

Press Release



BASF and farmers partner to help the monarch butterfly

The Living Acres Monarch Challenge empowers farmers to create monarch butterfly habitat

RESEARCH TRIANGLE PARK, N.C., April 13, 2017 — Farmers are poised to be heroes in the life of the monarch butterfly, which has begun its yearly migration in the face of a dwindling habitat. Tools from the BASF Living Acres Monarch Challenge will help farmers build the habitat monarchs need to make their way north with a vital sidekick: milkweed.

“Milkweed is critical to the monarch throughout its lifecycle, but can be difficult to grow,” said Laura Vance, Biology Project Leader, BASF. “The Living Acres Monarch Challenge is a program that helps farmers create more milkweed habitat alongside their production acres to increase the monarch population.”

The first 500 farmers to join the Monarch Challenge at www.MonarchChallenge.com will receive 18 butterfly milkweed (*Asclepias tuberosa*) seedlings, a hose, gloves and a guide book to help them create this important habitat.* Planting milkweed seedlings is one of the easiest ways to start a habitat that will sustain itself for years to come.

As Vance explained, milkweed is critical for monarchs. “The leaves are the only food source for monarch caterpillars. It is where the adults lay their eggs and the blossoms provide food for migrating adults.”

Monarch Challenge participants are encouraged to share their milkweed planting success throughout the year by posting pictures to Facebook, Instagram and Twitter using #MonarchChallenge.

BASF developed its biodiversity program, Living Acres, in 2015 with the initial goal of helping to restore the monarch population. Through Living Acres, BASF researches the most efficient way to grow milkweed alongside high production agriculture. The Monarch Challenge represents the next step in sharing best practices on milkweed development with farmers to help support the monarch butterfly.

Farmers can use their growing skills to become monarch butterfly heroes by joining the Monarch Challenge on the BASF Living Acres Facebook page or by visiting www.monarchchallenge.com.

*While supplies last.

For press photos, please click on the following links:

https://www.basf.com/press-photos/us/en/photos/2017/04/04-13-17_MCNR1.jpg

Suggested Caption: Milkweed is critical for the monarch throughout its lifecycle. The leaves represent the only food source for monarch caterpillars and where the adults lay their eggs. The blossoms provide food for migrating adults.

https://www.basf.com/press-photos/us/en/photos/2017/04/04-13-17_MCNR2.jpg

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Suggested Caption: BASF Living Acres Monarch Challenge will help farmers create milkweed habitat monarchs need to make their way north.