2025 Field Study

Plant Type: Wollypod Milkweed (A. eriocopa)

Summary: Scott Hennessy runs a greenhouse in Salinas, Ca. For the last several years, he has received contracts to germinate seeds, and provide plants to the people who restore habitats.

Our work together initially in 2024 involved a native milkweed plant (Narrowleaf milkweed), which are the primary food for the threatened Western Monarch butterfly caterpillars. In 2024, we got great results with these Narrowleaf milkweed plants (i.e. largest leaves 4.7x larger, 30x larger plant volume, 10x larger root ball). We decided to repeat the experiment in 2025, and add to it a second species of milkweed, Wollypod. The Narrowleaf milkweed opened up a larger gap, while in our initial attempt in 2025, the SAI treated Wollypod milkweed plants also significantly outperformed control (i.e. 19x larger leaves, 167x more leaf surface area/plant).

Scott had some of the SAI soil amendment left over, so on 16 Sept 2025, he planted some Wollypod milkweeds as "control". Nine days later, he planted some Wollypod milkweeds in his soil mixed with our SAI soil amendment. He was stunned to observe that the 4 days old SAI treated plants had caught up to the control plants which were 14 days old, and had larger leaves. By 7 days old, vs 17 days old, here's what Scott said:

> *" It is clear your product has significant impact on growth, w.r.t. plant height, plant volume, and larger leaves. I'll continue to monitor the differences in the rates of growth."*

Photo 1: 200 Wollypod milkweed "control" plants, at 35 days old (right).

200 Wollypod milkweed plants at 25 days old (left).

The SAI treated plants are taller, are wider (thus greater plant volume), and the leaves are larger.

We have observed that SAI treated plants usually grow larger root balls, than control plants. So we asked Scott to examine the roots. (photo 2 below)

Photo 2: Root structure of a 35 day old Woolypod milkweed control plant (right), which is insufficiently developed to hold the soil from a 6”x1” planting tube.

Root structure of a 25 day old Wollypod milkweed plant treated with the SAI soil amendments, which is so much larger that is “holds” the soil in the shape of that same 6”x1” planting tube.

This represents one of the first independent confirmations by a respected grower, of the benefit of the SAI soil amendments.

Post script 1: a mouse got into Scott’s greenhouse, and ate the non treated milkweed plants, so furture comparisons are not possible. Scott will restart this experiment, the week of 10 Nov 2025.

Post script 2: Scott had a little SAI soil amendment left over, and he was planting a leaf lettuce that he’s grown for years from seed. Anecdotally, he observed that the size of the leaves on this lettuce plant were significantly larger than what he typically harvested for many years. He did not start control lettuces, so we lack the quantitative comparison, but Scott has seen the faster growth and larger leaves for himself with 2 different plants. Scott has Invited SAI to work with some of the US Federal, State, and regional habitat restoration projects, and has accepted a position on our technical board of advisors.

Mr. Hennessy’s contact information is available upon request.