



MISSOURI BOTANICAL GARDEN

4344 Shaw Boulevard • St. Louis, MO • 63110 • (314) 577-9400 • www.mobot.org

Date: August 8, 2008

What's growing on
at the Garden!

MISSOURI BOTANICAL GARDEN CAFÉ NAMED STATE'S FIRST CERTIFIED GREEN RESTAURANT

(ST. LOUIS): The Missouri Botanical Garden's cafe, Sassafras, has become the first Certified Green Restaurant™ in the state of Missouri. The official designation was made by the Green Restaurant Association (GRA), a national non-profit organization whose mission is "to create an ecologically sustainable restaurant industry."

"The Garden takes pride in this certification, which is another way we stand behind our mission to preserve the planet," said Garden President Dr. Peter Raven. "As stewards of the Earth, it is of great importance that we continually seek out ways to become more environmentally friendly in all of our practices."

The GRA performed a thorough evaluation of existing practices in the café to begin the certification process. After the assessment, the organization recommended steps the Garden and Catering St. Louis, which operates Sassafras, could take to improve upon its sustainable practices.

The restaurant was remodeled in early 2005 to incorporate environmentally friendly materials. Tabletops and divider walls are made of recycled paper products and renewable agricultural resources. Areas around the service counter are made of natural cork oak bark, one of the best-rated sustainable materials available. Ceiling tiles contain over 70-percent recycled content. Ceiling lights use energy efficient fluorescent bulbs, and accent lighting uses compact fluorescent bulbs (CFLs). Natural light is maximized through skylights and windows.

Visitors will also find napkins and menus made from 90-percent post-consumer recycled

(over)

ADD ONE: Green Restaurant

paper, with no chlorine bleach. Food is served on colorful, washable dishware with real cutlery, so there is less disposable waste. Aerators installed on kitchen sink equipment help to conserve water.

Sassafras staff recycle all paper, glass, plastic, aluminum, steel, cardboard and more. Visitors are also encouraged to recycle waste in marked bins at the restaurant entrance. To-go orders are served in recyclable paper boxes, as opposed to polystyrene containers.

The Garden is required to make four recommended café improvements per membership year, to maintain its standing as a Certified Green Restaurant.

“The café at the Missouri Botanical Garden joins over 260 restaurants nationwide in making a commitment to sustainable practices,” said GRA President Michael Oshman. “Sassafras already had in place many of the kinds of measures we recommend when the Garden joined the GRA. We are proud to showcase their example, and we look forward to working on more challenging environmental measures together.”

“The Garden recognizes the need to continually learn about and incorporate sustainable practices,” said Jean Ponzi, program manager at the EarthWays Center, a division of the Garden. “Going green is a process. We’re striving for ways to grow more sustainable in all that we do, especially in our service to visitors.”

The Missouri Botanical Garden is open daily from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Lunch is served in the Sassafras café from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Light snacks and beverages are available throughout the day. Brunches are offered yearly on Easter and Mother’s Day.

Admission to the Garden is \$8; residents of St. Louis City and County are \$4 adults and \$2 seniors. Children age 12 and under and Garden members are free.

For more information on the Garden, visit www.mobot.org or call the recorded line at (314) 577-9400. For more information on the Green Restaurant Association, visit www.dinegreen.com.

###

NOTE: Digital color images available by request. Check the online Media Room for downloadable news releases and images at www.mobot.org/press.

The Missouri Botanical Garden’s mission is “to discover and share knowledge about plants and their environment, in order to preserve and enrich life.” Today, 149 years after opening, the Missouri Botanical Garden is a National Historic Landmark and a center for science, conservation, education and horticultural display.