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For Immediate Release

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Horticultural Research Institute Announces Funded Research Projects

2017 Funding Totals $289,500

WASHINGTON, DC and COLUMBUS, OH—February 1, 2017—The Horticultural Research Institute (HRI), the AmericanHort Foundation, is pleased to announce 2017 grant funding. Thirteen projects were selected for funding based on a rigorous review system including both industry relevance and scientific merit.

"HRI is pleased to support a number of excellent projects working to improve horticultural knowledge and practices. Supporting projects where outcomes can impact the bottom line for the industry is a top priority for our donors, our volunteer leadership, and our organization," states Jennifer Gray, HRI Administrator.

Dr. Jill Calabro, Science & Research Programs Director with HRI, agrees. "We received 53 total proposals this year that were thoughtful and representative of the entire green industry. The decision-making process was not easy. The projects ultimately selected address critical issues with sound science."

HRI will provide a total of $289,500 in 2017 to support research that benefits the green industry.

The 2017 portfolio of projects are:

Improved sanitation/hygiene practices in nursery crop production.
Principal Investigator: Dr. F. Baysal-Gurel, Tennessee State University
Objective: This project aims to address plant disease management through the use of improved sanitation and hygiene practices.

Developing a modified hydroponic stock plant system for mini-cuttings of difficult-to-root nursery crops.
Principal Investigator: Dr. R. Geneve, University of Kentucky
Objective: This project will compare plant vigor and root system development the production of mini-cuttings through a modified hydroponic system with traditional cuttings using eastern redbud as a model system.

Assessing Human Health Benefits of Gardening.
Principal Investigator: Dr. C. Guy, University of Florida
Objective: This project will demonstrate quantifiably, therapeutic benefits to human health through gardening and horticulture therapy.

Development of weed control strategies for bioretention that protect water quality.
Principal Investigator: Dr. H. Kraus, North Carolina State University
Objective: This project will better enable members of the green industry to manage weeds in rain gardens while still protecting water quality.

Determining the impact of soilless substrate age, composition, fertilizer placement, and irrigation regime on weed management in container nursery plant production.
Principal Investigator: Dr. C. Marble, University of Florida
Objective: This project will provide the basis of an all-inclusive, systems-based approach to weed control in soilless substrates to help growers reduce weed control costs.

Evaluation of new herbicides and formulations to develop more effective and economical herbicide rotations for nursery production.
Principal Investigator: Dr. C. Marble, University of Florida
Objective: This project will present herbicide control information in two commonly requested formats, direct efficacy comparisons of the newest products and formulations and a rotation schedule.

Control strategies for Nostoc, a health and safety concern in container nurseries.
Principal Investigator: Dr. J. Neal, North Carolina State University
Objective: This project will identify treatment options for control of 'the green slime' in nurseries.

Assessing bee attractiveness of woody landscape plants and mitigating potential bee hazard from neonicotinoid insecticides.
Principal Investigator: Dr. D. Potter, University of Kentucky
Objective: This project will continue Dr. Potter's previous research in years 2015-2016 and will expand to compare native to nonnative plants in terms of forage quality and quantity.

Beyond Sedum: expanding the plant palette for green roofs.
Principal Investigator: Dr. B. Rowe, Michigan State University
Objective: This project will identify plants (other than Sedum) able to withstand harsh temperatures, drying winds, and extreme fluctuations in root zone temperature and moisture levels for use on green roofs.

New groundcover and native grass species when replacing turfgrass.
Principal Investigator: Dr. K. Umeda, University of Arizona
Objective: This project will evaluate ten (10) grass species and two (2) ground covers as low input turf alternatives where traditional turfgrass has been removed from native areas on golf courses.

Development of protocols for micropropagation of woody trees using last-generation bioreactors.
Principal Investigator: Dr. W. Vendrame, University of Florida

Objective: This project will optimize protocols for the micropropagation of woody ornamentals, such as olive trees, hybrid palms, dwarf coconut trees, and various ornamental flowering landscape trees, using bioreactor technology.

Do pH and alkalinity of irrigation runoff influence floating treatment wetland efficacy?
Principal Investigator: Dr. S. White, Clemson University
Objective: This project will characterize the capacity of aquatic plant species to effectively fix nutrients in varied pH and alkalinity levels through measurement of their growth and survival in a floating system.

Pairing vegetative buffers and slow sand filtration to remediate diseases from irrigation runoff.
Principal Investigator: Dr. S. White, Clemson University
Objective: This project will develop an effective and low-cost buffer system to remediate *Phytophthora* species from irrigation water using a combination of vegetative buffers and slow sand filtration.

HRI supports scientific research and students for the advancement of the horticultural industry and was established by industry leaders. HRI's research and education efforts are only made possible by industry support and donors who are willing to invest and contribute.

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The Horticultural Research Institute (HRI), the research affiliate of AmericanHort, has provided over $7.3 million in funds since 1962 to research projects covering a broad range of production, environmental, and business issues important to the green industry. Over $10 million is committed to the endowment by individuals, corporations, and associations. For more information about HRI, its grant-funded research, scholarships, or programming, visit www.hriresearch.org or contact Jennifer Gray at 614.884.1155.