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GCCA President and CEO Addresses United Nations Forum on the Global Food Crisis

Bill Hudson Addresses Elite Audience of Global Decision-Makers

WASHINGTON, DC, September 24, 2008 – Bill Hudson, President and CEO of the Global Cold Chain Alliance (GCCA), addressed a special United Nations Forum on the Global Food Crisis on September 23, 2008 at UN headquarters in New York City.

His speech was part of a panel on “Partnerships along the Value Chain” at the Public-Private Partnership Forum, “Investing in Agriculture Partnerships to Combat Hunger.” The event was organized by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID).

President George W. Bush, accompanied by U.S. Secretary of State Condoleeza Rice and First Lady Laura Bush, also spoke to the high-level audience of 140 global policymakers and top corporate executives. The CEOs of Monsanto and Land O’ Lakes, a director of Cargill, and the President of Texas A&M University were among those appearing on the panel with Hudson.

Hudson highlighted the importance of cold chain development in the quest to alleviate the current global food crisis.

“As we gather to discuss global food hunger,” he said, “we could argue that the solution is not only to increase production, but to reduce the losses through proper postharvest technologies.”

Hudson explained that these losses are not insignificant. Countries lacking proper cold chain infrastructure typically lose approximately 30-60 percent of all perishable products in any given year.

“The cold chain is a solution to improving the livelihoods of people around the world by extending product shelf life as well as creating access to markets for higher value commodities,” he explained.

He described the extensive international cold chain development work done by GCCA and its Core Partner the World Food Logistics Organization through the USAID Partnership for Food Industry Development program and other agencies such as the

U.S. Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Trade and Development Administration, illustrating how public-private programs can build and improve the cold chain in developing nations.

Private corporations, such as those represented by GCCA, are eager to support and provide expertise for international projects to expand their international presence and make a positive impact on the worldwide community.

Hudson's presence and comments at the event fostered awareness of global cold chain development on a broad international scale.

Mike Hennigsen, Jr., Chairman of the International Association of Refrigerated Warehouses said, "If you've ever wondered if what we do matters, I think Bill's speech answers the question well. I'm very proud to be associated with our industry."

The forum audience included top U.S. CEOs, representatives of U.S. non-governmental organizations, development ministers from several nations, members of the press, and leaders from global institutions such as the United Nations, the World Bank Group, and the UN Food and Agriculture Organization.

Hudson has been President and CEO of the Global Cold Chain Alliance for more than 25 years. He holds BA and Law degrees from Louisiana State University and is a member of the Louisiana Bar Association, American Bar Association, and Washington, DC Bar Association. Among numerous organization affiliations, Hudson has served as a member of the board of the American Society of Association Executives and was the founding chairman of the Foundation for International Meetings. Hudson was named as one of the "top 50 trade association leaders" by Washingtonian magazine.

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Attached: Transcript of speech delivered by Bill Hudson

Comprised of its Core Partners, including the International Association of Refrigerated Warehouses, the World Food Logistics Organization, the International Refrigerated Transportation Association, and the International Association for Cold Storage Construction, the Global Cold Chain Alliance (GCCA) represents all major industries engaged in temperature-controlled logistics. GCCA unites partners to facilitate communication, networking, and education for the perishable food industry. For more information about GCCA, visit www.gcca.org.

Investing in Agriculture Partnerships to Combat Hunger
September 23, 2008
United Nations
The Millennium Plaza Hotel, Diplomat Ballroom
New York City, New York

J. William Hudson, President and CEO, Global Cold Chain Alliance

My name is Bill Hudson and I am President and CEO of the Global Cold Chain Alliance. I want to take this opportunity to discuss a critical element of the value chain; and that is the cold chain for perishable foods.

While it is extremely important to improve crop genetics, expand the use of proper farming equipment, and increase processing and worker productivity, these improvements will be wasted if we lose 30–60% of the products due to spoilage and damage before they get to the consumer. These postharvest losses are even more significant when you consider the lost labor, water, seeds and fertilizer invested in the growing process. As we gather to discuss global food hunger, we would argue that the solution is not only to increase production, but to reduce the losses through proper postharvest technologies. The cold chain is a solution to improving the livelihoods of people around the world by extending product shelf life as well as creating access to markets for higher value commodities.

Building on our 118-year history, the Global Cold Chain Alliance uses this historical knowledge, its many resources, a bank of distinguished scientists, as well as the interest and expertise of our corporate members to partner with organizations such as USAID. The purpose is to understand food distribution challenges in a country, educate and train local workers, build infrastructure, and maximize product delivery to market. In other words, improve productivity, reduce spoilage and waste, and ultimately feed more people.

We are proud to have conducted cold chain development work with our partners in countries around the world, with our postharvest training programs serving as a model for emerging markets. Our goal is to create a sustainable integrated cold chain in our target markets, and in doing so we invest energy and expertise into training, technology transfer, resource development, association building, stakeholder partnering, and program evaluation. It is important to note that we represent more than 1000 cold chain companies in 65 countries that are interested in building the global food infrastructure, and that our public-private partnership efforts facilitate the growth and success in developing countries. Our project work is a long-term investment in people and infrastructure, with public initiative and funding followed by private investment and development. A USTDA-funded cold chain training program in India is followed with a \$240 million corporate investment in the cold chain; while a USAID food safety project in the Ukraine is followed by a major infrastructure investment into a cold store in Kiev. A

feasibility study in Moldova conducted by our industry experts resulted in a fully operational vegetable packhouse, and a USDA program allowed our industry to create the Philippines Cold Chain Association which is still going strong today, providing a voice for the industry in the island nation. By using a wide array of industry technical experts on our projects, we are able to better understand the unique needs and challenges of each marketplace, such that the investments that follow a project are well focused and practical.

However, we never lose sight of the value of simple solutions, including low cost and no cost alternatives to reduce spoilage, such as understanding the value of shade from a tree or an umbrella to lower temperatures, or the use of local water to remove field heat, and other low-cost solutions to improve quality while extending usable shelf life and reducing losses.

Whatever the solution, our mission is long-term sustainability. It is this public-private approach that empowered our partnership with USAID in their Partnership for Food Industry Development program leading to measurable impact and success in Southern Africa, Latin America and Eastern Europe. Through this program, more than 30 companies in the recipient countries received technical assistance and training from one of our member companies that volunteer their time and expertise. This has also led to sustainable business relationships with those countries and our members in the US that participated in the program.

With this structure, concept and vision, our mission is to remain an important and valued partner in combating global hunger.