

# Sustaining monarchs

## *Farming, ranching and monarch butterflies*

*America's farmers and ranchers play a vital part in protecting and promoting monarch butterflies across the continent. They know that sustainability and profitability can coexist when we promote smart, sensible land use.*

From practices that promote native wildflowers and their beneficial insects in field margins to grazing plans that help grow and protect native prairie plants, ranchers and farmers are already doing the work to enhance monarch populations. These same practices that create and protect good habitat for monarchs can also reduce erosion, make soil healthier, control invasive species and provide high-quality forage for livestock. Managing for monarchs can make agricultural operations more resilient and more productive.

### **Working together**

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service offers technical and financial assistance to help landowners manage monarch habitat on farms and ranches. We can help you plan and implement a variety of practices that protect monarchs and other wildlife, fish, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people.

We realize that not all the practices we may recommend will work for every operation. Our goal is simply to provide concrete guidance that can help farmers and ranchers help monarchs while maintaining farm profitability.

For additional information about monarch conservation measures that will fit best with your operation, check out the U.S. Department of Agriculture's and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's best management practices for monarchs. These agencies have informational resources and assistance to help you develop a conservation management plan for your operation.

America's agricultural community grows the food that sustains us and brings our communities together. Let's work together to do the same for monarchs by growing the wildflowers and milkweed they need to survive and thrive across the United States.

### **How you can help**

Two-thirds of the continental United States is privately owned, and agricultural producers are playing a critical role in helping to save the monarch butterfly. Here are some steps they've taken that you can try.

- Leave or plant unsprayed wildflowers or hedgerow buffers along fields to maintain and create pollinator habitat. This can also provide habitat for other beneficial insects.
- Reduce mowing. Monarch butterfly and pollinator habitat can be anywhere, including yards, buffers, roadsides, and more. If possible, avoid mowing while native plants are in bloom or before they have dispersed seed.
- Time grazing to increase the abundance of wildflowers, including milkweed. This can also help reduce erosion and soil compaction, which in turns means healthier pastures for cattle.
- Consider developing an integrated pest management plan.

**U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service**  
**[fws.gov/monarch](https://fws.gov/monarch)**  
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