

"Bees do have a smell, you know, and if they don't they should, for their feet are dusted with spices from a million flowers." — Ray Bradbury, *Dandelion Wine*



MARCH 9, 2018

## News you can use from the OBA!

**Register for the Spring 2018 Meeting before March Break -  
Early bird rates extended to March 18.**

**In this edition: Early bird rates extended to Sunday, March 18 for the  
Spring Meeting - Register now for this season's Beekeeper Workshops -  
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**Early Bird Rates extended to  
Sunday, March 18  
for the OBA Spring Meeting**

Thursday March 22 and Friday March 23  
Blue Mountain Resort, Collingwood

Calling all honey producers, mead makers and bee breeders! OBA's Spring Meeting is designed to deliver real, practical value as you ramp up for this year's season.

[Scan or fax the registration form](#) or call (905) 636-0661 to get set up right away.

Highlights include:

- Introducing *Essential Practices for Ontario Beekeepers*, a comprehensive resource that points you to reliable, accessible information relevant to Ontario beekeepers
- Getting ready for new antibiotic requirements
- The latest on varroa, honey bee health, honey as a wound treatment
- Get in (on the bottom board) as Ontario's brand new mead association is launched
- A focused vendor showcase – so bring your shopping list!

View the programs for both days, Honey & Mead Producers Day and Bee Breeders Day [here](#).

We've requested snow... in case you find time to visit the ski hills. Call now for reservations at Blue Mountain Resort: **877 445-0231** and quote Ontario Beekeepers' Group.

## Register now for this season's Beekeeper Workshops

**Registration is now open for the OBA's Tech-Transfer Program Workshops across the province. Space is limited, and popular locations fill up early.**

1. Introductory Beekeeping (Beginner)
2. IPM for Beekeeping (Intermediate)
3. Queen Rearing (Advanced - 3yrs exp+)

Workshop details:

- Each workshop is a separate **one-day** workshop.
- Workshops take place during May and June, mostly on weekends.
- Cost: \$180/workshop (tax incl), \$155 for members of the OBA
- Lunch: Provided with registration fee. Coffee and snacks also included. Comes with a Manual.

[Find out more here](#).

## Open Letter to Ministers for Action on Neonics

The OBA delivered a letter this week from OBA president, Jim Coneybeare, to Ministers Leal and Ballard, and Premier Wynne, on behalf of beekeepers, and Ontario's wild and managed bees.

"Ontario's beekeepers, many of whom keep bees in proximity to field crops treated with neonicotinoid pesticides, continue to suffer low honey yields, unsustainable colony losses and a myriad bee health problems, such as spring and fall dwindling and queen losses.

In 2014, the government of Ontario took a bold step toward protecting its insect pollinators from the effects of a highly toxic pesticide that was linked by PMRA (Canada's Pest Management Regulatory Agency) to bee kills and colony losses. At the time that the legislation regulating neonics was put in effect, 99% of corn and 60% of soy acreage were being treated, despite the fact that Ontario crop specialists estimated that only 20% of acreage was threatened by the target pests. Ontario passed legislation for the reduction in the use of these pesticides with an aspirational target of 80% reduction by 2017. However, the latest data published by MOECC (Ontario's Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change) for 2017 have shown only a 22% decrease in the treated acreage of corn and 16% reduction for soy, signalling a significant shortfall in achieving the government of Ontario's goal for the reduction of the use of neonicotinoid pesticides on field crops." The full letter can be read [here](#).

## Front of Packaging Labelling News:

When Health Canada introduced its Healthy Eating Strategy for Canadians in 2016 it also proposed to introduce mandatory front-of-package labelling for foods that were high in saturated fats, sodium and sugars. The Canadian Honey Council recognized that this would adversely affect honey and honey sales and submitted a background paper requesting honey be exempted from this type of labelling. In February of 2018, the new front-of-package labelling requirements were published in Canada Gazette and they exempted honey. The exact reference is as follows:

*"The following prepackaged products would be fully exempt from the nutrition symbol requirements:*

- *Sweetening agents, as defined in subsection B.01.001(1), which include sugar, honey, syrups and molasses (these products are all or mostly all sugars and are used by consumers for sweetening purposes in different amounts depending on application, such as coffee/tea, baked goods, toppings, etc. Having a nutrition symbol for "high in sugars" on these products would be redundant);"*

## And in the News:

### European Neonc Report

#### **"Neonicotinoids: Risks to Bees Confirmed by European Food Safety Authority"**

Most uses of neonicotinoid pesticides represent a risk to wild bees and honeybees, according to assessments published today by EFSA. The Authority has updated its risk assessments of three neonicotinoids – clothianidin, imidacloprid and thiamethoxam – that are currently subject to [restrictions](#) in the EU because of the threat they pose to bees. [Click](#)

[here](#) for the full article.

And read [this article](#) in *The Guardian*: Analysis from EU's scientific risk assessors find neonicotinoids pose a serious danger to all bees, making a total field ban highly likely

## Federal Bio-diversity Regulation

### Commenting on the Federal Budget, Indigenous & Environmental Groups: "The Government of Canada hits a home run for biodiversity conservation."

A partnership of Indigenous and environmental groups commended the Canadian government for tabling the best federal budget for biodiversity conservation in decades. The budget creates hope that Canada will meet its commitment to protect at least 17 percent of lands and inland waters by 2020. Now, the Government of Ontario needs to step up to the plate. [Read the full article](#) here.

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