

The question is whether any civilization can wage relentless war on life without destroying itself, and without losing the right to be called civilized. — Rachel Carson



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News you can use from the OBA!

In this edition: Congratulations on Pollinator ECO Award to ADM Deb Sikora and MoECC's Sarah Rang! - OBA urges Federal Ministers to end widespread use of neonics and review of PMRA - Nuffield Canada Scholarship - Beekeepers refuse to put thousands of colonies in Fraser Valley blueberry fields - *Listening to the Bees* with Mark Winston - Beekeeping Education comes to Community Colleges

Congratulations on Pollinator ECO Award to ADM Debra Sikora and MOECC's Sarah Rang!

The OBA would like to extend its sincere congratulations to OMAFRA and MOECC staff on the occasion of receiving the Environmental Commissioner of Ontario's ECO Recognition Award.

By introducing the **Pollinator Health Action Plan**, Ontario has established itself as a global leader by taking steps to protect insect pollinators. We will, however, be judged by the health and vigour of our insect pollinators. We look forward to working with you in the months and years to come, to ensure Ontario has a sustainable bee population and beekeeping industry.

Read more [here](#).

OBA Asks PMRA to Take Action To End the Widespread Use of Neonics on Field Crops & Requests Immediate, Independent Review of PMRA's Decision-Making Process, Methods & Policies for Pesticide Approvals.

Last month, the OBA sent a letter to Minister of Health, the Honourable Ginette Petitpas Taylor, and the Honourable Lawrence MacAulay, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, requesting an immediate, independent review of PMRA's decision-making process, methods and policies for pesticide approvals.

In the letter, OBA president, Jim Coneybeare notes that beekeepers managing honey bee colonies in Canada's corn, soy and canola growing regions continue to experience unsustainable colony losses, queen failures, record low honey production and unsustainable costs associated with the replacement of colonies and queens.

The association of these losses to the agricultural use of neonicotinoid pesticides applied as seed treatments on corn and soy and other field crops was confirmed by Canada's Pest Management Regulatory Agency as early as 2013.

View the full letter [here](#),

\$15,000 Nuffield Canada scholarships available for those working in agriculture.

Nuffield Canada has up to five scholarships of \$15,000 each, available for 2019, and the deadline for applicants is the end of April. This is an incredible opportunity for someone involved in agriculture to travel the world, meeting top industry leaders, and getting to see/experience things not normally open to the public. It's also a chance for them to deeply study an issue of importance to their sector, learn how the issue is being tackled around the globe, and to bring back solutions to Canada, benefiting our industry for the long-term.

At different times during their two year scholarship, they also will interact with other scholars from countries including the US, Britain, Ireland, France, New Zealand, Australia, Holland, Brazil, China, India, and various places in Africa. Life-long friendships develop from these gatherings. Application forms and more information can be found at www.nuffield.ca

And in the news:

Beekeepers refuse to put thousands of colonies in Fraser Valley blueberry fields

Beekeepers, including major operators from Alberta, are refusing to put thousands of their colonies in the Fraser Valley this spring due to health concerns related to blueberry pollination. That decision is predicted to cost blueberry farmers millions of dollars in lost production.

"It could be a big problem for blueberry growers," said Kerry Clark, president of the B.C. Honey Producers' Association. "If you don't have bees, you don't get berries... all that investment in the fields won't produce."

See the [full story](#) in the *Vancouver Sun*.

Listening to the Bees with Mark Winston

Join Governor General award winning author Mark Winston for an evening of stories and research, based on Mark's 40 years of experience with bees. He'll be speaking on Friday, May 4th at the Lillian H. Smith Library, [239 College Street, Toronto](#), 7 - 8 pm.

He'll be offering his thoughts on the limitations and the power of science and the need for dialogue and action on protecting pollinators.

Sustainable beekeeping programs are creating a buzz

Decline in honeybee population sparks what have become popular studies.

Sustainability is trending, and it's the guiding principle behind a raft of innovative programs springing up at colleges and universities.

Sustainable Urban Beekeeping is one of the latest offerings from Humber College, presented in association with Humber Arboretum, TRCA and Parks, Forestry, and Recreation. The pilot program, launched in 2017, grew in popularity so quickly, class size doubled within one season. "Enrollment is already full for 2018 and we have a waitlist," says arboretum director Alexandra Link. Read the full article [here](#).

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Ontario Beekeepers' Association
[8560 Tremaine Road](#)
Box 476
Milton, On L9T 4Z1
Canada