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May 9, 2011

D.C. Youth Garden Grows with Hundreds of Vegetable and Herb Plants

Kid Power, Inc. Expands VeggieTime Program at Tubman Elementary School with Burpee Home Gardens® 2011 'I Can Grow' Youth Garden Award Enthusiasm and education about youth gardening was the lesson of the day Wednesday, May 4 at Washington, D.C.'s Harriet Tubman Elementary School, where students and staff from local nonprofit Kid Power, Inc., along with Burpee Home Gardens experts, expanded its VeggieTime academic and nutritional after-school program by planting six new garden beds. Kid Power is one of five grand prize winners in the 2011 Burpee Home Gardens® "I Can Grow" Youth Garden Award, selected from more than 220 applications of community and urban school gardens from the across the nation. About 20 excited and knowledgeable VeggieTime students planted more than 200 vegetable and fruit plants in the six new garden beds located in front of the school. But before digging in the dirt, they received words of encouragement from Kid Power founder and executive director Max Skolnik; Diane Hund, director of marketing for Burpee Home Gardens; and Dru Ealons, director for the Office of Public Engagement for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The message was simple: Growing and eating fresh, nutritious vegetables and fruits is a good habit that can last a lifetime. "The enthusiasm of the kids today was contagious, and it was impressive to see their knowledge base about plants and gardening," Hund said. "It's clear Kid Power's VeggieTime curriculum is strong – the kids were well-versed in plant varieties and gardening practices, along with the benefits of fresh vegetables and fruits. Burpee Home Gardens is proud to support the great work of organizations like Kid Power and terrific programs like VeggieTime."

Kid Power was selected as a Burpee Home Gardens "I Can Grow" Youth Garden Award grand prize winner based on its comprehensive plan for youth-centered educational programs that serve 275 students by emphasizing nutrition and food production, environmental awareness, social responsibility and scholastic integration, including VeggieTime. Kid Power received more than 275 Burpee Home Gardens vegetable and fruit plants provided by Washington, D.C.'s Greenstreet Growers, along with \$2,500 toward garden supplies; and a Flip™ video camera to document the garden's ongoing success on the Burpee Home Gardens blog. "Kid Power's VeggieTime program is having a huge impact on our students' eating habits," Skolnik said. "It also provides the academic knowledge and hands-on experience that will encourage healthy behaviors over their entire lives. But, as we all got our hands dirty, it was abundantly clear that gardening is just plain fun. Whether it's carrots, beans, or even beets, the kids can't wait to taste the first vegetables of the season."

Harriet Tubman Elementary School was the site in December 2010 where President Obama signed into law the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010. The legislation included substantial improvements that help provide children with more nutritious food options, and teach them about making healthy food choices today, tomorrow and the rest of their lives.

To see how this school garden is flourishing throughout the year, please visit the Burpee Home Gardens blog at www.burpeehomegardens.com and Facebook page at www.facebook.com/BurpeeHomeGardens. For advice, tips and ideas about how to get your own school or community garden started, check out the "I Can Grow" portion of the Burpee Home Gardens website. ###

ABOUT BURPEE HOME GARDENS® 'I CAN GROW' PROGRAM: The Burpee Home Gardens® "I Can Grow" program launched in 2010. It focuses on four key areas of interest, or the four E's: education, eating better, environment and economy. Thousands of children and community members were affected by the 2010 "I Can Grow" program. School, public and community gardens in Baltimore, Chicago, Dallas, Denver and New York received more than 6,000 plants in addition to garden installation materials from Burpee Home Gardens.

ABOUT BURPEE HOME GARDENS®: Burpee Home Gardens is a program of garden-ready vegetable and herb plants available nationally at retail garden centers. Backed by the 135-year history of Burpee, the first name in home gardening, Burpee Home Gardens provides gardeners with time-tested varieties and information, ideas and inspiration for success. For more information, visit burpeehomegardens.com.

ABOUT BURPEE: Burpee was founded in 1876 by seed pioneer W. Atlee Burpee. The company remains privately owned by George Ball, a third-generation seedsman, who serves as chairman of W. Atlee Burpee &

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Co. and is past president of The American Horticultural Society. Today, Burpee is the largest, most progressive garden company in North America offering seeds, garden plants and gardening supplies through the company website (www.burpee.com), direct-mail catalogs, and via retail garden centers nationwide. Burpee offers both heirloom and hybrid varieties, and is credited for introducing the world to numerous ornamental and edible breakthrough varieties during its 135-year history. Burpee's headquarters, display gardens and research farm are located in historic Bucks County, Pa.

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