

PRESS RELEASE**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

September 16, 2015

Laura Kunkle

Communications & Media Relations Specialist

LauraK@AmericanHort.org

614-884-1137 Direct

**AmericanHort Selected to Represent U.S. Garden Retailers
in the International Garden Centre Association**

Columbus, OH/Washington, DC (September 15, 2015)—The Board of Directors of the International Garden Centre Association (IGCA) recently selected AmericanHort to be the U.S. representative to the association. The IGCA is an independent nonprofit organization that supports national garden center associations and their members by providing forums to promote business and networking opportunities, including an annual Congress and study tour.

“As the largest trade association for garden retailers, we are passionate about promoting and supporting our members, and participating in IGCA provides another substantial benefit to our members,” said Michael V. Geary, CAE, the AmericanHort president and CEO. “Our members will have opportunities to share ideas, successes, experiences, and for networking through the international network of retailers and their associations.”

The IGCA was organized in 1968 at a joint Conference in Oxford, England of the Horticultural Trade Association and the British Group of Garden Centres. The annual congress often sees over 200 delegates, from up to 20 different countries, and includes a study tour with a strong learning focus for emerging professionals, according to IGCA. “We enthusiastically welcome AmericanHort, and we’re confident they will significantly contribute to the IGCA community, ensuring continued success of the independent garden center industry worldwide,” said Victor Santacruz, the IGCA secretary general.

“We participated in the Congress and study tour in the past, and it’s a fantastic experience for experienced owners and managers, and younger staff as well,” said Sherry Johnson, the AmericanHort vice president for knowledge and business advancement. Johnson will serve as the AmericanHort liaison to the international group. “We hope to bring the tour to the U.S. in the future so we can share and learn with our colleagues from around the world in order to be more competitive in a changing retail environment.” Participation in the Congress and tour is limited to members of the associations that belong to IGCA.

“Along with our SHIFT initiative and the upcoming NextLevel conference, AmericanHort is making a concerted effort to bolster the retail sector of our industry,” said Geary. “Horticulture is a global industry, and combined with our membership in the International Association of Horticultural Producers, our involvement with IGCA offers a collaborative context to further support our members.”

#

AmericanHort was formed in 2014 by the consolidation of the American Nursery & Landscape Association and OFA – The Association of Horticulture Professionals. With a combined history of 220+ years, AmericanHort supports nearly 16,000 member and affiliated businesses that include breeders, greenhouse and nursery growers, garden retailers, distributors, interior and exterior landscape professionals, florists, students, educators, researchers, manufacturers, and all of those who are part of the industry market chain. The horticulture industry's production, wholesale, retail, and landscape service components have annual sales of \$163 billion, and sustain over 1.15 million full- and part-time jobs. Our mission is to unite, promote, and advance the horticulture industry through advocacy, collaboration, connectivity, education, market development, and research. The association has offices in Columbus,

Ohio for administration and member services, and in Washington, DC to facilitate government relations and research activities.