

A Message From Ambassador Kenneth M. Quinn
President of the World Food Prize Foundation

October 16 is a day for all Iowans to focus on hunger.

October 16 is United Nations World Food Day, a time to recall that over 800 million human beings around the world still suffer hunger and food insecurity.

October 16 is Dr. Norman Borlaug Day in Iowa, when we should celebrate this Iowan's achievements, which includes saving hundreds of millions in the Hindu and Muslim world from famine and starvation, and which earned him the Nobel Peace Prize.

October 16 is the day the \$250,000 World Food Prize will be presented to Catherine Bertini in a Ceremony at the Iowa State Capitol, in recognition of her leadership of the United Nations World Food Programme which, over a decade, saved 50 million people from death and famine around the world.

October 16 is a day on which World Food Prize Laureates, experts, governmental officials, researchers and leaders of civil society from around the USA and around the world will come together for a dialogue in "Building Alliances to Defeat Hunger and Famine" at the World Food Prize International Symposium.

October 16 is the day that three of America's hunger fighting organizations – America's Second Harvest, Bread for the World, and MAZON – the Jewish Response to Hunger – will participate in the World Food Prize International Symposium in Des Moines to bring attention to the more than _____ million Americans who are food insecure.

And, October 16 is a day to recall how Iowans came together in 1979 to send lifesaving food and medicine half way around the world to rescue tens of thousands of starving Cambodian Buddhists who had suffered mercilessly under the genocidal Khmer Rouge. Then Governor Robert Ray, in conjunction with the leaders of the Protestant, Jewish and Catholic communities, created a unique mechanism to respond to this humanitarian crisis. Known as Iowa SHARES, this campaign was inspired by the homily of Pope John II, who at Living History Farms, on October 4 told Iowans that "... you are the stewards of the earth, with the obligation to feed all mankind."

Iowa's historic humanitarian legacy is that our people rise above any ethnic, racial, religious or political differences to come together to alleviate human suffering. As we prepare for another bountiful harvest in October 2003, it is hoped that Iowans will reflect on whether there could be another Iowa SHARES effort, as Iowans unite in spirit to build an alliance to Stop Hunger, Aid Refugees and End Suffering