



AMERICAN HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

Reciprocal Admissions Program

2020 Program Information for Gardens

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Reciprocal Admissions Program Overview

The American Horticultural Society's (AHS) Reciprocal Admissions Program (RAP) promotes horticulture across North America, encouraging people to visit gardens and other horticultural institutions. Launched in 1990, the program comprises a network of **more than 320 horticultural institutions** in 48 states and the District of Columbia, plus Canada and the Caribbean.

A current membership card from the American Horticultural Society or a participating institution entitles individuals to **special admission privileges and discounts** at other participating institutions.

A complete listing of participating institutions can be found in the printed Reciprocal Admissions Program Guide and on the AHS website, www.ahsgardening.org/rapgardens. You do not need to log in to view the listing; it is available to the public.

Benefits of Participation

RAP helps horticultural institutions attract more visitors and increase their membership base. Participation benefits include the following:

- **Increased visibility:**
 - Ad listings in the printed RAP Guide (over 12,000 sold) and on the AHS website (averaging 22,700 views/month)
 - *The American Gardener* magazine (6 issues per year; delivered to over 20,000 AHS members)
 - Opportunity to list events in the Regional Happenings section of the magazine. These events are identified with a RAP symbol to draw attention to your event.
 - For organizations participating at and above the B level, opportunity to be featured in the Traveler's Guide to Gardens segment
 - 15% discount for ads placed in the magazine
- **Valuable member benefits:** Access for the organization's individual members to the reciprocal benefits offered by other participating RAP institutions. A current membership card from the AHS or a participating RAP institution entitles the visitor to benefits as specified in the listings.
- **Discounted registration** to the annual National Children & Youth Garden Symposium (NCYGS) for employees
- **Bulk AHS membership discounts:** Organizations participating at the Type C level can purchase individual AHS memberships for staff and/or board members at the discounted rate of \$25 (regularly \$35). Organizations participating at the Type D, E, or F levels receive three complimentary individual AHS memberships for staff and/or board members. Additional individual AHS memberships can be purchased at the discounted rate of \$25.

Printed RAP Guide

AHS prints a full-color guide annually, which is available for purchase (www.ahsgardening.org/rap) at a wholesale rate. Gardens frequently use the RAP Guide as a member benefit, an acquisition premium, marketing tool, or gift shop item. This publication provides a complete listing of participating gardens and the benefits they offer.

Online listings

Our website, www.ahsgardening.org, provides access to a state-by-state listing of RAP participants along with an updated digital map. For quick reference, a printable list of participating gardens is also available. The Reciprocal Admissions Program web page, www.ahsgardening.org/rap, consistently attracts the highest number of unique visitors on the AHS website.



RAP Guide and Online Directories listing types and pricing

Six directory listing types are available to help enhance the visibility of your organization:

Hard Copy Guide	Type A-\$155	Type B-\$230	Type C-\$320	Type D-\$385	Type E (Half Page)-\$550	Type F (Full Page)-\$1500
Size	1.45"x1.25"	2.9625"x1.25"	2.9625"x2.5625"	4.475"x2.5625"	4.475"x3.8564"	4.475"x7.754"
Contact Information	X	X	X	X	X	X
Benefits Offered	X	X	X	X	X	X
Logo		O	X	X	X	X
Photo		O	O	X	X	X
Event Listing			O	X	X	X
Additional Photos					X	X
Garden Description					X	X

State-by-State Listing	Type A	Type B	Type C	Type D	Type E	Type F
Contact Information	X	X	X	X	X	X
Benefits Offered	X	X	X	X	X	X
Logo		O	O	O	O	O
Photo		O	O	O	O	O
Description (40 words max.)				X	X	X

Printable List	Type A	Type B	Type C	Type D	Type E	Type F
Garden Name	X	X	X	X	X	X
Location, Phone, and Website	X	X	X	X	X	X

X = Included with this listing type

O = Choose **one** of the options listed



Plus take advantage of these special benefits for Type B and above ad sizes:

- **Type B level and above:** Priority will be given to sites participating to be featured in the ‘**Travelers Guide to Gardens**’ column of *The American Gardener* magazine.
- **Type C level and above:** Discounted **AHS individual memberships** for staff and/or board members for a discounted rate of \$25 (regularly \$35).
- **Type E level and above:** Opportunity to become the ‘**Featured Garden of the Month**’ on the [Find a Garden](#) page of our website, averaging 22,700 web visitors monthly, and AHS social media outlets. This will be on a first come, first served basis so renew early!

