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## **NATIONAL CHERRY BLOSSOM FESTIVAL EXPANDS PET-FRIENDLY PROGRAMMING WITH MARS, INCORPORATED**

**Washington, DC** (March 6, 2019) – The National Cherry Blossom Festival is pet-ready once again thanks to its host sponsor Mars, Incorporated.

Guided by Mars Petcare's BETTER CITIES FOR PETS™ program, a key initiative that advocates for fewer pets in shelters, more pet-friendly places, and happier, healthier lives for both people and pets, the National Cherry Blossom Festival's partnership with Mars enables select signature events to be "pet-friendly" by providing dogs who attend with their owners the necessities they need while on-the-go. As part of this year's partnership, Mars will also provide a \$20,000 grant to Washington DC's Southwest Business Improvement District (SWBID) to help further improve the lives of pets and their owners in the area.

Throughout the Festival, which attracts millions of visitors from around the world, pet owners can visit pet comfort stations featuring waste bag distribution, treats, shade, and water stations using bowls with potable water to keep dogs hydrated and out of the sun. Mars and the Festival will also provide educational resources for pet owners on responsible pet ownership and the importance of creating more pet-friendly spaces.

"As a member of the Washington DC community, with our global headquarters in McLean, VA, Mars is proud to be a Host Sponsor of the National Cherry Blossom Festival. We are excited to once again provide pet-friendly activities for dogs and their owners through our BETTER CITIES FOR PETS™ program," said Jam Stewart, vice president of corporate affairs for Mars Petcare. "We applaud the National Cherry Blossom Festival and the DC community for recognizing that pet-friendly amenities are critical at events like this and we look forward to another successful year."

Pet-friendly services provided during the Festival include:

- *Weekends between March 23-April 14 (10:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m.):* At the **Tidal Basin Welcome Area**, pet comfort services will be available complete with water bowls and waste bags for dogs on the go.
- *Saturday, March 30 (10:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m.):* At the **Blossom Kite Festival** on the grounds of the Washington Monument (17th St NW & Constitution Ave), pet comfort services will also be available.

- *Saturday, April 6 (12 p.m. -9:30 p.m.):* At **Petalpalooza** taking place at the Wharf, BETTER CITIES FOR PETS™ will offer a pet comfort station and activities celebrating pets and pet-friendly spaces. Visitors can also pick-up giveaways and share thoughts on how cities can make life happier and healthier for pets and owners.
- *Thursday, April 4 (5:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.):* Mars and **Milk Bar Logan Circle** invite all four-legged friends and their humans to an afternoon of dog-friendly activities, food, and drinks.
- *Saturday, April 13 (10 a.m. – Noon):* At the **National Cherry Blossom Parade**, Festival sponsor Mars and BETTER CITIES FOR PETS™ will host the springtime float. Visitors and parade attendees are welcome to bring dogs to this event.

“We realize the important role that pets play in so many of our attendees lives, and with the help of Mars Petcare’s BETTER CITIES FOR PETS™ initiative, we are excited to enhance the Festival experience by providing pet-friendly amenities throughout our events,” said Diana Mayhew, President of the National Cherry Blossom Festival.

Attendees of the Festival will also have the chance to learn more about BETTER CITIES FOR PETS™, a Mars Petcare program, that aims to create enough places for every dog and cat to live, visit and play by supporting shelters, homes, businesses and parks.

Before attending, Festival attendees with pets should visit <https://nationalcherryblossomfestival.org/pets/> for more information and to determine if their dog is Festival friendly before making the trip.

Additionally, to join the BETTER CITIES FOR PETS™ movement, get more information about Mars Petcare, and access resources such as the [Playbook for Pet-Friendly Playbook](#) to help create more pet-friendly communities, visit [www.bettercitiesforpets.com](http://www.bettercitiesforpets.com).

### **About Mars, Incorporated**

Mars is a family-owned business with more than a century of history making diverse products and offering services for people and the pets people love. With over \$35 billion in sales, the company is a global business that produces some of the world’s best-loved brands: M&M’s®, SNICKERS®, TWIX®, MILKY WAY®, DOVE®, PEDIGREE®, ROYAL CANIN®, WHISKAS®, EXTRA®, ORBIT®, 5™, SKITTLES®, UNCLE BEN’S®, and COCOAVIA®. Mars also provides veterinary health services that include BANFIELD®Pet Hospitals, Blue Pearl®, VCA® and Pet Partners™. Headquartered in McLean, VA, Mars operates in more than 80 countries. The Mars Five Principles – Quality, Responsibility, Mutuality, Efficiency and Freedom – inspire its more than 115,000 Associates to create value for all its partners and deliver growth they are proud of every day.

For more information about Mars, please visit [www.mars.com](http://www.mars.com). Join us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Instagram](#) and [YouTube](#).

### **About BETTER CITIES FOR PETS™**

BETTER CITIES FOR PETS™ is a program of Mars Petcare, the world’s leading pet nutrition and health care business, created to help communities become more pet-friendly by bringing the voice of pets and their owners to places of influence and advocating for fewer pets in shelters, more pet-friendly places, and happier, healthier lives for both people and pets. Mars Petcare works with key partners, businesses and local governments to better understand how to improve communities by: providing safe and welcoming shelters that lead to forever homes; encouraging pet-friendly, responsible homes for pets; welcoming more pets into local businesses, and giving pets plenty of park space to play. For more information about Mars Petcare and BETTER CITIES FOR PETS™, visit [www.bettercitiesforpets.com](http://www.bettercitiesforpets.com).

**About National Cherry Blossom Festival**

The National Cherry Blossom Festival is the nation's greatest springtime celebration. The 2019 Festival, March 20 – April 14, includes four weeks of events featuring diverse and creative programming promoting traditional and contemporary arts and culture, natural beauty, and community spirit. Visit [nationalcherryblossomfestival.org](http://nationalcherryblossomfestival.org) or call 877.44.BLOOM for more information, or check out [Facebook](#) (CherryBlossomFestival), [Twitter](#) (@CherryBlossFest), and [Instagram](#) (@CherryBlossFest).