



Prince Edward County Bans Controversial Pesticide As Bee Health Debate Continues

By [Kelsey Johnson](#) | May 29, 2014



A county in southern Ontario has become the first Canadian municipality to temporarily ban a controversial insecticide believed to be killing bees.

On Tuesday, officials in Prince Edward County passed a motion prohibiting the use of neonicotinoid pesticides on municipal lands, effective immediately.

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

The rural county, nestled in the heart of Ontario's agricultural heartland, wants the federal and provincial government to "declare a moratorium surrounding the use of neonicotinoid crop treatments, as soon as possible, pending further study."

The motion also requires letters be sent to several federal and provincial ministers – including the prime minister, Agriculture Minister Gerry Ritz, and Health Minister Rona Ambrose – outlining the county's position.

The European Union has already imposed a two-year moratorium on the controversial insecticides. Despite calls for similar action from beekeepers and environmentalists, Canadian officials have refused to follow suit.

Research has linked the highly toxic neonicotinoids to mass bee deaths. They are also found to linger in water and do not break down easily in the soil.

In September, Health Canada's Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) – responsible for regulating pesticides in Canada – discovered neonicotinoid contaminated dust had caused severe bee mortality in Ontario and Quebec. A final report is expected in 2015.

South of the border, new research from Harvard University's School of Public Health confirms what beekeepers have been claiming for years: the insecticides are killing millions of bees.

Researchers found the slightest exposure to neonicotinoids would cause a colony to collapse and die. The pesticides, the study said, also impede a bee's ability to survive the winter.

Farmers, though, insist the insecticides are crucial to agriculture production. Neonicotinoids, they argue, help boost crop yields and are essential to modern agriculture.

Even if farmers wanted to purchase neonicotinoid-free seeds, though, they're not readily available. An estimated 92 to 95 per cent of planted corn acres in Canada and the United States are coated in neonicotinoids.

That lack of options did not go unaddressed by county officials. "We urge seed companies to make adequate supplies [of non-treated seed] available," the motion reads.

Farmers, meanwhile, are encouraged to "order seed not treated with insecticide for the 2015 growing season."

Prince Edward County is one of the highest producing agriculture regions in Ontario. A hub for dairy, poultry and hog production, the region is famous for its major cheese festival and local wines.

Scientists estimate one-third of all plants and plant products eaten by humans depend on bee pollination.

NORAHG RESPONSE

NORAHG RESPONDS TO RECKLESS AND ARBITRARY PROHIBITION IN PRINCE EDWARD COUNTY

Anti-pesticide officials at Prince Edward County are absolutely wrong about bee losses ! With their reckless and arbitrary prohibition against safe and effective neonicotinoid insecticides, officials at Prince Edward County may face the spotlight of scrutiny and the terror of the courts. Their prohibition cannot be defended in court. There is no legitimate scientific evidence to suggest a link between neonicotinoid insecticides and bee losses. With best management practices, neonicotinoid insecticides do not harm bees. If officials at Prince Edward County were not so scientifically illiterate, they would know that scientific research shows that, as reported through Health Canada's vast toxicology database, legitimate scientific evidence demonstrates that no harm will occur to bees with neonicotinoid insecticides. However, it is more likely that bee-keepers themselves are harming their own bees. It is clear that bee losses are the fault of a very small number of incompetent bee-keepers and their mis-management practices. In other words, bee-keepers are responsible, and not neonicotinoid insecticides. Officials at Prince Edward County are not willing to explain why only a very limited number of bee-keepers were affected, less than 1 per cent of all bee-keepers. 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 incompetent 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. Why don't officials at Prince Edward County question why only a very limited number of bee-keepers are affected !?! Moreover, bee-keeper allegations regarding insecticides are so ridiculous that observers are beginning to speculate that bee-keepers deliberately killed their bees in order to lay false blame against neonicotinoid insecticides. Why don't officials at Prince Edward County investigate the losses of bees at the hands of bee-keepers !?! Why don't officials at Prince Edward County investigate the incompetence of bee-keepers !?! Bee-keepers conceal the fact that their losses are actually the fault of their mis-management practices, or worse, their own deliberate actions. We have to consider all the factors that can harm the bees, and there is no legitimate

scientific evidence to suggest that neonicotinoid insecticides somehow harm bees. Officials at Prince Edward County must rescind prohibition. For more information concerning bee-keepers KILLING THEIR OWN BEES, go to the following links ... <http://wp.me/p1jq40-7fx> For more information regarding BEES, go to ... <http://wp.me/p1jq40-2ba> <http://wp.me/p1jq40-6WJ> <http://wp.me/p1jq40-6H8> NORAHG is the National Organization Responding Against HUJE that seek to harm the Green space industry. WILLIAM H. GATHERCOLE AND NORA H. G. Get the latest details at The Pesticide Truths Web-Site <http://pesticidetruths.com/> and go to The Complete Library Of Web-Pages, Reports, & References <http://wp.me/P1jq40-2rr>