



Fremont Area United Way

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The purpose of this letter is to share the experience in Fremont Nebraska during the last several years as Wholestone Farms has joined our community.

In my role as Executive Director for Fremont Area United Way, I have the privilege to participate in the United Way campaign held at Wholestone Farms every year. This time spent meeting with so many individuals in the organization gives me an inside perspective on the varied Wholestone employee experiences. I hear and see so much pride in the work accomplished, friendship amongst the employees and respect for everyone's part in the greater goal of food production.

As someone who is allowed into various businesses and industries in order to campaign and fundraise, I have found that when employees feel unsure about their employment or underappreciated in their role, they are less likely to choose to donate through payroll deduction. However, when employees feel appreciated and valued they are able to contemplate the reason to contribute to the community. Wholestone has the highest number of individual donors in this community and statistically they are unmatched for an organization their size. Almost half of all Wholestone employees choose to donate to United Way. 50% participation is a rare and remarkable accomplishment. Proving that their employees feel valued and respected. In addition, Wholestone Farms matches that donation at 100%. This is a massive and on-going employee and company contribution to the community.

This investment creates an impact in the community that can be seen and felt throughout all economic levels. The local safety net is stronger in Fremont because Wholestone is located in this town. The resources for help are available for everyone when organizations operate with the values that Wholestone demonstrates. Wholestone is a leader for other industries to follow, in how to support their community.

When a young person can get the help they need they are less likely to follow a path of frustration and crime. A food box, a rent payment or an available counselor for example, helps individuals in a time of need and despair. This reliable safety net serves not just an individual but the whole community to lower crime and provide options for the most vulnerable among us. Wholestone understands this concept and takes action from this perspective.

I can relate to the concern that some in Sioux Falls may feel regarding further production development in their community. I was nervous when Hormel Foods left the community and Wholestone Farms purchased the local facility. Now through my years of experience I know I should have been celebrating and welcoming the transition. I could not have imagined the number of community boards that would gain valuable members. I have been impressed with the amount of volunteer involvement from employees, and the overall commitment Wholestone Farms provides to our community.

I feel certain that the Sioux Falls community will benefit greatly from the Wholestone Farms decision to develop a location in their area. The Wholestone Farms commitment to care for the community where their employees live, make them a unique and valuable community partner.

Thank you,

Christy Fiala
Executive Director Fremont Area United Way