

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – December 2010

BC Turkey and Egg farmers donate \$50,000 of products to help the health of those in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside.

Abbotsford and Vancouver, December 15 - From his farm in corner of rural Abbotsford, James Krahn is making a big difference for the most poverty-stricken neighbourhood in Canada. As the Director of the BC Turkey Association and a third-generation Abbotsford turkey farmer himself, Krahn has been part of an effort that raised over \$50,000 for Union Gospel Mission's food program. The donation comes from the BC Turkey Producers and BC Egg Producers Associations, via money raised at their annual Golf Tournament.

"It's quite a rewarding feeling as a farmer," says Krahn. "You're already offering a good product to someone in your local community, but to know that what you're producing is going to help those in desperate need is a good feeling."

At Union Gospel Mission's Downtown Eastside facility, the turkey and egg donations have been very well received. "It is a real challenge to get good nutrition to people who are homeless and living with mental health or addiction issues," says UGM Senior Chaplain Bruce Curtiss. "Good quality protein is like gold here on the Downtown Eastside. Service providers do their best, but there is often a lack of protein in the meals served. What people really need is good protein, and that's exactly what they're getting with these donations." Curtiss says that the lineups at the Mission's morning drop-in program have doubled since they added hard-boiled eggs to the breakfast. "Besides the homeless, we're seeing people come in with hardhats and work boots who are eating a couple eggs before heading to temp work agencies. We also see quite a few seniors from the neighbourhood coming through looking for eggs and good-quality meat products like turkey, especially near the end of the month when they're trying to make it the last few days before their assistance cheque comes through. They can tell the difference in their energy levels and health when they eat right."

Beyond serving mouth-watering turkey dinners for the holiday season, Union Gospel Mission has also worked in other turkey products to the regular rotation of meals, including delicious turkey sausage, ground turkey and BBQ turkey thighs. Union Gospel Mission serves over 250,000 meals every year throughout its facilities in Metro Vancouver, including the Mission, BC, Drop-in Centre.