

Sunflower pollen, legislating "local" and the rapid-fire report

A sustainable e-newsletter from GrowerTalks and Green Profit



MONDAY, AUGUST 31, 2026

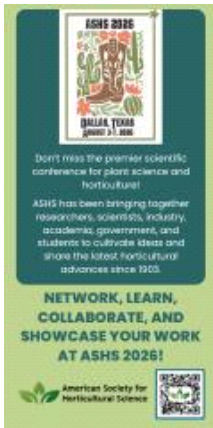
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COMING UP THIS WEEK:

The Importance of Sunflowers
Defining Colorado Grown
Make Wind & Solar Work
Organic Weed Management
Report from the MT Outpost

**NATIONAL
PLANTS OF
THE YEAR
BOOST SALES**

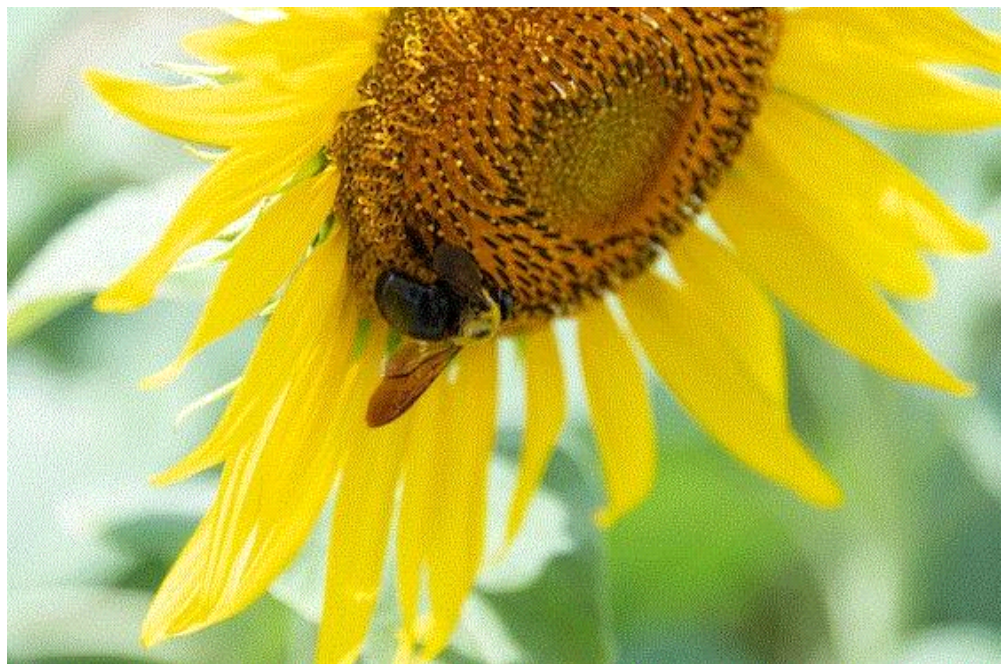
ANNUAL
OF THE YEAR
2027



PW
PROVEN
WINNERS

The Importance of Sunflower Pollen

While pollenless sunflowers might seem trendy and even convenient in the cut flower vase, research says that sunflower pollen is a critical food for some native bees. Dan Gilrein, entomologist at Cornell Cooperative Extension of Suffolk County, covered the topic in a recent [e-Gro blog post](#).



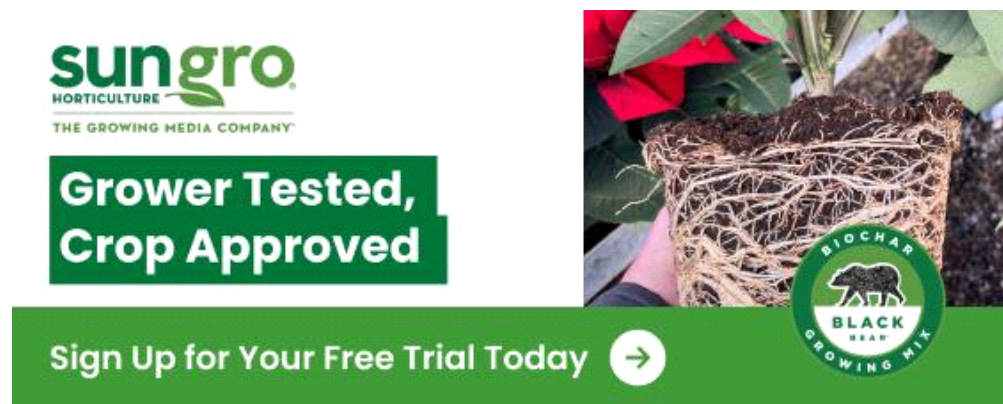
While sunflower pollen is considered low in protein and can't give bees a full range of nutrition for

their diet, that doesn't mean it's not important. In fact, it may determine their overall health.

