

Farm group calls on Ambrose to ban pesticide linked to bee deaths

By [Kelsey Johnson](#) | Apr 28, 2014 2:18 pm |



The National Farmer's Union (NFU) is calling on Health Minister Rona Ambrose to temporarily ban a popular seed treatment in the name of bee health.

In a Apr. 22 letter, NFU president Jan Slomp urged the minister to “work with the Minister of Agriculture and the Minister of Environment, along with provincial ministers... to help implement a five-year moratorium on the use of neonicotinoid seed treatments.”

Neonicotinoids are a class of pesticides used to coat corn, soybean and canola seeds. The pesticides have been widely used since 2004. They were developed to replace older, war-era aerial sprays like agent orange.

The union also wants soil monitoring, “publicly funded, independent field trials” on crop yields with and without the pesticides, and compensation for beekeepers.

“Health Canada’s primary responsibility must be to act in the interest of the Canadian public,” Slomp wrote.”It is imperative for the well-being of all Canadians that Health Canada put effective measures in place that will truly protect bees and other pollinators.”

Copies of the letter were also sent to Agriculture Minister Gerry Ritz, Environment Minister Leona Aglukkaq.

The NFU letter is the latest development on the bee health file.

In September, Health Canada’s Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) linked neonicotinoid-contaminated dust to mass deaths in bee populations in Ontario and Quebec. The agency is responsible for regulating and monitoring pesticide use in Canada.

Beekeepers and grain farmers are immersed in a lengthy, complex debate on how to protect pollinators after the PMRA determined current agriculture practices were “unsustainable.”

The Ontario beekeepers Association and the Fédération des apiculteurs du Québec want the chemicals banned, at least temporarily. The two groups have been pushing provincially since July for a moratorium similar to a two-year ban currently in place in the European Union.

In 2013, a national survey by the Canadian Association for Professional Apiarists found colony mortality in Canada has nearly doubled from 15 per cent to 29 per cent. Bee mortality was even higher in Ontario and Manitoba, where millions of bees have died, with losses ranging from 38 to 46 per cent respectively.

Beekeepers have repeatedly said these losses are not sustainable.

Meanwhile, grain farmers and the biotech industry argue the pesticides are essential to modern agriculture. Grain farmers have repeatedly said, if the chemicals are pulled, yields in corn and soybeans could drop significantly.

Ninety-five per cent of corn and between 50 to 60 per cent of soybeans grown in Ontario are coated with neonicotinoid pesticides.

Liberal Leader Justin Trudeau has said he will not push for an immediate ban on the pesticides. In February, party supporters voted overwhelmingly in favour of a motion demanding the pesticide be pulled immediately.

The NFU’s letter comes as the Senate agriculture committee continues its months-long investigation into bee health. The committee’s next meeting on the file is set for Thursday morning.

<http://www.ipolitics.ca/2014/04/28/farm-group-calls-on-ambrose-to-ban-pesticide-linked-to-bee-deaths/>

NORAHG RESPONSE

CRISIS ? WHAT CRISIS ?

There is NO bee crisis in Canada. And there is NO bee crisis in Ontario. According to Ontario Premier Wynne — « *Although large bee die-offs have been observed in Ontario apiaries, they are NOT OCCURRING UNIFORMLY across all operations or areas of the province — many bee-keeping operations HAVE NOT BEEN AFFECTED and have been able to maintain strong and healthy bee colonies as evidenced by hive strength and honey production* ». <http://wp.me/p1jq40-7Mw> There is NO bee crisis in Canada. Only A VERY LIMITED NUMBER of Bee-Keepers report losses, LESS THAN 1 PER CENT. In 2012, a mere 43 Bee-Keepers alleged losses. In 2013, only 82 Bee-Keepers alleged losses. There are 7,000 Bee-Keepers keeping 600,000 colonies of honeybees across Canada. Essentially, a mere 1.0 per cent of all Bee-Keepers are reporting losses. These represent the Anti-Pesticide Lunatic-Bee-Keepers of Canada. Over 99 per cent of all Bee-Keepers are reporting NO losses. 1 per cent of Bee-Keepers appear to HAVE NO IDEA WHAT THEY ARE DOING, leading some observers to conclude that Bee-Keepers may NOT BE COMPETENT TO RAISE BEES. Bee-Keepers KNOW ALMOST NOTHING ABOUT PEST CONTROL PRODUCTS. Bee-Keepers know full well that VARROA MITES are the primary problem associated with bee mortality, and NOT Neonicotinoid Insecticides. Science and statistics DO NOT SUPPORT demands to PROHIBIT against Neonicotinoid Insecticides in agriculture. If we had less pesticide use in the environment, WE WOULD STILL HAVE Bee Colony Collapse Disorder, because MANY BEE-KEEPERS ARE NOT COMPETENT TO MANAGE THEIR HIVES. For the whole truth regarding BEES, go to The Pesticide Truths Web-Site ... <http://wp.me/p1jq40-6WJ>
<http://wp.me/p1jq40-2ba> <http://wp.me/p1jq40-6H8>
<http://wp.me/p1jq40-7ty> WILLIAM H. GATHERCOLE AND NORAH G
<http://pesticidetruths.com/> <http://wp.me/P1jq40-2rr>