



For Immediate Release

RDS Allotment Awards 2011

Tuesday, October 11 – County Down allotment holders were well represented at Ireland’s second annual Allotment Awards in the RDS on Tuesday, October 11, 2011. The RDS Allotment Awards recognise the hard work, dedication and attention to detail that is being delivered by those involved in allotment gardening and aims also to promote an area that encourages people to become more aware of rural issues.

The winner of this year’s Allotment Provider Award, which includes a cheque for €1,000 and an RDS Silver Medal, went to Ards Allotments, Co. Down. Owned by Maurice and Judith Patton, Ards Allotments began in 2007 with just a handful of members but numbers have grown steadily and there are now close to 50 allotments on their land. The judging panel commended Mr and Mrs Patton for the work they have done on the overall allotment site as well as the support they provide for individual growers.

In the Experienced Gardener category, Helen Hume, also of Ards Allotments received the runners up prize narrowly missed out on claiming the overall award in a very competitive category. Mrs Hume, who promotes organic gardening ideas, received a cheque for €300 and an RDS Certificate of Merit.

With a total prize fund of over €3,000 the Awards strengthen the Society’s commitment to promoting biodiversity, which is vitally important, in that it provides significant economic, environmental, health and cultural benefits to Ireland. Leading the judging panel, Dr Mary Forrest, said, “Whether it’s for reasons of health or the economy, allotment gardening has never been more popular in Ireland. Allotments provide fresh and healthy food as well as many other benefits to those involved such as relaxation, enjoyment and recreation. These Awards aim to promote excellence in allotment gardening and we would like to congratulate everyone who is involved in this project for their commitment and hard work.”

The RDS Allotment Awards are part of the RDS Foundation’s agriculture programme which aims to inform debate and promote excellence in agricultural and rural development as well as recognising and rewarding the professional development of young practitioners and supporting developmental projects in agriculture and rural life.

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For further information, please contact:

J.P. Montgomery
The RDS Marketing Department
01 2407 222
jp@rds.ie
www.rds.ie/agriculture

Paul Farrelly
RDS Development Executive
01 2407 215
paul.farrelly@rds.ie