

Balancing Beauty and Biodiversity:

Designing Urban Pollinator Gardens with the Viewer in Mind

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Introduction

What is an Extension Pollinator Program Coordinator?



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Presentation Overview

- Challenges for pollinators in North Dakota cities
- How our Extension Master Gardner Program addresses those challenges
- Introduction to the **FAME** method:
- Next steps for our program
- Q & A



What is a pollinator conservation garden?

- Habitat for pollinators
- Contains nectar and pollen foraging sources, water, and shelter
- Mimics the function and design of natural habitat



Why should we care about pollinator habitat in urban areas?

Pollinators play a crucial role in maintaining healthy ecosystems and food security.

Urban gardens create connections between remaining native habitat patches.



What challenges do urban pollinator gardens face?

- Lawn culture
- Public perception of cultivated beauty
- Neighborhood and/or city ordinances



Fargo Landscaping

- Rock mulch
- Near zero pollinator foraging
- Drought vulnerable
- Weed pressure



North Dakota Native Prairie

- Mix of grasses and forbs
- Drought tolerant
- Wetlands
- Diverse plant life!*



What are we doing to address those challenges?

- Educational Programming
- Certified Pollinator Garden and Bee Lawn signs



Why FAME?

- How did audience feedback inspire the FAME method?



Photo credit: Fargo InForum

Why FAME?

- How did audience feedback inspire the FAME method?



FAME

- Frame
- Accessorize
- Maintain
- Educate



F: Frame

Set Boundaries

Examples:

- Paths / Pavement
- Borders / Fences

A good frame turns chaos into art



Case Studies



A: Accessorize

Add Visual Interest

Examples:

- Trees & shrubs
- Stalks & grasses
- Art



Art as Accessories

- Garden art
- Furniture
- Water features (water source)



Shelter as Accessories

- Bee house
- Feature wood (driftwood, logs, living fence, bound twigs, etc.)
- Winter interest: grasses and shrubs



Case Studies

M: Maintain

Determine the Level of Care

Examples:

- Regular pruning / weeding
- Remove spent vegetation when temperatures reach 50 degrees
- Keep edges tidy



E: Educate

Make it Interactive

Examples:

- Pollinator garden sign
- QR code
- Plant labels
- Share the space*



Case Studies



Key Points:

- Pollinator gardens make a difference in protecting at risk species
- Use the FAME method as a simple framework to making a functional and beautiful pollinator space
- Apply for certification—get a free sign!



Projects for 2025

- Bee Campus, USA
- New publications
 - Bee Lawns
 - "Pollinator Gardens and City Ordinances"
- Participation in National Pollinator Week (summer)
- Podcast episodes
- Pollinator Conservation on Social Media and new website



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