

For Immediate Release

Professional sports establish “green” game plan to benefit trees

Major league teams among those partnering with communities to promote renewable resource

CHAMPAIGN, Ill. (September 2014) – First downs, baskets and goals recorded by pro sports teams take on another meaning as more of these organizations develop a playbook-of-sorts on how to promote trees to encourage a greener society.

The number of sports partnerships with community tree planting programs is fueling awareness for the benefits of trees, according to The International Society of Arboriculture (ISA). The program, “Teaming up with Pro Sports to Advance Urban Forestry,” was a featured presentation at ISA’s 90th Annual Conference & Trade Show in Milwaukee this year.

“Professional sports are such a part of today’s culture,” says Jim Skiera, ISA Executive Director. “The partnerships between sports teams and a community help everyone better understand the benefits of trees. These organizations want to do their part and align with a worthy cause.”

Here are some examples of successful partnerships benefiting communities:

- Green Bay Packers** - “First Down for Trees,” was established to offset the team’s carbon footprint when traveling to away games. For every first down achieved, the Packers plant so many trees the following year.
- National Football League** - More than 1,000 seedlings were planted on the campus of the University of North Florida, thanks to the cooperation of the NFL, the Super Bowl XXXIX Host Committee, and Greenscape of Jacksonville, Florida.
- Los Angeles Lakers** – Working with TreePeople, an environmental non-profit group based in southern California, the NBA team distributes trees for the “Fruit Tree Giveaway Festival,” in an effort to grow L.A.’s tree canopy.
- New York Knicks** - For every three-point basket scored by the Knicks, PricewaterhouseCoopers plants two trees as part of MillionTreesNYC.
- Minnesota Twins** – Every time a pitcher breaks the baseball bat of an opposing player, the Twins plant 100 trees through the “Break a Bat, Plant a Tree,” program.
- Philadelphia Phillies** – The Major League Baseball team partners with the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society (PHS) to plant a tree for each home run in a season.
- Portland Timbers** - The Major League Soccer team participates in the “Score a Goal, Plant a Tree” program. This has led to more than 2,000 trees and shrubs being planted in the Portland, Oregon metro area.
- NASCAR** - Ten trees are planted for each green flag that drops during a race at Richmond International Raceway in Virginia to offset carbon dioxide pollution as part of NASCAR’s Green Clean Air Program.

“We can quantify the value of the services that trees provide,” says Laura Wyatt, ISA Certified Arborist and partnership specialist with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. “For every dollar invested in urban trees, a community gets three dollars in environmental benefits. This includes air quality, storm water mitigation and more, so trees are a solution.”



For More Information

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Sports teams in at least 19 cities throughout the U.S. are involved with tree planting programs, including the NFL, NBA, MLB, NHL, MLS and NASCAR.

“This kind of cooperation between a sports team and a community leads to increasing canopies across the U.S. and overall better care for trees,” adds Wyatt. “The more folks you partner with, the more people are spreading the right message about trees and that’s what makes it successful.”

To learn how you can become involved in tree planting opportunities in your community, visit ISA’s consumer website, **www.treesaregood.org**.

About ISA

*The International Society of Arboriculture (ISA), headquartered in Champaign, Ill., is a nonprofit organization supporting tree care research and education around the world. To promote the importance of arboriculture, ISA manages the consumer education web site, **www.treesaregood.org**, which fulfills the association’s mission to help educate the public about the importance and value of proper tree care. Also, as part of ISA’s dedication to the care and preservation of shade and ornamental trees, it offers the only internationally-recognized certification program in the industry. For more information on ISA and Certified Arborists, visit **isa-arbor.com**.*



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