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Lt. Governor Kim Guadagno Kicks Off 3rd Annual Agribusiness Tour With Visit To Halka Nurseries

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Millstone Tree Farm Is Enhancing Landscapes in New Jersey and Beyond

Trenton, NJ – Emphasizing the importance of agriculture to New Jersey's economy, Lt. Governor Kim Guadagno today kicked off her annual agribusiness tour by visiting Halka Nurseries in Millstone. Joining her on this tour was New Jersey Secretary of Agriculture Douglas Fisher. This visit marks the third year Lt. Governor Guadagno has visited New Jersey's agricultural business community, underscoring the important contribution this thriving industry provides to the State's economy.

"Halka Nurseries showcases the diversity of New Jersey's agriculture industry," said Lt. Governor Guadagno. "For more than fifty years, this family-owned business has been dedicated to quality and variety, solidifying their position as the country's premier grower of specimen trees. This Administration supports the hard work of farmers throughout the state and is grateful for their significant contribution to New Jersey's economy. From fresh produce to vineyards to greenhouse and dairy products, we truly are the 'Garden State.'"

Started in 1954 by Chester Halka Sr., Halka Nursery is the premier supplier of specimen trees for some of the nation's most prestigious homes, museums, monuments, memorials, colleges and commercial facilities. Halka Nurseries grows 198 varieties of trees in sizes ranging from 3 to 20 inches and heights from 8 to 40 feet. The trees are shipped throughout the country.

As a third generation family-owned business, Halka plants 25,000 tree seedlings annually. Many of these trees will remain planted in the Millstone farm for decades. Custom machinery and marine quality rope allow trees as heavy as 40 tons to be lifted out of the hole and onto trailer beds for delivery. Halka has sold trees that were planted around the U.S. Capitol Building, the Korean War Memorial, Ellis Island, the World Trade Center Memorial, the Arlington National Cemetery, and Princeton University.

"We are very excited to welcome Lt. Governor Kim Guadagno to Halka Nurseries. And we are extremely honored that she has chosen our nursery to tour and learn more about our agribusiness," said Chet Halka, owner of Halka Nurseries. "We often sell trees to our nation's important landmarks, but we rarely get visits from our state leaders. We appreciate the Lt. Governor taking the time to make our nursery an important stop on her tour."

Agriculture is New Jersey's third largest industry. In 2012, the state's 9,071 farms generated sales totaling \$1.14 billion. With 715,057 acres of farmland, the Garden State produces more than 100 varieties of fruits and vegetables that are enjoyed throughout the Northeast, in Canada and globally. The horticulture industry is one of New Jersey's top agriculture commodities. The industry includes nursery, greenhouse, sod and Christmas trees and generated \$444.8 million in sales in 2012.

"New Jersey's agricultural industry is vast and meets the growing demand of consumers throughout the region," said Secretary Fisher. "Halka Nurseries is known throughout the country for its trees. They are part of the reason why our state enjoys such a prosperous horticulture sector."

Businesses considering a move or in need of assistance are encouraged to call New Jersey's Business Action Center at (866) 534-7789 or visit the State's Business Portal at www.newjerseybusiness.gov.

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