

THE GROWER'S ROLE ENSURING HONEY BEE HEALTH ON WORKING AGRICULTURAL LANDS



Proactive communication between growers, applicators and beekeepers is essential to protect honey bees from unintended pesticide exposure. Beekeeper and landowner cooperation based on mutual interests is important to mitigate risks of pesticide exposure to pollinators.

WHEN BEES ARE PLACED FOR CROP POLLINATION

Growers contracting honey bees and the commercial beekeeper should:

*Discuss grower's pest management program **before** agreement is made and apiary is placed.*

Identify any risks of pesticides being used and discuss best management practices to protect pollinators.

Develop an agreement, preferably written, outlining the following steps:

1. **Timing** of crop bloom and desired pest treatments;
2. **Beekeeper's responsibility** to provide strong effective colonies;
3. **Landowner's responsibility** to safeguard bees from poisoning;
4. **Location for apiary placement** on the land for access to pollinated crop, water, and buffer areas.

WHEN BEES ARE PLACED ON PUBLIC OR PRIVATE LANDS, NOT FOR POLLINATION

Grower/Landowner Responsibilities:

Always refer to the pesticide label for application requirements.

Review the managed pollinator protection plan (MP3) or other bee health plans for the State or province if available.

Abide by the agreement - verbal or written.

Protect water sources from contamination by pesticides of concern.

Inform applicators of apiary locations, agreements and pollinator friendly practices.

Notify the beekeeper as soon as possible before an application is planned.



The Grower's Role - Ensuring Honey Bee Health on Working Agricultural Lands

Grower and Aerial Applicator Responsibilities:

Growers and the applicators they hire should cooperate when applications are made in areas where honey bee hives are located.

Always read the pesticide label to ensure compliance in the country of application. Check for "Bee Hazard" warnings and pollinator precautions in the Environmental Hazards Statement and in the directions for use on the label.

Accurately identify the proper site for application. Use GPS coordinates if the applicator has this capability. Review a sketch of the field and surrounding areas.

Accurately identify and confirm the location of hives near the treatment site or on neighboring fields.

Guard against drift of pesticides from ground or aerial applications.

Check to ensure weather conditions are appropriate for aerial applications by reviewing the 1 to 6 hour forecast prior to initiating treatments. In conditions where excessive heat or wind is present it's important to ensure that conditions are appropriate for application. Refer to label instructions.

Avoid direct overspray of beehives or off-site movement toward beehives and other sensitive sites.

Avoid spraying during peak foraging times.

Avoid applying when lower temperatures will allow dew formation. Dew may re-wet pesticides and increase bee exposure.

Report undocumented/unwanted hives on your property to your state department of agriculture or other local authority



Beekeeper Responsibilities



Maintain healthy, vigorous colonies—manage pests and diseases, provide supplemental feed when necessary. Follow best management practices according to your State or provincial apiarist.

Contact State lead agency/extension offices to understand State and local apiarist regulations or requirements. Review the managed pollinator protection plan (MP3) for the State if available.

Alert local Mosquito Control office of apiary location.

Ensure that the apiary location has sufficient forage and a fresh source of water.

Inform neighboring landowners and custom applicators of apiary locations.

Register apiary for notification program if available.

Face hives away from fields and with buffered area between the field and apiary when possible.

Post the beekeeper's name and contact information near apiary.

Report bee deaths so that causes can be addressed (see: <http://honeybeehealthcoalition.org/quick-guide/>).

Engage landowners to:

Review the cropping system and pest management practices before the hives are placed.