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**For Immediate Release**

**Philanthropy from an Unexpected Source**

*Chicago Flower & Garden Show Gives Gifts That Give through Four Seasons*

**CHICAGO (Nov. 7, 2011)** – The Chicago Flower & Garden Show – nationally known for its extensive displays of inspiring gardens, exciting and educational plant combinations and motivating industry leadership – is more than an event. Tony Abruscato, the show’s director and owner of its production company, Flower Show Productions, Inc., is a philanthropist, too.

Each year, thousands of plants from the Chicago Flower & Garden Show – including woody varieties, perennials, bulbs, annuals and more – are donated to nonprofit organizations and schools. Following the 2011 Chicago Flower & Garden Show, approximately \$18,000 in cash also was donated to recipient charities from the event’s signature Potting Parties, while additional donations were generated through an “Evening in Bloom.” The show’s preview event benefited Chicago Gateway Green and the Chicago Botanic Garden. Show organizers estimate total value of cash and plant donations in 2011 exceeded \$100,000.

This spring, the Chicago Flower & Garden Show runs from March 10-18 at Navy Pier. At the show’s close, garden builders and Flower Show Productions staff will be left with hundreds of beautiful plants and trees inside the exhibit hall. These cannot be transplanted outside immediately, as the ground remains frozen. Instead of considering the plants waste material, organizers donate them to the Chicago High School for Agricultural Sciences, and nonprofits including Growing Power and Joy Garden.

When the Chicago High School for Agricultural Sciences receives plants, students store them in the campus greenhouse for the remainder of the winter. In early spring, they plant on site for beautification purposes. Other donated plants are held until Mother’s Day, when they’re sold to raise money for the school.

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## **Chicago Flower & Garden Show – Philanthropy // Add One**

The Chicago High School for Agricultural Sciences also receives donated plant containers and uses them for various agricultural projects, keeping them out of landfills. Planting containers are difficult to recycle because very few recycling facilities have the equipment necessary to break down the particular kind of plastic used in the pots. The donation also reduces the number of containers the high school is required to purchase, allowing them to save or apply those funds to other needs.

Growing Power also receives donated plants from the Chicago Flower & Garden Show. The national organization supports people from diverse backgrounds, and the environments in which they live, by helping provide equal access to healthy, high-quality, safe and affordable food. Through their location on Chicago's south side, Growing Power uses the show's plants to beautify iconic Chicago locations, including Grant Park, and sells the plants at a farmer's market near Cabrini Green.

The Chicago Flower & Garden Show also provides highly-visible floor space during the event to not-for-profits such as Chicago Gateway Green, Conservation Foundation, Openlands and the Trees That Feed Foundation. All utilize their space to expand awareness of their organization's mission and the good work they're doing on behalf of the environment in Chicago and around the world.

The Trees That Feed Foundation, for example, sends the bread fruit tree to needy residents of foreign countries in the tropics. The prolific tree produces 250 fruit after its second year – enough to feed a family of four – and can be used to create gluten-free flour. The tree also pulls carbon from the air, reducing the greenhouse effect, filters air pollution and has wood that is strong enough for creating tools and shelter.

“Every day we look for new ways to live the mantra: ‘Do Green. Do Good.’ By re-using materials from the Chicago Flower & Garden Show through gifts of donations and assistance, we extend our message of sustainable living. We also help beautify our city while aiding community groups and students in the Chicago area and beyond,” says Abruscato, who assumed ownership of the show in 2011 and is president of its new production company, Flower Show Productions, Inc. In addition to the nine-day show in March, Flower Show Productions provides year-round programming to extend its “Do Green. Do Good.” message to 12 months of the year.

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## Chicago Flower & Garden Show – Philanthropy // Add Two


With a legacy in Chicago that can be traced to 1847, the Chicago Flower & Garden Show welcomes upwards of 60,000 visitors to Navy Pier annually. Tickets to the Chicago Flower & Garden Show are available at the Navy Pier Box Office and online at [www.ChicagoFlower.com](http://www.ChicagoFlower.com). Weekday admission is \$15 when tickets are purchased online; \$17 at the box office. Weekend admission is \$17 when tickets are purchased online; \$19 at the box office. Tickets for children ages 4 through 12 are \$5. Discounted parking at Navy Pier, and group rates and tours also are offered.

For additional information about the Chicago Flower & Garden Show, including a schedule of events, parking information and directions to Navy Pier, visit [www.ChicagoFlower.com](http://www.ChicagoFlower.com). For information about participating as an exhibitor or sponsor, call 312-595-5400 or send an email to [info@flowershowproductions.com](mailto:info@flowershowproductions.com).

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### ***About Flower Show Productions, Inc.***

*Flower Show Productions, Inc. is the production company for the annual Chicago Flower & Garden Show at Navy Pier, and for grand-scale public events that celebrate sustainable living and eco-friendly lifestyles. The company provides year-round messaging, education and information about the benefits of earth-friendly choices to our yards, neighborhoods, communities and the planet. For information, please visit <http://flowershowproductions.com>. For information about the Chicago Flower & Garden Show, please visit [www.chicagoflower.com](http://www.chicagoflower.com).*

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