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## Congrats On a Million!

*Ellen C. Wells*

Friends, you should be proud of yourselves! We recently got word from AmericanHort and HRI that their Million Pollinator Garden Challenge (MPGC) has hit the mark. In fact, they surpassed the target number, having registered 1,040,000 pollinator gardens, with more than 8 million people associated with those gardens. These gardens—mostly in the U.S. and Canada, but also some in Mexico—total a whopping 5 million acres of habitat for pollinators.

The challenge was launched in June 2015 by the National Pollinator Garden Network with the goal of creating a network of gardens that benefit pollinators, which have seen decreases in their populations in recent years. It became the largest pollinator conservation effort to engage both horticultural members and volunteers. And as a result, the MPGC led to a shift in consumer awareness about the issue. The impact report also notes that 92% of garden centers have seen an increase in demand for pollinator-friendly plants and services and 86% are offering more pollinator-friendly plants, services and education. That's why I said congrats at the beginning!

So, where to now? The next steps in the MPGC are:

- Expand the available garden habitat by asking folks to plant different pollinator-friendly plants that bloom in three different seasons to help provide consistent food for pollinators.
- Encourage people to participate in citizen science projects that help pollinators. These can be found at [www.scistarter.org/pollinorgardens](http://www.scistarter.org/pollinorgardens).
- There's no time to rest on our laurels, folks. Get your customers (and yourselves) off to a great start on the next set of challenges as soon as spring has sprung. **GP**