



**Contact:**  
Amy Richards  
Charleston|Orwig, Inc.  
Office: (262) 563-5100  
Mobile: (262) 352-2446  
[arichards@charlestonorwig.com](mailto:arichards@charlestonorwig.com)

## **For Immediate Release**

### **Celebrity Cook Paula Deen and Her Family Bring Smithfield Foods' Helping Hungry Homes™ Tour to Chicago**

CHICAGO, Ill. (February 25, 2008)—The Greater Chicago Food Depository today received over 30,000 pounds of meat products to help feed local families thanks to Smithfield Foods' 10-city Helping Hungry Homes™ Across America tour, a hunger relief initiative led by celebrity cook Paula Deen.

The tour's goal is to provide one million servings of meat to the nation's hungry families, including those in the metropolitan Chicago area, where nearly half a million people each year rely on emergency and supplemental food provided by the Food Depository, the city's food bank.

Paula Deen's husband Michael Groover and her sons Jamie and Bobby, who regularly appear on her *Food Network* shows, were all on hand today to help Food Depository staff unload the Smithfield Foods truck carrying over 30,000 pounds of ham and hot dogs.

In addition, the Deen family visited students at Chicago's Community Kitchens, a Food Depository training program that prepares unemployed and underemployed adults for foodservice industry jobs through a 12-week course.

"In teaming up with Smithfield Foods to provide this much-needed protein to needy families, our eyes have certainly been opened to the plight of the working poor in America," Deen said. "And getting the chance to visit with students who are working hard to learn new skills and provide for their families was a special thrill for me, since hard work in a hot kitchen was how it all began for me."

"Hunger is a daily reality for thousands of individuals and families in Cook County. Working poor families, parents of young children, and the elderly are among those who need our assistance to make ends meet," said Kate Maehr, executive director for the Food Depository. "We are truly grateful for Smithfield Foods' donation of more than 30,000 pounds of essential protein."

The Smithfield Foods Helping Hungry Homes tour began in Deen's hometown, Savannah, Ga., on January 14th and has now reached Philadelphia, New York City, Atlanta, Los Angeles, Kansas City and Chicago. Additional stops include New Orleans and Washington, D.C., before concluding in Detroit. Donations are being distributed in each city through local members of America's Second Harvest, the nation's largest hunger-relief organization.

Smithfield Foods' Helping Hungry Homes initiative was established to help ensure that American families in need do not go hungry. Smithfield Foods and its independent operating companies have a long history of stocking food banks, supporting after-school nutrition programs and providing food relief in the wake of natural disasters.

This 10-city tour alone will distribute 250,000 pounds of meat products with an estimated retail value of more than one million dollars.

"Although Smithfield Foods has long been a supporter of hunger relief initiatives, we felt the need to help shine a spotlight on an ever-increasing problem for American families," said Dennis Treacy, vice president of environmental and corporate affairs for Smithfield Foods.

“Providing hunger relief with Paula Deen and her family through our Helping Hungry Homes initiative will remain a high priority throughout our family of companies,” Treacy added.

The Greater Chicago Food Depository, Chicago’s food bank, is a not-for-profit food distribution and training center providing food for hungry people while striving to end hunger in the community. The Food Depository distributes donated and purchased food through a network of 600 food pantries, soup kitchens and shelters to almost a half-million adults and children every year. Last year, the Food Depository distributed more than 40 million pounds of nonperishable food and fresh produce, dairy products and meat, the equivalent of more than 84,000 meals every day. Innovative training programs and initiatives developed by the Food Depository also work to provide men, women and children with the tools necessary to break their individual cycles of poverty.

Smithfield Foods is a global food company with operations in 13 countries through wholly owned subsidiaries and joint ventures. Headquartered in Smithfield, Va., the company produces more than 50 brands of pork, beef and turkey products and more than 200 gourmet foods. Employing more than 57,000 people across the globe, Smithfield Foods is the world’s largest producer and processor of pork and a leader in turkey processing, cattle feeding and beef processing.

###