

NEWS RELEASE

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50 New School Beehives Funded by Whole Kids Foundation® and The Bee Cause Project

25,000 kids introduced to importance of bees and pollination

AUSTIN, Texas (March 29, 2017)—Today, Whole Kids Foundation and The Bee Cause Project announced 50 new school beehive grant recipients. The recipients cover 34 U.S. states and three Canadian provinces, providing educational opportunities around biology, agriculture, ecology, nutrition and business for 25,000 students.

The Whole Kids Foundation Honey Bee Grant program allows for schools and nonprofits to receive support for educational honey beehives. This support is provided in one of three ways: a monetary grant of \$1,500, an equipment grant of a custom-made indoor observation hive from The Bee Cause Project or an equipment grant of an outdoor hive with starter kit from Bee Thinking. Equipment grants also include monies to cover the first year of expenses. All grant recipients receive a consultation on safety and use of the hive from The Bee Cause Project and each recipient must have a 'bee mentor,' or a certified beekeeper that provides quarterly checkups on the hive.

“Many people don’t know the role bees play in the production of food, but one in three bites of the food we eat is made possible because of pollination,” said Tristana Pirkl, school grant manager of Whole Kids Foundation. “Educational beehives are key in teaching the next generation of consumers to have respect for pollinators and their role in nature and food production.”

Over the past three years, 166 hives have been awarded by Whole Kids Foundation, costing \$293,500 and impacting 310,603 students in the U.S. and Canada. The hives also support the health of bee populations, as an unprecedented amount of honey bees are perishing each year due to colony collapse disorder (CCD). The phenomenon occurs when the majority of worker bees in a colony disappear due to loss of habitat, immune system decline and attack of pest, mites and diseases.

“It has never been more important to educate our children on the importance of our natural environment and to begin cultivating future scientists, engineers and advocates prepared to take on the incredible challenges they will face as adults,” said Tami Enright, executive director of The Bee Cause. “The Bee Cause Project provides insight into issues like climate change, resource scarcity and species extinction in real-time through hands-on learning with live animals, helping make a powerful connection that will resonate into adulthood.”

Free curriculum on honey beehives, available to all schools, can be found at <https://www.wholekidsfoundation.org/downloads/resources/bee-wise-2015.pdf>. For more information on the Whole Kids Foundation Honey Bee Grant program, visit

wholekidsfoundation.org/schools/honey-bee-grant. For more information on The Bee Cause, visit thebeecause.org.

About Whole Kids Foundation®

Whole Kids Foundation, a Whole Foods Market foundation, is based in Austin, Texas, and operates as an independent, nonprofit organization. By empowering schools and inspiring families, the Foundation aims to help children reach optimal health through the strength of a healthy body fueled by nutritious food. For more information on the Foundation's programs including school gardens, salad bars and nutrition education for teachers, visit wholekidsfoundation.org.

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