



August 2018 | Vol 31 # 3



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August 2018 Vol 31 #3

Funded by the Government of Canada



Hivelights: The official magazine of the Canadian Honey Council, The Canadian Beekeeper and The Canadian Honey Packer.

The Canadian Honey Council (CHC) is the national organization of the Canadian beekeeping industry and Hivelights is the industry's magazine.

In order to receive Hivelights you must be a current member of your provincial association. Non members such as Hobby Beekeepers, Honey Packers, Urban Beekeepers or Canadians with interests in Beekeeping can subscribe to the magazine for a \$25.00 subscription fee per year.

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Hivelights is published quarterly (Feb, May, Aug, Nov). Deadline for submissions and adverts are 6 weeks prior to publication (i.e. Dec 15th for Feb issue). The opinions expressed in the articles printed in Hivelights are those of the authors and do not imply endorsement of the Canadian Honey Council for the promotion of any product, goods or services mentioned unless specifically stated.

Advertising rates as are follows:

	Black & White	Full Colour
1/8 page	\$100.00	\$150.00
1/6 page	\$125.00	\$185.00
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Publication Mail Agreement number

43070512

ISSN 1489-730X

Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to Hivelights

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Alberta T2H 2H4

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Design and Production .....Cristian Campean  
Advertising enquiries ..... Geoff Todd  
Publisher .....Bunker to Bunker Books Inc.

Printed in Canada



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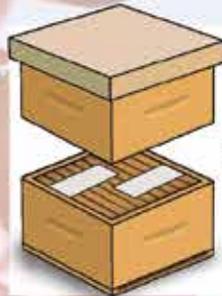
**FOR OVERWINTERING:** Treat at end of the honey flow, while the last super is still on, add additional boxes if bees do not have room to move up and expand. 2-3 brood cycles before Queen goes off-lay.

**TEMPERATURE:** Between 10°C (50°F) and 29.5°C (85°F) on day of application. Maximum temperatures should not reach above 32°C (90°F). **Bees need to be flying regularly** during daytime highs, therefore it should not be raining during the first three days of treatment. Nighttime temperatures below 10°C (50°F) are acceptable.

**VENTILATION:** Full width of hive, minimum 1/2 inch high. If using bottom boards with limited entrances, set-back second box by 1/2 inch to give fresh air access. Screen bottom boards should be closed off or anticipate a decrease in efficacy due to Formic Acid being heavier than air. Upper entrances and screen bottom boards are not additional or sufficient ventilation sources.



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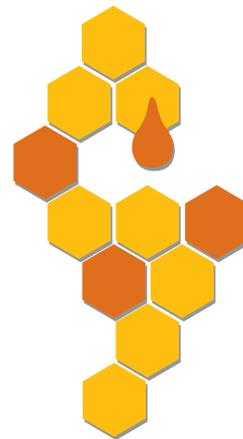


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# Canadian Honey Council Report



*Rod Scarlett, Executive Director, CHC*

The spring of 2018 certainly was one that created many issues for beekeepers. First and foremost was the weather. At the time of this being written, CAPA is just getting in the provincial over-wintering loss results but suffice it to say, it isn't a pretty picture for most of the country. I would expect the national average to exceed 30% and the primary cause will be the weather. While these types of loss numbers are not sustainable in the long term, looking from afar, there was a somewhat positive occurrence that was not necessarily expected. Despite the higher losses, many beekeepers were able to re-establish their numbers through domestic supply and using splits from their own operation. Also, the supply of packages met demands. All in all, a very difficult and expensive situation.

Earlier this spring, the industry was jolted by the announcement from Medivet that they were shutting down the business operations and Fumagilin-B would no longer be available. Medivet has been a very strong supporter of the Canadian Honey Council and the Canadian beekeeping industry and will certainly be missed. The CHC has recognized the importance of maintaining the availability of Fumagilin-B and at a recent Board meeting passed a motion that the CHC, "investigate and pursue information regarding the feasibility of obtaining the Canadian rights to the label and formulation of Fumagilin B as well as look for options for supply of both the active and a processing lab facility." The whole process may take time, and it may include partnerships, but knowing how important nosema control is to many beekeepers, it would seem appropriate to ensure some amount of Canadian control in its production.

