MSU Agriculture Innovation Day
Focus on Fruit and Vegetable Technologies

Supporting Pollinators

Bees are valuable for fruit and vegetable production

- Most fruits & vegetables need bees for pollination to set marketable crop
- Increasing wild pollinators = increased fruit weight in a particular blueberry cultivar
- Best management practices impact both wild and managed bees

Crops benifit from visits by different types of pollinators

- Both wild and managed honey bees pollinate crops
- Michigan has over 400 species of wild bees
- Managed honey bees are the most recognized pollinators

Look at the big picture to improve pollinator habitat?

- Flowering fruit & vegetable crops
- Field crops that flower - sunflower, canola, soybean, buckwheat, alfalfa
- Blooming fence rows and woodlots
- Wildflower plantings and these may be eligible for cost-share

Consider holistic pollinator stewardship

- Aim for season-long floral resources
- Mow infrequently to allow flowers to bloom
- Leave some areas undisturbed to provide for nesting
- Use best management practices when spraying crops

Supporting bees can benefit your farm

- Better nutrition for both managed and native bee
- Nesting opportunities for wild bees
- Soil management strategies - flowering covers support bees and improve soil health
- Farm marketing opportunities - attractive farm site and positive environmental message

College of Agriculture and Natural Resources
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