

Canada Blooms

THE FLOWER AND GARDEN FESTIVAL

For immediate release

Spring comes early at Canada Blooms

Celebrate Canadian gardens in all their blooming glory from March 18 to 22, 2009

March 2009 – Toronto, ON – From March 18 to 22, 2009, Canada Blooms returns to Toronto to transform the Metro Toronto Convention Centre into Canada's largest flower and garden festival. Now in its thirteenth year, the 2009 Festival celebrates the best of Canadian gardens and explores the tradition of gardening and horticultural excellence across the country.

“After a long, cold Canadian winter, Canada Blooms will once again delight garden-lovers with a springtime paradise – particularly this year because the first day of spring, March 20th, falls in the middle of the Festival,” says Gerry Ginsberg, General Manager, Canada Blooms. “Whether you are an aspiring green-thumb or hardcore horticulturalist, a visit to Canada Blooms will plant the seeds of inspiration as it showcases the latest in floral and horticulture products and services.”

Canada Blooms 2009 will feature six acres of feature gardens in full bloom, more than 100,000 square feet of green-thumb shopping, over 200 hours of seminars, workshops and demonstrations, a special children's garden and more.

Festival Highlights

- **Opening Night Celebrations – “Green on Green”** – Celebrate St. Patrick's Day and be the first to preview the spectacular gardens, while sampling exotic fare, exclusive Vincor wines, and fine Canadian cheeses from Dairy Farmers of Canada. Special guests include the Honourable, David C. Onley, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario and His Excellency Declan Kelly, the Irish Ambassador to Canada. Sponsored by Tourism Ireland, Sobey's and the Royal Bank of Canada.
- **The RBC Speakers Series** – The RBC Speakers Series presents five education days featuring North America's premier gardening experts. Themed days include: March 18 – Organic Gardening Day, March 19 – Design Day, March 20 – Scents and Sensibilities: Plant Day presented by Vineland Research and Innovation Centre, March 21 – Ecology Day and March 22 – Urban Gardening Day. Take advantage of the **RBC after 5 pm** rate with \$6 dollars off the regular admission.
- **The Garden Club of Toronto – Canada's Largest Standard Judged Flower Show** – With the theme ‘Sea to Sea,’ the Garden Hall will be filled with exciting amateur competitions in horticulture and floral design. Enjoy spectacular designs from premiere Ontario flower arrangers and international competitors. Toronto Master Gardeners will answer queries.

Feature Gardens

- **The Home Depot Outdoor Living Central** – Find yourself under a custom-built cedar arbour and stroll past an almost seven metre long water feature surrounded by spring tulips. Once inside, you will be surrounded by lush gardens showcasing ideas for your own backyard. Visit the deck design expert for inspiration and ideas for upgrading your existing space or any of our onsite Associates for advice on your next outdoor project. Learn more about the “eco-options” on display in the garden shed and throughout the garden. An outdoor kitchen will entice your taste of outdoor living.
- **City of Toronto's 175th Anniversary Garden - Toronto: Then and Now** – Toronto celebrates its 175th birthday with a creative use of plants, trees, bulbs, water and artwork in a design that uses traditional horticultural principles to embrace accessibility and inclusiveness, art and cultural expression. Expert staff will be there to speak on a range of services including: native plants, community gardens, tree pruning basics, tree care, greening tips and healthy living.
- **The Bienenstock Natural Playground** – Experience a fully accessible natural playground that will transport children to a world of imagination. See a water flute shoot water into a living pond and sand sculptures by Canada's world champion Karen Fralich. Travel through the Living Willow Tunnel to a tree fort and play music on the xylophones and whale drums. Climb stone and wood sculptures and create your own sand play area. The Toronto Botanical Garden engages children in activities and McMaster Child Health Research Institute shares insights on the benefits of nature on children.
- **The Niagara Wine Garden** – Enjoy a comfortable sofa, glass of wine, mellow music, grassy floor and flowers galore, while tasting some of Canada's best known wines including Inniskillin, Jackson-Triggs VQA, Sawmill Creek and Jackson-Triggs Esprit. New for 2009 – Come and savour a pairing experience of fine Canadian cheeses served daily from 11 am to 5 pm presented by Dairy Farmers of Canada.
- **The Heart and Stroke Pulse Garden** – The Heart and Stroke Foundation, in partnership with the Humber College Landscape Technicians Program, presents one of the largest featured gardens at Canada Blooms. The 4,500 sq ft. garden will feature magnolia trees, cut-leaf Japanese maples, purple rhododendrons, Bristol ruby weigelas and signature Foundation red and white tulips. Humber nursing students will take blood pressure readings at five stations.

