



EDITORIAL LETTERS COLUMN

OPINION LETTERS

Letters to the editor

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Winter always challenging for honeybees

Regarding the article, Bedevilled by losses (Sarnia Observer, May 11).

Ontario's long, cold winter and slow start to spring was challenging for many – so it's not surprising it took a toll of bee health. Winter is always a challenging for honeybees, which are not native to Canada, and harsh winters often cause increased losses.

The Canadian Association of Professional Apiculturists collects and publishes statistics regarding bee health and overwinter losses each year. This data provides a fulsome picture of bee health across Canada from professional beekeepers. Last year's data indicated poor queens, Varroa mites, weak colonies and weather as the main causes of losses.

Farmers choose to use neonic-treated seed because it is a safe and effective way to protect their crops that actually minimizes 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 both people and the environment.

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

That said, adding pollinator-friendly plants to your garden is always a fantastic idea. Adding bee-friendly flowers to your yard or balcony garden gives them the fuel they need to thrive. Get a free seed packet with pollinator-friendly flowers at BeesMatter.ca.

Pierre Petelle

president, CropLife Canada