

**Note each company received a tailored letter.

September 6, 2016

CEO Name
Company Name
Address

Dear CEO,

On behalf of Friends of the Earth and the undersigned organizations, which represent millions of American potential and current customers, we would like to follow-up on our June 2016 letter and survey request. We are collecting information on food retailer policies regarding sourcing organic food, pollinator protection and/or the use of pollinator-toxic pesticides in company supply chains. We will be publicizing this information to consumers.

We understand that completing our survey may prove challenging for your company. However, we would like to ensure that we have the most up to date and accurate information regarding your company's policies to best inform our membership and the general public. **We request that your company notify us if the attached information accurately reflects your company's policies by September 22, 2016.** We want to publicly recognize supermarkets that are striving to advance sustainable food and pollinator protection.

From our research, we recognize that many supermarkets and food retailers are working hard to advance sustainability and environmental stewardship in their supply chains while balancing the many barriers and opportunities to meet consumer demand for organic and sustainable food.

As a top company dedicated to meeting growing consumer demand for organic food and advancing sustainability, we invite your company to help protect bees and other pollinators essential to our food supply and to its industry by committing to phase out the use of pollinator-toxic pesticides in its supply chain and to increase its offerings of organic food, particularly from U.S. growers.

Since the 1990's, organic food sales in the United States have shown double-digit growth and have generally exceeded 10 percent since the downturn in the American economy in 2008.¹ In recent years, retail sales of organic food products have increased faster than any other category. This past year, sales reached \$37 billion.² This rapid increase is a result of consumer demand as well as increased federal support for organics, which rose from \$20 million in the 2002 U.S. farm bill to \$167.5 million by 2014. The number of organic farms, ranches and processing facilities nearly tripled over this time period³ and increased 12 percent from 2014-2015 — the highest rate of increase since 2008.⁴

In recent years, supermarkets and food companies have announced new purchasing policies and commitments regarding organic food, pollinator protection and bee-toxic pesticides. Aldi, a German supermarket chain, became the first major retailer to ask its German and Dutch fruit and vegetable suppliers to stop using eight pesticides hazardous to bees.⁵ Aldi announced in January 2016 that it is expanding its selection of organic meat and produce in its U.S. stores.⁶

In 2014, Whole Foods issued its Responsibly Grown product rating system, which grades fresh fruit, vegetables and flowers as “good, better or best” based upon established criteria, including pollinator protection. It prohibits four of the common neonicotinoid pesticides, which are a leading driver of global bee declines, in order for products to receive a “best” rating.⁷ Aside from supermarkets, more than 100 businesses, cities, universities, states and countries around the world have restricted use of these insecticides. *Greenhouse Grower’s* 2016 State Of The Industry survey found 74 percent of growers who supply mass merchants and home improvement chains said they will not use neonicotinoid insecticides in 2016.⁸

Leading supermarkets have started addressing pollinator protection in their sourcing policies because pollinators are essential to our food system. About three-fourths of the world’s food crops depend on pollination by insects and other animals.⁹ Bees alone are essential to the production of one out of every three bites of food we eat.¹⁰ In fact, 71 of the 100 crops that provide 90 percent of the world’s food — from almonds to tomatoes to strawberries — are pollinated by bees.¹¹ Honeybees, in particular, contribute an estimated \$20 billion to the U.S. economy¹² and \$217 billion to the global economy.¹³ Globally, between \$235 billion and \$577 billion worth of annual global food production relies on direct contributions by pollinators.

