

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Media Contact:

Jaimee Trobough
The Big Garden
402.906.2714
jtrobough@biggarden.org

The Big Garden Announces Donation for 15 New Community Gardens

More gardens and schools will receive onsite ag education during summer months

OMAHA, NEBRASKA – The Big Garden is pleased to announce that it will establish 15 new community gardens through a grant from AgriBank and Farm Credit Services of America (FCSAmerica). The combined \$40,000 donation will allow The Big Garden to plant five new community gardens in each of the next three years.

The Big Garden exists to cultivate food security in communities and neighborhoods in Nebraska, Iowa and Kansas. More than 25,000 volunteers gardeners tend to 120-plus community gardens in the Big Garden Network. Last year's harvest yielded 82.4 tons of food, enough to feed 10,000 people.

The new gardens funded by AgriBank and FCSAmerica will allow The Big Garden to increase its annual production by 25,000 pounds by 2018. The planned gardens are on top of the 10 gardens already built with support from AgriBank and FCSAmerica, both of which are part of the Farm Credit System.

"By partnering with over 100 schools, community organizations and congregations to develop community gardens, and teaching hundreds of children and adults how to grow their own food, the Big Garden is having a huge impact on food insecurity in our community" said Nathan Morgan, Executive Director of the Big Garden. "We are grateful for the support of Agribank and FCSAmerica in this work."

In addition to supporting new community gardens, AgriBank and FCSAmerica are helping to fund The Big Garden's mission of nurturing greater self-sufficiency through education in gardening, food storage and food preparation. About 400 children and adults participate each week during the summer months in The Big Garden's agriculture education programs, which are led with the help of interns. The donation from AgriBank and FCSAmerica also will support a seedling program operated in partnership with Omaha Public School's Blackburn Alternative High School.

"Farm Credit is committed not only to serving farmers and ranchers, but also to making our rural communities stronger," said Ann Finkner, senior vice president and chief administrative officer at FCSAmerica. "We are proud to support The Big Garden's mission of addressing food and hunger issues."

About The Big Garden

The Big Garden was started by United Methodist Ministries in 2005, with funding from the USDA's Community Food Project. The Big Garden had a goal of creating 12 community gardens in three years. Today, the Big Garden is a network of 100-plus community gardens in metro-Omaha and rural and semi-rural communities in Nebraska, Iowa, and Kansas working to fight hunger and grow justice...one garden at a time. www.gardenbig.org

About AgriBank

AgriBank is one of the largest banks within the national Farm Credit System, with more than \$90 billion in total assets. Under the Farm Credit System's cooperative structure, AgriBank is primarily owned by 17 affiliated Farm Credit Associations. The AgriBank District covers America's Midwest, a 15-state area stretching from Wyoming to Ohio and Minnesota to Arkansas. About half of the nation's cropland is located within the AgriBank District, providing the Bank and its Association owners with expertise in production agriculture. For more information, visit www.AgriBank.com.

About Farm Credit Services of America

Farm Credit Services of America is a customer-owned financial cooperative proud to finance the growth of rural America, including the special needs of young and beginning producers. With more than \$23.3 billion in assets and \$4.2 billion in members' equity, FCSAmerica is one of the leading providers of credit and insurance in Iowa, Nebraska, South Dakota and Wyoming.

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