

Ontario Beekeepers' Association – 2014 election – NDP Response

1. Ontario has lost thousands of hives in both 2012 and 2013 that Health Canada has confirmed were the result of exposure to neonicotinoids in corn and soy planting.

Do you support our call for a moratorium on the sale of the neonicotinoid treated seeds that are killing our bees?

Honey bees are important pollinators for agricultural crops and in Ontario the bee population dropped by 37.9 per cent in the last year. Ontarians are concerned about the loss of all bees, not just those involved in the agricultural sector.

We are encouraged by actions to promote the use of non neonicotinoid treated seeds and promote the use of other products and deflectors. However, we recognize that these actions may not be sufficient.

Rather than pinning the health of Ontario's bee population on the federal government with their poor record on environment, as the Liberals have done. The Ontario NDP will use evidence, best practices in other jurisdictions and rigorous research to develop a course of action that makes sense for Ontario.

2. Health Canada and other studies have shown significant amounts of persistent neonicotinoid pesticides in water and soil samples across Ontario.

With over 4 million acres treated annually with these pesticides, will your party declare this an urgent environmental problem?

With bee populations continuing to decline at significant rates it is clear that action is needed. Honey bees play a vital role not just in pollinating crops, they are key to the life cycle of the plant life that helps sustain our planet. This is an urgent priority for the Ontario NDP. We also recognize that we need to act responsibly and take steps that will stabilize the bee population. We will be cognizant that any actions we take may also have their own far reaching implications.