



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Delaware Center for Horticulture announces Top 10 for 2011 *Areas of accomplishments include trees, green jobs, and urban agriculture*

WILMINGTON – The Delaware Center for Horticulture (TheDCH) is pleased to announce this year has been filled with many important milestones and celebrations. The Top Ten for 2011 are:

1. TREES

Milestone: Planted more than 10,000 trees – This year we planted 1,300 new trees in New Castle County and Sussex County, putting TheDCH over the 10,000 mark since the founding of the organization in 1977. The majority of the trees planted by TheDCH are large trees (7'– 12' tall) along streets and in urban areas.

Other 2011 tree highlights: After 3 years of leading the effort and writing the legislation, TheDCH celebrated unanimous passage of a new tree ordinance in the City of Wilmington. We also watered and inspected more than 3,400 urban trees, created the Delaware Tree Coalition (a new statewide collaboration of organizations and agencies that plant trees), and launched Plant One Million in Delaware – a tri-state regional partnership to plant trees throughout 13 contiguous counties in Delaware, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey. <http://www.plantonemillion.org/>

2. VOLUNTEERS

An all time high: 772 volunteers contributed time and talents. Hundreds of dedicated volunteers clocked more than 6,600 generous hours in 2011. Their time was worth almost \$145,000 to the organization (based on Bureau of Labor Statistics calculations). Learn more about volunteering for TheDCH: <http://www.thedch.org/support-us/volunteering>

3. DISCOVER TheDCH WEEK

Discover TheDCH Week increased membership by 10% – Again.

That's a 20% increase since 2009 – Attendance totaled nearly 600 individuals for 11 Discover TheDCH Week events over 9 days in May. New faces as well as long-time DCH members enjoyed multiple activities celebrating plants and gardening.

<http://www.thedch.org/activities-events/discover-the-dch>

New for 2012: An expanded Discover TheDCH schedule will encompass the entire month of June. Stay tuned for a smorgasbord of garden tours, social events, workshops, and family fun.

(more)

4. **BEES**

150 lbs of honey produced by two beehives in our Trolley Square gardens – At the height of the summer, each hive in TheDCH gardens was buzzing with 60,000 to 80,000 bees. TheDCH public gardens in Trolley Square are in bloom throughout the season with something new every day to attract our bees. The resulting raw honey has a delicious and uniquely complex flavor.

Honey from the 2011 harvest is available for holiday gifts:

<http://www.thedch.org/products/100-pure-honey>

5. **Green jobs: RETURN-TO-WORK**

Graduated 7th class of green jobs for ex-offenders – TheDCH hires previously incarcerated men and women and prepares them for entry level positions in landscaping and horticulture. This program combines classroom time and hands-on experience. Since 2009, our proud trainees have planted more than 1,500 trees throughout Wilmington. In 2011 we celebrated our first group of downstate graduates in Georgetown. <http://www.thedch.org/news/planting-seeds-new-life>

6. **Landscaping & engineering solutions: ACME Parking Lot**

Major greening renovations installed in Trolley Square grocery store parking lot – TheDCH installed a landscaping and engineering system to capture stormwater and help preserve the integrity of the region's drinking water. The system is designed to filter and absorb 70% of the rain that falls on the Trolley Square ACME property. It includes 19 large shade trees, 2,800 shrubs and smaller perennial plants, a rain garden, and a series of underground holding tanks. Read more and see a slide show:

<http://www.thedch.org/content/major-greening-renovations-completed-acme-parking-lot>

7. **COMMUNITY GARDENS & URBAN AGRICULTURE**

Helped launch 4 new community gardens – 2011 has been a banner year for community garden collaborations, including Simonds Garden in New Castle, as well as Southbridge Community Garden, Westminster Presbyterian Church, and Rodney Reservoir in Wilmington. TheDCH currently supports 23 community gardens, and over the years has converted more than 50 vacant lots to green neighborhood assets.

Other urban agriculture highlights: Celebrated 3rd season of TheDCH urban farm at 12th & Brandywine Streets in Wilmington, highlighted the long-term success of the community garden inside Baylor women's prison at our Annual Meeting, and collaborated with the Urban Farm Coalition to host a Food Summit that attracted almost 100 people representing local farmers, children's health advocates, community gardeners, and others interested in creating better access to fresh, healthy produce in city neighborhoods.

<http://www.thedch.org/what-we-do/community-gardens-urban-agriculture>

8. **DOWNSTATE**

TheDCH expands downstate – Our programming expanded into Kent and Sussex Counties more than ever before in 2011. We planted 320 new trees in Seaford, ran a green jobs training program for ex-offenders in Georgetown, and recruited several new downstate garden centers and florists to provide discounts to members of TheDCH.

See list of businesses throughout the tri-state region that offer discounts to members of TheDCH:

<http://www.thedch.org/support-us/become-a-member/member-discount-partners>

9. **RARE PLANT AUCTION®**

31st Anniversary of Rare Plant Auction® – Once again, this event raised more than \$100,000. This gala evening at Longwood Gardens is always acclaimed for a premier selection of unusual, newly-introduced or difficult to propagate specimens. Proceeds benefit TheDCH Community Greening Program, which

uses horticulture to beautify Delaware and improve the quality of life for residents in urban neighborhoods.

Save the date for the next Rare Plant Auction on April 28, 2012.

<http://www.thedch.org/activities-events/rare-plant-auction>

10. TWO BABIES & OTHER NEW FACES

TheDCH family keeps growing – We're happy to report that in 2011 two of our staff members delivered healthy babies, and four new employees joined our team. Meet everyone on TheDCH staff:

<http://www.thedch.org/who-we-are/our-staff>

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The **Delaware Center for Horticulture (TheDCH)** cultivates greener communities by inspiring appreciation and improvement of the environment through horticulture, education and conservation. Founded in 1977, the Center's headquarters in the Trolley Square neighborhood of Wilmington includes public gardens, an art gallery, lecture hall and greenhouse. TheDCH supports 23 community and school gardens; beautifies Delaware's roadsides with native vegetation; leads regional conservation projects to enhance Delaware's urban forest; and provides educational programs for children, teens, and adults. For more information, visit [thedch.org](http://www.thedch.org) or find us on Facebook <http://www.facebook.com/TheDCH.org>

High resolution images and captions are available upon request.