

PRESS RELEASE**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

June 3, 2015

Laura Kunkle

Communications & Media Relations Specialist

LauraK@AmericanHort.org

614-884-1137 Direct

**AmericanHort and Other Founding Partners Launch the
Million Pollinator Garden Challenge**

Columbus, Ohio – On June 3, 2015, the National Pollinator Garden Network (NPGN), an unprecedented collaboration of national, regional, conservation, and gardening groups, launched the Million Pollinator Garden Challenge. This is a strategic effort to promote and protect the needs of pollinators in North America.

In the fall of 2014, AmericanHort and seven other organizations were convened to propose public/private sector efforts to help restore critical pollinator populations in support of the U.S. Federal Government's strategy to "Promote the Health of Honey Bees and Other Pollinators." AmericanHort and the other organizations are the [founding partner members](#) of the NPGN.

The [Million Pollinator Garden Challenge](#) (MPGC), is the Network's new campaign to register a million public and private gardens and landscapes to support pollinators. The diverse groups behind the campaign understand and agree that pollinators including honey bees, bumblebees, other native bees, butterflies, and others face complex threats. Some pollinators, including the iconic migrant Monarch butterfly, have steeply declined. More nectar and pollen sources provided by flowering plants and trees will help to improve their health and numbers. Increasing the number of pollinator-friendly gardens and landscapes will support the health of bees, butterflies, birds, bats, and other pollinators across the country.

The Million Pollinator Garden Challenge mobilizes America's extensive gardening community, including commercial growers, retailers, and landscapers, and supports them in making more native and non-invasive pollen and nectar producing plants available in gardens of any size, from a window garden or patio box to a large-scale landscape. When a new garden has been established, or pollinator-supporting plants are added to an existing garden or landscape, the MPGC urges that the garden be registered on the [SHARE Map](#) site, hosted by the Pollinator Partnership.

"AmericanHort is thrilled to help launch the Network and the Million Pollinator Garden Challenge," said Mark Foertmeyer, Foertmeyer & Sons Greenhouse, Delaware, OH, and chairman of the board of AmericanHort. "As both seasoned and new gardeners step up to do their part, they are going to need plants, seeds, and expertise. Our member garden retail, landscape, and grower professionals are here to help."

"Here at home, AmericanHort is fully committed to this cause and we accept the challenge. We have already installed several bee hives to the landscaping at our office, and will be including pollinator-friendly plants this season," said Michael Geary, AmericanHort President & CEO.

AmericanHort's involvement in the National Pollinator Garden Network and Million Pollinator Garden Challenge is part of the organization's bee and pollinator stewardship initiative. To learn more visit www.AmericanHort.org/bees.

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 1,150,000 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.