**Busy bees at Lidl Ireland launch ‘Operation Pollination’ in stores nationwide**

*Lidl Ireland sign up to the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan as part of "A Better Tomorrow" sustainability strategy to support declining pollinators*

Lidl Ireland have been busy bees looking at ways to further support biodiversity as part of their “A Better Tomorrow” sustainable strategy. With one third of our bee species threatened with extinction from Ireland, Lidl Ireland have signed up to the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan. Declining pollinators such as bees and butterflies are considered an essential part of the team at Lidl Ireland in producing food, as they transfer pollen, aiding in the fertilization of plants and flowers, producing seeds, ensuring a new generation of greenery is produced every day.

The decline in pollinators is due in part to the reduced amount of food (flowers) and safe nesting sites in our landscapes. Signing up to the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan ensures our operations support biodiversity so pollinators can survive and thrive. Steps we have taken at Lidl Ireland as part of Operation Pollination include:

* Promoting our bee friendly pollinator range in our leaflet, which are plants that are particularly attractive to pollinators such as Lavender and Perennials,– watch out for our bee friendly logo!
* Ensuring that there are no pesticides which are harmful to pollinators on our bee friendly plant range.
* Installing bat boxes (night-time pollinators), insect hotels and pollinator friendly plants at our head office in Dublin as well as a native wildflower meadow at our distribution facility currently under construction in Newbridge, Co. Kildare

Watch out for our Bee Friendly plants in our leaflet, available in 161 stores nationwide from Thursday 18th of July:

* *Dianthus Pink Kisses, €2.49*
* *Lavender, €4.99 (6 pack)*
* *Mini Cyclamen, €1.49 each*
* *Pentas Lanceolata, €2.99 each*
* *Perennials, €4.99 each (10 varieties including Phlox, Lavender & Verbena)*

The environment forms an important part of Lidl’s “A Better Tomorrow” sustainability strategy, with numerous actions already underway to support biodiversity and the planet in which we live. For example, Lidl has a strict policy concerning pesticides, which indicates that our fruit and vegetables may contain no more than one third of the maximum level permitted by EU law. Our suppliers work hard to meet these requirements, which ensures we are supporting biodiversity on a daily basis.

We are continuing to build green roofs for selected new store builds. Partially covered in vegetation, green roofs absorb rainwater and provide insulation, reducing the need for in store drainage systems. Green roofs also help to cool urban environments, improve air quality, sequester carbon and increase urban biodiversity by providing habitats for wildlife.

Lidl also recently welcomed a grant of planning from Kildare County Council for the installation of energy-saving solar panels at its distribution centre in Newbridge, Co. Kildare, which is currently under construction. This installation will see an investment of €1m at this site alone, adding to the €1m already committed by Lidl to solar power installations across its store network.

In addition to the solar installations Lidl became the first Irish retailer to roll out recycling bins across its store network to allow customers recycle unwanted packaging and have committed to installing the largest network of electric vehicle charging points in the Irish supermarket sector.

Lidl was also the first retailer to be ISO50001 accredited across its entire operations. ISO50001 is a European energy management standard credited to businesses who are committed to continually reducing energy output. In conjunction with their extensive investment in on-site renewable solar energy, Lidl switched to sourcing 100% of its electricity requirements from renewable sources last year.

If you’re looking for ways to support Irelands local pollinators, providing food (flowers) in your community and gardens is a great step. Keep an eye on our garden range which has everything from plants to insect hotels and bird houses.

**ENDS**

**For more information, please contact:**

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