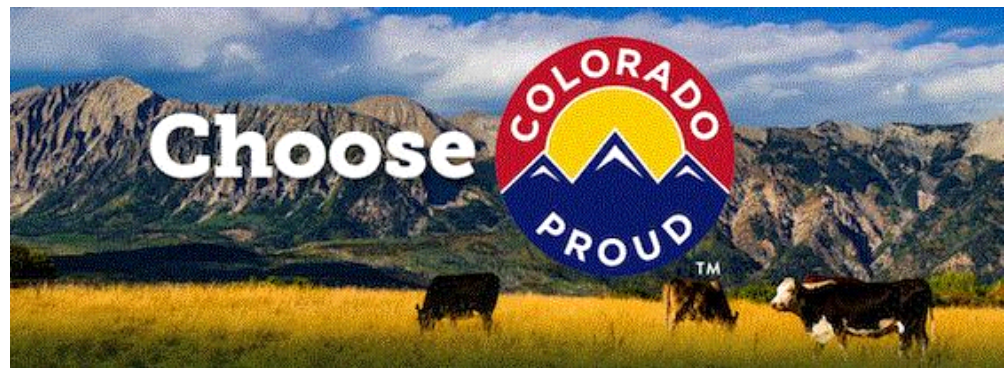
Dan cites a [2023 Entomology Today](#) article reporting on research that found sunflower pollen associated with reduced levels of Varroa mites [a serious and common parasite] in honey bee colonies. The researchers found that at the landscape level, each doubling of sunflower crop area was associated with a 28% reduction in mite infestation. So consider planting some regular sunflowers to go along with your pollenless varieties!

Of course, the biggest source of sunflower pollen for bees would be commercial crops; however, the report notes that United States sunflower crop acreage has declined by 2% per year since 1980—a number that adds up over 46 years.

You can read the original research [HERE](#).

An advertisement for Sungro Horticulture. On the left, the Sungro logo is displayed in green, with 'HORTICULTURE' and 'THE GROWING MEDIA COMPANY' in smaller text below it. Below the logo is a green box with the text 'Grower Tested, Crop Approved' in white. At the bottom left, a green banner contains the text 'Sign Up for Your Free Trial Today' followed by a white right-pointing arrow. On the right side of the advertisement is a photograph of a plant in a pot, with a circular logo overlaid on it. The logo features a silhouette of a bear and the text 'BIOCHAR BLACK BEAN GROWING MIX'.

Colorado Grown Gets Legal Protection



You can't dispute the allure of locally grown products, but with that comes the potential for deceptive practices that misrepresent the true origin. A new Colorado law just went into effect to protect Colorado-grown produce in the face of folks carting in out-of-state produce and passing it off as grown in the state.

In the case of peaches, out-of-state fruits were being brought in and marketed as Colorado-grown with a Colorado Proud logo at prices that undercut actual local produce. (And for those who swore by a particular region's peaches' superiority, it may have also sullied their reputation.)

Rep. Matthew Martinez, sponsor of [HB26-1031](#), said, "This new law ensures that vendors who falsely label their produce as Colorado-grown can be held accountable for deceiving consumers and harming Colorado producers." Not only can they be prosecuted now, but the law also requires that you must be authorized to use the Colorado grown logo/label.

