

**PRESS RELEASE****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**AmericanHort Cultivate'16 Results. Excitement Building for Cultivate'17**

Columbus, Ohio – AmericanHort's signature event Cultivate, has been leading the industry for more than 85 years. The exceptionalism of this event rests in one thing: the entire industry gathers here. Cultivate'16 was no different with representation from a breadth of industry segments, including garden retailers, nursery growers, landscapers, greenhouse growers, interior plantscapers, florists, and industry suppliers.

Attendees came from 34 countries and represented all 50 U.S. states, culminating in nearly 10,000 attendees. A record number of emerging professionals - over 1,000 - were in attendance. Additionally, numerous industry groups such as Garden Writers Association, ECGC Distributors, Society of American Florists, America in Bloom, Royal Netherlands Embassy, CropLife America Group, and CalPoly Alumni convened at Cultivate.

Over half of those attending Cultivate are major decision makers in their company, making Cultivate the perfect opportunity for the discussions and decisions that drive the industry forward. Twenty percent of attendees made purchases onsite, while 55% left with the intention to purchase in the next 6 months.

Besides networking, doing business, and exploring new products, seeing new varieties was top of everyone's list. More than 740 new varieties made their debut at Cultivate - from annuals to trees to tropicals. The 130+ education sessions were well attended and praised for their relevancy, engaging speakers, and strong takeaways. In addition, attendees earned continuing education credits for pesticide applicator licenses (for 40 states), LA CES credentials, and Landscape Industry Certified credentials.

Cultivate'16 was not without its external challenges. The Greater Columbus Convention Center is in the midst of a \$125 million dollar renovation. The renovation adds over 30,000 square feet of exhibit space, multiple session rooms, and additional parking. The redesigned center will celebrate local artists through art showcases and will feature local food vendors in the Food Court and Cafe.

"The convention center expansion has perfect timing. Cultivate'16 featured 623 companies and had a wait-list of companies wanting to exhibit," says Sherry L. Johnson, CEM, CMP, AmericanHort Vice President of Knowledge and Business Development. "The expansion will allow more companies to participate in this industry-wide event, enriching the experience for everyone who attends. With the event going on its 87th year, it's important to us that it keeps bringing the entire industry together."

The convention center expansion will not only allow for a larger exhibit hall but will provide space for each industry segments to gather, network, and share ideas. Additional new features include a new product pitch stage, a centrally-located Member Center, increased meeting space, and upgraded New Products and New Varieties Zones.

Ken Fisher, AmericanHort President & CEO, who experienced Cultivate for the first time this year, was impressed by the industry at large. Already looking forward to next year's event, Fisher shares, "Cultivate'17 is the industry event that brings the entire professional community together to make an even greater impact. The horticulture industry -- from retailers, to producers, to installers, and suppliers -- is a powerful force."

Cultivate'17 is July 15-18 in Columbus, Ohio. Registration opens March 2017.

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The AmericanHort community includes professionals from all facets of the industry. From growers to retailers, breeders to installers, suppliers to innovators, students to researchers, and everyone in between, businesses across the horticulture industry call AmericanHort their inspiration, voice, community, success, business partner, leader, and advocate. With \$163 billion of market influence and the generation of 1.15 million jobs, the horticulture industry is a key player in the global economy. AmericanHort supports businesses in their continuous growth and success with knowledge resources, staff development, in-person meetings, and government advocacy. The strength of our influence depends on the strength of our collaboration, and AmericanHort unites the industry as a major force. What we do together matters. #WWDTmatters.