



Leader in
Horticultural
Containers

HC Corporate Charity

KidsGardening.org

Prepared by Craig Ruvere, Marketing Communications Manager (updated 2/25/21)

Overview

HC's market share in the horticultural container industry has increased dramatically over the last few years. With that growth comes a responsibility to support the future of the industry and the young growers interested in joining it. After vetting several organizations, I believe partnering with KidsGardening.org is an ideal philanthropy for HC, which directly ties into the industry we successfully serve.

Business Goal

More businesses, large and small, are discovering the real-world advantages of supporting charitable causes. In addition to tax breaks for charitable activities, there are numerous social benefits. ***If you want people to respect your company, doing good is just as important as doing well.***

Working with a non-profit can expand our audience and branding, while raising respect for our company's efforts. People who have a strong sense of social awareness often like to reward companies that are involved in charities by promoting their brand on social media or through word-of-mouth.

In partnering with KidsGardening.org, this philanthropic effort will show growers and retailers that HC understands the challenges of encouraging young people to enter the industry by supporting them where and when it matters most.

Benefits

- This charity perfectly aligns with our business
- Shows social responsibility
- Drives positive public relations to our brand
- Increases marketing and brand awareness (publicize on all print and digital communications/advertising)
- Customers appreciate doing business with organizations that give back



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- Employees appreciate working for a charitable organization (could be beneficial when recruiting new talent)
- Differentiates our brand from the competition
- Builds relationships throughout the community which could translate to new business in the future
- Leverage SEO, webinars, trade shows and editorials further touting the partnership

Who is KidsGardening.org?

KidsGardening has been a leader in the youth gardening movement for nearly 40 years. As a national nonprofit, they inspire and support garden educators, volunteers and families by offering grants, original educational resources and inspiration to get more kids learning through the garden.

A big part of what they do is through the **Youth Garden Grant**. This yearly award is designed to build capacity for under-resourced school and youth educational garden projects that enhance the quality of life for students and their communities. The award is open to any (50) nonprofit, public or private school or youth program in the United States planning a new garden program or expanding an established one that serves at least 15 youth between the ages of 3 and 18.

By the numbers:

- Reached 2.6 million children in 2020 with curriculum, lesson plans and activities
- Reached 90k children with grants in 2020
- Reach 42k educators (influencers) through their email list
- Average of 42k unique visitors to their website each month with an average of 222k page views
- With every \$1 donated to KidsGardening, they are able to reach five more children with resources to learn through the garden

The Sponsorship

Sunshine Sponsorship - \$10,000 (yearly)

Benefits:

- HC logo placed prominently on grant landing page (linked to our site)
- At least 15 social media mentions throughout the lifecycle of the grant
- HC logo in the grant announcement email



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- HC logo in two KidsGardening monthly newsletters heralding our support
- Youth Garden Grant support badge for our website
- Poster for display in our office or retail establishment
- NOTE – this is not exclusive and open to other organizations and competitors
- Current sponsors include (there are around 20 total):
 - Ball Publishing, Gardeners Supply Company, Klorane Botanical Foundation, Scotts/MiracleGro, PT Holdings, Whole Kids Foundations (part of Whole Foods Market), Bluestone Perennials, Epicor, Fine Gardening, Meadows Farms and more.

How employees could get involved

- Provide growing containers to the 50 grant programs they do in one year. This could be a great use for discontinued inventory we're trying to move as well as some propagation items KidsGardening.org sees as beneficial. Fiber containers would also be of interest as the younger generation is now more aware than ever of environmental issues and sustainability in gardening. Team members could visit/donate to local groups.
- Facilitate installation of school or youth gardens in communities near headquarters, offices or other communities. These programs range from \$20K-\$40K and involve finding a worthy local site to donate a garden and working with the sponsor company to coordinate a team of employee volunteers to help build the gardens. KidGardening.org manages these installations end-to-end and has done dozens of them over the years. They are great employee morale-building events and media coverage as well.
- KidsGardening.org has the ability to set up crowdfunding campaigns through their donation software whereby they could offer a challenge to our employees to raise funds for KidsGardening.org through friends and family. This could be matched by the company as a fun way to get employees engaged and we could offer incentives to those who recruit the most donors and raise the most funds. We could arrange to, 1) have these funds split between KidsGardening.org and a local youth garden program in a community we are connected to, or 2) Put these funds towards an HC Companies contribution to the Youth Garden Grant.
- As the KidsGardening.org community continues to grow, more and more opportunities will emerge for local volunteering at community gardens or other gardening related programs near HC locations.



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