

Green Bucks For Green Thumbs Who Give Back To Their Communities

Awards Recognize Gardeners Who Grow A Better World

(NAPSA)—Nearly 80 million Americans garden and 64 million volunteer, but it may come as a surprise that many combine the two activities to make a difference at a grassroots level. By donating fresh produce to feed the hungry, revitalizing crime-infested neighborhoods, teaching children about the environment, and beautifying communities, people across the nation are proving that gardening can be much more than a hobby.

To reward their efforts, The Scotts Miracle-Gro Company is seeking nominees for its sixth annual Scotts Give Back to Grow Awards. At stake is a total of \$40,000, with winners in four categories each receiving \$5,000 and two additional finalists in each category receiving \$2,500.

“As a company we’ve been helping people grow healthy lawns and gardens for more than 130 years. We understand the difference gardens can make in enriching and strengthening communities,” said Jim Hagedorn, chairman and CEO of ScottsMiracle-Gro. “The Scotts Give Back to Grow Awards honor those who seek no reward—the unsung heroes who volunteer their time and effort to grow a better world through gardening.”

Prizes will be awarded in four categories:

• **Classroom Gardener of the Year**—Salutes elementary through high school teachers who’ve incorporated gardening into their curriculums.

• **Urban Greenup Gardener of the Year**—Salutes volunteers who’ve used gardening to address the challenges of an inner-city neighborhood.

• **Community Beautification Gardener of the Year**—Salutes volunteers who’ve demonstrated their commitment to environmental stewardship through beautification.



Teachers who incorporate gardening into their curriculum may be eligible for a \$5,000 award.

• **Good Neighbor Gardener of the Year**—Salutes volunteers who help feed the hungry by growing produce for donation to food banks or participating in programs such as Plant a Row for the Hungry.

The winners of the fifth annual awards included a special education teacher who inspired her class to build a butterfly garden in memory of a fellow student who passed away; a retired draftsman who has donated more than 1,000 pounds of fresh produce to feed the hungry for the past three years; an 89-year-old gardener who created a 1.5-acre rhododendron park for his town; and a 79-year-old community leader who transformed her neighborhood from a haven for drug dealers into an urban oasis featuring gazebos, trees, vegetables and flowers.

Nomination forms for the sixth annual Scotts Give Back to Grow Awards, which are due Dec. 2, 2005, are available at www.scotts.com/gbtg or by calling 1-866-565-3554. The winners and finalists will be announced on or before Feb. 3, 2006.

Gardening Tips for Beginners

Whether you’re planting a community garden or a garden of your own, here are some tips to get it growing:

- Get the soil ready. Great garden soils are built over time. Add compost or garden soil to beds every spring before planting to improve the soil so that more water and nutrients can get to the roots.
- Select the right plant. Choose easy-to-grow plants that are well-adapted to your region. Be sure to consider the needs of different plants for sunlight, soil conditions and temperature so you can find the right plant for your specific plot of land.
- Feed your garden regularly. In addition to sunlight and water, plants need a regular diet of minerals and other elements to survive. Applying plant food regularly ensures that plants have the nutrients they need to grow and produce foliage, flowers and fruit.
- Control garden pests. Insects, diseases and weeds can harm a garden. Identify the problem and then decide if it’s severe enough to need a cure. For small, localized problems, a spot treatment with a ready-to-use product can control pests effectively while protecting the environment.
- Attract wildlife to your garden. Many plants attract birds, butterflies and bees with their flowers, fruits and berries. Feeders, birdhouses, water gardens and other garden structures can also enhance backyard wildlife habitats.

For more gardening tips or to learn more about the Scotts Give Back to Grow gardening awards, visit www.Scotts.com.

