

## Canada Takes Action to Save the Bees



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By: [Michelle Schoffro Cook](#) | August 17, 2018  
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The Canadian government announced it will ban two pesticides that have been linked to the falling numbers of pollinators, including bees. The pesticides include: clothianidin and thiamethoxam, both of which fall under the category of neonicotinoid (called neonics) pesticides. Health Canada announced that it will ban most outdoor uses of these pesticides within 3 to 5 years.

Neonicotinoid pesticides are currently in widespread use in agriculture, horticulture,

pesticide clothianidin while Syngenta developed thiamethoxam.

Interestingly, the decision to ban the two pesticides came on the heels of a lawsuit collectively initiated by the David Suzuki Foundation, Friends of the Earth (Canada), Ontario Nature and The Wilderness Committee [against the Canadian federal government](#) for allowing the use of two common neonic pesticides that were banned earlier this year by the European Union (EU). The EU also banned a third pesticide: Bayer CropScience's chemical known as imidacloprid, which Canada previously banned as well.

The toxic pesticides have been linked to the deaths of countless bees and other pollinators. Prior to the decision to ban the pesticides, Health Canada, a Canadian federal government agency tested dead bees and [found neonicotinoid on 70 percent of the corpses](#).



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Known as “colony collapse disorder,” Harvard researchers in conjunction with Massachusetts beekeepers studied the widespread deaths of bee colonies and concluded in the [Bulletin of Insectology](#) that neonics were directly linked to bee deaths, even at supposedly sub-lethal exposures.

## THE POLITICS OF NEONICS

While the ban is a victory, it is long overdue and the 3 to 5 years allotted for growers to find alternative options is simply too long. In many cases, they have had well over a decade to perfect organic and environmentally-sustainable growing practices rather than the next few years to find alternative toxic chemicals. Health Canada, like other governmental agencies around the world, need to implement a full ban of these chemicals immediately before neonics do further damage to the environment.

In an [interview](#) with *The Globe and Mail*, Tibor Szabo, a board member of the Ontario Beekeepers' Association said: “These (chemicals) should never have been registered without any risk assessments done on bees...(the chemicals) killed so many pollinators in the past 10 years that there is no way they will ever be replaced – the genetic diversity that has been lost is permanent.”

## HOW NEONICS DESTROY BEES AND THE ENVIRONMENT

evidence found that neonics follow a sadly-predictable course. They:

1. Become embedded into seeds that are planted
2. Treated seeds are eaten by birds
3. The dust from the seeds contaminates the air during planting
4. Pollen and nectar eaten by bees is contaminated
5. The insecticides wash into waterways like streams, rivers and oceans
6. The soil is contaminated from year-after-year buildup

## SERIOUS HUMAN HEALTH RISKS

While the damage to bees and other pollinators cannot be overstated, they are not the only ones harmed by neonic exposures, which have been [linked](#) to many serious human health issues as well, including: autism, developmental and neurological abnormalities, liver cancer, memory loss, tremors and even death. The toxic chemicals collectively known as [neonics](#) seem to disrupt receptors in the body that are critical to brain function, memory, cognition and behavior.

Additional [studies](#) including one published in the journal *Scientific Reports* found that clothianidin specifically damages human genes resulting in disruption of the immune system. Neonics have also been linked to infertility and other reproductive problems.

## AMERICA GOES IN A DIFFERENT DIRECTION

While the Canadian and European Union bans on neonics is a step in the right direction, the United States has decidedly gone in a different direction. The director at the Center for Biological Diversity, Lori Ann Burd, says that the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is considering [increasing](#) the use of neonicotinoids on 165 million additional acres in the US.

The time has come to authoritatively and immediately ban neonics and their use around the world. The environmental destruction and the potential human health hazards greatly outweigh the financial benefits to corporations and farmers choosing to grow using these detrimental toxins. As I regularly state: "you're either part of the solution or you're part of the problem." Those who choose to ignore the perils of these toxic chemicals are complicit in the environmental devastation and harm to pollinators and humans alike.

### Related Stories:

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- [Help the Bees with This DIY Bee Water Garden](#)
- [The High Price of Royal Jelly](#)

Dr. Michelle Schoffro Cook, PhD, DNM is the publisher of the free e-newsletter *World's Healthiest News*, the *Cultured Cook*, co-founder of *BestPlaceinCanada*, and an international best-selling and 20-time published book author whose works include: *The Life Force Diet: 3 Weeks to Supercharge Your Health and Get Slim with Enzyme-Rich Foods*. Follow her work.

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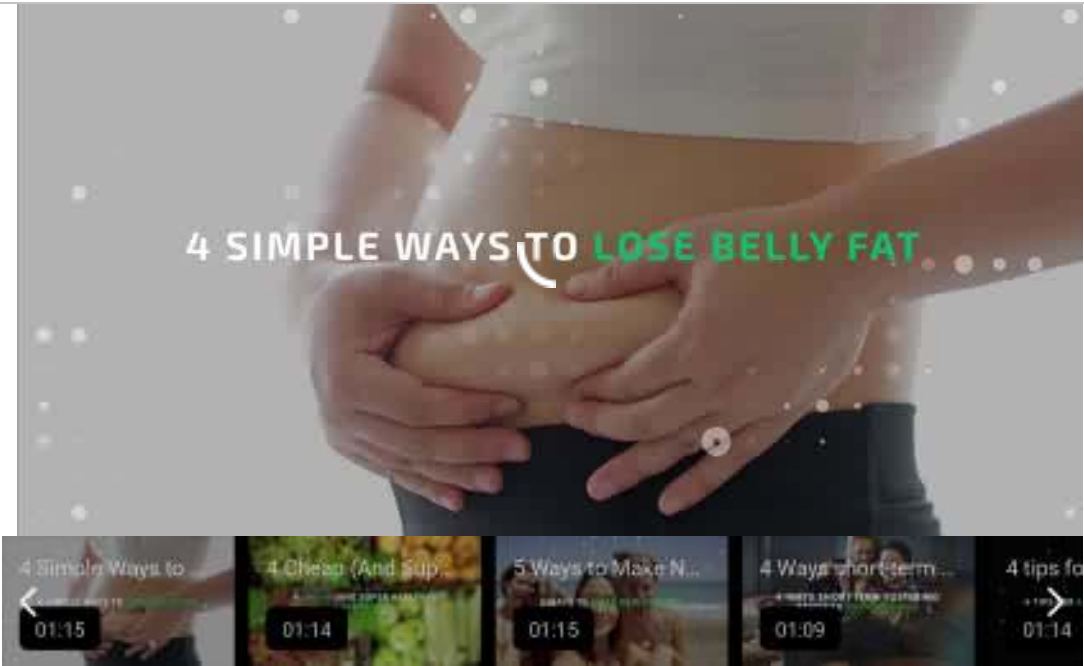
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**Angeles M** 6 hours ago

Good news! But why they need to wait 3 to 5 years?

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**Phyl Morello** 10 hours ago

When will the whole world demand an end to pesticide & chemicals...& get monsanto out of our lives forever!

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**Linda Wallace** 10 hours ago

It is good news but I wish the ban would be put into place quicker.

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**Renata B** 12 hours ago

It's good news but 3 to 5 years??? Why not now? How many more have to die. It's a very long time. Are they serious? I don't trust these delayed decisions.

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