

# **Monarch Butterfly Habitat Development Project**

United States Department of Agriculture  
Natural Resources Conservation Service



Photo courtesy of Rick Hansen, NRCS

## Conservation

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is helping combat the decline of monarch butterflies by assisting farmers, ranchers and other landowners who are willing to plant milkweed and other nectar-rich plants on their land. Conservation practices that benefit monarch butterflies and other insects also help reduce erosion, increase soil health, control invasive species, provide quality forage for livestock and make agricultural operations more resilient and productive.



Photo courtesy of NRCS

The agency's staff of experts and conservation partners work with landowners to develop conservation plans specific to the landowners' objectives. Each plan is tailored to the property and provides a

roadmap for how to use a system of conservation practices to meet natural resource and production goals. NRCS worked with their conservation partners, the Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation, and butterfly experts across the United States to choose the best milkweed species and nectar-producing plants to recommend for landowners. In Missouri, landowners benefit from the expertise of a statewide monarch coordinator who works with local, state and federal agencies as well as private organizations to coordinate efforts to increase monarch habitat.

With financial assistance from NRCS, landowners can plant milkweed and nectar-rich plants along field borders, in buffers along waterways or around wetlands, in pastures and other suitable locations. All of NRCS' Farm Bill programs offer landowners opportunities to introduce pollinator habitat into their acreage. Common programs include the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) and Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP).

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