



**To: Newsroom Directors and Assignment Editors**

**For Immediate Release:**  
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**June 22 – 28, 2008 is Pollinator Week in Delaware and across the Nation**  
**Celebrate with DDA on *Open Garden Day*, June 26th**

Governor Ruth Ann Minner has proclaimed the week of June 22 – 28, 2008 as *Pollinator Week in Delaware*. In a statement, Governor Minner said, “Our bees, butterflies, birds, and other pollinators are essential to our food supply and to maintaining our environmental quality. I hope that everyone will become more aware of the importance of pollinators and help protect them and their habitats.”

Michael Scuse, Secretary of Agriculture and the Plant Industries staff of the Delaware Department of Agriculture (DDA), invite the public to celebrate Pollinator Week at the Delaware Department of Agriculture, 2320 S. Dupont Highway, by visiting DDA’s pollinator garden on *Open Garden Day*, June 26<sup>th</sup>. *Open Garden Day* will feature:

**10:30 – 11:15 – *Pollinator Garden Tour and Dedication***

- Ribbon cutting by Agriculture Secretary
- Unveiling of future Livable Landscape design for DDA
- Monarch butterfly release

**11:15 – 12:30 – *Bees, Flowers, & Butterflies***

- The ways of honey bees – DE Beekeepers Association
- Sunflowers – Dr. Susan Yost, Delaware State University
- Farming for Native Bees – Heather Harmon, DDA Plant Industries Section
- Delaware’s butterflies – Ashley Ward, DDA Forest Service
- Honey tasting and the mysteries of mead – John Talkington, mead maker,



*Bumble bee on goldenrod, DDA’s pollinator garden.*  
*Photo: Susan Washinski*

**12:30 – 1:30 – *Laboratory Tours***

- DDA’s Seed Inspection and Certification – Dick Goerger, Seed Lab Supervisor, Plant Industries Section
- Test your seed IQ!
- State Insect Survey Lab – Jim Kroon, Cooperative Agricultural Pest Survey, Plant Industries Section

Refreshments will be served, including Delaware strawberries and blueberries donated by Fifer Orchards, Magee Farms, and Blueberry Lane Farm.

Pollinators are among the hardest working creatures on earth. Most of the 200,000 species that act as pollinators are insects, and bees are the premier pollinators. These creatures transfer pollen grains from flower to flower of the same species so the plants can set seeds and fruit. Our food supply and our quality of life would be seriously

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impacted if we lost our pollinators. For example, seventy-five percent of world's flowering plant species rely on pollinators. Also, 130 of the crop plants grown in the United States are pollinated by bees. The rich biodiversity in our forests and other natural areas is dependent both directly and indirectly upon our native pollinators.

Last spring (2007) in an effort to protect and preserve our vital pollinators, DDA began a Pollination Garden Project that is being unveiled for the public on June 26. In the garden are nectar and pollen rich native plants, to attract bees, butterflies and other beneficial insects. Native plants tend to be low maintenance and hardy, because they are adapted to our region.

The *Pollinator Garden* has also been designated as an Official Monarch Waystation (#1172, [www.monarchwatch.org](http://www.monarchwatch.org)). Monarch waystations are a nationwide system that provides habitat for monarch butterflies to stop along their migratory route to Mexico ([www.monarchwatch.org](http://www.monarchwatch.org)). These habitats provide nectar sources and the required host plant of milkweed, so butterflies can lay their eggs.

The Department of Agriculture has also initiated a project to catalog and conserve the native bees in Delaware's vine crop production areas. More information about the Farming for Native Bees Project can be found at <http://dda.delaware.gov/plantind/pollinator.shtml>.

The garden project is one of many DDA pollinator initiatives. Information on other initiative will be presented during the *Bees & Butterflies* talks and demonstrations and laboratory tours.

**Please celebrate with us on June 26<sup>th</sup>!**