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MEDIA RELEASE

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Over 3,500 meals donated to local food banks

Approximately 1,500kg of food, which equates to 3,571 meals, has been donated to local food banks, giving them a welcome boost as the school summer holidays get underway.

Lincolnshire Co-op store colleagues teamed up with local Community Co-ordinators and food bank volunteers to host in-store donation events at nine different locations.

Food bank drives took place in Haxey, Sleaford, Keelby, Scartho, Holbeach, Barrowby, Alford, Branston, and Sutton on Trent.

Food Bank Leader at Alford Storehouse, Sarah Lithgow, said: *"Lots of families really struggle with the finances during school holidays, yet we tend to receive fewer donations at this time of year."*

“Unfortunately, lots of people feel embarrassed to ask for help, and often parents will skip meals so that they can feed their children. It’s not until they are absolutely desperate that they will reach out to us.

“To continue helping struggling families and individuals, we need support from our community. Thank you so much to everyone who’s contributed, and to Lincolnshire Co-op for helping to raise awareness and encourage donations.”

Lincolnshire Co-op worked with local food banks to compile priority shopping lists of the most-needed items, aiming to maximise impact.

Shoppers are also able to support their local food banks throughout the year by dropping items in donation bins located in every Lincolnshire Co-op food store.

Rachel Fox, Community Co-ordinator for North and South Kesteven, led food bank drives in Branston, Barrowby, and Sleaford and collected 1,120 items, weighing 388.2kg, and equating to 924 meals.

She said: *“A huge thank you to our wonderful members, customers and colleagues for your generosity and support, it’s humbling to see firsthand how many people are willing to help others in need.*

“Foodbanks provide a lifeline to some of the most vulnerable people in our communities, and it’s fantastic to be able to provide them with the supplies they need to continue this great work.”

Ends

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CONTACT DETAILS NOT FOR PUBLICATION

Notes to editors:

1. **Lincolnshire Co-op** is an independent co-operative society. Its purpose is to bring together ideas, energy and resources to make life better in communities. It has around 300,000 members and 2,900 local colleagues in Lincolnshire and the surrounding counties and an elected board of directors who oversee the business.
The society provides **valued services** and supports the **local economy** from outlets across its trading area including food stores, filling stations, post offices, travel branches, funeral homes, a florist, a crematorium and community libraries. It also cares for people's **health and wellbeing** through its pharmacies and support for a network of wellbeing walks. Local good causes benefit through its Community Champions scheme and together, colleagues and members also look after the **local environment** through volunteering.
As well as its trading outlets, Lincolnshire Co-op owns properties, from flats and houses to commercial premises. The society brings land and buildings back into use to create attractive environments. With Lincolnshire Co-op as landlord, rents stay local and are invested in schemes that benefit the community.