



For Immediate Release

WORKING TOGETHER TO PROTECT POLLINATORS

GUELPH, ON (March 8, 2013) - During the spring 2012 corn planting season, 230 separate incidents of bee kills were reported in Ontario (predominantly in the southwest), involving thousands of bee hives at different bee yard locations. These reports have triggered a re-evaluation of neonicotinoid insecticides by Health Canada's Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA).

With the re-evaluation on-going, and this year's corn planting season fast approaching, the Ontario Beekeepers Association, Ontario Federation of Agriculture, Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario, and Grain Farmers of Ontario are working together to address the concerns of all our farmer-members in relation to this issue.

The four organizations agree there is much more work to be done to clarify the relationship between neonicotinoid insecticides and the spring 2012 bee kills.

It is our goal to ensure farmers have access to all crop protection products as they deem necessary for a successful growing season.

We recognize the important role honey bees play in pollinating crops and are dedicated to ensuring a healthy bee population in Ontario.

The Ontario Beekeepers Association, Ontario Federation of Agriculture, Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario, and Grain Farmers of Ontario are encouraging the continued investigation into the cause of the bee kills, and support existing and ongoing objective research into new products and technology that have the potential to reduce pesticide exposure.

We are calling for an open dialogue between farmers, beekeepers, government agencies, the crop protection industry, and equipment manufacturers. All stakeholders need to work together to protect pollinators and ensure profitable growth for farmers.

More information on the re-evaluation by PMRA can be found at: <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/cps-spc/pubs/pest/fact-fiche/pollinator-protection-pollinisateurs/index-eng.php>.

Ontario Beekeepers Association: The Ontario Beekeepers' Association works to ensure a thriving and sustainable beekeeping industry in Ontario. To this end, we advocate for beekeepers' interests, support honey bee health research and deliver practical training and information. In our vision, Ontario leads with well-informed and skilled beekeepers, healthy and plentiful honeybees raised in Ontario, a prosperous beekeeping industry as well as a widespread appreciation for honey and for the critical role that honey bees play in agriculture. www.ontariobee.com.

Ontario Federation of Agriculture: The Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA) is the largest accredited general farm organization in Ontario. As a dynamic farmer-led organization based in Guelph, the OFA works to represent and champion the interests of Ontario farmers through government relations, farm policy recommendations, lobby efforts, community representation, media relations and more. OFA is the leading advocate for Ontario's farmers and is Ontario's voice of the farmer. www.ofa.on.ca.

Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario: The Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario is a professional organization for families involved in the business of farming, representing 4,100 members and supporters. We value family enterprise, profitability and a responsible stewardship of resources. Our members and supporters share a commitment to public policies that provide a strong legislative environment for the business of farming. www.christianfarmers.org.

Grain Farmers of Ontario: Grain Farmers of Ontario (GFO) is the province's largest commodity organization, representing Ontario's 28,000 corn, soybean and wheat farmers. The crops they grow cover 5 million acres of farm land across the province, generate over \$2.5 billion in farm gate receipts, result in over \$9 billion in economic output and are responsible for over 40,000 jobs in the province. www.gfo.ca.

- 30 -

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