



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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KANSAS CITY NONPROFIT ANNOUNCES EXPANSION INTO TWO NEW METRO AREAS
Giving Grove orchards provide free fruits, nuts and berries for neighborhoods facing food insecurity

Who: The Giving Grove National Network
Where: Auburn (ME) & South Bend (IN)

What: Program expansion into two new cities
When: Planting begins 2023

Kansas City, MO- The Giving Grove National Network, a Kansas City-based nonprofit serving communities facing food insecurity, announces today that it will expand to Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and Northern Indiana, through partnerships with ReTreeUS (Auburn, ME) and Unity Gardens (South Bend, IN). **“Both of these organizations bring incredible knowledge and skills to our national network,”** says Giving Grove Co-Executive Director Ashley Williamson. **“We are excited to collaborate with them on their program goals and support their growth. With every new affiliate joining our network, we gain a community orchard champion that becomes a resource hub.”**

The Giving Grove programs equip neighborhood volunteers to plant and care for fruit trees, nut trees, and berry brambles that improve the urban environment, increase tree canopy, and provide a sustainable source of free, organically-grown food for neighborhoods facing high rates of food insecurity. Currently, over 400 Giving Grove urban orchards serve 11 cities nationwide, from Atlanta to Seattle. The typical orchard sequesters 29 tons of carbon and removes more than 195 pounds of pollution from the air while also intercepting stormwater and stabilizing urban soil.

“This affiliation enables us to expand our organizational capacity, resulting in more fruit and nut trees planted, improved programming, and more seeds of thought germinated to empower generations of healthy environmental stewards,” said Richard Hodges, ReTreeUS Program Manager and founder. **“We are delighted to be part of a network that shares resources and best practices around community orchards, amplifying our organizations’ positive impact nationwide.”**

“Unity Gardens Inc. is pleased to be ‘growing together’ with The Giving Grove National Network!” says Sara Stewart, Unity Gardens Executive Director. **“Both organizations have congruent missions to offer free food and improve the urban environment with welcoming greenspace. We are thrilled to add orchards to the Unity Garden’s uniquely dignified free food model and to expand our reach through Giving Grove’s expansive network.”**

Founded in Kansas City in 2013, The Giving Grove began expanding nationally in 2017 and now supports urban orcharding programs across the U.S. in collaboration with a robust network of local partners. Through this network, more than 800 volunteers serve as urban orchard stewards, caring for the orchards that nourish their local communities for decades. At full implementation, Giving Grove orchards will reach 15% of Americans experiencing food insecurity. The typical Giving Grove orchard will produce more than 9,800 servings of organically grown, free, fresh foods worth more than \$8,200 annually.

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Giving Grove’s vision is thousands of little orchards in food-insecure urban neighborhoods nationwide, creating a local food production system that feeds people for decades. Learn more at www.givinggrove.org.