



## Power to the Pollinators

### Minnesota Leads the Way

For nearly a decade, PAN and our allies have pressed EPA and other regulatory agencies to act on bee-harming pesticides. By investing in key states like Minnesota, we're leveraging the three things we do best—strategic communications, grassroots science and network organizing.

Minnesotans are fired up about bee decline. Although our decisionmakers are hearing this concern from voters, they're also flooded with research and campaign funding from the pesticide industry. That's why PAN's model is powerful. We digest the latest research on pesticides and bee decline; inject smart, accurate messaging into the public conversation; and build networks that exert pressure on decisionmakers to pass better policy. We're building a growing counterweight to the might of the pesticide industry.

We think this is a winning formula. Last year, Minnesota passed two innovative laws to protect bees from pesticides. These laws ensured that retailers cannot label plants "bee-friendly" if they contain bee-harming pesticides, and that beekeepers who lose bees to pesticide poisoning receive compensation for their losses.

Meanwhile, local victories are spreading like wildfire. So far, five Minnesota communities have passed "bee-friendly" resolutions to eliminate use of neonics on public property and plant forage for bees.

It's no surprise that our progress has led the Big 6 to ramp up their efforts to keep neonicotinoids on the market. This year, under pressure from the pesticide industry, lawmakers backpedaled on last year's progress by weakening the nursery labeling law. But by keeping pressure on lawmakers throughout the legislative session, PAN and our allies were able to protect important pieces of last year's laws. Most importantly, we made it impossible for pesticide industry defenders to dismantle important protections for bees without the public taking note.

But we aren't satisfied playing defense. This year, we worked with legislators to introduce a bill calling for a five-year moratorium on neonics. It's time to press the pause button on these pesticides, which are key known drivers of bee decline.

PAN doesn't do this work alone. When we opened our Minnesota office, we joined a dynamic ecosystem of organizations fighting for a just food and farming system. Land Stewardship Project has brought the voices of Minnesota farmers to EPA by commenting on the agency's neonic review. Clean Up the River Environment organized a lively town hall meeting in western Minnesota to raise the profile of bee decline. Indigenous Environmental Network, League



Beekeepers, gardeners and farmers called on the Minnesota Department of Agriculture to suspend neonicotinoids.

of Women Voters and local beekeeping groups invited PAN to speak about the role of pesticides in bee declines. And our national partners, like Friends of the Earth and Center for Food Safety, coordinate with PAN to mobilize their Minnesota members at strategic moments.

There's no shortcut to rolling back the influence of the pesticide industry and winning real protections for beekeepers, farmers and pollinators. By starting with sound science, changing the public conversation and building power, we're making Minnesota a leader in bee-protective policy. Our food system depends on it. 🐝

**take action:** Urge Congress to pass the Saving America's Pollinators Act at [bit.ly/SAPA15](http://bit.ly/SAPA15).



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# Farmworker-Assured Food Standards

## A Dream Come True by Margaret Reeves

My work as a farmworker advocate dates back to the early '80s in Michigan and Ohio, working in support of the Farm Labor Organizing Committee's (FLOC) Campbell Soup boycott and the resulting precedent-setting three-way negotiations among workers, growers and retailers.

Now, nearly three decades later, I have the honor of representing PAN as a member organization of the Equitable Food Initiative (EFI)—an innovative, multi-stakeholder effort that promises to do more for the wellbeing of U.S. farmworkers than we have seen in decades. The team includes long-time farmworker labor groups including UFW, FLOC and the Oregon-based farmworker union PCUN, our long-time allies at Farmworker Justice, and partners on the retail and production side: Costco Wholesale, Bon Appétit Management Company and three large-scale produce growers with operations in the U.S. and Mexico. Other key EFI members include the Consumer Federation of America, Center for Science in the Public Interest and Oxfam America.

**At EFI's core is the recognition that respected, well-trained and well-compensated farmworkers are essential to growing high quality produce.**




The first EFI-certified strawberries went on sale at Costco in April 2015.

For the past five years, PAN has been working with these partners to develop and launch EFI—and this growing season marks the project's debut in the marketplace. Certified farms are now delivering “Responsibly Grown, Farmworker Assured” fresh fruits and vegetables to Costco, with additional retailers waiting in the wings. EFI-labeled produce is grown in compliance with standards that require substantial reduction in the use of hazardous pesticides and ensure the safety and dignity of farmworkers in the production and handling of produce.

At EFI's core is the recognition that respected, well-trained and well-compensated farmworkers are essential to growing high quality produce. It is the workers in the fields and packing houses upon whose skills we depend—and who bear the ultimate responsibility for delivering product to market. Much like quality improvement teams in an industrial setting, farmworkers who understand and embrace food safety and environmental stewardship can help improve productivity, safety and quality. This shared understanding and commitment among all EFI partners—from farmworkers and consumer advocates to growers and buyers—is what sets EFI apart in a marketplace replete with claims of social and environmental sustainability.

