***Why Pollinator Plots?***

Commercial honey bees play an essential role in pollinating carrot flowers for hybrid carrot seed production. However, hybrid carrot flowers do not provide adequate nutrition (enough pollen and nectar) to keep bees at optimal health throughout the pollinating season. This may result in lower pollination and less than optimal crop yield of seeds. Currently, scientific studies are being conducted to test the hypothesis that providing supplemental nutrient sources for commercial honey bee colonies can improve bee health and enhance pollination.

Planting supplemental forage is designed to:

1. Improve carrot seed crop pollination,
2. Increase the health of commercial honeybees,
3. Promote native bee populations that can additionally improve crop yield.

Pollinator plant species can also serve as cover crops, enrich soil and potentially reduce erosion.

***Has Anyone Researched This?***

The Central Oregon Agricultural Research and Extension Center (COAREC) and the Honey Bee Lab at Oregon State University are currently conducting research to improve bee health by providing supplemental forage. Their research to date shows that planting lacy phacelia and yellow mustard seed has potential for providing urgently needed pollen and nectar for honey bees pollinating carrot seed crop. These plant species augment commercial honeybee nutrition in a positive way. The researchers argue that adequate nutrition will lead to greater brood (larvae) production in the honey bee hives, which will stimulate bees to seek more pollen and nectar thereby increasing pollination of hybrid carrot seed crop. This will be a win-win scenario for both the carrot seed producers and beekeepers.

***About How Much Land Would This Take?***

Approximately ¼ acre of pollinator plot per 10 acres of commercial crop production may be adequate for providing necessary nutrients for honey bee colonies.

***How Does P4P Overlap COAREC Efforts?***

The P4P program has designed its pollinator plots to align with on-going research projects managed by COAREC. Conditional to their experimental criteria and operational boundaries, applicants can learn more about how to join their study, which in turn provides added support and resources to the pollinator plot. There is line on your application to show interest in joining COAREC’s study. If the project joins the COAREC research study, then the plot becomes a OSU project. As such, farmers should be willing to provide OSU researchers with harvest yield results and access to the fields for research purposes.

***How Does This Apply to My Farm?***

NUID, in conjunction with Coalition for the Deschutes and the Middle Deschutes Watershed Council, is interested in finding patrons who would like to improve their commercial and native bees’ health by planting pollinator plots on their property. This would involve the following:

1. Identifying irrigated farmland.
2. Planting this field with selected pollinator species (lacy phacelia and yellow mustard). For optimal results, lacy phacelia should be planted in mid-May (approximately May 15). Yellow mustard should be planted at the end of May (approximately May 29).

Seed costs may be covered by future grant opportunities.

**2020-2021 Pollinator Plot Application**

Who may we contact regarding this project?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Please tell us a little bit about your property. (Crops grown, acreage, location of crops relative to possible pollinator site)

Please describe your goals & objectives in creating a pollinator plot. (e.g. increase domestic and/or native bee health)

How large would you like this pollinator plot to be?

Is there irrigation (or irrigation potential) on the site?

For how many years will this plot site be available?

What are your initial questions regarding this project?

Your plot could take part in an on-going research study based out of Central Oregon Agricultural Research and Extension Center (COAREC) in Madras. Are you interested in receiving more information on this? Yes? Or No?

**Please return by email to** **nuid@northunitid.com****, by mail to NUID office (address above), or by fax to (541)475-3905**

**For further questions, contact Lisa Windom at NUID, (541)475-3625**