



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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VICTORY GARDEN INITIATIVE ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF 5 NEW COMMUNITY ORCHARDS

MILWAUKEE. Tuesday, March 8, 2016 — Last month, Victory Garden Initiative (VGI) gave a little more hope that spring is coming soon: they announced the **winners of five new community orchards** that will be planted in April.

All communities in Milwaukee County were encouraged to apply to **cultivate beautiful local food sources and pockets of edible abundance** in the city we call home. Of many applicants, VGI's Fruity Nutty 5 Committee chose: Centro Hispano, Hales Corners Environmental Committee, Urban Eden Community Garden, St. Ann Center for Intergenerational Care-Bucyrus Campus, and a partnership between Milwaukee Jewish Day School and Westside Academy to steward the growth of fruit- and nut-producing plants in their neighborhoods for generations to come. Gordon Place and Five Points Neighborhood Association were runners up and will receive a smaller "Seedling" award. In total, 150 plants will get growing this spring to feed their communities.

VGI builds communities that grow their own food, creating a **community-based, sustainable, nutritious food system**. Planting these five (and a half!) orchards is key to that fruitful work. The winning groups will receive up to 30 fruit and nut producing plants each: hazelnuts, cherries, peaches, pears, apples, plums and more.

Toni Rivera, Executive Director of Centro Hispano, says, "This orchard gives us the opportunity to bring our community together to share food, love and connections. We hope to start a revolution of healthy living in life, work and play!"

Dr. Daniel Weber, a lead in the MJDS/WSA partnership notes, "We are incredibly excited about our project because it will bring together two schools from two very different communities...it will bring children and families together in a way that will allow them to learn about and with each other. We always knew that food can bring people together!"

Juantzceal Tolliver of Five Points responded, after finding out they were a winner, "I am so happy. Now I am looking forward to spring. This will give our youth something productive to do." Neighborhood orchards provide more than delicious, natural, local fruits and nuts—though they do that as well. They cultivate roots for closer communities. They supplement grocery bills. They get our neighbors outside, enjoying and preserving our environment.

This year's Fruity Nutty 5 Contest launched on November 1, 2015, and winners were announced at the Fruity Nutty Affair on February 20, 2016. After the planting in April, VGI's Fruity Nutty 5 Contest will have planted 25 orchards throughout Milwaukee County. Apply next winter and win your own orchard! To learn more, go to VictoryGardenInitiative.org/fruitynutty or call (414) 431-0888.



Representatives from this year's Fruity Nutty Five Contest Winners, VGI Community Program Manager, Kelly Moore Brands and Executive Director, Gretchen Mead

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About Victory Garden Initiative:

Victory Garden Initiative builds communities that grow their own food, creating a community-based, socially just, environmentally sustainable, nutritious food system for all. The scope of Victory Garden's educational programs and urban agricultural projects encompass a complete cycle: from soil, to seed, to plate, and composting back to soil - in back yards, front yards, rooftops and on patios.