



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Delaware Center for Horticulture and Food Bank of Delaware Partner with Pennsylvania Horticultural Society to Expand Harvest 2020 Efforts

The initiative brings together leaders in horticulture and hunger relief to help alleviate food insecurity.

Wilmington, DE – The Delaware Center for Horticulture (DCH) and Food Bank of Delaware (FBD) are partnering with the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society (PHS) to expand the regional reach of PHS’s Harvest 2020 initiative, focused on increasing food production and addressing food insecurity. This partnership expands the reach of the program throughout the state of Delaware, asking gardeners and individuals to become growers (someone who grows food for themselves and their family), sharers (one who commits to donating food through hunger relief organizations or directly within their communities), or donors (someone who supports Harvest 2020 efforts through a monetary donation) to fight hunger.

[Harvest 2020](#) is a multi-faceted initiative aimed at mobilizing gardening enthusiasts and other individuals in the region to help people in underserved communities. As architect of the initiative, PHS has encouraged thousands of gardeners to participate in these efforts across the region. For the state of Delaware, DCH will serve as lead coordinating entity for outreach promotion, engagement with other Delaware partner agencies and organizations, and track impact. The Food Bank of Delaware will support collection and distribution efforts. The expected collective action from Harvest 2020 will bring a stronger focus to food insecurity, while teaching people to garden more productively, collecting thousands of pounds of fresh produce for hunger relief organizations, building long lasting relationships among gardeners and hunger relief organizations, and continuing PHS’s vision of using horticulture to advance the health and well-being of local communities.

“Many of our neighbors in the region have struggled to access enough food to live a healthy and active life,” said Matt Rader, PHS President. “PHS is able to bring together people and organizations across the region to garden for the greater good. The Delaware Center for Horticulture and the Food Bank of Delaware will champion the Harvest 2020 initiative and help address food insecurity throughout the state of Delaware. We look forward to their combined efforts as part of this initiative.”

Harvest 2020 has been designed for anyone to participate -- from individuals that haven’t gardened before and are looking for healthy food for their family -- to those with gardening expertise that can grow enough to share and help support food banks that serve those most in need.

“We are incredibly proud to be a part of this vitally important effort led by PHS to engage our extensive network of home and community gardeners to help feed our communities with locally-grown fruits and vegetables,” said Vikram Krishnamurthy, DCH Executive Director. “We know the need to address food insecurity is real, now more than ever. Building on the Food Bank of Delaware’s collection and distribution network, we are proud to bring our urban agriculture and education expertise together with partners to mobilize our networks and make a sizable impact on this significant need.”

The initiative is timely with the food growing season underway and with the increased demand for fresh food during the COVID-19 crisis. In Delaware, 121,850 people (1 in 8 people) struggle with hunger -- and of them, 38,680 are children. Many food pantries have experienced a 50% increase in demand over the last few weeks, thereby heightening the need for broad collective action.

“The economic impact from COVID-19 has been far reaching,” said Sanjay Malik, Food Bank of Delaware Interim CEO. “Because of the pandemic, we anticipate that an additional 50,000 Delawareans will experience food insecurity this year. Getting fresh fruits and vegetables into the hands of those who need it most is a critical part of our operation. We are thankful for the opportunity to partner on this initiative so gardeners can share their bounties with our neighbors in need.”

To support Harvest 2020, DCH recently received \$10,000 in funding from the DCF/Philanthropy Delaware COVID-19 Emergency Response Fund to serve as lead agency for implementation of the campaign in Delaware. With the grant funding, DCH plans to:

- Coordinate outreach and marketing efforts to Delaware gardeners and engage local nonprofits, agencies and gardens to become a part of the effort
- Coordinate efforts with FBD for drop-off sites and collection for distribution channels
- Create and share free horticultural education videos as part of DCH’s new “Green Thumb” series, specifically geared towards supporting the Harvest 2020 campaign
- Distribute later-season seeds and plant starts to communities/individuals in need, particularly in Wilmington, to promote vegetable gardening

PHS has brought together a number of organizations to aid in the success of this initiative, including hunger relief organizations, such as AmpleHarvest.org, the Chester County Food Bank, Food Connect, Greater Philadelphia Coalition Against Hunger, SHARE, Philabundance, DCH, and FBD. Subaru has also signed on as an official sponsor of the Harvest 2020 effort.

For more information on Harvest 2020 or to pledge as a grower, sharer, donor, or sponsor, visit PHSONline.org/harvest2020/overview, or call 215.988.8897. Updates on the initiative can be found via PHS’s social media using #PHSHarvest2020. For organizations in Delaware looking to get involved, please contact Vikram Krishnamurthy, Executive Director, at vkrishna@thedch.org or (302) 658-6262 x101.

ABOUT DCH

Founded in 1977, the **Delaware Center for Horticulture** inspires individuals and communities through the power of plants. Its work includes creating and maintaining the first urban farm in the city of Wilmington, creating and supporting over 40 community gardens, beautifying public landscapes, planting and advising on the urban placement of trees, and hosting community events and educational programs, including our Branches to Chances Return to Work program. Because much of its work occurs in low income neighborhoods with higher rates of disease, environmental contamination, and poor

access to healthy foods, our educational efforts also emphasize the personal health and sustainability benefits of gardening. For more information, please visit thedch.org.

ABOUT FBD

The **Food Bank of Delaware** distributes millions of pounds of products each year to its network of 509 hunger-relief program partners throughout the state and also provides thousands of meals a month for children through the Backpack Program. The Food Bank of Delaware provides community outreach through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women Infants and Children (WIC). Financial literacy coaching through \$tand By Me and nutrition education are also offered to empower Delawareans. Delaware Food Works, a workforce development initiative of the Food Bank of Delaware, provides training for adults interested in careers in the food service industry and warehousing/logistics. For more information about the Food Bank of Delaware, visit fbd.org or call (302) 292-1305.

ABOUT PHS

The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, an internationally recognized nonprofit organization founded in 1827, plays an essential role in the vitality of the Philadelphia region by creating healthier living environments, increasing access to fresh food, growing economic opportunity, and building deeper social connections between people. PHS delivers this impact through comprehensive greening and engagement initiatives in more than 250 neighborhoods; an expansive network of public gardens and landscapes; year-round learning experiences; and the nation's signature gardening event, the Philadelphia Flower Show. PHS provides everyone with opportunities to garden for the greater good as a participant, member, donor, or volunteer. For information and to support this work, please visit PHSONline.org.

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