Evidence is mounting that the health and productivity of these critical pollinators, along with many wild pollinators, is declining rapidly. A recent report by the United Nations reviewed nearly 3,000 scientific papers and found that 40 percent of invertebrate pollinator species, including bees and butterflies, are facing extinction. Sixteen percent of vertebrate pollinators, such as bats and birds, are also threatened with extinction.¹⁴

A growing body of science has implicated the world’s most widely-used insecticides, neonicotinoids (neonics)— which are used on 140 crops— as a key factor in recent bee die-offs and a cause of harm to many other beneficial organisms essential for natural pest control and sustainable food production, including birds, bats, butterflies, dragonflies, lacewings, ladybugs, earthworms, small mammals, amphibians, aquatic insects and soil microbes — putting food production and the environment in jeopardy.^{15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24} A global body of twenty-nine independent scientists (the Task Force on Systemic Pesticides) drew similar conclusions based on a review of more than 1,100 peer-reviewed studies and called for immediate regulatory action to restrict neonicotinoids.²⁵ Glyphosate, the most widely used herbicide in the world, has been identified as a major source of monarch decline.²⁶ In addition to pollinator decline, environmental damage resulting from industrial agriculture is pegged at \$3 trillion annually by the United Nations FAO.²⁷ The need to foster more sustainable food production is urgent.

The link between pollinator protection and organic farming is clear. Organic farming supports 50 percent more pollinator species than conventional, chemical-intensive agriculture, according to an Oxford University meta-study.²⁸ Organic agriculture offers additional significant environmental, health and economic benefits. According to one analysis, organically-farmed soils could sequester 32 percent of all current human-made global greenhouse gas emissions, which would help mitigate climate change.²⁹ Organic soils have the capacity to withstand soil disturbances associated with intense rainfall events and have a 30 to 40 percent higher capacity to conduct water, which renders them less prone to erosion and flooding.³⁰ Organic farming protects the health of consumers, farmers, farmworkers and rural communities by eliminating the use of highly toxic pesticides.³¹ Agricultural workers, among the highest percentage of U.S. workers affected by chemical exposures, are less at risk for occupational exposures to harmful pesticides when working in organic food production. Organic farming systems are also more

profitable for farmers and boost local economies.³² One study found that in U.S. counties with high levels of organic production, median household incomes are higher and poverty levels are reduced.³³

Given this range of benefits for consumers, farmers, pollinators and the environment, there is an important opportunity and need to foster more domestic organic production in the United States. Organic sales currently make up nearly five percent of total U.S. food sales, but acreage devoted to organic agriculture is less than one percent of total U.S. cropland.³⁴ We recognize that there are difficulties in sourcing sufficient domestically organic ingredients and raw products to meet burgeoning demand. However, we urge your company to seek creative partnerships in order to boost U.S. production of organic foods. A leading example is the U.S. Organic Grain Collaboration.³⁵

It is clear we must advance a sustainable food system that protects the wellbeing of pollinators, people and the planet. **We invite your company to signal its dedication to pollinator health and sustainability by phasing out the use of pollinator-toxic pesticides in its supply chain and by increasing the percentage of organic food offerings in its stores, with a focus on sourcing from domestic producers.**

Friends of the Earth U.S. and allies request that retailers commit to adopt the following policies by the end of 2017:

- Establish a pollinator protection policy that includes the phase out of pollinator-toxic pesticides, including neonicotinoids and glyphosate, in your company's supply chain and encourage suppliers to employ alternative pest management strategies that focus on pest prevention through cultural, biological, structural, and mechanical means, and the use least toxic pesticides, approved for organic production or exempt from federal registration, as a last resort. See attachment for our list pesticides of special concern.
- Increase USDA certified organic food and beverages to 15 percent of overall offerings by 2025, prioritizing domestic, regional and local producers.
- Support government and market initiatives to help farmers transition to organic production.
- Publicly disclose company policies and progress related to these actions.

We believe these actions would demonstrate your company's commitment to sustainability and to protecting our essential pollinators. We also believe your company's customers would react positively, given growing concern about the plight of bees and growing demand for sustainable and organic food. We will be educating the public and hope we can publicize positive information regarding your company's policies on these important issues.

We have also surveyed other companies in the food retail sector. All companies we contact will be highlighted on our website, in social media and in the press so consumers can see for themselves where each company stands on protecting pollinators and advancing a sustainable food system.

