



ONTARIO BEEKEEPERS'  
ASSOCIATION  
Since 1881

## OPEN LETTER TO PREMIER: WE NEED REAL ACTION TO PROTECT BEES NOW!

**Milton, ON. December 13, 2013.** The Ontario Beekeepers' Association delivered a strong message to Premier Wynne yesterday: "Premier Wynne, We need real action to protect bees, now!" The message demanding the suspension of the use of neonicotinoid pesticides was delivered in an open letter format co-signed by 36 organizations representing beekeeper organizations, farm groups and environmental advocates.

With the closing of their call for comments and only months until the spring planting season, it is expected the PMRA will be tabling their recommendations by the end of January and the government of Ontario will follow suit quickly thereafter. Ontario beekeepers felt this was the time to remind Premier (and also OMAF Minister) Wynne that she needs to make the right decision: suspend the use of neonicotinoids and protect bees from another season of exposure to this deadly pesticide.

"I've heard from dozens of Ontario beekeepers who have suffered unacceptable losses due to the indiscriminate use of this pesticide," said Dan Davidson, OBA President, "we cannot stand by and watch our industry destroyed when it can be avoided."

Once word of this open letter reached beekeeping associations and supporters of pollinators, the OBA received dozens of requests to add names to the list of signatories. Supporters represent a wide range of groups such as the Grey Bruce Beekeepers Association, Whole Foods Market, the David Suzuki Foundation and the National Farmers' Union - Ontario.

In addition to these organizations, over 65,000 people have signed the OBA petition calling for suspension of the use of neonicotinoids. And in less than 2 weeks, almost 3,000 people have viewed the new OBA video showing the effects of pesticide poisoning on a third generation beekeeper. (<http://vimeo.com/81158064>)

The linkage of neonicotinoid pesticides to bee kills has been confirmed. After investigating bee kills in Ontario, Quebec and Manitoba, Health Canada's Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) determined that "current agricultural practices related to the use of neonicotinoid treated corn and soybean seed are affecting the environment due to their impacts on bees and other pollinators". Europe's suspension of neonicotinoids on seed treatment became law earlier this month. Our government needs to act on its findings now.

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