

Written Testimony
of
Jeff Peanick
Chief Executive Officer
Breedlove Foods, Inc.

on

“U.S. International Food Aid Programs: Stakeholder Perspectives”

before

The Committee on Agriculture, House of Representatives
September 30, 2015

Good morning, Chairman Conaway, Ranking Member Peterson and Members of the House Agriculture Committee. I would also like to recognize the Vice Chairman, Congressman Neugebauer who also happens to be my Congressman. We we're all sad to hear of your intent to retire, and I want to thank you for your service to our 19th district in Texas and to our country.

Thank you all for inviting me here today to testify about the role that Breedlove Foods plays in providing global humanitarian aid. Founded in 1994, Breedlove is a non-profit humanitarian food aid processor dedicated to hunger relief throughout the world.

My name is Jeff Peanick and since this past April, I have been entrusted to carry on the good work as the CEO of Breedlove Foods. Although I am new to Breedlove, since 1978 I have been engaged in international trade with Asia, Europe and Latin America, and have served as a senior executive in North America and overseas in Europe and in the Middle East. As a young man, I was privileged to grow up on a farm in the Missouri Ozarks and was an active 4-H member. Although my career in international business took me far from those Ozark hills, my agricultural roots remain with me.

Breedlove Foods Background

Breedlove Foods, Inc. is a 501(c)3 non-profit humanitarian food aid organization located in Lubbock, Texas. Since it's beginning in 1994, Breedlove has focused it's efforts as a non-profit organization on providing

nutritious food aid items to planned feeding programs, improved nutrition programs, emergency preparedness, and emergency relief operations. This is accomplished by working with various Private Volunteer Organizations (PVO's) throughout the world to determine specific program needs and distribute humanitarian food aid. Breedlove works with both private and government funding sources in order to develop food aid items that deliver sound nutrition, to the most people, at the lowest cost to our partners.

Since Breedlove began operations in 1994, approximately 1.5 Billion servings of shelf-stable, prepackaged food aid has been shipped to approximately 80 partnering PVO's, in more than 65 countries. It is safe to say this would not have happened without the vision of the House Agriculture Committee in promoting the International Food Relief Partnership Act, nor without the good work of USAID.

Employing more than 50 people, we operate 5-7 days per week with up to 3 shifts each day. Production capacity includes a drying line (110,000 pounds of raw product per day), four dry blending and packaging lines (192,000 pounds of finished product per day), a paste-pouch packaging line (20,000 pounds of finished product per day), over 30,000 square feet of warehouse space, and 4 shipping bays to accommodate multiple types of transportation.

Breedlove combines expertise in food technology, manufacturing, logistics, and program implementation to provide the most appropriate food aid to partner organizations. Since it's beginning, Breedlove has focused on research and development of nutritious food aid products specifically for use in various types of humanitarian programs. Simple packaging helps to keep costs low for our partners; however, labeling can be customized to best suit the needs of the partner and the end user. Preparation requirements vary from ready-to-eat convenience pouches to minimal boil and serve soup blends; and Breedlove food aid items are packaged in such a way that makes shipping and handling very convenient for both the distribution personnel and the end recipient.

Breedlove food aid items have a long shelf-life, a highly dense number of servings requiring minimal storage space, and require only routine non-perishable food storage management. Products include various types of Vegetable Blends, Lentil Vegetable Blends, Rice Blends, other legume and pulse blends, nutritionally fortified Dry Drink Blends, and nutritionally fortified Ready-to-Eat pastes in convenience pouches. Breedlove looks to both

staple commodities (soybeans/soybean products, rice, lentils, beans, peas, peanuts, dried vegetables – potatoes, carrots, onion, etc.) and innovatively processed and fortified products to develop nutritionally impactful food aid products.

Throughout the years, Breedlove has developed a variety of products, taking into consideration cultural preferences, program needs, nutritional needs, as well as other factors affecting logistics and costs, all to provide the right food aid to those in need of assistance.

Breedlove Foods' Partnership with Food For Peace

In 2001, Breedlove Foods began its partnership with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to provide hunger relief through the Office of Food For Peace programs. Breedlove implemented a unique approach by offering nutritious blended foods. The strategy was to provide staple commodities, like rice, lentils, potatoes along with soy-based fortified textured vegetable protein and other nutritious vegetables like carrots and onions. These blends were formulated to provide nutrition first, but also to be adaptable to cultural preferences. Breedlove's food has been called "nutrition with dignity."

Under our USAID/Food For Peace programs alone, Breedlove has partnered with 49 other US Non-profit organizations - many of them community and faith based - in 48 countries, providing 22,500 MTs, over 1.1 billion servings of Breedlove food aid to those in need. This has leveraged another 10,060,000 servings of nutritionally fortified peanut paste delivered through other non-federal forms of assistance.

Our partnership with Food For Peace enables Breedlove and PVOs to collaborate in a wide range of program activities, including small scale emergency and relief activities, institutional and hospital feeding, feeding children in schools, food for orphans, safety net assistance for needy communities, the elderly, supplemental food in for those dealing with severe illnesses, and many others.

Our innovative and expeditious programs with Food For Peace have increased our ability to serve the needy and destitute. The objectives of these programs have grown – adding new types of fortified products, engaging the private sector, rapid response to natural disasters and civil strife, and increasing outreach to small organizations typically new to collaborating with USAID.

Our programs have served as a catalyst for introducing new products, and a model for conceptualizing prepositioning of aid commodities for emergencies. Both processors and distribution partners bring additional resources in the form of other matching funding or in-kind asset use, personnel, administration, services, and development activities to projects. Distribution partners educate, shelter, tend to the sick, give technical/vocational training, teach life skills, and perform many more program activities that contribute beyond simply feeding, thus reducing the factors that lead to poverty and food insecurity.