Please contact Tiffany Finck-Haynes, Food and Technology Program at Friends of the Earth (beeaction@foe.org or 202-222-0715) by September 22, 2016 so that we may discuss your company's current policies and how your company can demonstrate its leadership in corporate sustainability and pollinator protection. We would also be happy to answer any questions you might have or provide further information on this topic.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. We look forward to working with your company to protect the small but important creatures upon which so much of our food and planet depends, and we hope to be able to highlight your company as an industry leader.

Sincerely,

Tiffany Finck-Haynes
Food and Technology Program
Friends of the Earth

Cynthia Palmer
Director, Pesticides Science and Regulation
American Bird Conservancy

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Washtenaw County Food Policy Council

Jan Stephan
Steering Committee
100 Grannies for a Liveable Future

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**Note each company received a tailored letter outlining publicly available information on the following categories.

Company policies regarding organic food, pollinator protection and pesticide use

We are collating information on supermarket policies regarding organic food, pollinator protection and/or use of neonicotinoid pesticides in supermarket supply chains. We will be publicizing this information to consumers. **We request that your company notify us if the following information accurately reflects your company policies by September 22, 2016.** We want to ensure we publish information that accurately reflects your company policies.

Company store policies on organic food:

Company store policies on pollinator protection:

Company store policies on pesticide reduction:

Please contact Tiffany Finck-Haynes, Food and Technology Program at Friends of the Earth (beeaction@foe.org or 202-222-0715) to verify, update or notify us with any different information regarding your company's current policies regarding the above topics. We would also be happy to answer any questions you might have or provide further information on this topic.

Pesticides of Special Concern: Pesticides to Reduce in Food Retailer Supply Chains

Top Ten Registered Pesticides for Acute Toxicity to Honey Bees

Active Ingredient	Chemical Class	Hazard to Bees
Imidacloprid	Neonicotinoid	Acute & chronic toxicity, contaminates forage
Clothianidin	Neonicotinoid	Acute & chronic toxicity, contaminates forage
Fipronil	Pyrazole	Acute & chronic toxicity
Thiamethoxam	Neonicotinoid	Acute & chronic toxicity, contaminates forage
Abamectin	Macrolide	Acute toxicity
Dinotefuran	Neonicotinoid	Acute & chronic toxicity, contaminates forage
lambda-Cyhalothrin	Pyrethroid	Acute toxicity
Fenithrothion	Organophosphorus	Acute toxicity
Resmethrin	Pyrethroid	Acute toxicity
Chlorpyrifos	Organophosphorus	Acute toxicity

Additional EPA Designated Insecticides Toxic to Bees, Butterflies and Other Pollinators

Active Ingredient	Chemical Class	Hazard to Bees
Acephate	Organophosphate	Acute toxicity
Acetamiprid	Neonicotinoid	Acute & chronic toxicity, contaminates forage
Aldicarb	N-Methyl Carbamate	Acute toxicity
Alpha-cypermethrin	Synthetic Pyrethroid	Acute toxicity
Amitraz	Acaricide/Insecticide	Acute toxicity
Arsenic acid	Heavy Metal, Inorganic-Arsenic	Acute toxicity
Azadirachtin	Botanical	Acute toxicity
Bensulide	Organophosphorus	Acute toxicity
Beta-cyfluthrin	Pyrethroid	Acute toxicity
Bifenazate	Carbazate	Acute toxicity
Bifenthrin	Pyrethroid	Acute toxicity
Carbaryl	Carbamate	Acute toxicity
Carbofuran	N-Methyl Carbamate	Acute toxicity
Chlorethoxyfos	Organophosphorus	Acute toxicity
Chlorfenapyr	Pyrazole	Acute toxicity
Chlorpyrifos methyl	Organophosphorus	Acute toxicity
Cyantraniliprole	Cyantraniliprole	Acute & chronic toxicity, contaminates forage

