



UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
Office of the Secretary  
Washington, D.C. 20250

NATIONAL GARDEN MONTH  
April 2016

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By the Secretary of Agriculture of the United States of America

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A PROCLAMATION

**WHEREAS** gardening at home, at school, or within a community is a vibrant American tradition that provides healthy food for the table; pleasant surroundings and recreational benefits for people; and beneficial habitat for wildlife across the Nation; and

**WHEREAS** gardens provide a positive setting for pollinators such as bats, bees, birds, butterflies, beetles, and other animals that contribute substantially to the U.S. economy and play a vital role in keeping fruits, nuts, and vegetables in our diets; and

**WHEREAS** the People's Garden Initiative, launched by the U.S. Department of Agriculture in 2009, has resulted in the establishment of more than 2,000 People's Gardens on public and private lands across the United States and its territories and in 12 foreign countries; and

**WHEREAS** People's Gardens serve as helpful models for uniting individuals and groups in a common effort to benefit communities; increase people's access to fruits and vegetables; conserve water and restore soil health; beautify neighborhoods; provide living laboratories for scientific study; and offer hands-on training in valuable job skills;

**NOW, THEREFORE**, in recognition of the importance of gardens in fostering a healthy and sustainable environment for current and future generations of people, pollinators, and other living things, I, Thomas J. Vilsack, Secretary of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, do hereby proclaim April 2016 as National Garden Month. I call upon the people of the United States to join me in celebrating the dedicated work of gardeners and the many benefits of gardens with appropriate observances and activities.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, I have hereunto set my hand this 16th day of March 2016, the two-hundred fortieth year of the Independence of the United States of America.

Handwritten signature of Thomas J. Vilsack in black ink.

THOMAS J. VILSACK  
Secretary