The regulations for the Safe Food for Canadians regulations have been finalized and will come into effect on January 19, 2019. They outline much

of the labelling requirements for honey. The pertinent section is as follows:

## **275 (1) The label of prepackaged honey that is graded must bear**

- (a) a declaration of net quantity, in metric units or, in the case of prepackaged honey that is sold as one unit but that consists of two or more individual packages, the number of those packages and the net quantity of each, in metric units; and
- (b) the word "Creamed" or "en crème" or another word that indicates that the contents are granulated, "Liquid" or "liquide", "Pasteurized" or "pasteurisé" or "Pressed" or "de presse", as the case may be.

## **Location**

(2) In the case of consumer prepackaged honey, the information referred to in paragraph (1)(b) must be shown on the principal display panel.

### **Graded Canadian honey**

276 The label of prepackaged honey that is produced in Canada and graded in accordance with these Regulations must bear the expression "Product of Canada" or "produit du Canada" or "Canadian Honey" or "miel canadien".

## **Imported prepackaged honey**

277 (1) The label of imported prepackaged honey must bear the expression "Product of" or "produit de" followed by the name of the foreign state of origin.

## **Type size**

(2) In the case of imported prepackaged honey, other than consumer prepackaged honey, that information must be shown in characters that are at least 9.5 mm in height.

## **Honey packaged from imported honey**

278 The label of consumer prepackaged honey that was packaged from imported honey and graded in accordance with these Regulations must bear the expressions "Product of" and "produit de" followed by the name of the foreign state of origin.

## **Blend of Canadian and imported honey**

279 (1) The label of prepackaged honey that is a blend of imported honey and Canadian honey and that is graded in accordance with these Regulations must bear the expression "A Blend of Canadian and (naming the foreign state or states of origin) Honey" or "mélange de miel canadien et de miel

(indication de l'État étranger ou des États étrangers d'origine)" or "A Blend of (naming the foreign state or states of origin) Honey and Canadian Honey" or "mélange de miel (indication de l'État étranger ou des États étrangers d'origine) et de miel canadien".

## **Sources of honey**

(2) The states of origin, Canadian or foreign, must be shown in descending order of the proportion of honey from each state.

In response to a question to CFIA, I received the following clarification:

"We acknowledge that there has been a long standing issue with regards to honey grade labelling conflicting with its country of origin declaration. For clarification, the new direction in the SFCR for honey grades is the following :

- Only honey that is produced and graded in Canada can use "Canada No. 1", "Canada No. 2" and "Canada No. 3".
- Imported honey that is graded before import uses import grade name in Vol 9 of the Grade Compendium "No. 1", "No. 2", and "No. 3".
- Honey that is imported, and blended with Canadian honey, then graded, uses "No. 1", "No. 2", and "No. 3".

There are other label requirements as it pertains to nutrition and they are finalized. Changes to labels have to be made by 2021.

There is a timetable for requirements of the Safe Food for Canadians Regulations (SFCR) related to licensing, preventive control plans (PCP), preventive controls and traceability. That timetable can be found at <http://www.inspection.gc.ca/food/sfcr/timelines/honey-and-maple-products/eng/1527617644916/1528211917538>. The Canadian Grade Compendium for honey can be found here: <http://www.inspection.gc.ca/about-the-cfia/acts-and-regulations/list-of-acts-and-regulations/documents-incorporated-by-reference/canadian-grade-compendium-volume-6/eng/1523388139064/1523388171017>

There is a very good questions and answers post on the CFIA website that addresses many of the issues outlined in the regulations. That can be found here: <http://inspection.gc.ca/food/sfcr/toolkit-for-businesses/questions-and-answers/eng/1492029195746/1492029286734>

Finally, remember to save the date, Apimondia in Montreal, September 8-12, 2019! ■



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1 - Efficacy tests: Anti-varroa treatments - FNOSAD (National Federation of Departmental Apian Health Organizations) 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015 and 2016 - France // 2 - Amitraz residue transfer into honey from Apis mellifera hives treated with Apivar® - Jeff Pettis, USDA-ARS, Beltsville, MD USA - 2013 // 3 - Apivar registration dossier (2015); Study 2026-2015 - Testapi

  
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# Regional Reports



## Maritimes



Mario Swinkels

Hopefully everyone has recovered from the winter losses, much of the damage I think can be contributed to the dry summer of 2017. This cold wet spring has also slowed down the spring build up. Here's to a long warm and moist summer.

