



Local Food Depends on Pollinators

New in the 2017 Seedling Sale-Apple and Pear Trees

Win-Win for Pollinators and Growers

Pollinators are declining worldwide, as are their pollination services. Farmers, specially, orchard owners have a unique opportunity to simultaneously conserve wild bee populations and benefit from their contribution to fruit pollination. The mixed eastern landscape provides pollinators with needed habitat in close proximity to orchards. Simply protecting the habitat areas that already exist on grower lands is a first step in ensuring pollination. By encouraging a diversity of habitat for pollinators, agricultural growers may be able to provide nature's pollination services rather than incurring the cost of renting honey bees.

Why is Bee Pollination so Important?

Honey bees are the most widely used pollinator in agricultural systems, as they are

easily managed. However, due to disease and competing demands, the cost of hive rentals continues to increase as supplies decrease. Apple and pear trees are self-incompatible, meaning a tree's own pollen will not produce fertilized seeds or fruit. Because all trees within a variety are clones, pollen must be from another variety of apple tree including crabapple trees or pear trees. Bees collect pollen with their hairy bodies and cross-pollinate flowers as they move throughout an orchard feeding on nectar and pollen. For the same reason that diversified investing is safer than dependence on a single stock, relying on a single pollinator for this vital service may pose increasing risk. Honey bees will no doubt remain a key pollinator for agricultural systems, but research suggests more and more that wild bees are contributing to apple and pear pollination.

Protect and enhance your floral resources throughout the growing season and provide nesting material/sites (trees, rotting logs, wooden structures, old stone walls, semi-barren land) and provide a buffer from soil compaction.



Pollinator Favorites in the Seedling Sale

- Bearberry
- Foam Flower
- Blazing Star
- Highbush Blueberry
- Elderberry
- New Jersey Tea
- Summersweet
- Serviceberry
- Butterflybush

Make your Backyard Pollinator Friendly

What are pollinators and why should you care?

Pollinators are bees, butterflies, hummingbirds, bats and other animals that feed on flowers, transferring pollen in the process. Nearly 80% of all flowering plants need pollinators to transfer pollen between flowers in order to

produce seeds, fruits, and vegetables. Approximately one out of every three bites of food you eat depends on the work of a pollinator.

Pollination also produces seeds and fruits that feed birds and other wildlife. Many blooming plants depend on pollinators for survival, and globally many

pollinators are declining from a variety of causes. When using pesticides you could unintentionally harm pollinators and other beneficial insects. Your careful actions can prevent harming pollinators.



Provide Native Plants for Pollinator Habitat

visit www.putnam.cce.cornell.edu for a list of plants and visit their pollinator garden at 1 Geneva Road, Brewster