



## MEDIA ADVISORY

November 17, 2014

ONTARIO MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS (OMAFRA) TO ADDRESS BEEKEEPERS' MEETING

**Milton, ON.** OMAFRA Minister Jeff Leal will address the Annual General Meeting of the Ontario Beekeepers' Association (OBA) in Markham on Thursday, November 20<sup>th</sup> at 3 pm. Minister Leal represents the ministry under whose jurisdiction Ontario's beekeeping industry falls.

OBA members are hoping to hear news from the Minister on the current issues affecting beekeepers and pollinator health, most notably the widespread use of neonicotinoid pesticides. In her mandate letter for the Ministry tabled last month, Premier Wynne asked Minister Leal to "develop an action plan to meaningfully reduce neonicotinoid use for the 2015 growing season, including measurable targets," and to "develop a system that requires a reduction in the use of seeds treated with neonicotinoid insecticides for the 2016 growing season through regulatory mechanisms, permitting or further measures as needed."

The Ontario Beekeepers Association has represented the interests of beekeepers since 1881. Today there are over 3200 beekeepers in Ontario managing approximately 100,000 colonies. In their report related to the excessive bee kills of 2012 and 2013, Health Canada's Pest Management Regulatory Authority (PMRA) has called the current use of neonicotinoid pesticides "unsustainable". Last winter Ontario reported overwinter losses of over 58% of colonies, three times the national average.

The OBA AGM will be held at the Delta Markham. All media are invited to attend but are asked to notify the OBA in advance. \*\*\*

**MEETING LOCATION:** Delta Markham, 50 East Valhalla Drive, Markham, ON L3R 0A3

For more information on the event: <http://www.ontariobee.com/events/meetings-and-events/2014-oba-annual-general-meeting>

To RSVP attendance please email, text or phone Julie White, Chair, Communications Committee at 647-988-5942 or [enews@ontariobee.com](mailto:enews@ontariobee.com) to confirm attendance.

For more information on bees and neonicotinoid pesticides: <http://www.ontariobee.com/neonics>