



May 9th, 2024

Brian Cornell, Chair and Chief Executive Officer
Target Corporation
1000 Nicollet Mall
Minneapolis, MN, 55403

Dear Target Chair and Chief Executive Officer Brian Cornell,

On behalf of the 46 undersigned organizations, which represent millions of customers, sustainable and responsible investors, and other stakeholders, we urge Target to signal its dedication to protecting the health of pollinators, people, and the planet by phasing out the use of toxic pesticides in its supply chain as well as taking meaningful action to transition toward organic and other ecological farming methods.

Bees and other pollinators are a cornerstone of Target's food supply. One in three bites of food we eat depends on pollinators, who contribute approximately [\\$34 billion](#) to the U.S. economy. Yet pollinators are in great peril. At current rates, forty percent of invertebrate pollinators face extinction. Pollinator declines are fueled by the use of pollinator-toxic pesticides and present a material risk for the supply chains of food retailers like Target. Food costs are predicted to rise as managed and wild pollinator populations decrease, and research indicates that pollinator loss has already resulted in decreased production of key crops like apples, cherries, and tomatoes in the United States.

Pesticides harm biodiversity and undermine soil carbon sequestration and farmers' resilience to climate change. Pesticides pose a grave threat to the foundation of a healthy, biodiverse, and sustainable food system. U.S. agriculture has become [48 times more toxic](#) to insects since the introduction of neonicotinoid pesticides, and studies have demonstrated that all classes of commonly used agricultural pesticides [kill or harm soil invertebrates](#) including earthworms, ants, beetles, and ground nesting bees. Biodiversity above and belowground is central to ecologically regenerative agriculture, and must be protected in order to build healthy soils that sequester more carbon, enhance farmers' resilience to climate change, and conserve water.

Pesticides are harmful to human health. Decades of data show that pesticides can disrupt and derail the healthy functioning of our bodies. Pesticide exposure is linked to cancers, asthma, birth defects, neurodevelopmental disorders like ADHD, Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, reproductive disorders, and endocrine disruption. [Children](#) are the most vulnerable to pesticides, and exposure is inequitable, as [farmers, farmworkers and rural communities](#) are on the frontlines of exposure.

Target is falling behind competitors on pesticide elimination and pollinator protection. Leading companies are making measurable and timebound commitments to reduce toxic pesticides in their supply chains. Walmart, Giant Eagle, Kroger, and Whole Foods are requiring all fresh produce suppliers to adopt Integrated Pest Management (IPM) and to verify their compliance using a list of third-party certifications vetted by the IPM Institute of North America. Giant Eagle's policy will also eliminate the worst neonicotinoid pesticides in the company's fresh produce supply by 2025. While these are important steps in the right direction, given the role that pesticides play in the health and environmental crises we're facing, we need to go further. To meet or exceed the rising industry standard, [Target's pollinator health policy](#) must include clear, timebound commitments to phase out toxic pesticides and expand ecological farming methods.

As a company with a well-known and public dedication to corporate responsibility, it's time for Target to step up and move towards eliminating toxic pesticides. Target's 2023 Sustainability and Governance Report reiterates the company's commitment to "sustainability efforts as part of an

interconnected system, where our actions help address climate change, restore natural systems and drive opportunity and equity for our teams, communities and partners.” Honoring this commitment requires taking meaningful action to protect pollinators, other biodiversity, and human health by phasing out toxic pesticides in the company supply chain.

To protect pollinators, people, and the planet, we urge Target to:

- **Phase Out Pesticides:** Establish a pollinator health policy that includes timebound and measurable commitments to phase out and eliminate neonicotinoids, glyphosate, organophosphates and other pollinator-toxic pesticides as well as implementation of alternative, least-toxic pest management strategies along the company’s food and beverage supply chains.
- **Grow Organic:** Increase USDA-certified organic food and beverages to at least 15 percent of overall offerings, prioritizing sourcing from domestic growers, and implement policies that provide meaningful support to domestic organic growers and growers in transition to organic in the company supply chain.
- **Act With Speed and Transparency:** Take immediate steps to implement stronger protections for pollinators and to develop a new pollinator health policy by spring 2025. Publicly disclose company policies and progress related to these actions.

We strongly urge Target to step up and do its part to protect the pollinators that its supply chain depends on. We look forward to hearing about Target’s next steps on this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Alaska Community Action on Toxics
American Bird Conservancy
Animals Are Sentient Beings Inc
Audubon Society of Rhode Island
Beyond Toxics
Californians for Pesticide Reform
Center for Environmental Health
Center for Food Safety
Ekō
Endangered Habitats League
Endangered Species Coalition
Environmental Protection Information Center (EPIC)
Friends of the Earth
GMO/Toxin Free USA
Green America
Grow Native Massachusetts
Howling For Wolves
Kalmiopsis Audubon Society
Kettle Range Conservation Group
Klamath Forest Alliance
Latino Farmers & Ranchers International, Inc.
LEAD for Pollinators, Inc.
Los Angeles Audubon Society
Maryland Pesticide Education Network
Massachusetts Pollinator Network
Moms Across America
Nevada Wildlife Federation Inc. and WHIN
Non Toxic Communities

Northern California Council, Fly Fishers International
Northwest Center for Alternatives to Pesticides
Oceanic Preservation Society
People & Pollinators Action Network
Pesticide Action Network
Raptors Are The Solution
Re:wild Your Campus
Resource Renewal Institute
Save Our Sky Blue Waters
The Borneo Project
The Ecology Center
The International Wildlife Coexistence Network
The Story of Stuff Project
The Urban Wildlands Group
Toxic Free NC
Voices of Wildlife in NH
Western Nebraska Resources Council
Wild Farm Alliance
Wild Zone Conservation League
WildCare of Western New York