

For Release  
IMMEDIATE (Sept. 14, 2005)

## **Agriculture River Recovery Fund Created to Aid Ag Industry Employees, Families Victimized by Hurricane Katrina**

WASHINGTON – An “Agriculture River Recovery Fund” has been established to provide financial assistance to those who work for or provide services supporting U.S. agriculture and its grain industry, and who have been displaced and had their lives and livelihoods disrupted by Hurricane Katrina.

The fund, which was announced today, is being spearheaded by a wide range of organizations and individuals involved in U.S. agriculture, including the grain and related industries. The Agriculture River Recovery Fund is designed to serve as a vehicle through which tax-deductible charitable contributions can be made to assist these individuals and their families in restoring their lives and livelihoods.

The concept for the fund was generated by leaders from a diverse spectrum of the grain and allied industries, who approached the North American Export Grain Association (NAEGA) and National Grain and Feed Association (NGFA) for assistance in organizing the effort.

“Individuals and businesses from across U.S. agriculture and the international grain industry are uniting to help our own and to provide support for the recovery of the vital Mississippi River/Center Gulf region,” said NAEGA President Gary C. Martin. “In essence, we are following up on requests received from around the world for information on how assistance can be directed to these dedicated employees and their families, as well as employees of allied industries, such as barge operators, grain inspectors and others, who provide support services to export grain elevators in the region and who have served our industry faithfully over many years. We are gratified by this outpouring of concern! This initiative provides the industry with a mechanism to show our strong support.”

“The human tragedy associated with Hurricane Katrina is immense,” added NGFA President Kendell W. Keith. “Employees and their families who have worked to serve U.S. agriculture have suffered profound personal loss as a result of Hurricane Katrina. We hope this unprecedented, agriculture-wide effort will contribute in a meaningful way to the relief and recovery in the region, and most importantly to restoring the lives and livelihoods of the most important assets our industry has – our people.”

Organizers of the Agriculture River Recovery Fund said they hope to raise at least \$500,000 in charitable financial contributions to help supplement the financial resources of personnel from grain elevators and supporting service industries in the region who have suffered personal loss or injury, been displaced, and/or suffered economic loss as a result of Hurricane Katrina. Several categories of suggested donation levels for both individuals and business have been established.

All funds contributed to the Agriculture River Recovery Fund are fully deductible to individuals and corporations as a charitable contribution for federal income tax purposes. One hundred percent of all donations will be distributed to needy applicants. Contributed funds will be maintained in a segregated account by the National Grain and Feed Foundation – a 501(c)(3) charitable foundation administered by the NGFA – and 100 percent of the contributed funds will be distributed to affected parties. All administrative and operating expenses associated with the fund will be paid by the NGFA.

A web site – [www.ARRFund.org](http://www.ARRFund.org) – has been created that provides information on this agricultural humanitarian-relief effort, including mechanisms for receiving contributions. Donations may be made by checks payable to: Agriculture River Recovery Fund; 1250 Eye Street, N.W., Ste 1003; Washington, D.C., 20005. To send funds by wire on or after Sept. 15, please provide the following instructions to your bank: SunTrust Bank (Atlanta Office), 1 Park Place, Atlanta, Ga., 30303; ABA Routing

Number 061000104; Account number 1000025890061; Agriculture River Recovery Fund/National Grain and Feed Foundation.

An advisory board comprised of leaders representing a wide spectrum of U.S. agriculture will provide guidance to an Operating Committee in implementing the Agricultural River Recovery Fund. The actual funds will be disbursed by a grants panel consisting of volunteers. Fund organizers said they hope to generate sufficient funds so that grants can be made to a “significant number of qualified and appropriate individuals who work to serve agriculture and who have suffered personal loss or injury, been displaced, and/or suffered economic loss as a result of Hurricane Katrina.” The number and amount of these individual grants will depend upon the level of contributions received, the organizers noted, and no applicant can be assured that he or she will receive grants or the dollar value of such awards.

In addition, from a legal liability standpoint, fund organizers noted that donors; the Agriculture River Recovery Fund and its administrative entities and grant panels; the National Grain and Feed Foundation; and NAEGA are not responsible or liable if funds are unable to be donated, are donated to inappropriate individuals, or are used in an inappropriate manner by grant recipients.

Export grain elevators and support services located in the Mississippi/Center Gulf region and Port of Mobile, Ala., are critically important to U.S. agriculture, which counts on exports to market approximately 50 percent of U.S. wheat, 25 percent of U.S. corn and 35 percent of U.S. soybeans. Export grain facilities in the New Orleans/Mobile region account for approximately 60 to 70 percent of vessel-borne shipments, consisting primarily of corn and soybeans – which combined typically represent about 90 percent of export shipments from the region. The region also is an important export port for U.S. hard red spring wheat.

Export elevators in the Mississippi/Center Gulf region range in storage capacity from 2 million to nearly 8 million bushels each. There are 10 commercially operated

grain elevators in the New Orleans area, with a combined storage capacity of approximately 52.6 million bushels. These facilities have a rated vessel-loading capacity generally ranging from 60,000 to 100,000 bushels per hour.

-30-

9/13/05 rcg

2005-21

For Further Information, Contact:  
Randy Gordon, Vice President, Communications and Government Relations  
National Grain and Feed Association  
Phone: 202-289-0873; E-Mail: [rgordon@ngfa.org](mailto:rgordon@ngfa.org)