

Partnership in Bloom: The J.M. Smucker Co. and Pollinator Partnership's Ongoing Commitment to Conservation

Over the past decade Pollinator Partnership (P2) and The J.M. Smucker Co. have partnered to advance pollinator conservation. The partnership first arose from a desire on the part of Smucker to promote the monarch butterfly and its conservation in Ohio, where the company's headquarters are located. As one of the inaugural partners of P2's [Monarch Wings Across Ohio](#) program, Smucker was able to sponsor the creation of four practical and highly detailed [guides](#) to the creation and maintenance of monarch habitat in the state, aimed at four separate audiences: corporations, homeowners, rights of way (ROW) managers, and farmers. In fact, Smucker went beyond simply sponsoring the creation of these guides, setting aside land at its headquarters in Orrville, OH to act as a research plot to trial the habitat creation techniques outlined in the guides themselves.



This research plot became such a hallmark of the company's commitment to pollinator conservation that Smucker decided to work with Pollinator Partnership in 2016 to install an additional thousand pollinator-friendly plants, developing long-term maintenance plans in the process. Given the critical role of pollinators in our food system, Smucker decided to make pollinator conservation and its relationship with P2 a focal point of its charitable giving work.

With the demonstration garden firmly established by 2019, Smucker employees utilized materials and resources supplied by Pollinator Partnership at company outreach events with the intent of engaging others on the vital role of pollinators in healthy ecosystems. Despite the challenges that 2020 brought, Smucker employees were dedicated to continuing the momentum of their various pollinator conservation initiatives, this time turning the spotlight on their products and the critical linkages between Smucker's namesake fruit spreads and pollinators. Smucker worked with P2 on creating interpretive signage for their customers at the Smucker Company Store in Orrville, OH. These signs highlighted the pollinators responsible for the fruit-filled products that Smucker is so well known for. Given the pandemic social distancing conditions, Smucker also saw the opportunity to continue to engage their employees outside and revamped the demonstration garden at their company headquarters, working with P2 to install an additional 2,600 plants consisting of 36 different pollinator-friendly species during the height of the pandemic. These volunteer events were one of the few ways the company could act on its volunteer-focused culture during the pandemic.



Meanwhile, Pollinator Partnership staff continued to leverage the success of the Orrville, OH pollinator garden, working with the company to identify garden locations at two more of their manufacturing sites in 2022 and 2023 (Longmont, CO and New Orleans, LA) and create additional signage and comprehensive maintenance plans for the sites. To secure the long-term viability of the habitat they created, Smucker's Corporate Sustainability and Employee Experience Teams implemented a

voluntary employee gardening program that sought to execute the maintenance plans for the habitat provided by P2. Today, employees at Smucker work on maintaining their pollinator gardens, getting their hands dirty, and gaining an up-close perspective on the rewarding process of gardening for pollinators. To date, Ohio-based P2 staff make seasonal trips to the Orrville, OH garden providing in-person support, and helping the company celebrate events like Pollinator Week and the opening and closing of the garden season.

In the following years, the relationship between P2 and Smucker grew even closer, Smucker deciding to provide direct support for P2's programs, like the North American Pollinator Protection Campaign, P2's various grant programs, Bee Friendly Farming, and one of P2's newest programs, Bee Friendly Gardening (BFG). The fit between Smucker and BFG was a natural one, building on the Company's multi-year efforts to create and maintain pollinator-friendly demonstration gardens at its company headquarters in Orrville. The support Smucker has provided BFG has enabled the fledgling program to make a tremendous impact in its first few years, reaching thousands of supporters and enrolling hundreds of pollinator and gardening enthusiasts in the program.



Looking ahead, P2 and Smucker will continue to maintain, promote, and expand their gardens to more Smucker sites, employees, and customers. With the recent proposed listing of the monarch butterfly on the federal endangered

species list, Smucker has prioritized milkweed in its plantings, and positioned much of its educational resources and funding support around this critical species.

We at Pollinator Partnership believe wholeheartedly that each and every one of us has a vested interest in pollinator health, and by providing an example of how we, both as individuals and organizations, can create and maintain valuable habitat that supports pollinators and other wildlife, The J.M. Smucker Co. has been able to engage its employees and the surrounding community in the wide world of pollinators and the broader movement to protect them. We are grateful for the exceptional support they have provided to our work at P2, and are eager to expand our partnership going forward.



The J.M. Smucker Company (Smucker) is a leading American manufacturer of food and beverage products, headquartered in Orrville, Ohio. Founded in 1897 as a maker of apple butter, the company has grown to include a diverse portfolio of brands and products, including consumer foods, pet foods, and coffee. Smucker is known for its iconic brands like Smucker's fruit spreads, Jif peanut butter, and Folgers coffee.