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Bee Better Certified E-News Winter 2024

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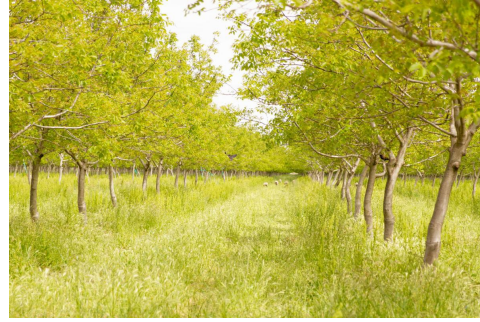


Bee Better Certified Included in Kroger Co.'s Certification List for it's Strong IPM and Biodiversity Requirements

In case you missed the big news - Bee Better Certified was included as a Top 5 US Retailer Pollinator and Biodiversity Sourcing Platform by Kroger. The Kroger Co. has made a bold commitment to advance sustainability and biodiversity conservation in its produce supply chain. This follows similar commitments made by Walmart and Giant Eagles last year. As part of its commitment, Kroger Co. will require all of its fresh produce suppliers to use Integrated Pest Management (IPM) practices for all products supplied to Kroger by 2030. To comply with this sourcing requirement, suppliers must achieve a third-party IPM and biodiversity-focused certification. Currently, there are thirteen certifications available, and at the top of that list is Bee Better Certified. We are very grateful to our partners at Kroger and the IPM Institute for building such a robust sourcing platform and we look forward to engaging with growers over the coming years to help them meet the needs of Kroger and the other retailers looking to create more sustainable supply chains.

Full press release from Kroger can be found here - [Press release](#)

The Living Farms Project: Your Partner in On-Farm Conservation



Xerces Society's Living Farms Project brings pollination conservation to your farms and suppliers through A to Z service for on-farm habitat installation and biodiversity practices. Xerces specialists are located throughout the Western U.S. and are ready to assist farmers with Bee Better Certification transition and other regenerative agriculture goals. We specialize in the planting of carbon sequestering pollinator hedgerows and cover crops, pesticide risk mitigation and IPM planning, assessments for meeting biodiversity criteria and the enhancement of natural pest suppression.

With decades of agriculture and conservation experience, Living Farms Project staff can help farmers and food companies design projects that will maximize the benefits for specific sustainability goals. Using research-backed monitoring protocols and advanced technology, our staff can provide real-world insights and asset development for conservation impact storytelling.

The Living Farms Project works through custom service agreements or state and federal grants that provide free consultation and project materials such as potted native plants, seeds for meadows and cover crops, irrigation, and mulch. Currently funded groups include:

- Organic producers in the General Mills, Cascadian Farm, or Muir Glen supply chains in Washington, Oregon, California, and beyond - including but not limited to tree fruit, almonds, tomatoes, and fruit and vegetable producers.
- Socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers in California.
- California producers in the Sacramento Valley, San Joaquin Valley, and Central Coast.

For more information and to receive free consultation and habitat materials contact Anna Murray, Living Farms Project Lead, at anna.murray@xerces.org

California Citrus Quality Council, Sunkist Growers, the California Farm Bureau, and Xerces Partner on New CDFA Grant Program

The Xerces Living Farms Project is excited to be partnering with the California Citrus Quality Council, Sunkist Growers, and the California Farm Bureau on a new grant program by the California Department of Agriculture (CDFA). The CDFA's Healthy Soils Block Grant Pilot Program is designed to bring together key players in California agriculture to spearhead the growth of soil health and biodiversity conservation work on farms in the state. This grant will focus on getting citrus growers in 12 counties the technical expertise and funding they need to get soil health, carbon sequestration, and pollinator conservation work done on the ground. The citrus sector in these counties generates around \$2 billion per year, playing a crucial role in

job creation and contributing to agricultural and environmental sustainability efforts.

Link to [Farm Bureau press release here](#).

Certification Spotlight: Golden Gate Hop Ranches

The Yakima Valley of Washington State is famous for high-quality hops. As the second-largest hops grower in the state and world, Golden Gate Hop Ranches not only produces high alpha and aroma hops but now also provides habitat for pollinators and beneficial insects.



Golden Gate Hop Ranches received their Bee Better Certification last fall after seeding 3.5 acres of permanent habitat during early summer 2023. Their meadow is a mix of native and tame flowers, both annual and perennial. The flowers include 17 species, such as blanketflower, needle and thread grass, sunflower, and alfalfa. This mix of species will bloom from spring to fall to provide food and shelter for bees and butterflies during the entire growing season.

This farm's commitment to protecting and providing for pollinators also helps satisfy the requirements of their voluntary Global G. A. P. certification used by retailers globally. The Bee Better Certification application requirements meshed easily with the records they were already keeping for their organic hops field.

Thanks to Golden Gate Hop Ranches for tasty hops and healthy bees!

Bee Better on the Road this Spring

Come and visit us this spring!

[The Blueberry Convention](#) - Feb. 28 - Mar. 2 Tucson, AZ

Expo West - Mar. 12 - 16 Anaheim, CA

[US Sustainable Wine Growing Summit](#) - Apr. 30 - May 1 Lodi, CA

For more information on Bee Better Certified
visit beebettercertified.org
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Banner Photo: Cameron Newell
Inset: Cameron Newell (regenerative walnut grove); (planting crew)

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