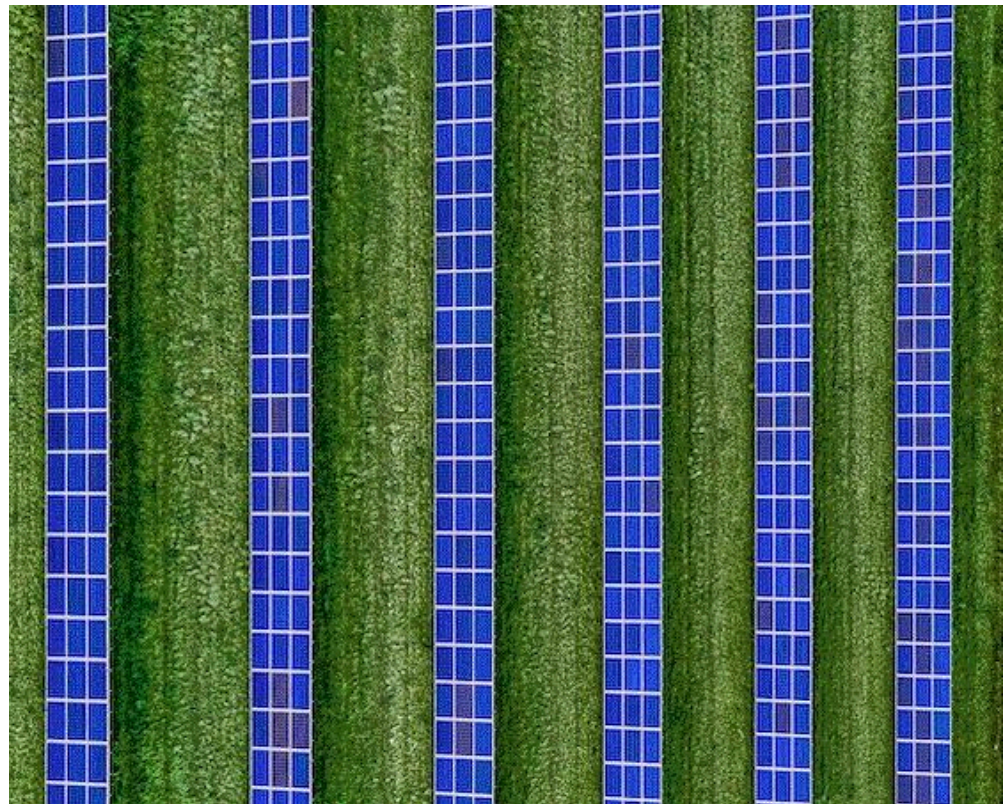
The law applies to raw/unprocessed plants, fruits, vegetables or fungi that are intended for human consumption. While the law went into effect on August 12, I'll be curious to see what enforcement looks like.



Making Wind & Solar Work on the Farm

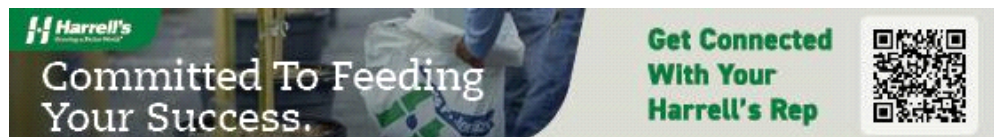
If you've ever thought of leasing your land for a wind or solar energy project, the National Center for Appropriate Technology (NCAT) just created a new resource to help landowners navigate these projects and understand the impacts.

"[Navigating Land Leases for Wind and Solar](#)" walks you through lease negotiations, construction, operation and decommissioning. While these kinds of projects can diversify your income streams, setting up the agreements and contingencies is a key part of the process, whether you're looking to take a piece of land out of production entirely, or have it serve dual purposes with an energy project.



Since most of these projects have fairly long-term agreements, it's important to use professional guidance and write in the correct lease options.

And if your interest is piqued, don't forget that NCAT also has a whole clearinghouse of resources on [agrivoltaics](#). They're working to find ways for farmers and growers to co-locate their production and solar, so that they're growing more sustainably while also providing new income.



Organic Weed Management Seminar

The National Organic Program and the USDA's Transition to Organic Partnership Program are putting on an online Organic Weed Management Workshop on September 2.

Tubby Creek Farm's Josephine Alexander will talk practical weed management strategies, including hand tools, cover crops, and mechanical cultivation. They'll also have a live Q&A. The workshop is free.

It's slated for Wednesday, **September 2, 2026 at 6 p.m. Eastern/ 5 p.m. Central.** Register [HERE](#).



Report from the MT Outpost

A rapid-fire report from the Outpost goes something like this:

I lost part of my perennial garden at the rental cabin this week: a casualty to the semi-nightmare of having to install a new leach field this past week. (I say "semi" because we caught the problem before we had any dramatic failures and miraculously, we didn't have to cancel any reservations.) I exercised my "transparency first" customer service skills as we dug a giant hole to sleuth out the problem. So fall planting, here we go.

Meanwhile, we're digging up the front lawn at our house next week for a 100% fun project: installing a perennial garden/rockscaping.

And yesterday, as if to remind us that anything can happen, lightning struck the nearby ridge that our house faces. A small wildfire ensued—nothing too dramatic—and last night I watched both a lunar eclipse and the headlamps of firefighters who'd hiked up to put out the fire. In any other weather, it would have been unnerving, but it was a calm, cool evening, and they had it fully out by this morning.

Until next time,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jennifer".

Jennifer Duffield White

jwhite@ballpublishing.com

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