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New Staff, Notes from the Field, and Certification Spotlight

Staffing Changes on the Bee Better Certified Team



New Staff:

Rosemary Quinn joined Xerces in April as the new Bee Better Certified Program Technical Specialist. Rosemary is based in Portland, Oregon.

Before working at Xerces, Rosemary worked for GLOBALG.A.P. North America, a company that manages a food safety certification standard. Rosemary also worked for the Community Alliance with Family Farmers (CAFF) and managed the Buy Fresh Buy Local campaign for the Santa Clara Valley, while providing marketing support to small family farmers. Rosemary also has experience working in organic certification. Her strong background at various sustainable agriculture non-profits and farm-level certifications lends itself well to her role supporting the Bee Better program and its stakeholders.

Rosemary can be reached at rosemary.quinn@xerces.org.



Farewell to Eric Lee-Mäder:

It is with a great sense of sadness and excitement that we share the news of our visionary leader's departure from his role at Xerces. Over his 16 year tenure at the organization, Eric has built a program dedicated to integrating nature into our food system. Eric brought his visionary approach to programs like Bee Better Certified, and has provided a win-win solution for not just biodiversity but to the farmers and food companies that work tirelessly to bring food to our tables every day. Eric's approach to the challenges we face as ecologists, as farmers, and as society have been

ahead of the curve time and time again. We will dearly miss his leadership, his thoughtful approach to work and life, and his North Dakotan sense of humor. We're sure he doesn't need it, but best of luck Eric!



Farewell to Lea Van Es:

Lea Van Es joined the Bee Better team in summer 2023. Lea brought to Xerces a fantastic can-do attitude and great experience managing projects and directing complex fieldwork. She hit the ground running; planning and implementing miles of pollinator hedgerows and other habitat plantings on a huge range of farming systems from lettuce farms on California's Central Coast, to Montana's prairie grains, all the way to wild blueberries in Maine. Lea is now leaving California to pursue new opportunities with her family in Mississippi. We will miss Lea and we are grateful for all her work benefiting bees and farms!

Certification Spotlight - Northwest Meadowsclapes

A core strength of Bee Better Certified is its flexibility.

Even as it offers the most robust standard for pollinator conservation, Bee Better Certification can be applied to an incredible diversity of different farm systems: fresh and processed vegetables, tree crops, small fruit, grains and field crops, and much more.

Yet, Bee Better Certified can also be applied to non-food crops as well. One remarkable example of this is [Northwest Meadowsclapes](#), a native wildflower seed farm based on Whidbey Island in Washington state. Growing showy wildflower species such as camas, checker lily, lupines, and other more, the farm already has a robust baseline of habitat to meet some of the Bee Better standards. And, by having the formal Bee Better Certification, the farm communicates to its customers that those wildflower seeds are produced with an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) approach that verifiable protects the very pollinators that many of Northwest Meadowsclapes' customers care about.

Founded in 2016 by Xerces Emeritus Eric Lee-Mäder, Northwest Meadowsclapes has served as something of a real world test farm for some of Bee Better's systems. As one of the original architects for Bee Better Certified, Eric wanted to directly understand how the certification process functioned for farmers – from plan development, through application and inspection. By putting his own farm through the process, He was able to understand where there could be process improvements to benefit other farmers. Now as his primary occupation, Eric is rapidly expanding crop production at Northwest Meadowsclapes and applying for his first renewal of Bee Better Certified.

You can find out more about Northwest Meadowsclapes and how their seed is available and used for pollinator habitat conservation at NorthwestMeadowsclapes.com.



Notes from the Field



Spring brings new flowers to the orchard and to the remnant habitat, which can be counted as permanent habitat for Bee Better Certification. This April, Xerces Habitat Specialist Angie Orpet walked many remnant habitat areas at a Washington Fruit Growers' orchard because they are interested in expanding their certified acreage. Orpet did an inventory of native and non-native species, photographed them, and estimated their coverage during bloom. Some areas had all the requirements to count as permanent habitat and were absolutely full of wildflowers, bees, and butterflies. Other areas that were a little weedier also fulfilled the requirements, and a couple of spots only needed just one more fall bloomer, which could be remedied with a planting.

For farmers who are interested in [Bee Better Certification](#) or want to expand their certified acreage - If you have some areas in mind, but aren't familiar with wild plants, take pictures over the season, estimate bloom, and use your photos with plant ID websites to fill in the BBC plant spreadsheet. Also, Xerces has many resources to help you identify if the plants provide materials for nesting bees. Then voila! Acres ready to count as permanent habitat for certification! Don't overlook remnant habitat because it's worth protecting and useful for certification.



Growers planting gardens for pollinators

Zirkle Fruit Co., a Bee Better Certified farm, was highlighted in a recent article in *Good Fruit Grower*. Their work creating roughly 200 acres of pollinator habitat at various farm sites through Central Washington has led to a notable increase in pollinator activity on the farms. Read the [full article](#).

Upcoming events

July 10-11, 2024

[Organic Produce Summit](#)

Monterey, CA

Bee Better Certified Staff will be attending the event and walking the tradeshow floor. Send us an [email](#) if you would like to connect!



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Learn more:

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