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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Online Voting Begins for “America’s Favorite Cherry Tree” as National Cherry Blossom Festival Launches Centennial Celebration**

Washington, DC (January 4, 2012) – “[America’s Favorite Cherry Tree](#),” an online poll launched today by the Arbor Day Foundation and the National Cherry Blossom Festival, allows all Americans to participate in the Festival’s Centennial Celebration by casting their vote for one of three finalists: the Yoshino, Kwanzan, or Autumn Flowering cherry tree.

The poll can now be accessed at [arborday.org](http://arborday.org). On the website, participants also have the opportunity to purchase individual cherry trees, with a portion of every sale benefiting the National Cherry Blossom Festival. This year’s Festival commemorating the 100-year anniversary of Tokyo’s gift of cherry trees to Washington, DC, begins on March 20, 2012.

Results of the online voting will be announced on April 27, 2012. April 27th is National Arbor Day and the last day of this year’s festivities.

“By voting in the poll and purchasing a cherry tree, Americans can bring the Centennial Celebration to both their computer and backyard,” said Diana Mayhew, president of the National Cherry Blossom Festival.

“We’re thrilled to add a new chapter to this great American tradition,” said John Rosenow, founder and chief executive of the Arbor Day Foundation. “With this year’s poll and the availability of online cherry tree purchases, Americans can take part in this historic event even if they are unable to travel to the nation’s capital.”

The three finalists, selected by Festival and Foundation staff, were included in the gift from the mayor of Tokyo in 1912. Since their introduction, they have become favorites along Washington, DC’s Tidal Basin, as well as in yards, parks and streets across the United States.

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**About the Arbor Day Foundation:** The Arbor Day Foundation is a nonprofit conservation and education organization of more than one million members, with the mission to inspire people to plant, nurture and celebrate trees. More information on the Foundation and its programs can be found at [arborday.org](http://arborday.org).

**About the National Cherry Blossom Festival:** The National Cherry Blossom Festival is the nation’s greatest springtime celebration. The 2012 Festival, March 20 through April 27, includes five spectacular weeks of events and features diverse and creative programming promoting traditional and contemporary arts and culture, natural beauty and community spirit.