



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Ontario Beekeepers Support Bee Health Working Group

Milton, Ontario, July 9, 2013: The Ontario Beekeepers' Association (OBA) congratulates the Government of Ontario on their initiative to form a cross industry working group to provide recommendations on how to mitigate the potential risk to honey bees from exposure to neonicotinoids -- pesticides used on corn and soybeans.

Ontario has experienced heavy losses of colonies this spring. Based on reports from beekeepers it appears that these losses could be even greater than those experienced in 2012. These new reports of bee kills demonstrate what appears to be a longer term decline in bee population as a result of the continued use of these highly toxic pesticides.

'As a member of the Group, we will help our crop farmers find alternatives to toxic neonicotinoids. However we must enact a ban before the next planting season. Our industry simply cannot sustain these losses.' says Dan Davidson, President of the Ontario Beekeepers Association. 'Allowing the status quo to remain would spell tragedy for the bees that pollinate our fruits and vegetables.'

The federal Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) concluded in their report: Evaluation of Canadian Bee Mortalities that coincided with Corn Planting in Spring 2012, "*The information evaluated suggests that planting of corn seeds treated with the nitro-guanidine insecticides clothianidin and/or thiamethosam contributed to the majority of the bee mortalities that occurred in corn growing regions of Ontario and Quebec in Spring 2012.*"

On April 29, the European Union suspended the use of neonicotinoid pesticides in Europe.

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