

MEDIA RELEASE



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Farmers Giving Back in Canada

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Marc and Chantal Bercier, owners and producers at their farm, Ferme Agriber Inc., recognize how important a healthy bee population is to their success. Along with their son Guillaume, Marc and Chantal operate a respected seed cleaning company and farm in Ontario, Canada. They work to pioneer sustainable farming practices and show other farmers how restoring natural buffer zones can benefit both wildlife and the land.

From an early age, Marc has wanted to give back to the local wildlife by preserving some of the beauty of the natural landscapes in his area. After purchasing his neighbor's farm in 2013, Marc decided to build a natural habitat buffer for wildlife in a gully between the two farms. He called different environmental agencies to learn more and gain support for his habitat enhancement work. Eventually, he came across the ALUS (Agricultural Land Use Services), which was able to fund his efforts and help with the development of his project. Together, Marc and Chantal want to pioneer sustainable, pollinator-friendly farming practices to show other farmers how quickly they can restore and maintain their natural buffer zones to benefit both wildlife and the land.

Marc and Chantal's commitment to environmental stewardship and pollinator conservation has not gone unnoticed, as they have been selected as this year's winner of the NAPPC Canadian Farmer-Rancher Award. The award was presented to Marc and Chantal last Tuesday night at the 16th Annual North American Pollinator Protection Campaign (NAPPC) Conference Evening Reception at the USDA Log Lodge in Beltsville, Maryland.

The NAPPC Canadian Farmer-Rancher Award recognizes individuals who have contributed significantly to pollinator protection, conservation, and issue outreach resulting in increased awareness of the importance of pollinators and pollination within the agricultural community. This special award sheds light on the contributions of American farmers to natural and cultural resource preservation. Marc and Chantal Bercier share this great honor this year with U.S. Farmer-Rancher, Lakhy Sran, of Sran Family Orchards.

Without pollinators we would lose one third of our diet, nearly all of our high-nutrient food, most terrestrial ecosystems would collapse, important plant species that provide the raw materials for medicines would die out, and the biosphere would stop filtering air and freshwater for us and other wildlife. The world as we know it depends on pollinators. Pollinators require healthy clean habitat, and factors such as uncontrolled development, agricultural intensification, chemical misuse, and pathogen introduction are decimating their populations. Some species have seen a 90% decline in their populations over the last decade.

The Pollinator Partnership (P2), as the world's largest organization dedicated to the protection and promotion of pollinators, hopes to encourage environmental stewardship and to catalyze future actions that benefit pollinators by identifying individuals that have taken on advocacy. P2 manages NAPPC – the North American Pollinator Protection Campaign – and coordinates pollinator conservation outreach with over 150 stakeholders. P2 works to promote widespread collaborative stewardship practices on public, private, open, and working lands, within institutions and among individuals.

For more information about the NAPPC Canadian Farmer-Rancher Award, Pollinator Partnership, and the NAPPC, please visit www.pollinator.org.



From left: Jason Hickman (Grower Relations, Sran Family Orchards), Dr. Vicki Wojcik (Research Director, Pollinator Partnership), Dan Ashe (Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service), Laurie Davies Adams (Executive Director, Pollinator Partnership), Marc Bercier (Winner, Canada Farmer-Rancher Award)

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NAPPC is a collaborative effort of over 150 organizations in the U.S., Canada, and Mexico whose common goal is to promote awareness of the essential role that pollinators play in food systems and ecosystems, and to provide the public with simple, effective ways to engage in environmental stewardship.

Pollinator Partnership is a nonprofit 501(c)3 organization and the largest in the world dedicated exclusively to the protection and promotion of pollinators and their ecosystems. The Pollinator Partnership's mission is to promote the health of pollinators, critical to food and ecosystems, through conservation, education, and research. Signature initiatives include the NAPPC (North American Pollinator Protection Campaign), S.H.A.R.E., National Pollinator Week, and the Ecoregional Planting Guides.

To learn more about the NAPPC and the Pollinator Partnership visit www.pollinator.org or contact info@pollinator.org or call 415-362-1137 for more information.