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## AAD Announces Pollinator Garden Project During National Pollinator Week

**LITTLE ROCK, AR** – In recognition of National Pollinator Week, the Arkansas Agriculture Department (AAD) unveiled a new pollinator garden effort planned for the north side of the Little Rock Headquarters Office complex at 1 Natural Resources Drive. The garden will include various species of native flowers and educational signage to bring awareness to the valuable contributions of native pollinators to agricultural operations and natural ecosystems.

Eleven years ago the U.S. Senate designated a week in June as “National Pollinator Week” as a step toward addressing the urgent issue of declining pollinator populations. “Pollinator Week has grown into a national celebration through projects like this one,” says Agri Program Manager Jake Bodart, who is organizing the effort for the AAD. “We hope that this pollinator garden brings awareness to the important role that native pollinators play in our agriculture system and serves as an educational centerpiece for the public,” says Bodart.

“I applaud Jake and other Arkansas Agriculture Department staff for initiating a project and volunteering their off-duty time to create a garden that will not use any state funds but still provide educational benefits about the importance of pollinators to Arkansas agriculture,” says Arkansas Agriculture Secretary Wes Ward.

The AAD’s Apiary Division serves Arkansas beekeepers, and helps to maintain and promote viable honeybee populations for the purpose of pollination in Arkansas. According to the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, honey bees are managed and used to pollinate over 100 crops grown commercially in North America including Arkansas commodities such as cotton, tomatoes, strawberries, sunflowers, apples, watermelons, squash, peaches, and blueberries. Currently, Arkansas has 2,826 registered apiarists with 5,537 active yards and 45,062 colonies. Arkansas Apiary rules and regulations, registration forms for bee yards, inspection details, and more are available, [here](#).

Find a guide for selecting plants for pollinators by zip code through the National Pollinator Partnership, [here](#). Learn more about conservation programs available through the United States Department of Agriculture which allow farmers and ranchers to manage pollinator habitat while also improving their operations, [here](#).

The Arkansas Agriculture Department is dedicated to the development and implementation of policies and programs for Arkansas agriculture and forestry to keep its farmers and ranchers competitive in national and international markets while ensuring safe food, fiber, and forest products for the citizens of the state and nation.

Visit [www.agriculture.arkansas.gov](http://www.agriculture.arkansas.gov).

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