

## **CONSUMER PREFERENCES FOR POLLINATOR-RELATED PROMOTIONS**

Consumer preferences are important because they influence demand which can directly impact product development and availability, production practices, ROI, and marketing and promotional strategies. Here, research is discussed that summarizes consumer preferences for pollinator-related promotions in the ornamental plant industry.

### **1. Consumers, Pollinator Related Promotions, & Neonicotinoids**

- Consumers want to aid pollinator insects. Consequently, they purchase plants that are perceived as being beneficial to pollinators.
- If plants are not labeled to indicate that they aid pollinators, consumers rely on their own perceptions to determine which plants are beneficial. Typically, flower characteristics are the primary traits used to determine if a plant aids pollinators.
- Twenty-four percent of respondents had heard of neonics/neonicotinoids at the time of the study (January 2015). These individuals are more knowledgeable about pollinator related topics and are more likely to purchase plants with ‘neonic-free’ labeling.
- Simple, convenient in-store promotions (i.e. plant tags, container/pot labels) are preferred by end customers.
- ‘Pollinator friendly’ wording was the most preferred by consumers, regardless of if they had heard of neonics or not. ‘Neonic-free’ labeling was the least preferred wording option.
- Overall, pollinator related promotions improved consumers’ purchase likelihood for ornamental plants.

### **2. ‘Pollinator Friendly’ Plant Labels Case Study**

- Florida plant purchasers want to aid pollinators through purchasing plants that benefit them.
- ‘Pollinator friendly’ labels positively influence the majority of respondents’ purchasing decisions toward landscape plants.
- Visual attention to price signs/labels decreases consumers’ purchase likelihood while visual attention to value-added attributes (including ‘pollinator friendly’ signage) improves their purchase likelihood.

**Key Insights:**

1. Consumers are interested in aiding pollinator insects through plant selection.
2. Plant labels/tags, container labels, and bench signs are the preferred in-store promotional methods.
3. 24% of consumers are aware of neonics, but ‘neonic-free’ labeling is less effective than other pollinator related promotions.
4. ‘Pollinator friendly’ was the most preferred pollinator related promotion.
5. Visual attention to pollinator promotions on landscape plants increases consumers’ purchase likelihood for those items.

**Additional Resources:**

- Rihn, A., and H. Khachatryan. 2016. Does Consumer Awareness of Neonicotinoid Pesticides Influence Their Preferences for Plants? *HortScience*, 51(4): 388-393.
- Khachatryan, H., and A. Rihn. Consumers’ Response to “Neonic-Free” and Other Insect Pollinator Promotions on Ornamental Plants. <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/fe991>
- Khachatryan, H., and A. Rihn. Florida Consumer Preferences for Ornamental Landscape Plants. [www.edis.ifas.ufl.edu/fe1000](http://www.edis.ifas.ufl.edu/fe1000)
- Khachatryan, H., and A. Rihn. Eye-Tracking Methodology and Applications in Consumer Research. <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/fe947>

**Contact Information:**

Alicia Rihn

University of Florida  
Mid-Florida Research and Education Center  
2725 S. Binion Rd., Apopka FL 32703

Email: [arihn@ufl.edu](mailto:arihn@ufl.edu)

Phone: 407-410-6936