



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**JAMES HEARSUM JOINS MASSACHUSETTS HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY
AS NEW PRESIDENT AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

WELLESLEY, Mass., January 1, 2020 –Hearsum has been Executive Director of St. Andrews Botanic Garden in Scotland since May 2014. In the heart of St. Andrews, the St. Andrews Botanic Garden is widely regarded as a national treasure. Hearsum succeeds Suzanne Maas, who has been the interim head of MHS since the fall of 2018.

“We are extremely excited to have James join us and lead MHS to the next levels in our strategic growth plans,” said Wayne Mezitt, chair of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society’s Board of Trustees. “His leadership at St. Andrews Botanic Garden, extensive background in the field, and high energy well-position James to lead our great organization and create an incredible experience for our thousands of members and our broader community.”

“I’m honored to be selected for this great responsibility,” said Hearsum. “It is a wonderful opportunity to bring to MHS my leadership experience and passion for the way horticulture can change lives and communities. I am joining a committed and talented team at a time of great opportunity to extend the contribution of MHS, making the Commonwealth a center of horticultural excellence and an inspiring place to live and work.”

As Executive Director of St. Andrews Botanic Garden, Hearsum has been responsible for renewal in all aspects of the organization's guest experience, outreach, and educational programs, particularly by welcoming previously unreached communities. Notable developments include establishment of a sustainable Urban Farm, Butterfly House and Community Hub, in addition to a core focus on horticultural excellence. Prior to St. Andrews, Hearsum was Curator at the Royal Botanic Garden of Jordan.

A member of the Chartered Institute of Horticulturists, Hearsum began his career in the UK as a working gardener and nursery manager before attending Writtle College for his undergraduate degree in Horticulture and the University of Cambridge for Practical Horticulture and Plantsmanship. He also was a participant in the Longwood Graduate Program in Public Horticulture in Kennett Square, Penn.

About Massachusetts Horticultural Society

Founded in 1829, the Massachusetts Horticultural Society is dedicated to encouraging the science and practice of horticulture and to developing the public's enjoyment, appreciation, and understanding of plants and the environment. MHS is located in the heart of the Wellesley and Dover communities and is open for classes, symposia, trainings and workshops year-round. The Gardens at Elm Bank welcomes visitors for touring May through Columbus Day. As MHS's flagship botanic garden, The Gardens at Elm Bank is a seasonal 36-acre display of plants, flowers and trees that provides a beautiful setting for gatherings, walks, picnics, and more. It welcomes visitors to find inspiration for home gardens, relaxation in the natural world, and a backdrop for time spent with family and friends. The Gardens at Elm Bank also is a popular wedding and special events venue. MHS is a 501 (c) (3) educational organization.

For additional information please visit www.masshort.org, or contact Wayne Mezitt, Trustee Chair, waynem@westonnurseries.com, 508-962-1857

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