



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Beekeepers Applaud Premier Wynne's Commitment to Bee Health**

**MILTON, ON.** In her mandate letters to the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) and the Minister of the Environment (MOE), Premier Kathleen Wynne specifically targeted pollinator health as an issue to be resolved by both Ministries of the Government of Ontario.

Recent declines in bee populations and the economic problems suffered by Ontario beekeepers from neonicotinoid pesticide poisoning has been a very high profile issue, affecting both the beekeeping industry and potentially the province's food supply, which depends on honey bees and other insect pollinators.

In her letter to Minister Leal at OMAFRA, Premier Wynne also asked for 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.'*

In 2013, PMRA declared that the current use of neonicotinoid pesticides in agriculture was "not sustainable". Last winter Ontario beekeepers lost 58% of their hives, more than three times the average of the rest of Canadian provinces. Earlier this year, OMAFRA announced plans to create a permit system to address the "indiscriminate use of neonicotinoid pesticides."

"We're pleased that the Ontario Government is following through on their promise to base their strategy on science by following the E.U. and recognizing the overwhelming body of research documenting the acute and long-term sub-lethal effects of these systemic pesticides," said OBA president Dan Davidson. "We hope that Minister Leal will implement these actions immediately before Ontario beekeepers are driven out of business by yet another year of pesticide related losses."

Most recently, the Worldwide Integrated Assessment of the Impact of Systemic Pesticides on Biodiversity and Ecosystems (WIA), a consortium of 50 scientists from around the globe who examined over 800 scientific studies spanning the last five years, recommended *'that regulatory agencies consider applying the principles of prevention and precaution to further tighten regulations on neonicotinoids and consider formulating plans for a substantial reduction of the global scale of use'*.

\*\*\*

For more information: Julie White, OBA Chair Communications Committee 647.988.5942  
[enews@ontariobee.com](mailto:enews@ontariobee.com) or [www.ontariobee.com/neonics](http://www.ontariobee.com/neonics)

---

<sup>1</sup> Conclusions: [http://www.tfsp.info/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/8\\_ESPR\\_11356\\_2014\\_3229\\_OnlinePDF.pdf](http://www.tfsp.info/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/8_ESPR_11356_2014_3229_OnlinePDF.pdf)  
Chapter on invertebrates: <http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11356-014-3471-x>