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**Sargent's Landscape
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Press Release

Taking Action to Protect Pollinators

Neonicotinoid pesticides commonly used by farmers, nurseries and individuals have been linked to declining native and honey-bee populations. Local Rochester, MN grower and green goods retailer, Sargent's Landscape Nursery, has taken action by eliminating the use and sale of neonicotinoids.

Rochester, June 10, 2014: Sargent's grows over 95% of the perennial plants sold at its two Rochester garden centers. All Sargent's grown perennial plants and any annuals sold by Sargent's are now neonicotinoid free. This pesticide is suspected to be a factor in the Honey-Bee Colony Collapse Disorder, according to University of Minnesota Entomology Professor and bee expert, Martha Spivak. Several other factors likely to be contributing to this disorder include parasites, decreased habitat and diverse food sources along with climate change. According to the USDA, "Honeybees are responsible for pollinating more than 100 crops and one out of every three bites of food Americans eat."

Fortunately, gardeners can do their part by planting neonicotinoid-free plants along with creating pollinator friendly outdoor spaces. Butterfly populations are also suffering. For a pollinator-friendly habitat the USDA recommends:

Go Native - plant native plant species
Bee Showy - flowers should bloom in your garden throughout the growing season
Bee Bountiful - plant big patches of each plant species
Bee Diverse - plant a diversity of flowering species that supply an abundance of pollen and nectar
Bee Chemical Free - limit or eliminate use of pesticides

Source: <http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?navid=usdabees>

Locally people can celebrate pollinators and learn more about how to protect them at Cascade Meadow Environmental Learning Center's Pollination Celebration, Saturday, June 21st. This event is part of RochesterFest and National Pollinator Week, June 16 – 23rd.

Additional information about this subject is available at:

<http://sargentsgardens.com/info-center/>

<http://pollinator.org/index.html>

<http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?navid=usdabees>

<http://www.npr.org/2013/09/27/225440117/why-are-bees-disappearing>

<http://beelab.umn.edu/>

For Immediate Release