

Niagara letters to the editor

OPINION Jun 21, 2018 St. Catharines Standard

Bee-keepers and farmers can work together

Re: [New bee yard to provide needed breeding ground for Hamilton honeybees](#), June 11

Honeybees, which are not native to Canada, can always use a little help from humans to thrive in our environment.

While colony numbers are at an all-time high, according to Statistics Canada, Canadian beekeepers list harsh winters, varroa mites and poor nutrition as top causes for colony losses.

Farmers choose to use neonic-treated seed because it is a safe, effective way to protect crops while actually minimizing exposure to non-target organisms like bees. Before any pesticide can be sold in Canada, it must be approved by Health Canada. Canada's regulatory process is stringent and world-renowned and ensures pesticides are safe for people and the environment.

Farmers and beekeepers can work together to ensure crops are pollinated and bees are healthy. BeeConnected is an app anonymously connecting farmers, beekeepers and pesticide applicators to share hive locations and pesticide application activities.

Just as we need bees, farmers need tools like pesticides to provide safe, high-quality foods while ensuring our environment is protected.

Adding bee-friendly flowers to yards or gardens is another way to fuel bees and help them thrive. Get a free seed packet at BeesMatter.ca.

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