Requirements for joining RAP

RAP is open to many different types of horticultural institutions. Participating gardens must be open to the visiting public and have a membership program. It is the general practice of the AHS not to admit gardens that have been in operation less than one year. We encourage brand-new garden sites to focus their efforts on their physical and virtual garden presence, and to establish their membership base before applying to join RAP.

To participate, interested gardens must offer at least one benefit to other participating RAP members. Reciprocal benefits that may be offered are:

- Free Admission*
- Free Parking*
- Gift Shop Discount
- Free or Discounted Educational Programs
- Free or Discounted Admission to Select Special Events
- Free or Discounted Audio Guide or Tour
- Library Privileges

The benefits offered are strictly based on the admissions structure of the garden. ***If the garden charges an admission or parking fee, then free admission or parking must be the primary benefit offered. Gardens without admission or parking fees must offer three out of the five other types of reciprocal benefits.**

Gardens may choose to enforce the 90-mile exclusion policy, which excludes members of other gardens within 90 miles of them from receiving their reciprocal benefit(s) unless the gardens mutually agree to lift the exclusion.

Applying to join

All organizations interested in joining the program must submit an application online (<https://riverfarm.wufoo.com/forms/zwgpkdopbkjo1/>). AHS will review the application and inform the organization of its status (see page 4 for application timeline).

If approved by AHS, the garden becomes a participant in the program and will submit payment for the year. The garden will be invited to renew annually as long as it continues to fulfill program requirements and payment is received on time. Once in regular renewal cycles, if



neither a payment nor a request for an extension is received by **October 15**, it will be assumed the garden is no longer participating in RAP, and it will be removed from all listings.

2020 schedule for new RAP garden applications

RAP participation is based on the calendar year. RAP Guides are printed once a year in January, and listing information must be received by the **preceding October 15** to be included in the printed RAP guide. Gardens submit their listing information and any images to AHS, and AHS will design each garden's ad.

Gardens can join mid-year according to the schedule on page 4, but there are no pro-rated fees for mid-year joins. **March 31** is the last day that applications for new mid-year joins will be accepted. Gardens that join in-between RAP Guide printings will **only** be added to the online directories, and current participating gardens will be notified.

Application received by:	Garden will be notified by:	If approved, garden will be added to website by:
September 15, 2019	October 1	January 1, 2020
January 15, 2020	February 15	March 15
March 31, 2020	April 30	June 30
March 31 is the last day that applications for new mid-year joins will be accepted. New RAP garden applications received between April 1-September 15 will be considered for membership in the next calendar year.		

How to renew participation in RAP

Renewal information for the following year's membership is emailed to each participating garden's RAP contact in mid-August of the preceding year. To update your garden's RAP contact or ask questions about your garden's renewal, email rap@ahsgardening.org.

To renew your garden's participation, your RAP contact will need to complete the following **by October 15**:

1. Review the listing information, ad size, and benefits for your garden from the previous printed RAP guide
2. Reply to the email with
 - a. any changes or to confirm that the information is all correct
 - b. if applicable - new artwork for your listing, or to confirm that you'd like to use the same ad size, images, event listing, and/or description for your upcoming listing as in your previous listing
3. Submit payment as instructed in the email by **October 15**

Please note that changes in benefits offered and addition of the 90-mile exclusion may only be implemented during this annual renewal cycle.

Requirements for submitting images, event listings, and descriptions

- All listing updates and images must be received by the preceding **October 15** for inclusion in each year's printed RAP Guide. These can be emailed to rap@ahsgardening.org



- Gardens submit their listing information and any images to AHS, and AHS will design each garden's ad.

