



NEWS RELEASE

Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence

Senate Agriculture Committee Report Stresses The Importance of Bee Health to Sustainable Food Production in Canada

OTTAWA (May 27, 2015) Today, the Standing Senate Committee on Agriculture and Forestry tabled its latest report entitled: *The Importance of Bee Health to Sustainable Food Production in Canada.*

The report provides a roadmap of nine recommendations the committee believes are necessary to improve bee health. Among them, the Committee is calling on the Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) to keep monitoring pollinator mortality during the spring of 2015 to assess whether the protective measures adopted for the 2014 planting season were efficient. Furthermore, the Committee is recommending the PMRA conclude, without delay, its re-evaluation of neonicotinoid insecticides based on evidence and sound scientific principles with an objective of protecting the health of bees.

“Given the importance of bees to the environment and food production in Canada, our Senate Committee strongly believes in the continued collaboration between the federal government, stakeholders and the provinces to work on measures to improve pollinator health, such as the Bee Health Forum, the National Bee Farm-Level Biosecurity Standard, and the re-evaluation of three neonicotinoid pesticides.”

Senator Percy Mockler, Committee Chair

“Given the current duration of some conditionally registered neonic insecticides, the Committee believes that the duration of this conditional registration should be reduced. It is necessary that the Pest Management Regulatory Agency accelerate its conditional registration process in order to reduce the current number of conditional registrations granted to neonicotinoid active ingredients.”

Senator Claudette Tardif, Committee Deputy Chair

Summary of report recommendations

- Enabling bee packages importation from foreign jurisdictions such as the United States while keeping in mind the importance of improving the inspection of imported honey bee packages.
- Monitoring bee health status, across the country, through the implementation of the bee health surveillance project on a continuous basis, rather than a four-year period.
- Accelerating the implementation of the National Bee Farm-Level Biosecurity Standard in hives.
- Reducing the current number of conditional registrations granted to neonic active ingredients.
- Ensuring, through the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development audits, that the PMRA is working on enhancing its pesticide registration process.
- Improving access to new pesticides which could be safely used in beehives.
- The PMRA keeps monitoring bee mortality and concludes, without delay, its re-evaluation of the three neonic insecticides.
- Increasing the amount and the duration of research funding targeting pollinator health.
- Improving management practices of beekeepers and growers while minimizing the use of chemical products and ensuring the availability of untreated seeds.
- Improving pollinator habitat in order to achieve floral diversity.

Quick Facts

- During the study that began in November 2013, the Committee heard from [85 witnesses](#). Witnesses included officials from the federal and provincial governments of Canada, the European Union and Australia, as well as representatives from industry associations, civil society, and academia.

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