

Rec. Jan 2/2014

**Ministry of Agriculture
and Food**

**Ministère de l'Agriculture
et de l'Alimentation**

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DEC 19 2013

Mr. Dan Davidson
President

Ontario Beekeepers' Association
8560 Tremaine Road
Box 476
Milton, Ontario
L9T 4Z1

Dear Mr. Davidson:

I appreciate that you have written to me and shared the concerns of the Ontario Beekeepers' Association along with the petition requesting a suspension of the use of neonicotinoid pesticides. I can assure you that I am well aware of the significant bee health issues that are facing some Ontario beekeepers.

I agree that Ontario's producers are excellent stewards of the land and want to manage their farms sustainably. Field crop producers' concern for the health of the pollinator population is part of that stewardship. That is why I am counting on them to be part of the solution by adopting best pest management practices, including integrated pest management, to protect pollinators.

As you know Ontario is looking to the federal government – as the regulator for pesticides in Canada – to provide direction on a national approach to neonicotinoid insecticide use. The Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) is expediting the re-evaluation of all uses of neonicotinoid insecticides.

The Ontario government is, and will continue to be guided by the best scientific data available when making recommendations to address bee health issues in Ontario. In 2013 this government committed more than \$700,000 to support essential research on various bee health related issues. We will continue to support the PMRA as they move forward with their re-evaluation of all uses of neonicotinoid insecticides. I am aware of the complexity of the issue and want to reiterate the importance for actions to be based on sound science to ensure the best results.

I want to assure you that I appreciate the importance of bee health to Ontario's agri-food industry. That is why it is essential that this issue be addressed by applying sound judgement and the best scientific data available.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathleen Wynne".

Kathleen Wynne
Minister of Agriculture and Food