

# Lawns to Legumes

## 🐝 Program Overview 🐝

### What does this program do?

We aim to protect the federally endangered rusty patched bumblebee (Minnesota's state bee) and other at-risk pollinators.

Lawns to Legumes offers workshops, coaching, planting guides and cost-share funding for installing pollinator-friendly native plantings in residential lawns. The program also campaigns to raise awareness for pollinator habitat projects and will establish demonstration neighborhoods that showcase best practices.

### Why does this matter?

Minnesota is home to more than 450 native bee species. Pollinators also include butterflies, moths, beetles and native flies. All play a key role in pollinating many food crops and native plants, but populations have significantly declined worldwide in recent years. Population decline can be attributed to habitat loss and lack of related nutrition for pollinators, as well as pesticide use and pathogens.

Even relatively small plantings of native flowers can help create conditions that are highly valuable to pollinators and can help build important habitat corridors.

### Am I eligible? When can I apply for funding?

Anyone is welcome to use the planting guide developed for this program to help plan a pollinator habitat project. Minnesota residents who have an area at their home that can be used for outdoor planting can apply for a combination of technical assistance (workshops, coaching) and cost-share funding.

In December 2019, Blue Thumb began accepting applications from residents for reimbursement funding. Apply on Blue Thumb's website <https://bluethumb.org/lawns-to-legumes/>. Applications will be accepted through Feb. 28.

Applicants who are accepted into the Lawns to Legumes individual support program can receive up to \$350 of funding through a reimbursement process. Funding decisions will be made and all notifications emailed in March for spring 2020 installations. A second application round will open this spring for summer and fall installations.



your yard  
**CAN BEE**  
the **CHANGE**  
#Lawns2Legumes

## Demonstration neighborhoods

In addition to the individual support component of the program, Lawns to Legumes aims to establish high-profile community-wide projects located in important pollinator pathways to highlight best practices.

A Request for Proposals (RFP) will be issued by BWSR this winter inviting local government units to apply to establish a demonstration neighborhood. Those accepted through the RFP will receive funding to work with local residents to establish beneficial pollinator habitat.

## Outreach and awareness

Lawns to Legumes strives to promote public adoption of residential pollinator habitat through a coalition of supportive groups including Blue Thumb, non profits and more. A public outreach campaign will provide education and raise awareness around issues affecting Minnesota pollinators.

## Getting started now

You don't have to wait to start planning a pollinator-friendly yard! Resources for planning projects can be found at [www.bwsr.state.mn.us/l2l](http://www.bwsr.state.mn.us/l2l). These include:

- Planting for Pollinators: BWSR's one stop shop guide for residential pollinator habitat
- Gardens for Pollinators: Tips from the Xerces Society
- DIY Bee Lawn: Steps for creating a bee lawn from Blue Thumb
- Build a Pollinator Garden in Seven Steps: Advice from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