(more)

- **Canadian Cancer Society: Cancer Connections** – Walk through a serene outdoor urban gallery of spring time flowers, daffodils, and waterfalls while you connect with photographs of those touched by cancer. Sponsored by the Canadian Cancer Society, the collection is part of the national PhotoSensitive Cancer Connections photographic exhibition traveling across Canada – capturing our hearts, inspiring us with their stories and engaging us in a conversation about cancer.

Marketplace and more

- **Sobeys Featured Floral Area** – There is something for everyone at Sobeys in the Marketplace. At Sobeys, the finest fresh flowers from around the world are available every day. Sobeys prides itself on the highest quality of customer service and are eager to decorate your life and your special occasions for memorable experiences. Visit the Sobeys section in the Canada Blooms Marketplace to purchase premium floral products and a variety of special products.
- **Miracle Gro Garden Boxes** – Back by popular demand with a celebrity twist, the Miracle Gro Garden Box Challenge will showcase 6 exciting ideas on container gardens. Whether you're decorating for a cottage, farmhouse, condo, country or urban home, these Garden Boxes are sure to inspire. All window boxes will be judged by show visitors and a charitable donation will go to the winner's favourite cause. Be sure to cast your vote.
- **VIA Rail Garden Route** – VIA Rail makes seeing Canada's most spectacular gardens easier with the VIA Rail Garden Route. This program links 15 outstanding Gardens from Victoria to Halifax and 30, 5-bloom award winning Communities in Bloom destinations along the track, with a special fare (online bookings only). Visit the VIA Rail/EZ Rock Garden Route Lounge to find out more and speak with representatives from some of the route's gardens.
- **Pick Ontario Avenue (600 Level)** – Some of the best cut and potted flowers and plants are grown right here in Ontario. To learn about Ontario-grown cut flowers and potted plants visit the vibrant floral area on the 600 Level of Canada Blooms. Enjoy a special afternoon with the **Floral Superstars** as they present Pick Ontario products on the Celebrity Stage on March 18th and 21st.
- **First Day of Spring, March 20** – For the first time, enjoy an evening speaker sponsored by Vineland Research and Innovation Centre. Dr. Robert Raguso, Cornell University examines the impact of floral scent on pollinators and people with his presentation 'Wake up and Smell the Roses.'
- **The Family Rest Area brought to you by Barbie Presents Thumbelina on DVD** – Every day from 10am – 5pm, get a sneak peek of the movie and learn some important eco-friendly tips at the same time.

Canada Blooms is a not-for-profit volunteer-driven event which promotes awareness of horticulture and showcases outstanding floral and landscape products and services. To date, more than \$500,000 in Canada Blooms' show proceeds has been reinvested into community horticultural projects. This year's proceeds from Canada Blooms will benefit the Toronto Botanical Gardens children's programs.

Canada Blooms 2009 Festival information

Dates: Wednesday, March 18 to Sunday, March 22, 2009
 Hours: 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. (Wednesday to Saturday); 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. (Sunday)
 Venue: Metro Toronto Convention Centre – South Building
 Tickets: Available in advance: Online at www.canadablooms.com and Sobeys Ontario locations \$16
 At the door: \$18; Seniors \$16; Students \$16; Children 12 and under are free

Use the CN Tower-Canada Blooms Downtown Shuttle to reach the MTCC, South from Union Station or Downtown Parking Lots. The CN Tower Shuttle runs daily from 9:30 am to 9:30 pm and will pick up and drop off at Queens Quay Parking Lots and Union Station with drop-offs at Canada Blooms and the CN Tower.

About Canada Blooms

Dedicated to providing horticulture expertise, education and resources on an ongoing basis, Canada Blooms is a not-for-profit organization that gives back to the community throughout the year by funding community garden projects around Ontario. Now in its thirteenth year, Canada Blooms was founded by Landscape Ontario and The Garden Club of Toronto. Each year it is supported by a committed group of partners, sponsors and volunteers. In 2009, sponsors include The Home Depot, Brampton Brick/Oaks, Brookdale Treeland Nurseries Ltd., Canadian Cancer Society, City of Toronto, Dairy Farmers of Canada, Grey Power Insurance, Heart & Stroke Foundation, Indigo Books & Music Inc., JVK, Miracle-Gro, Myers Lawn and Garden Group, Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership Corporation, Pick Ontario, Rechargeable Battery Recycling Corporation, RBC, Sobeys Ontario, Tourism Ireland, VIA Rail, Vincor, The Vineland Research and Innovation Centre, Universal Studios Home Entertainment Canada, Show Smart, CN Tower, Nestle Canada, Sinclair-Cockburn, CanWest Media, The National Post, EZ Rock, HGTV, CFRB and The New Classical 96.3 FM.

For more information, please contact:

Linda Yahya / Michelle Yeh

Palette PR

416.703.9859, ext. 19/22

lyahya@palettepr.com / myeh@palettepr.com

Gerry Ginsberg

Canada Blooms

416.447.8655 x 24

gerry.ginsberg@canadablooms.com