U.S. international food aid programs facilitate partnerships: between Food For Peace and non-profit processors like Breedlove, between our nation's great agricultural producers and the world's most vulnerable and food insecure. U.S. international food aid programs have allowed Breedlove Foods and The Office of Food For Peace to engage more small organizations in nimble program partnerships, increasing outreach to those in need – children, mothers, families, the elderly, and the ill.

The Importance of U.S. International Food Aid

Breedlove Foods is a small food processor with just 54 employees. When confronted with the enormity of the world hunger problem, we realize the importance of our partnerships through U.S. international food aid.

According to statistics on World Hunger from the World Food Program:

- *Some 795 million people in the world do not have enough food to lead healthy, active lives.*
- *Poor nutrition causes nearly half (45%) of deaths in children under five, 3.1 million children each year.*
- *One out of six children – roughly 100 million – in developing countries is underweight.*
- *One in four of the world's children are stunted. In developing countries the proportion can rise to one in three.*

Solving the world hunger problem requires a first step. In August, Breedlove was privileged to host 4-H students from Nicaragua following their tour of Washington DC. Some of these 40 students were beneficiaries of Breedlove's feeding programs from 2002 to 2010 with Fabretto Children's Foundation, a

partner with Breedlove through food aid programs with Food For Peace (photos attached). The ramifications of food insecurity in Nicaragua are serious, with 23% of children unable to reach their expected height due to stunting. In response to high rates of undernourishment in Nicaragua, Fabretto Children's Foundations implements a school lunch program that provides students with a nourishing meal every weekday. Fabretto also prepares future community leaders by teaching primary and secondary students about sustainable agriculture through hands-on models such as 4-H clubs.

As we all visited that afternoon at Breedlove in Lubbock, Texas, the signs of hunger without intervention could be seen clearly. Two boys approached us to express their gratitude for hosting them that day, but also for much more. One boy stood as tall as a normal growing teenage boy— the other, a small-framed boy that appeared to be 8 or 9 years old. Both boys had been recipients of the food aid programs. The smaller boy did not receive nutritional intervention soon enough to avoid stunting— he actually is a teenager, close to the same age as the other boy. The Fabretto feeding program certainly made a difference to those 40 children!

Closing

What difference does U.S. international food aid make? Does a soybean farmer in Illinois or a rice grower in Arkansas or a lentil farmer in Minnesota touch the lives of at risk children in Nicaragua or wasting mothers in Africa?

Yes. U.S. international food aid through Food For Peace can and does make a difference.

There may be those that seek to marginalize the good that America does. But among the children we feed today lies the future of all developing nations, and the future friends of America and our children.

In closing, I wish to thank our leaders for allowing Breedlove to continue our mission. For we see the faces of children we have saved and can proudly proclaim that we made a difference.

Breedlove looks forward to continuing its partnership with Food For Peace in international food aid programs.

Chairman Conaway, Committee Members, we appreciate the opportunity to share Breedlove's story and to express our support of international food aid.
Thank you

See Attached.

(Photo credit to Breedlove Foods, Inc., August 2015. Fabretto Children's Foundation and 4-H kids from Nicaragua visit Breedlove Foods in Lubbock, Texas. Pictured, left to right top row, Kevin Marinacci, 4-H student, Hope Floeck; left to right bottom row, 4-H girl student, a stunted teenage 4-H student, Elbia Galo.)

(Photo credit to Breedlove Foods, Inc., August 2015. Fabretto Children's Foundation and 4-H kids from Nicaragua visit Breedlove Foods in Lubbock, Texas.)

Breedlove Partners in Food For Peace Programs (49)

A Call to Serve	International Crisis Aid
Amigos International	International Medical Corps
Batey Relief Alliance	International Partnerships for Human Development
Bless the Children	International Relief Teams
Catholic Relief Services	Joint Aid Management
Center for International Health	Legacy World Missions
ChildLife International	Medical Missionaries
Children's Hunger Fund	Nascent Solutions
Church of Bible Understanding	NOAH
CitiHope International	OICI
Convoy of Hope	Outreach Aid to the Americas
Copro Deli	Planet Aid
Counterpart International	Project Concern International
Cross International	Project Hope
Evangelistic International Ministries	Resource & Policy Exchange
Fabretto's Children Foundation	Salesian Missions International
Family Outreach	Salvation Army WSO
Feed the Children	Samaritan's Purse International
Food for the Hungry	SERV Ministries International
Food for the Poor	Share Circle
Global Hope Network	United Methodist Committee on Relief
Global Transitions	Uplift International
Haiti Vision	World Help
Healing Hands International	
Hope Education Foundation	

Breedlove Food Aid by Country thru Food For Peace Programs (48)

Angola	Philippines
Armenia	Romania
Belize	Senegal
Bolivia	Serbia
Burundi	South Africa
Cambodia	Swaziland
Central African Republic	Tajikistan
Central Asia (Region)	Tanzania
Congo	Uganda
Dominican Republic	Uzbekistan
Ecuador	Zambia
El Salvador	Zimbabwe
Ethiopia	
Georgia	
Ghana	
Guatemala	
Guinea	
Haiti	
Honduras	
India	
Indonesia	
Kazakhstan	
Kenya	
Kosovo	
Kyrgyzstan	
Laos	
Lesotho	
Liberia	
Malawi	
Mexico	
Moldova	
Namibia	
Nicaragua	
Niger	
Peru	

