

BUYING BEE-SAFE PLANTS IN NORTHERN COLORADO – 2021

Many greenhouse plants are pre-treated with chemicals, including systemic neonicotinoid insecticides (neonics) which are toxic to pollinators and can remain in plants and soil for over a year. In 2014, over 50% of bee-attractive plants at big box stores tested positive for neonicotinoids. However, in 2021, many growers have moved away from using these pesticides. We have interviewed greenhouses and growers in Northern Colorado to create a list of the best places to shop for bee-safe plants. This list is based on interviews of nursery managers and reflects what has been reported to us. It is still important to ask nursery owners and managers about their pesticide practices and how to identify bee-safe plants. Organically labeled plants are always your best bet to protect pollinators. And, please say THANK YOU to nurseries growing pollinator-safe plants!

RETAILERS COMMITTED TO BEE-SAFE PLANTS!

We love these guys! Committed to growing & selling bee-safe plants!

High Plains Environmental Center

www.suborbitat.org

ONLINE Ordering

(970) 622-9676

HPEC grows a wide variety of native plants that support pollinators. Their plants are 100% neonicotinoid free, grown using organic methods and many are xeric species that will save you money on your water bill. Their plant sale runs from May-October with online ordering. Most plants are in the \$5-6 range and proceeds go to supporting the non-profit.

Harlequin Gardens

www.harlequingardens.com

4795 N. 26th St, Boulder, CO 80301

(303) 939-9403

100% pesticide and chemical-input free! What a great place to go buy plants – an adventure complete with chickens, ducks, and big views! They specialize in native perennials and have a selection of shrubs and trees and some herb and vegetable starts. They are so committed to organic that they won't even stock plants or trees that are known to have insect problems and might be sprayed in the future.

High Country Gardens

www.highcountrygardens.com

Online/Phone Order Only

(800) 925-9387

This famous nursery in Santa Fe, NM specializes in xeric & native plants and is a leader in the bee-safe movement! They have eliminated 100% of neonics in their plants and seeds. They are still working on flower bulbs. Wholesalers in the Netherlands do not use neonics, but grow in previously contaminated ground.

Center for ReSource Conservation

www.conservationcenter.org/gardens

These folks have unique "Gardens in a Box" for sale each spring with complete instructions and plants for a small garden space. You must order early in the year because they will sell out. All plants are neonic-free and gardens range from xeric to pollinator-attracting to themed vegetable combinations. You select a date and location for pick up in the metro area. Prices range from \$80-\$180 and that is a great deal for 15-30+ plants! This year they have added a manual turf-removal service making it easier than ever to convert lawn to garden

RETAIL NURSERIES THAT GROW THEIR OWN BEE-SAFE PLANTS

These nurseries grow a significant portion of their inventory using only beneficial insects or natural products. They cannot guarantee that plants sourced from wholesalers are neonic free. Always ask how to identify the plants grown on-site and ask for the safe wholesale brands, listed below!

Bath Nursery

www.bathgardencenter.com

2000 E Prospect Rd, Fort Collins, CO 80525

(970) 484-5022

Bath has a good selection of native plants in their xeric section & sometimes has harder to find species. In 2021, Bath switched their IPM plan to only using bio-controls, they do not spray in-house at all. 75% of the vegetable starts they stock are grown organically. They try to source neonic free trees and shrubs whenever possible, but it is not always possible to know if plants coming from out-of-state have been treated. If you have questions about if plants have been treated, talk with a nursery manager.

Fort Collins Nursery

www.fortcollinsnursery.com

2121 E Mulberry St, Fort Collins, CO 80524

(970) 482-1984

This is one of the best NOCO nurseries to find native shrubs and trees. All of their perennials and in-house grown plants are neonicotinoid free, including veggies and shrubs. They try to source neonic free plants from wholesalers as much as possible, but noted that it can be difficult to find neonic free trees because they come from out-of-state. If you have questions about which plants may have been treated, talk with nursery staff.

Gulley Greenhouse

www.gulleygreenhouse.com

6029 S Shields St, Fort Collins, CO 80526

(970) 223-4769

Plants grown in house are 100% neonic free- this includes vegetable and annual starts and herbaceous perennials. They buy shrubs and trees from other suppliers, and they do not check on whether suppliers use neonicotinoids, so they cannot confirm if woody species have been treated or not. They use bio-controls and organic pesticides in their in-house pest management. They carry some native species like rabbitbrush.

(MOSTLY) LOCAL WHOLESALE BRANDS THAT ARE BEE-SAFE

These growers do not use neonicotinoids in their greenhouses, with certain noted exceptions.

BONNIE PLANTS

BROWN'S GREENHOUSE– neonic free but unlabeled

FORT COLLINS WHOLESALE NURSERY

GULLEY GREENHOUSE

LAPORTE AVENUE NURSERY- organically grown

BOTANY LANE

CALABRESE GREENHOUSE

HARDY BOY (except for 10" pots and larger)

KIYOTA GREENHOUSE

*****This list was compiled to the best of our ability based on self-reporting of nurseries and growers. To receive any updated information or a pdf version of this document, please e-mail us at noco@peopleandpollinators.org*****