PHILADELPHIA (October 2014) – The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society recently received three grants in support of various initiatives throughout the organization.

The Boeing Company gave a grant to further develop training efforts and expand the tree-planting activities in the Philadelphia region through the PHS Tree Tenders® program. Over the next year, Boeing’s support will help PHS Tree Tender groups across the region to plant more than 1,700 community trees, continue the award-winning Tree Tenders basic training sessions, and expand training through an Advanced Tree Tenders course and new neighborhood pruning clubs. PHS will also begin working with the Philadelphia Housing Authority to help green its residences, as well as with the Alliance for Community Trees and community groups to bring more trees to low- and moderate-income neighborhoods of southeastern Delaware County.

“Boeing is proud to support programs like PHS Tree Tenders that demonstrate a lasting commitment to enhancing the quality of life and environmental stewardship in local communities across the Philadelphia region,” said Peggy Sweeney, community investor for Boeing’s Global Corporate Citizenship organization in Philadelphia.

The PHS Tree Tenders program is one of the oldest, most respected volunteer urban tree-care programs in existence. The program offers affordable training in tree-planting and care in the five-county Philadelphia region with affiliated trainings taking place across Pennsylvania. It boasts more than 4,000 graduates from its training courses, who have been responsible for the planting of more than 20,000 trees in Philadelphia and surrounding municipalities since it began more than 15 years ago. PHS Tree Tenders is also a critical component of the Plant One Million campaign, the largest multi-state tree planting partnership in the nation.
Independence Blue Cross Foundation renewed its support to enhance and sustain school gardening at the People for People Charter School in North Philadelphia. In 2013, PHS received funding from the IBC Foundation to develop a garden club that would reinforce the school’s commitment to healthier lifestyles and connect with the nearby North Street Community Garden. Over the past year, the club and its connection to healthy eating have been enthusiastically received by students and school staff. PHS and its partners will now be able to expand student involvement, brings hands-on gardening into the school, and train PFPCS teachers to sustain garden education on their own for years to come.

The Local Initiatives Fund of RSF Social Finance recently invited PHS and eleven other Philadelphia area organizations focused on building socially and ecologically sustainable food systems to participate in a Shared Gifting Circle. Shared Gifting is a collaborative granting model that gives ownership, distribution, and allocation authority for gift money to the participants of the Shared Gifting Circle. Inspired by Midwest philanthropist Elise O. Casper, Shared Gifting demonstrates a new model of philanthropy in which the participants are both grantees and grantors.

Through this opportunity, PHS was awarded $7,500 to pilot a new project that will create value-added products like jams or preserved vegetables from excess produce supplied by City Harvest growers. Through this project PHS will determine whether such a system could be viable over the long term and help City Harvest growers earn extra supplemental income.

In addition to providing valuable funding, the Shared Gifting Circle also was a unique opportunity for groups to discuss new ways to collaborate in the future. Participating organizations have already planned a follow-up meeting to be held in November at PHS offices that will continue the group’s momentum and plan for future projects.

RSF Social Finance offers investing, lending and giving services that generate positive social and environmental impact while fostering community and collaboration among participants. Since 1984, RSF has made over $275 million in loans and $100
million in grants to non-profit and for-profit social enterprises in the areas of Food & Agriculture, Education & the Arts, and Ecological Stewardship.

ABOUT PHS
The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society is a nonprofit organization, founded in 1827, dedicated to creating beauty and building community through gardening, greening and learning. With more than 64,000 members nationwide, PHS offers programs and events for gardeners of all levels, and works with volunteers, organizations, agencies and businesses to create and maintain vibrant green spaces. Proceeds from the PHS Philadelphia Flower Show and donations from foundations, corporations, government and individuals support PHS programs, including Plant One Million and PHS City Harvest. For information, visit PHSonline.org.

MEDIA CONTACTS:
Alan Jaffe, PHS Director of Communications, 215.988.8833, mobile 267.968.0859, ajaffe@pennhort.org
Marion McParland, PHS Communications Specialist, 215.988.8815, mobile 609.238.9599, mmcpandail@pennhort.org