

MEDIA RELEASE



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Bees Working for Farmers, Farmers Working for Bees

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Lakhy Sran, partner and second-generation grower at Sran Family Orchards, recognizes how important a healthy bee population is to their success. Located in Kerman, California, Sran Family Orchards is the largest grower of organic almonds. Under Lakhy's direction, Sran Family Orchards has become a leader in sustainability and bee friendly farming practices.

Since Lakhy's family started farming organic crops in 1987, they have been working to ensure a safe and healthy environment for maintaining and increasing the bee population. Sran Family Orchards practices a variety of bee friendly farming techniques, including no-till and no-pesticide application approaches, maintaining cover crops between trees, establishing bamboo hives for solitary bees, and installing an innovative drip system for year-round access to fresh water. Based on these environmentally-conscious activities, Sran Family Orchards has been certified by Pollination Partnership as a Bee Friendly Farming operation. Additionally, Sran Family Orchards recently started working with Project Apis m. to expand their pollinator program by establishing extensive hedge rows with a mix of blooming flowers and shrubs to provide a continuous source of nectar.

Lakhy's commitment to environmental stewardship and pollinator conservation has not got unnoticed, as he has been selected as this year's winner of the NAPPC-NACD U.S. Farmer Rancher Award. The award was presented to Jason Hickman, Grower Relations at Sran Family Orchards, on behalf of Lakhy 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-NACD U.S. 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. Lakhy Sran shares this great honor this year with Canadian Farmer-Ranchers, Marc and Chantal Bercier, of Ferme Agriber Inc.

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-NACD U.S. 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.