

Winter losses preliminary results. Also, Tyrosine not for spring usage.
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APRIL 30, 2014

Dear

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On Tuesday afternoon, OBA board members were informed at a meeting with senior OMAF officials that the Province has developed a one-time compensation package for beekeepers experiencing higher than normal mortality rates. Compensation includes \$105 per hive to beekeepers with more than ten hives who experience hive mortality of over 40% of their colonies between Jan. 1st and October 31, 2014. OBA has been advocating for over a year for beekeeper compensation related to extraordinary bee deaths. The amount per hive provided under this program is significantly less than we were proposing; however, we feel it is a good first step and shows awareness of the hardships many Ontario beekeepers are experiencing. We are pleased, as well, that losses will include those occurring over the summer and early fall, and not just winter. This is significant. Ontario is the first province to compensate beekeepers for losses likely caused by pesticides as well as other causes. We will be getting back to everyone with further information as it becomes available.

OBA is preparing a press release for later today. Watch the [website](#) and future newsletters for new developments.

All the best,

Dan Davidson, President

The Winter Loss Survey

Although results are still coming in to our short winter loss survey, our findings concur with PA Paul Kozak that the results vary widely.

- Less than 25%: 30.23%
- 25-50%: 28.68%
- 50-75%: 16.28%
- More than 75% 24.81%

We're glad to see that some are doing well, but concerned that more than forty percent are reporting 50% or more losses.

Based on beekeepers' observations, the following were cited as the causes (people were able to provide more than one cause).

- Normal winter loss 38.84%
- Suspect pesticides 32.23%
- Lack of stores 47.11%
- Too small/weak 31.40%
- An overload of varroa 4.13%
- A problem w/queen 17.36%

In terms of how beekeepers perceived their bees to be doing compared to five years ago:

- Much better 6.67%
- Better 7.41%
- About the same 18.52%
- Worse 19.26%
- Much worse 14.81%
- N/A 33.33%

The survey was intended to give us a quick snapshot of how beekeepers are doing, so it's too soon to draw firm conclusions. If you haven't completed the survey you can do so at

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/winterloss>

The next challenge, of course, is the spring corn planting. We are hoping that the measures promised such as availability of untreated seed, Integrated Pest Management and new lubricant will help mitigate somewhat, but we want to make sure beekeepers understand how to identify and report pesticide poisonings. This information can be found in the most recent e-newsletter as well as the upcoming OBJ.

In the meantime, stay in touch.

Notes from PA Paul Kozak

Beekeepers planning to ship honey bee colonies east for pollination services are encouraged to inform their local Apiary Inspectors as early as possible to schedule inspections. The latest information on requirements between jurisdictions will be available through Apiary Inspectors and the Ministry website at Ontario.ca/beekeeping.

The 2014 Treatment Recommendations will be available in late April on the Ministry website. Although the antibiotic, Tyrosine, is available as a preventive measure against American Foulbrood, beekeepers are strongly encouraged not to use it in the spring, however, as the residual is much too long, putting the honey crop at risk of contamination. Tyrosine can be used as a fall treatment.

Pollination rates rising for 2014

Commercial beekeepers providing pollination services are advised that summer pollination rates are expected to average between \$200 and \$250 per colony this summer. Information on stocking rates, other best practices and the Ontario Honeybee Pollination Association is on the [OBA's website](#). For Canpolin's guide to pollination [click here](#).

Update from PMRA to their 2013 consultation

According to a [release](#) from PMRA, a very high number of comments were submitted by stakeholders and the public in response to the Notice of Intent (NOI) consultation. *"Overall, a majority of the respondents (89%) supported taking further action (including a ban or moratorium on the use of neonicotinoid insecticides generally). Others (11%) were supportive of the measures proposed in the NOI to protect pollinators. Approximately 90% of the comments came from the general public."* Interesting that PMRA makes a distinction between 'stakeholders' and 'the public': if the public aren't stakeholders in the well-being of pollinators, then who is?

2014 Rates for Foreign Workers

Wondering what to pay your foreign workers this summer? Even if you aren't employing temporary foreign workers, it's good to know what the minimum rate is for beekeeping support. Rates for 2014 are: Technician: \$14.80; Worker, \$11.56 and Labourer, \$10.33. For full information on the program [click here](#).

2013/14 New directions research program project

[summaries](#) OMAF has [posted summaries of the research funded](#) related to

their priorities of the impact of neonicotinoid pesticides and Integrated Pest Management. Summaries are expected in summer 2014.

Upcoming Programs & Events

- [OBA TTP Integrated Pest Management Workshop Ancaster](#)

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- [Elmwood beekeeper experiencing die offs already](#)
- [It's hard out there for a honey bee: Time Magazine](#)
- [Bee report is missed opportunity: NFU](#)
- [Imidacloprid exposure is confirmed deadly to bees](#)

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