New Jersey designates Horticultural Therapy Week

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New Jersey Sen. Tom Kean, New Jersey Senate President Stephen Sweeney, Laura DePrado of Final Touch Plantscaping LLC, New Jersey Sen. Christopher (Kip) Bateman and Michael DePrado. Photo courtesy of the New Jersey Senate

Just in time for spring, the state of New Jersey has designated the week of March 20-26 as Horticultural Therapy Week, inaugurated in ceremonial Senate resolution on Monday March 14.

New Jersey is the first state in the nation to formally designate that week, initially established by Congress in 2006, to celebrate the endless benefits of connecting people and plants in vocational, social and therapeutic

programs in a peaceful non-threatening environment using horticulture modality to improve the quality of life, according to a March 15 press release from Final Touch Plantscaping LLC.

"Horticultural therapy is a time-proven practice," state Sen. Christopher (Kip) Bateman said in the press release. "Designating a week each year to raise awareness of horticultural therapy in the Garden State will hopefully expand opportunities for more people to take advantage of the many benefits it offers."

Paul Hlubik, New Jersey's executive director of the USDA's Farm Service Agency, said in the release, "As a farmer and as the spouse of a horticulturalist, I recognize first hand the healing powers of working with one's hands in the soil and with plant life. As a public advocate for every segment of New Jersey agriculture through my work with growers and my colleagues in DC, I commend such awareness and unyielding support of the horticultural industry here in the Garden State."

New Jersey Secretary of Agriculture Douglas H. Fisher added in the release, "Growing a garden and working with plants provides many benefits to people, such as physical activity, concentration and a sense of accomplishment. All people benefit from learning how to work the land and how hard work pays off in the form of beautiful flowers, decorative landscapes and food to eat."