



NEWS LOCAL

Beekeeper calls report a case of denial

By [Rob Gowan](#), Sun Times, Owen Sound

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A finger points to a honey bee, carrying sacks of yellow bee pollen which are used to feed the honeybees in the hive, which has died right at the entrance to one of Dave Schuit's beehives near Elmwood on Friday, April 25, 2014. (Sun Times files)

An Elmwood-area beekeeper is calling a recently released federal report saying that neonicotinoids don't pose a risk to honeybees a case of denial.

"They are in denial and it is just terrible," Dave Schuit said Friday. "I have lost so many bees over this product."

A bare-bones "pre-release" summary put out by the Pest Management Regulatory Agency earlier this week said neonics applied directly to the soil might put pollinators at risk. A full document is to be produced later this month.

But it states unequivocally, "No potential risk to bees was indicated for seed use."
But Schuit asks how can neonics harm some insects, but not bees.

"It kills all insects," Schuit said. "It doesn't discriminate between good and bad insects. It kills them all."

Schuit, who operates Saugeen Country Honey near Elmwood has been calling for a ban on neonicotinoids for years. He claims he has lost tens of millions of bees in recent years and he blames the pesticide, which is used to treat the seeds of crops such as corn, soybeans and canola.

Schuit said the PMRA concluded in 2013 that the continued use of neonics is "unsustainable" and he asked what has changed since then.

"Honey bees and bumble bees have not changed since creation," said Schuit. "How can a pesticide change the way it works in two years time?"

Schuit said he used to have to renew his queens every four to six years. Now he has to replace them three times a year.

He has also tried moving his bees into areas where there is less intensive corn and soybean crop production, but that doesn't seem to be helping.

"I have moved a lot of bees up north and in just the one area there I have lost over eight million bees this year," Schuit said. "We weren't sure what pesticide killed them but I am linking it back to neonicotinoids now."

"They have tested for other chemicals but they didn't test for neonics."

Schuit said the labels on seeds treated with neonics state that they are harmful to aquatic vertebrates, harmful to birds, harmful to bees and harmful to mammals.

"This product is ripping the whole ecosystem apart," said Schuit. "Where are the barn swallows? The barn swallows are an endangered species now. The writing is on the wall."

Schuit said it is unsustainable if he keeps losing as many bees as he is.

"For some of my yards I have to drive an hour north," said Schuit. "My farthest this year was an hour-and-a-half away to try to get out of neonics area, but it is up there too."

On the flip side grain farmers, who have long defended the use of the pesticide as necessary to their livelihoods, see the report as a vindication.

Grain Farmers of Ontario says the report proves its position that Ontario's new neonic rules, the most restrictive in North America, are unnecessary.

It's a victory of science over sentiment, said Mark Brock, a Perth County farmer who heads the provincial group.

"We've always said, with best management practices and using the product properly on corn and soybean seeds, that there is minimal impact on bees."

Few issues in modern farming have drawn the kind of polarized debate this has.

Beekeepers have long linked massive bee deaths that have taken place during and after corn and soybeans planting to farmers' use of neonics.

Seed and seed-treatment companies have insisted any bee deaths can't be attributed to neonics but are more likely issues of bee disease and how apiarists manage their hives. Farmers have said the issue has been stoked by urban environmentalists, unfamiliar with agriculture practices.

Adding more fuel to the fire is a preliminary report also released Wednesday by the U.S. Environmental Protection agency that said neonics are a threat to some pollinators when used on or near certain crops such as citrus and cotton. It's one of four preliminary reports the U.S. agency plans.

Still another study, also released Wednesday, suggests using neonics is also financially beneficial to farmers.

The Health Canada report weighs the economic benefit to farmers nationally at between \$101.5 million and \$134 million

- Corn farmers who use neonics add 3.2 per cent to 3.6 per cent to their revenue nationally -- with most benefit in Ontario, but with more cost than benefit in Quebec.

- Soybean farmers who use neonics get 1.5 per cent to 2.1 per cent more revenue nationally because their fields yield more, that study says.

The bulk of that benefit would be in Ontario, particularly Southwestern Ontario, where corn and soybeans are the mainstay of the cash-crop economy.

Those numbers disprove environmentalists' claims that farmers are in the pockets of seed-chemical companies, Brock said. Producers "are not just using (pesticides) for the sake of using them," but because they have a measurable benefit, he said.

DeVries said seed treatments in general "are an excellent idea. It's just that this one . . . didn't work out."

The reports could give pause to other governments looking to restrict the use of neonicotinoids. But in Ontario, the provincial government has adopted new rules that include a commitment to using neonics on 80 per cent less acreage by 2017.

with files from Debora Van Brenk, London Free Press

THE REAL CULPRITS ARE ACTUALLY THE BEE-KEEPERS THEMSELVES ! Seemingly, bee-keepers are losing their bees over and over again. Why is this madness happening ?!?! Observers have concluded that many bee-keepers have no idea what they are doing, and are simply not skilled to raise bees. Bee-keepers are killing their own bees over and over again. The alleged losses of bees are, in fact, the fault of these bee-keepers and their mis-management practices. The bee-keepers themselves are clearly responsible since they appear to be unable or unwilling or not skilled enough to mitigate the real issues that harm bees, such as starvation, weak colonies, fungal infections, and mite infestations. They prefer to remain unproficient at bee-keeping, and expect the government to shower them with vast sums of unjustifiable compensation. <http://tinyurl.com/l8odbpc> <http://wp.me/p1jq40-77N>
<http://wp.me/p1jq40-7VI> WILLIAM H GATHERCOLE AND NORAH G <http://pesticidetruths.com/>