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news release

For further information:
Julie Paradis (202) 225-0317
FAX (202) 225-8510

DE LA GARZA URGES USDA TO HELP FEED THE NEEDY WITH SURPLUS SALMON

For immediate release, Tuesday, November 19, 1996

WASHINGTON -- Rep. Kika de la Garza, D-Texas, announced that he has contacted Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman, urging that the Department provide assistance to food banks in the distribution of surplus salmon to the needy.

"There are so many salmon in Alaskan waters that hundreds of thousands of them are actually being thrown away by fishermen and hatcheries," said Rep. de la Garza. "Unmarketable salmon, rich in protein, should never be simply disposed of as garbage. Rather than waste such nutritious food, we should use these fish to feed the nation's hungry families."

The State of Alaska and the salmon industry are working with food banks to distribute some of the excess Alaska salmon to the needy as far away as Texas. However, the food bank network could distribute 12 times what it has been given if government assistance could be obtained to meet processing costs.

In his letter, Rep. de la Garza urged Secretary Glickman to do everything in his power to support the efforts of the food banks with financial assistance. He further stated, "As the welfare reform legislation enacted several months ago is implemented, many hungry families will be seeking help from food banks, and it is incumbent upon us to do all we can to support these critical sources of emergency food aid."

Rep. de la Garza has long been a supporter of both traditional and innovative ways to address the availability of nutritious food in low-income communities. "At a time when resources are being stretched to the breaking point, creative solutions to hunger concerns must be encouraged," said Rep. de la Garza.