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Press Release

Mars Food, The MolinaCares Accord, and Kroger Delta Division Partner to Improve Access to Healthy Foods in Mississippi Delta

Greenville, MS (July 15, 2021) – Today, [Mars Food](#), [The MolinaCares Accord \(“MolinaCares”\)](#), in collaboration with [Molina Healthcare of Mississippi \(“Molina”\)](#), and [Kroger Delta Division](#) announced a new partnership to expand the Delta Region’s supply and accessibility of healthy foods and to educate residents on forming healthy eating habits. Collectively, the coalition will donate approximately 70,000 healthy meals* (including produce and protein) per year. The companies seek to create a larger coalition by inviting more like-minded area-businesses to join them in their ambition.

Over the next five years, Mars Food will invest \$2.5 million to improve access to healthy foods and education for the region’s underserved. MolinaCares will add another \$1.25 million to further bolster food access efforts. Kroger Delta Division will support with additional sponsorships and investments of local and state food pantry programs. Specifically, over the next two years, the cumulative effort will focus on several core areas to:

- Help the City of Greenville to establish a local FoodCorps Service Member program supporting the Greenville Public School District and the Western Line School District. FoodCorps connects kids to healthy foods in school by leading hands-on lessons in growing, cooking, and making healthy food options;
- Purchase a refrigerated truck for Hearty Helpings Food Pantry to improve the collection and distribution of fresh produce and proteins to meet the needs of the Greenville community;
- Fund a community garden at The Boys and Girls Club of Washington County and educate at-risk youth to grow and harvest vegetables and prepare meals; and
- Fund The Mississippi Food Network Mobile Food Pantry to distribute fresh and frozen produce and proteins to Greenville and surrounding-area residents six times over a 12-month period.

Mars and MolinaCares are also evaluating additional area partnerships and projects to further improve access to healthy foods for residents.

“I am thrilled to see Molina and Kroger team up with Mars to make an even greater impact in Greenville,” said City of Greenville Mayor, Errick D. Simmons. “Molina, Kroger and Mars’ investment choices will definitely help our community to have better access to healthy food and begin to improve food education for our children—and their parents. I look forward to a long-term partnership with both companies and encourage other Greenville companies to join them in this great coalition.”

“For more than 40 years, we’ve been producing Ben’s Original™ rice in Greenville, Mississippi. During that time, Greenville has become our home. So, Mars Food and Ben’s Original™ are going to do all we can to make sure everyone has a chance to sit at a healthier table, especially in Greenville,” said Denis

Yarotskiy, regional president at Mars Food North America. “I’m incredibly proud to team up with MolinaCares and Kroeger to make an even deeper impact by helping community not-for-profits solve these issues which have been problematic in the Mississippi Delta region for generations.”

“Residents of the Mississippi Delta, including many Molina members, statistically experience poorer health outcomes than other Mississippians,” said Carolyn Ingram, executive director of The Molina Healthcare Charitable Foundation. “MolinaCares is proud to invest in programs and services addressing critical social determinants of health, including food security, transportation, and health-related education critically needed in this region.”

“Kroger Delta Division and The Kroger Company’s Zero Hunger Zero Waste Foundation is committed to ending hunger in the communities we serve and waste in our stores by 2025,” said Victor Smith, president, Kroger Delta Division. “I am so proud of this partnership because it is a great example of our community leaders working together to provide food for families in need.”

About Mars Food

Mars Food is a fast-growing dinnertime food business, making tastier, healthier, easier meals that bring the world to the dinner table. With North American headquarters in Chicago, Ill. and global headquarters in London, Mars Food US’s portfolio of leading brands includes: Ben’s Original™, Seeds of Change™, and Tasty Bite®. Our purpose –Better Food Today. A Better World Tomorrow. –drives our business to be a leader in health & wellbeing and sustainability. Mars Food is a segment of Mars, Incorporated. For more information about the Ben’s Original™ Brand and its purpose initiatives, visit <https://www.bensoriginal.com/> or <https://www.mars.com/>.

About The MolinaCares Accord

Established by Molina Healthcare, Inc., [The MolinaCares Accord](#) oversees a community investment platform created to improve the health and well-being of disadvantaged populations by funding meaningful, measurable, and innovative programs and solutions that improve health, life, and living in local communities. The MolinaCares Accord funds such measures through The Molina Healthcare Charitable Foundation Inc., a 501(c)(3) established in 2020 by Molina Healthcare, Inc.

About Molina Healthcare of Mississippi

Molina Healthcare of Mississippi has been providing government-funded, quality health care since 2018. The Company serves members through Medicaid (Mississippi Coordinated Access Network/MississippiCAN and Children’s Health Insurance Plan/CHIP) and Marketplace. Through its locally operated health plans, Molina Healthcare, Inc., a FORTUNE 500 company, served approximately 4.6 million members as of March 31, 2021. For more information about Molina Healthcare of Mississippi, visit MolinaHealthcare.com.

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**According to the USDA, 1.2 pounds is equivalent to one meal.*