



Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association

1-367 Woodlawn Road West, Guelph, Ontario N1H 7K9

Toll: 1-800-265-9751 Tel: 1-519-826-4214

www.ontariosoilcrop.org

Syngenta's Operation Pollinator partners with on-farm researchers to create habitat

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Guelph, ON (May 5, 2022) – Syngenta’s Operation Pollinator program continues to grow in Ontario with a spring initiative for farmers engaged in soil health and water quality research through the On-Farm Applied Research and Monitoring (ONFARM) Program.

Participating ONFARM cooperators will convert up to two acres of lower-productivity land into dedicated pollinator habitat. Both Operation Pollinator and ONFARM are delivered by the Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association (OSCIA). Syngenta [announced](#) the partnership with OSCIA at the 2022 ONFARM Forum in February.

"Operation Pollinator has seen great success in Ontario over the past four years," says Warren Schneckenburger, OSCIA president and ONFARM cooperator. "OSCIA was pleased to carry this momentum to ONFARM cooperators in 2022, who are committed to farming practices with benefits beyond productivity and that contribute to environmental and societal good."

Operation Pollinator was first offered to farmers and rural landowners in Southern Ontario in 2018. Since then, approximately 106 acres of pollinator habitat have been established by 44 cooperators under the Ontario program.

Cooperators will plant a blend of pollinator-friendly species, including birdsfoot trefoil and white clover, sourced with valuable technical support from Speare Seeds. Sites will be maintained for at least one year, and long-term habitat establishment is encouraged. In addition, cooperators may choose to plant milkweed, which supports Monarch butterflies native to the province.

"In exchange for dedicating the land, participating farmers receive a provision of seed, agronomic advice, and financial assistance to help offset site establishment costs," says Erin McGregor, Stewardship and Policy Manager for Syngenta Canada. "This is a win-win for Ontario’s biodiversity and the farmers participating in the program. We are pleased to continue our partnership with OSCIA and recognize the efforts of program participants for making biodiversity an important part of their farm."

ONFARM cooperators, like Norm Lamothe in Peterborough County, are leading farmers in Ontario and are well-positioned to showcase the value of agricultural biodiversity and disseminate their knowledge to other farmers. "We continue to see the benefits of integrating a diverse ecosystem on our farm," shared Lamothe. "A compliment to our soil health initiatives, a pollinator site is another way we can encourage beneficial insects and bees to work within our cropping practices."

About Operation Pollinator:

[Operation Pollinator](#) is an international biodiversity initiative focused on research and partnerships to promote the health and well-being of bees and other pollinators given their essential role in agriculture and nature.

About ONFARM:

The [ONFARM program](#) is a four-year, applied research initiative that began in 2019 which supports soil health and water quality research on farms across Ontario. The program was developed by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs and is funded by the Canadian Agricultural Partnership, a five-year federal-provincial-territorial initiative.

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Media Contact:

Samantha Lyon, Programs Analyst, Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association

519-546-8131

slyon@ontariosoilcrop.org