Cyfluthrin	Pyrethroid	Acute toxicity
Cypermethrin	Pyrethroid	Acute toxicity
Cyphenothrin	Pyrethroid	Acute toxicity
Deltamethrin	Pyrethroid	Acute toxicity
Diazinon	Organophosphorus	Acute toxicity
Dichlorvos	Organophosphorus	Acute toxicity
Dicrotophos	Organophosphorus	Acute toxicity
Dimethoate	Organophosphorus	Acute toxicity
Diuron	Substituted phenylurea	Acute toxicity
D-trans-allethrin	Pyrethroid	Acute toxicity
Emamectin benzoate	Macrocyclic Lactone	Acute toxicity
Endosulfan	Chlorinated Hydrocarbon	Acute toxicity
Esfenvalerate	Pyrethroid	Acute toxicity
Ethoprop	Organophosphorus	Acute toxicity
Etofenprox	Pyrethroid Ether	Acute toxicity
Fenazaquin	Quinazoline	Acute toxicity
Fenpropathrin	Pyrethroid	Acute toxicity
Fluvalinate	Synthetic Pyrethroid	Acute toxicity
Fosthiazate	Organophosphorus	Acute toxicity
Gamma-cyhalothrin	Pyrethroid	Acute toxicity
Imiprothrin	Pyrethroid	Acute toxicity
Indoxacarb	Oxadiazine	Acute toxicity
Malathion	Organophosphorus	Acute toxicity
Metaflumizone	Semicarbazone	Acute toxicity
Methiocarb	N-Methyl Carbamate	Acute toxicity
Methomyl	N-Methyl Carbamate	Acute toxicity
Momfluorothrin	Pyrethroid	Acute toxicity
Naled	Organophosphorus	Acute toxicity
Oxamyl	Carbamate	Acute toxicity
Permethrin	Pyrethroid	Acute toxicity
Phenothrin	Pyrethroid	Acute toxicity
Phorate	Organophosphorus	Acute toxicity
Phosmet	Organophosphorus	Acute toxicity
Pirimiphos-methyl	Organophosphorus	Acute toxicity
Prallethrin	Pyrethroid	Acute toxicity
Profenofos	Organophosphorus	Acute toxicity
Propoxur	N-Methyl Carbamate	Acute toxicity
Pyrethrins	Botanical	Acute toxicity
Pyridaben	Acaricide/Insecticide	Acute toxicity
Rotenone	Isoflavones	Acute toxicity
Sethoxydim	Cyclohexanone	Acute toxicity
Spinetoram	Spinosyn	Acute toxicity
Spinosad	Spinosyn	Acute toxicity
Sulfoxaflor	Sulfoximines	Acute & chronic toxicity, contaminates forage
Tefluthrin	Pyrethroid	Acute toxicity

Tetrachlorvinphos	Organophosphorus	Acute toxicity
Tetramethrin	Pyrethroid	Acute toxicity
Tolfenpyrad	Pyrazole	Acute toxicity
Zeta-cypermethrin	Pyrethroid	Acute toxicity

Registered Herbicides Harmful to Bees, Butterflies and Other Pollinators

Active Ingredient	Chemical Class	Hazard to Bees
Glyphosate	Phosphonoglycine	Eliminates forage & habitat
Atrazine	Triazine	Eliminates forage & habitat
Simazine	Triazine	Eliminates forage & habitat
Sulfallate	Dithiocarbamate	Eliminates forage & habitat
2,4-D	Chlorophenoxy acid or ester	Eliminates forage & habitat, chronic toxicity
Dicamba	Chlorophenoxy acid or ester	Eliminates forage & habitat

Registered Fungicides Harmful to Bees, Butterflies and Other Pollinators

Active Ingredient	Chemical Class	Hazard to Bees
Trifloxystrobin	Strobin	Acutely toxic
Iprodione	Dicarboximide	
Vinclozolin	Dicarboximide	
Procymidone	Heterocyclic organochlorine	
Captafol	Thiophthalimide	
Clonitralid	Molluscicide	
<u>Pyraclostrobin</u>	Strobin	