



USSEC Staff, Members Donate \$30,000 to American Red Cross for Japan Relief

ST. LOUIS, MO. (April 25, 2011) -- USSEC staff, member companies and farmers are donating \$30,000 to the Red Cross for earthquake and tsunami relief in Japan.

The "Japan-United States Soybean Friendship Aid" program was created as a way for individuals working at USSEC and USSEC stakeholders to provide relief in wake of the March 11 disaster.

The program was created to parallel the relief efforts of the soybean checkoff, allowing USSEC member companies and individuals to participate in this important effort using non-checkoff dollars.

"It is great to see the whole industry collaborating to come to the aid of people in Japan in various ways," USSEC CEO Jim Sutter said. "It is gratifying to see the generous donations particularly given the ongoing requests we all get for help from near and far."

USSEC has been gathering personal and corporate checks from parties within the soy complex and is in the process of notifying the Japanese soy industry and public of the contribution made to the Red Cross.

Meanwhile, the United Soybean Board (USB), which represents the nearly 600,000 U.S. soybean farmers, is helping Japanese small businesses that wish to donate food to those in need after multiple disasters in that country. The soybean checkoff plans to help Japanese companies including soyfood processors, suppliers and distributors donate soy-based food to people affected by the recent earthquake and resulting tsunami and nuclear disasters.

"We have been fortunate enough to have served Japanese soy customers for more than 50 years," said Marc Curtis, USB chairman and a soybean farmer from Leland, Miss. "We hope this gesture will send a message to the Japanese people that all U.S. farmers – of soybeans and all crops, poultry and livestock – support them as they work to emerge from this difficult time."

Japanese small businesses that wish to participate in the program may apply for reimbursement for donations of soy-based food such as tofu, cereal, pasta, bread, canned soybeans, soynuts, soybean oil for cooking, soymilk, cheese and yogurt, among other soy-based foods.

For its part, USSEC will help bring together the small businesses that wish to donate and soybean checkoff funds that will support those donations.

"Over the past few weeks we have seen terrible devastation, but we have also witnessed the resilience of the Japanese people," said Jim Echle, USSEC's country director in Japan. "We are grateful for the opportunity to show our support to the Japanese people and the local soy industry."