

For Immediate Release

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*In Honor of National Hunger Action Month, Panera Bread® Asks Chicagoans to Donate
5,000 Boxes of Cereal to Help Area Food Banks*

CHICAGOLAND, August 19, 2009 – With local food banks seeing a 35 percent increase in pantry visits this year, Panera Bread is asking Chicagoans to stop by a local bakery-cafe and donate a box of cereal during the 2nd Annual “Cereal Drive to Help Fight Hunger” event. The cereal drive begins Friday, September 18 and runs until Sunday, September 20. Chicagoans are asked to bring in a 12 ounce box of cereal into any of the 80+ bakery-cafes anytime between 6 a.m. and 9 p.m. As a “thank you,” each customer will receive one coupon for a FREE breakfast sandwich.

“This Cereal Drive comes at a critical time for us,” said Shannon Thompson, Promotions Manager of Northern Illinois Food Bank. “We distributed 5 million more pounds of food this fiscal year than we did last. We’re very grateful for this extra help and to be partnering with Panera on this effort.” Thompson added. “We understand the increased need food banks are currently up against because of tough economic times,” said Patrick Mellor, Area Director for Panera, LLC. “Therefore, we extended the event from one day to three days this year in an effort to double our collections and donate a total of 5,000 boxes and benefit the Greater Chicago Food Depository, Northern Illinois Food Bank and Northwest Indiana Food Bank.”

Visit www.panerabread.com for specific bakery-cafe locations.

About Panera Bread

Panera Bread offers more than 80 bakery-cafes in Chicagoland and 1,230 bakery-cafes across the nation. With its identity rooted in handcrafted, fresh-baked, artisan bread, Panera Bread is committed to providing great tasting, quality food that people can trust. Highlighted by antibiotic-free chicken, whole grain bread, select organic and all-natural ingredients and a menu with zero grams added trans fat, Panera's bakery-cafe selection offers flavorful, wholesome offerings. The menu includes a wide variety of year-round favorites, complemented by new items introduced seasonally with the goal of creating new standards in everyday food choices. In neighborhoods across the country, guests are enjoying Panera's warm and welcoming environment featuring comfortable gathering areas, relaxing decor, and free internet access provided through a managed WiFi network. At the close of each day, Panera Bread bakery-cafes donate bread and baked goods to community organizations in need. Additional information is available on the Company's Web site, www.panerabread.com.

The Northern Illinois Food Bank:

Northern Illinois Food Bank (NIFB) is a non-profit organization that provides food to all those in need through its 520 partner agencies in the following 13 counties - Boone, DuPage, DeKalb, Grundy, Kane, Kankakee, Kendall, Lake, McHenry, Ogle, Stephenson, Will and Winnebago. NIFB acquires, gathers, handles, and distributes donated, government, and purchased food to more than 50,000 different people each week through local food pantries, soup kitchens, shelters, youth activity centers and other food assistance sites. In Fiscal Year 2009 NIFB distributed over 27 million pounds of food. The Food Bank has recently launched a Capital Campaign to build a new Food Distribution and Community Nutrition Center to enable them to handle more food more efficiently to meet the increasing demand.