President Obama Announces New Plan to Help Save Bees and Other Pollinators

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Something to think about before squashing a “pesky” bee or spraying pesticides to keep bugs out of your garden: Pollinating insects are integral to our economy, food security and environmental health, and experts say their health and numbers are in jeopardy. A task force commissioned by President Obama has recently released a strategy to better understand and improve both of these issues, reports a White House press release.

In 2014, beekeepers in the United States reported losing nearly 40 percent of honeybee colonies nationwide. Researchers also said the number of Monarch butterflies found wintering in Mexican forests has declined by 90 percent or more in just two decades.

The strategy reflects the president’s “all hands on deck” approach to saving these pollinating insects through a new government initiative with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

The government’s *Strategy to Promote the Health of Honey Bees and Other Pollinators* and its accompanying *Pollinator Research Action Plan* have several major goals. One is to conduct research on why we are losing so many pollinators and learn more about how to improve their overall health.

Another goal is to protect and increase the number of honeybee colonies and Monarch butterflies. This would entail restoring millions of acres of land to help these pollinators thrive.

In addition, the White House is also asking people of all ages and communities across the country to plant pollinator gardens on their land, think twice about spraying pesticides, and learn to share space to help bees, butterflies, insects, bats and other pollinating species to flourish.

For more information about the government’s plans to save U.S. pollinator species, click here. To learn more about why honeybees are important for our health, click here.

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