21 counties in Eastern Washington and 5 counties in North Idaho. Over half of the food distributed is fresh produce, including thousands of pounds of potatoes generously donated by local farmers," said Rod Wieber, Chief Resource Officer for Second Harvest. "These produce donations help fill the nutritional gap for local children, families and seniors in need and all donations big or small help. So stop by and enjoy a baked potato and share what you can with Second Harvest."

"With the holidays fast approaching the need for food assistance to those within each of our communities is far too real and although this wager is a great way to raise awareness, much more can be done by fans of either team," said Voigt.

Those fans who will be attending the game have the opportunity to stop by one of two potato bars served by local growers, make a donation, and enjoy a free great tasting potato before kickoff. One booth will be set up in Cougville on Rogers practice field and the other in the Northeast entrance of the stadium. For those who are unable to make it Pullman, but would still like to help they can visit <http://www.2-harvest.org> to make a donation.

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