

Resolution
Declaring the Town of Mansfield a Pollinator Friendly community

WHEREAS, the loss of pollinators is alarmingly high, with honey bee colonies experiencing significant annual losses, and with populations of native bees and other pollinators also in decline; and

WHEREAS, threats to pollinators concern the entire food system, where pollination services provided by honey bees and other essential pollinators account for one in every three bites of food and are valued at \$18 to \$27 billion in agricultural production annually in the United States; and

WHEREAS, these declines are driven by a number of factors including habitat loss, pesticide exposure, lack of forage, and climate change; and

WHEREAS, the maintenance of healthy, biodiverse ecosystems depends upon the significant environmental services provided by pollinator species; and

WHEREAS, populations of pollinators can be supported and enhanced by increasing native habitat that is protected from pesticide contamination; and

WHEREAS, the use of neonicotinoids, the most widely used class of insecticides, is associated with lethal and sub-lethal effects on bees such as impaired foraging patterns, altered reproductive cycles, and impaired immune systems leading to increased susceptibility to pathogens and reduced colony survival; and

WHEREAS, a large and growing body of independent, peer-reviewed scientific studies demonstrate that existing neonicotinoid contamination in the environment can also adversely impact birds, aquatic organisms and the ecosystems they support; and

WHEREAS, research has shown that many pesticides, including fungicides and herbicides, can pose risks to already-compromised bees and other pollinators; and

WHEREAS, use of pesticides is often cosmetic and is not necessary to create and maintain landscapes, gardens or open spaces, given the availability of viable alternative practices and products; and

WHEREAS, integrated pest management - designed to manage pests by addressing the underlying sources of the pest problems and prioritizing techniques that are least toxic to humans and the environment - strengthens efforts to protect pollinators;

WHEREAS, CT Public Act No. 16-17, An Act Concerning Pollinator Health, limits the use of neonicotinoids; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Mansfield can demonstrate its support for pollinators by maintaining pollinator habitat on land managed by the Town and by encouraging residents to plant pollinator-friendly native plants, and to abstain from pesticide use.

NOW, THEREFORE:

The Town of Mansfield shall create, restore, and enhance safe, healthy pollinator habitat that provides forage and nesting resources, and that is free of pesticides. The Town of Mansfield shall identify appropriate locations for creating and managing habitat, potentially including parks, open spaces and around facilities. Where possible, the Town of Mansfield shall seek habitat locations that facilitate habitat connectivity.

Habitat plantings by the Town of Mansfield shall include a diversity of native plant species: flowering trees, shrubs, or forbs known to provide pollen and/or nectar to pollinators, with preference for ecologically appropriate native perennial species in newly planted or restored areas. Plantings should be designed to ensure that flowers are available throughout the growing season. Habitat should also include pollinator nesting sites such as undisturbed soil, undisturbed foliage, and pithy-stemmed plants.

As possible, the Town of Mansfield shall adhere to mowing practices that allow wildflowers and other appropriate flowering forage species to bloom and flourish. (See best practices provided by the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1qLQR48hu-HALkYeQ2928XMAuHlndMnWC/view>.)

The Town of Mansfield shall collaborate with its suppliers on sourcing plants and seeds free of neonicotinoids.

The Town of Mansfield shall avoid the use of pesticides on land owned or operated by the Town by following integrated pest management (IPM) techniques.

Synthetic insecticides identified as highly toxic to bees listed in Group 4 of the Insecticide Resistance Action Committee's classification shall not be applied to property owned or operated by the Town of Mansfield except in cases of a threat to public health or property and when less toxic alternatives do not exist.

The Town of Mansfield shall continue its practice of not applying pesticides for cosmetic reasons on land owned or operated by the Town.

The Town of Mansfield shall encourage government entities, businesses, and residents to avoid the use of neonicotinoids and other hazardous insecticides and to create and maintain native pollinator habitat.

To assist residents and businesses in making Mansfield a Pollinator Friendly Community, the Town shall sponsor and encourage educational programs, lectures, and demonstration projects, such as pollinator gardens.

This resolution shall become effective upon adoption.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have set my hand and caused the seal of the Town of Mansfield to be affixed on this 10th day of February in the year 2020.

Antonia Moran
Mayor, Town of Mansfield