



## Media Release

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# MELNA announces details of Inaugural Maine Flower Show

PORTLAND - Maine will have a new consumer flower show in 2017. In a press conference at Thompson's Point in Portland, the Maine Landscape & Nursery Association (MELNA) announced the inaugural Maine Flower Show will be held March 29 through April 2, 2017. Don Sproul, MELNA Executive Director also said Thompson's Point will be the venue of the new show and that this new Maine Flower Show will have 67% more display gardens than the last flower show held in Portland in 2015. There was no consumer flower show in southern Maine in 2016.

Sproul also said that the new Maine Flower Show will have a charitable component with an expected profit of around \$10,000 from the March 28 Premiere being donated. Any remaining profits will be retained by MELNA, a non-profit trade association, for the purposes of furthering its mission of education, college scholarships, a certification program, promotion of Maine's horticulture industry, charitable projects and legislative advocacy for Maine's small green businesses. He also noted that Thompson's Point will be easy to access and have affordable parking.

Jake Pierson, President of MELNA, said MELNA members hold a strong commitment of owning and producing a consumer flower show. MELNA members voted unanimously at their last Annual Meeting to undertake this endeavor. The Maine Flower Show will not only be visually stimulating and a great way to anticipate the new Spring, it will also be educational. The Maine Flower Show will have a full schedule of speakers and demonstrations. As the only state-wide horticulture association, MELNA has unique access to the best speakers and demonstrators in the industry. Pierson announced Good Shepherd Food Bank will be the charity of the Maine Flower Show and WGME13/Fox23 will be the TV media sponsor.

Mark Faunce, Chair of MELNA's Maine Flower Show Committee announced that 20 display gardens are planned. Faunce noted they have received written commitments of 15 gardens, with oral commitments from another 3; leaving room for just two more display gardens 11 months before the show opens. To date written commitments have been received from Billy Goat Landscaping, C.M. Nichols Landscape Company, Campbell's Landscape & Design, Cozy Acres Greenhouses with McSherry's Nursery & Garden Center, Distinctive Gardening with Gogan Landscaping, Gnome Landscapes Design and Masonry, Goodall Landscaping, Hughes Inc. Arbor and Land Management, Greenscapes Design, Moody's Nursery, O'Donal's Nursery, Picture Perfect Landscapes, Pierson Nurseries, Roosevelt Trail Landscaping, and Skillins Greenhouses with Pray's Hardscapes.

Faunce said he appreciated how flexible and committed to the show the developer of Thompson's Point have been. He added he sees the Maine Flower Show remaining at Thompson's Point for many years to come. The plan is to have the 20 display gardens plus another 120 exhibitors at the Maine Flower Show, with a full complement of seminars and demonstrations. Parking will be on-site, for the most part; with a parking fee only about 25% of parking fees in recent years at the most recent flower shows.

Others speaking at the press conference included Gary Fish, State Horticulturist who emphasized how the show will showcase Maine's outstanding horticulture industry; Jed Troubh and Chris Thompson, developers of Thompson's Point who outlined some of the renovations planned before the Maine Flower Show opens; and Mayor Ethan Strimling and City Councilor Ed Suslovik who welcomed the Maine Flower Show to Portland and emphasized how this will positively impact the economy of southern Maine.

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