

Seven Steps to Starting a Milkweed Stand

- 1 SEED/ROOT** When starting from seed, acquire mature seeds that have been stored over winter in cool, moist conditions. Or plant milkweed using root sections from established plants by harvesting lateral, 6-inch long roots with visible buds in early spring. Roots should be transplanted 2 to 4 inches deep in an area where surrounding vegetation has been removed.
- 2 POT** Four to six weeks before the last expected frost, plant two or three milkweed seeds in peat pots and place in a warm environment, such as a greenhouse, with full daylight.
- 3 PLANT** Dig a small hole and plant seedling peat pots in outdoor locations that receive at least six hours of sunlight daily. Cover each peat pot completely with soil.
- 4 SPREAD** Place seedlings in groups spaced 3 to 4 feet apart in an area free of competing vegetation. Alternately, individual seedlings can be planted 15 to 20 feet apart. Remove competing vegetation in a 2-foot diameter circle.
- 5 WATER** If rainfall isn't sufficient, water the milkweed seedlings. Use a small amount of fertilizer to speed the establishment of the plants.
- 6 GROW** To allow the plants to establish, don't directly apply herbicide to milkweed for the first year. Herbicides (with a few exceptions) may be used after the first year, but only when monarchs are not present.
- 7 MOW** To help milkweed thrive, mow around the established area to control unwanted plants, like invasive tall-growing weeds and woody species. However, neighboring nectar-producing plants are beneficial as a food source for monarchs.

Living Acres, a research-driven effort from BASF, focuses on protecting monarch habitat and increasing biodiversity alongside modern agriculture.

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