

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



We are all part of One Agricultural System with Shared Responsibility and Necessary Partnership. 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.

Beekeepers should be notified 48 hours prior to pesticide application and a conversation should ensue regarding safeguarding the bees (i.e. timing of application, choice of material and hive protection).

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

Develop a written agreement outlining the:

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, clean 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.

Abide by the agreement – verbal or written.

Protect water sources from contamination. Protect from ANY pesticide, oil or other product.

Please contact the state lead agency/Extension if unwanted hives are on your property

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

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



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. Note apiary locations on sketch.

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.

Follow recommendations when planting treated seed to mitigate dust.

Check to ensure weather conditions are appropriate for 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. Follow label instructions (for ANY application, not just aerial).

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

Avoid spraying during peak foraging times which normally is mid morning to early evening.

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 to manage pests and diseases.

Contact state lead agency/extension offices to understand state and local apiary regulations or requirements. Review the managed pollinator protection plan (MP3) for the state or province 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.

Notify grower as soon as possible if any problems occur.

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.