For Type B-F listings

- All logos and photos must be high resolution (300 dpi or higher). If you are sending multiple large image files, it may be helpful to use an online file transfer service such as Dropbox, Google Drive, or similar.
- Event listings should only include events for the new calendar year. Descriptions of your facility for use on the AHS website should be no longer than 40 words. AHS reserves the right to edit and/or exclude additional materials to fit within a listing's allotted space.
- Check page 2 for information on what is included with your garden's listing type. If your garden has opted for a Type B listing or above, and additional materials are not received by October 15, your listing type will be downgraded to a basic Type A, and no refunds will be made.

Guidelines for members of RAP institutions when visiting other gardens

The following guidelines for members to enjoy the Reciprocal Admissions Program are also included in the printed RAP Guides and on the RAP website, www.ahsgardening.org/rap.

- **We recommend that you call all gardens ahead of time before you plan your visit.** Some gardens have exclusions for special events or exhibits, or if you live within 90 miles of the garden (see the 90-mile Exclusion below), etc. Each garden has its own unique admissions policies, special events, and hours of operation, which is also why we recommend checking ahead of time to get the most up-to-date information.
- Present your current membership card or proof of membership at the admissions counter or gift shop to receive the RAP benefit(s) listed for that garden. **Each card will only admit the individual(s) whose name is listed on the card.** In the case of a family, couple, or household membership card that does not list individual names, the garden must extend the benefit(s) to at least two of the members. It is at the garden's discretion to extend benefits to more than two individuals. Some gardens may require a photo ID.
- Remember that the gardens you visit rely on admissions and donations to maintain their collections and gardens for all to enjoy. Please support them by visiting their gift shops or making a contribution.
- Be sure to check each garden's listing to determine the benefits offered.
- **The 90-mile Exclusion allows gardens to exclude members of other gardens within 90 miles of them from receiving their reciprocal benefit(s)** unless the gardens mutually agree to lift the exclusion. For AHS members, the exclusion is based on their home address. Please contact the garden you belong to or the garden you plan to visit to inquire about this guideline.

Staff and Volunteer FAQs

The following staff and volunteer FAQs are also provided as a separate one-page reference document online at www.ahsgardening.org/rap.

Who receives benefits?

Any card-carrying member of the listed participating gardens is entitled to receive benefits with the Reciprocal Admissions Program. This includes members of the American Horticultural Society. Gardens may have exceptions for special events or exhibits, or if the 90-mile exclusion is enforced.

How many people receive benefits?

Each member card will only admit the individual(s) whose name is listed on the card. In the case of a family, couple, or household membership card that does not list individual names, the garden must extend the benefit(s) to at least two of the members. It is at the garden's discretion to extend benefits to more than two individuals.

How can a garden's status be verified?

You can verify that a garden participates in the program by checking a current copy of the RAP Guide. Keep in mind that some gardens may join during the year and will not be included in the hard-copy RAP Guide. The AHS website, www.ahsgardening.org/rap, will always offer up-to-date information regarding garden status.

What is the 90-mile Exclusion?

The 90-mile Exclusion allows gardens to exclude members of other gardens within 90 miles of them from receiving their reciprocal benefit(s) unless the gardens mutually agree to lift the exclusion. For AHS members, the exclusion is based on their home address. Please use the RAP Guide or visit www.ahsgardening.org/rap to see if your garden enforces the 90-mile Exclusion.

How should RAP be promoted online and in print?

RAP is administered by the American Horticultural Society and should always be connected with the AHS. When referencing RAP on your own website and materials, please remember to use the following language: "The American Horticultural Society's Reciprocal Admissions Program offers free admission and/or additional benefits at over 320 gardens throughout North America and the Caribbean."

How can I order printed RAP Guides?

RAP Guides are available for order through the AHS website at www.ahsgardening.org/rap. Discounts are available for bulk orders. Visit www.ahsgardening.org/RAPGuideHelp for ordering assistance.

Who can be contacted at a participating garden if questions arise?

Questions that can be answered on-site should be directed to the membership, development, or administrative departments. For the most part, AHS works with the membership department for RAP-related issues. Be sure to check with your garden first to answer any questions.

How can AHS be contacted for program related questions?

Program information is available at www.ahsgardening.org/rap. Email rap@ahsgardening.org or call 703-768-5700 ext. 119 with questions.

