



03 May 2016

Tangshan transforms to a greener city with opening of International Horticultural Exhibition

The city of Tangshan in China last week opened the 2016 Tangshan International Horticultural Exposition. During an amazing opening ceremony, involving performances from hundreds of Tangshan citizens, guests from around the world celebrated the start of this six month event that is expected to attract many millions of visitors.

The Expo was opened on 29 April by Mr. Zhang Qingli, Vice Chairman of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) in a ceremony including speeches from other senior officials including Madame Jiang Zehui, President of the China Flower Association (CFA) who congratulated the city of Tangshan on opening such a great event.

The Expo covers an area of 2260 ha, including a core area of 540 ha and an experiencing area of 1720 ha in the South Lake Ecological Park, which was built on the site of a former mining area. Close to the city, the Expo has transformed this derelict lake-side landscape into a beautiful exhibition that will benefit the citizens of Tangshan for generations.

The Expo opens during an important anniversary year for the city. Forty years ago the city was hit by a huge earthquake claiming the lives of over 240,000 citizens; this earthquake killed more people than any other during the 20th century. Since then the city has rebuilt itself and has become important for heavy manufacturing. To mark this anniversary the city decided to re-define its focus. The theme of the Expo is 'City and Nature - Phoenix Nirvana' and the city is now concentrated on being a 'Green City' with a bright new 'living green' landscape for the future citizens of Tangshan whilst still remembering the tragedy of their past.

Also speaking at the opening of this A2/B1 category Expo, approved by the International Association of Horticultural Producers (AIPH), the President of AIPH, Bernard Oosterom said, "Cities that aspire to be 'Green Cities' have recognised what science has proven, that plants and trees within a green city landscape can help to tackle the major social and environmental challenges that all cities face. Tangshan is one of those cities. Despite having grown as the result of industrial development this city has recognised that filling itself with 'living green' must be at the core of its future and I congratulate Tangshan on this as it seeks to be a leading example to China and the whole world."

The Expo is open until 16 October 2016 and visitors can see 47 different gardens from different countries as well as different cities and regions within China. The event includes indoor exhibitions for peonies, bonsai and other plants. Visitors can tour the new landscape,

enjoy the spectacular water fountain displays, explore the tropical greenhouse and experience the 'low-carbon lifestyle' exhibition.

For further details visit <http://www.tangshanexpo2016.com/english/>

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Notes for Editors:

International Association of Horticultural Producers (AIPH)

Since 1948, AIPH has united horticultural producers in an international community that thrives to this day. Much has changed in that time. Technologies advanced, cities rose from the ground, and we have become more connected than ever. As a result, our essential bond with nature has been weakened. AIPH strives to reignite and uphold an appreciation of plants that we believe is a basic human instinct. We support the work of grower associations globally and together we champion a prosperous industry, growing plants that enhance lives, advance societies and sustain our planet, for this generation and the next.

For further details visit www.aiph.org