

Farmers for Monarchs – A Keystone Collaborative

Identifying and implementing solutions on agricultural and ranching lands to achieve a sustainable monarch butterfly population

Monarch populations have declined over the past two decades. Because they face serious challenges today, a diverse and dedicated group of organizations spanning the research community, agricultural production, conservation causes, public agencies, and others are working to identify solutions to promote conservation and recovery of monarch butterflies and their migratory phenomenon.

Farmers for Monarchs works in partnership with the farming and ranching community to support and enhance habitat for a sustainable monarch population while maintaining thriving working lands.

Who We Are

Farmers for Monarchs consists of national organizations representing farmers, ranchers, and landowners; businesses working along the agricultural supply chain; researchers and academic institutions; federal and state entities; and conservation organizations. We support productive agriculture and livestock operations in concert with monarch conservation. An increase in milkweed and nectar plants appropriately placed in rural areas can benefit monarchs without inhibiting production. Because farmers and ranchers are stewards of the land across much of monarch habitat, they are in a unique position to support sustainable monarch populations.

Farmers, ranchers, and landowners are already engaged in conservation initiatives focused on water quality, erosion control, wildlife, and pollinator habitat. These efforts demonstrate that continuing innovation in agricultural practices can reduce environmental impacts, increase crop productivity, and be compatible with monarch conservation efforts.

Our Approach

Farmers for Monarchs is committed to making progress through voluntary efforts to restore, enhance, and protect monarch habitat while maintaining producers' flexibility in their operations.

The Collaborative is utilizing the expertise and experience of our members to:

- Identify agricultural and conservation practices to support healthy monarch populations.
- Increase awareness of those strategies with the agricultural community and other interested parties.
- Promote the implementation of practices that will support monarch butterfly populations in agricultural landscapes.



Photos courtesy of U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Members

- American Farm Bureau Federation
- American Soybean Association
- BASF Corporation
- Bayer Crop Science
- Bee & Butterfly Habitat Fund
- Corn Refiners Association
- Corteva Agriscience
- Environmental Defense Fund
- FMC Corporation
- Iowa State University
- Monarch Watch - University of Kansas
- Monarch Joint Venture
- National Association of Conservation Districts
- National Association of Wheat Growers
- National Corn Growers Association
- Pheasants Forever, Inc.
- Saint Louis Zoo WildCare Institute
- Syngenta
- Tribal Alliance for Pollinators

With input from

- Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
- U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service



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Farmers for Monarchs Activities and Resources

Reversing the decline in the monarch butterfly population will require coordinated, collaborative efforts. Engaging in voluntary habitat conservation can be a win-win for all involved and help ensure productive lands and resilient monarch populations for future generations.

To help make this a reality, members of Farmers for Monarchs have worked together on target activities and resources to benefit both butterflies and agricultural landowners/operators, including:

- [Farmers for Monarchs](#): An online resource developed specifically for farmers by a subset of Farmers for Monarchs members, including farmers, ranchers, landowners and the agriculture industry, to encourage and enable the expansion and establishment of pollinator/conservation habitat, including milkweed, along the monarch butterfly seasonal migration route.
- [Webinar on Engaging Farmers and Ranchers in State Monarch Conservation Planning](#): hosted in partnership with the Monarch Joint Venture and National Conservation Training Center featuring learnings and tips on how to build a successful state plan that brings together the agricultural community with conservation partners in informing state plans and supporting the monarch butterfly
- [Farmers for Monarchs List of Agricultural Resources](#): The list of resources has been compiled by Farmers for Monarchs to offer agricultural producers relevant technical information on managing and restoring habitat for monarch butterflies.
- [Monarch FAQ](#): Farmers for Monarchs FAQ focuses on need-to-know information about the uniqueness of the monarch butterfly, challenges faced by the monarch, and opportunities for monarch conservation on agricultural lands.
- [Endangered Species Act and the Monarch Butterfly 101](#): An overview of the ESA process and must-have information on details pertaining to the monarch and agricultural land owners.
- In May 2018, the Collaborative and the Honey Bee Health Coalition jointly submitted [recommendations for enhancing honey bee, monarch butterfly, and pollinator habitat and forage](#) in private lands conservation programs to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. A summary is available here, and the full recommendations can be found [here](#).
- Letter to USDA and Department of the Interior requesting that the Farm Service Agency (FSA) initiate a section 7 conference with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) under the Endangered Species Act to analyze effects of conservation actions to benefit the monarch butterfly through the Conservation Reserve Program and provide ESA regulatory predictability for agricultural producers who elect to establish monarch habitat through the CRP should the butterfly be listed in the future.



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For More Information

For more information on Farmers for Monarchs, our approach, activities, and resources, please contact the Keystone Policy Center.



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