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Alaska Fish Fertilizer and Cornell Lab of Ornithology Partnership Launches Second Annual Educational Garden Grant Program

Initiative now accepting nominations for grants providing opportunities for student STEM learning

WALNUT CREEK, Calif.--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- Alaska Fish Fertilizer, a natural fish-based fertilizer providing a rich source of organic matter, and Cornell University Lab of Ornithology's BirdSleuth K-12, which provides inquiry-based curricula that supports engaging kids in scientific study, are again partnering on a program offering grants to K-12 schools in support of educational garden projects. The partnership is now accepting nominations from teachers who strive to bring STEM and healthy living from the garden to the classroom. The groups will award ten grants ranging from \$500 to \$2,000, gardening supplies, and BirdSleuth's [Habitat Connections](#) kit sponsored by Alaska Fish Fertilizer parent company, Central Garden & Pet Company (NASDAQ:CENT) (NASDAQ:CENTA).

Award recipients will use funds to support the building or revitalization of school gardens, and will allow students hands-on, project-based learning opportunities, which will increase engagement and advance student achievement. In addition to food gardens, Alaska Fish Fertilizer and Cornell will award grants for bird, pollinator, native habitat, rain, and other natural projects.

"We are excited to once again partner with Cornell's Lab of Ornithology following the success of last year's program," said Lauren McGlynn, Brand Manager, Central Garden & Pet. "We were pleased to see our educational winners use their funds for so many valuable and positive STEM lessons. Opportunities like these are important, as students that engage in school gardening are likely to experience academic, physical, emotional, social, and even behavioral benefits."

Entries for consideration can be submitted until October 3, 2016, and all winners will be notified by October 21, 2016. The BirdSleuth [Habitat Connections](#) kit will be sent out immediately to winning schools. Those selected will also receive complimentary training designed to expand their curricula and provide the most conducive, creative learning environment for their students. Full details can be found in the official application form.

In 2016, Cornell University and Alaska Fish Fertilizer awarded grants to the following 10 schools:

- Hodge Elementary School, Savannah, Ga.

- Clark Creek Elementary School, Acworth, Ga.
- Menlo Park Elementary School, Portland, Ore.
- Howard Valentine School, Coffman Cove, Alaska
- Crutchto ESD, Oklahoma City, Okla.
- Vogel Elementary School, Evansville, Ind.
- Watson High School, Fort Worth, Texas
- Hudson Public Schools, Hudson, Mass.
- George E. Wilson Elementary School, Hamilton, N.J.
- PEARLS Hawthorne School, Yonkers, N.Y.

One school in particular that benefited from this grant in 2016 was the Crutchto Elementary School in Oklahoma City, Okla. Officials explained that the grant helped them carry out a garden plan at their school, the dream of former principal Robert Killian, who passed away in late February 2016.

“The ornithology grant and curriculum have been an incredible blessing to our school as well as a great incentive for creative science projects,” said Duana Newcomb-Eckroat of Crutchto Elementary School. “Budget cuts in our state have caused despair in small school districts such as ours, and this grant allowed us to fix our wind-ravaged green house, add new vegetable beds and plant fruit trees.”

The application is open to all K-12 schools in the United States. Homeschool families and informal education settings are not eligible. The application process opened August 15, 2016, and will close October 3, 2016, at 11:59 pm ET. Applicants will be notified by October 21, 2016. The application can be found at www.surveymonkey.com/r/garden-grant. Questions may be emailed to birdsleuth@cornell.edu.

About Central Garden & Pet

Alaska Fertilizer produces fish emulsion fertilizers, made from by-products of the fishing industry. High in organic matter, these fertilizers make use of otherwise wasted nutrients. These fertilizers are useful on all types of plants, easy to use, difficult to over-apply, harmless, and organic, making them ideal for school use. To learn more about the program, please visit www.pennington.com/community. For additional information on Central Garden & Pet Company, including access to the Company’s SEC filings, please visit the company’s website at www.central.com.

About Cornell University Lab

The Cornell Lab of Ornithology is a world leader in the study, appreciation, and conservation of birds. Our hallmarks are scientific excellence and technological innovation to advance the understanding of nature and to engage people of all ages in learning about birds and protecting the planet. Founded in 1915, the Cornell Lab is a nonprofit organization supported by 98,000 [friends and members](#). Our vibrant community includes [200,000 citizen-science participants](#) from all walks of life and 14 million bird enthusiasts of all ages who connect with us online at [All About Birds](#).

As a proud unit of Cornell University we have seven faculty on staff and access to world-class resources. As a nonprofit environmental organization, however, we depend on members, donors, research, and our other programs for 99 percent of our operating budget. Your support will result in direct impacts and improvements for conservation science. To learn more, visit <http://www.birds.cornell.edu/>.

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