EFI has two key elements. The first is a **publicly accountable three-part standard** addressing labor rights, food safety and environmentally responsible crop and pest management. The second—and the innovative heart of the program—is the establishment of **Leadership Teams** of workers and managers. A Leadership Team on each farm includes representatives from all on-farm jobs and demographics (from pickers to managers). The Team is trained in problem-solving and conflict resolution techniques to ensure compliance with the EFI standard and to create practical solutions to any problems that arise.

I've been especially gratified to add my expertise in—and passion for—agroecology to the development of the environmental stewardship component of the EFI standard. Now that “Responsibly Grown, Farmworker Assured” produce is arriving on grocery shelves, we're excited to thank you, our members and funders, for helping realize this benchmark in making our food system safer and more just. —

### Support PAN today!

Donate \$50 and receive a coupon for \$25 off a case of organic wines from the Organic Wine Company.



Donate \$125 and receive Liz Carlisle's *Lentil Underground* and her take on the future of American agriculture and natural food.

Support PAN by going to [www.panna.org/](http://www.panna.org/) give and donating today!

# Persistent, Powerful, Potent

## The Journey of Ruth Berlin

PAN thrives because of the passion and courage of partners like Ruth Berlin.

Ruth became a grassroots activist after she and her young son became severely ill during three days of aerial spraying of malathion to control fruit flies in Southern California in 1990. Her family moved to Maryland only to suffer further impacts from the same chemical sprayed by the state for mosquito control. She organized a town meeting and the state eventually agreed to replace its use of malathion with a less toxic pesticide.

Building on this victory, Ruth organized the Maryland Pesticide Network (MPN), a coalition of 25 health, environmental and consumer groups in 1994. Twenty years later, she founded MPN's sister organization, the non-profit Maryland Pesticide Education Network (MPEN).

Under Ruth's leadership, pesticides have become a key environmental health issue in Maryland, and real progress has been made to protect both communities and the environment. MPN scored its first major victory in 1998 when the Maryland Integrated Pest Management in Schools law was passed, one of the first in the country and the first to identify pesticide exposure as a health issue for pregnant women and children under the age of two. Today, the coalition works with Maryland health care facilities to implement Integrated Pest Management (IPM) practices, and co-leads a 300+ member stakeholder project focused on reducing pesticide runoff into the Chesapeake Bay.

MPN recently launched the Smart on Pesticides campaign (SOPC)—a coalition of 64 organizations advocating for policies and laws addressing the most urgent pesticide threats in Maryland. Ruth, her small staff and SOPC impress us daily as they fight to protect Maryland's "Babies, Bees and the Bay" from pesticide contamination, exemplified in their current push for passage of the Pollinator Protection Act requiring labeling of neonicotinoid-treated plants and restricting sales of such products to homeowners.

Like PAN's efforts in Minnesota and California, this state-based challenge to bee-harming pesticides helps build momentum for national action. And the Maryland efforts also provide a compelling example of Ruth's undaunted persistence as she stands firm against Bayer AgroScience's aggressive lobbying against neonic restrictions.

PAN participates in MPN's work as an active coalition member. We mobilized national support, for example, for the campaign's efforts to establish a system for pesticide use reporting modeled on data collection in California. The resulting 2014 law set aside funding to investigate data collection and reporting options, and the Maryland coalition continues to press for comprehensive use reporting.

PAN is proud to be associated with MPN, MPEN—and Ruth Berlin. 🌱



An early photo of Ruth Berlin and her son in Los Angeles.  
Photo courtesy of Ruth Berlin



PESTICIDE ACTION NETWORK • NORTH AMERICA

### We have a new look!

We're excited to share our new logo and tagline, both highlighting PAN's ongoing commitment to creating a vibrant, just food and farming system.

Look for our new website later this summer! 🌱

# PAN & Organic Valley Celebrate Earth Week by Talking Up Soil

On April 23, PAN and our business supporter ally, Organic Valley, partnered to host “Grass Up! Save Our Soil, Berkeley 2015” at the state-of-the-art David Brower Center. This awareness raising soirée, featuring delicious organic hors d’oeuvres and organic cocktails, wine and beer, brought 150 PAN supporters and donors together to learn about and celebrate solutions for healthy soil and the future of food and farming in conjunction with the UN-sponsored “International Year of Soils.”

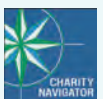
Featuring six learning stations—themed for soil, climate, pollinators, pasture, nutrition, and seeds—this festive event united experts at PAN’s many partner organizations, including Seed Matters of the Clif Bar Family Foundation, Rodale Institute, the Xerces Society, Organic Valley, Organic Wine Company, The Organic Institute, Poppy Hill Farms and Urban Bee.

The highlights of the evening were the main stage presentations from agroecology expert and PAN Senior Scientist Dr. Marcia Ishii-Eiteman and Clif Bar’s Seed Matters Director Matthew Dillon. Both presentations centered on challenging corporate control of the agricultural system and the effective solutions advanced by PAN and its allies to reclaim the future of food and farming. —



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