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**For Immediate Release**  
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### **Peanut industry collects 3 million servings of peanut butter for Haiti**

**LUBBOCK, Texas** – The American peanut industry sounded a call to action, and the call was answered – quickly.

In just under a week's time, members of the United States peanut industry raised enough money to purchase over 192,000 pounds of peanut butter to be sent to the earthquake victims in Haiti.

"Peanut Butter for Haiti", which is made up of organizations and businesses from the U.S. peanut industry, formed Jan. 15 in hopes of supplying the desperate Haitian earthquake victims with a non-perishable, nutritious food item that is high in protein. Early County 2055, a 501c3 non-profit organization in Blakely, Ga., has spearheaded the effort by organizing the funds received from donations.

So far, many peanut businesses such as Virginia-based Birdsong Peanut Company, which has a Brownfield, Texas location, JIF and Lance have contributed to the cause. In Texas, community and business members of Lamesa have raised nearly \$9,300 from local businesses and individuals to purchase peanut butter.

"Within a week we've raised money, found the charities, procured the peanut butter, and shipped it to Haiti," said Jeff Johnson, president of Birdsong Peanut Company in Suffolk, Va. "It took a tremendous effort, some very generous donors, and a lot of luck, but we did it."

Organizers have made arrangements with the Food for the Poor, Catholic Relief Services, and Operation Blessing charities to ship the purchased peanut butter from the United States to Haiti. The peanut butter will go on a Military Sealift Command vessel, which will anchor offshore in Haiti. The vessel carries helicopters on board that will ferry the peanut butter directly to the Operation Blessing ground center in Haiti.

Shelly Nutt, Texas Peanut Producers Board executive director, says nearly 3 million servings of peanut butter are on the way to Haiti. One pound of peanut butter is equal to 14 servings.

"The peanut industry from the Southeast all the way to Texas is known for being a tight-knit group that communicates on a regular basis," Nutt said. "Once Birdsong (Peanut Company) presented all of us with the idea, we were able to circulate emails and phone calls, and before we knew it, several businesses had stepped forward to donate cash or even truckloads of peanut butter."

Nutt said \$73,000 has been raised so far in cash donations to be used to purchase peanut butter. Most of the peanut butter has been bought from companies willing to sell their products below cost to help with the effort, and some peanut butter companies have donated their products for free. Overall, \$288,000 worth of peanut butter products and cash has been donated to the effort.

“Peanut butter is the perfect food product to help these people,” Nutt said. “It’s very nutritious with essential protein and fats. It doesn’t need refrigeration, it doesn’t need water, and it lasts a year and a half.”

To make a donation for the purchasing of peanut butter, please mail a check made out to “Early County 2055” to the Texas Peanut Producers Board at 4205 N. Interstate 27, Lubbock, Texas 79403. Please not “pnb for Haiti” on the check. Early County 2055 will send receipts to all donors, and all donations are tax-deductible.

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*The Texas Peanut Producers Board is a state-wide board funded by a \$2 per ton voluntary check-off program. For more information, contact Lindsay West Kennedy, TPPB communications director, at [lindsay@texaspeanutboard.com](mailto:lindsay@texaspeanutboard.com) or call 1-800-734-0086*