



ONTARIO BEEKEEPERS'  
ASSOCIATION  
Since 1881

November 9, 2017

The Honorable Jeff Leal  
Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs  
77 Grenville Street  
Toronto, Ontario M7A 1B3

Re: Support for Bill 153, Organic Products Act, 2017

Via email: [minister.omafra@ontario.ca](mailto:minister.omafra@ontario.ca)

Dear Minister Leal,

The Ontario Beekeepers' Association is pleased to support Bill 153, the *Organic Products Act 2017*. This Act will close the current loophole that allows honey producers who produce and sell only in Ontario to use the designation 'organic' without the need to apply for or conform to the regulations associated with the Canada Organic Regime.

Confusion around the term 'organic' has long been a source of frustration within the beekeeping industry as well as for consumers. The Canadian Organic Standards established in 2009 can provide clarity and certainty to consumers, but only if they are consistently applied for all honey producers in Canada.

The current situation, where honey producers who sell only in Ontario can use the designation 'organic' without penalty, creates an unfair marketing advantage against those producers who trade inter-provincially and who therefore must comply with the federal regulations.

Further, those Ontario beekeepers that are able to comply with, and are willing to invest in building an organic honey business are compromised by beekeepers who use the organic designation and who are clearly not compliant. This has not only led to confusion for consumers, but cynicism and mistrust for the very notion of organic.

Therefore we encourage Ontario to join with B.C., Manitoba, Québec and the other provinces that have created regulations to close this loophole, in order to provide protection and certainty to consumers and fairness to producers.

We thank you for your support on this.

Sincerely,

Jim Coneybeare, President  
[president@ontariobee.com](mailto:president@ontariobee.com)

cc: Sylvia Jones, MPP, Dufferin-Caledon  
Peter Tabuns, MPP, Toronto-Danforth  
Carolyn Young, Organic Council of Ontario