With Summer, many activities are planned. Things to look forward to: The New Brunswick Beekeepers Association Inc. is happy to announce that this year's edition of the Maritime Bee Tour will take place on August 17th and 18th in Moncton, New Brunswick. On Friday evening, a dinner will be held at Crandall University with Paul Kelly as the guest speaker. On Saturday, you will spend the day at Lockhart Apiaries where we will have educational stations attended to by beekeepers as well as added on value demonstrations. On October 20th the Nova Scotia Beekeepers Association will have a Fall meeting with Bee Blog Writer Ian Stepler as the guest speaker. Other activities are planned as well, check your local association websites for details.

Frost has hit another blow to the blueberry industry, thus the pollination industry. Beekeepers have seen less bees go to pollination, but let us not forget as the blueberry industry recovers there will be an even stronger need for maritime bees and we must be ready, or see a greater influx of inter provincial movement.

This is such a busy time of year with build-up and movement of bees, it seems like each week is only two days long but recall the winter days when we all longed to see a bee exit the hive and forage out into the surrounding areas in search of nectar, that time is now, enjoy what you see.

## Québec



Scott Plante

When I was in my first year of beekeeping, I was given some wisdom about wintering bees from an old beekeeper. He told me, "You can have near perfect winter survival for twenty-four years and on the twenty-fifth lose them all." This seems harsh but does hold some truth. To alleviate any future situations like what some of us have been through this spring, the stock replacement committee is working on a Canadian bee stock suppliers list, which will be available as a resource to the industry by next year.

One of the hurdles to achieving self-sufficiency in Canada, is the interprovincial movements of bee stock.

The western provinces seem to be pretty much harmonized. Hopefully at our fall meeting in Ontario, we can move towards a more harmonized system for the central and eastern provinces.

Our long-lasting dependence on US honey packers has placed our Canadian honey producers in a fragile position when negotiating prices for their honey. To facilitate the exports of Canadian honey on the world market, we are currently developing a schedule to travel to several food shows over the next couple of years. To make our presence at those food shows as prosperous as possible, we will be putting together a list of interested Canadian honey producers to give out to prospective clients.

A severe blueberry frost in the eastern provinces has motivated many blueberry producers in the northern areas to rent hives in their late blooming fields, which has spurred a bidding war in Quebec. Prices have risen to 175\$ a hive.

With the objective of giving a long-term direction to the Canadian beekeeping industry, the Canadian Honey Council has decided to ask the Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council, to facilitate the development of a strategic plan for the next 4-5 years. Have a great honey season!

En 1983, quand j'étais dans ma première année d'apiculture, un vieux apiculteur m'a donné une certaine sagesse sur l'hivernage des abeilles. Il m'a dit : « tu peux avoir une survie hivernale presque parfaite pendant vingt-quatre ans et, au vingt-cinquième, tu les perds tous. » Cela semble dur, mais il y a de la vérité. Pour pallier les situations futures comme celles que certains d'entre nous ont traversées ce printemps, le comité de remplacement des stocks travaille à la création d'une liste canadienne de fournisseurs d'abeilles, qui sera disponible en tant que ressource pour l'industrie d'ici l'année prochaine.

Un des obstacles à l'autosuffisance apicole au Canada, est les mouvements interprovinciaux des stocks d'abeilles. Les provinces de l'Ouest semblent être relativement harmonisées. J'espère que lors de notre réunion d'automne en Ontario, nous pourrions nous diriger vers un système plus harmonisé en ce qui concerne les provinces du Centre et de l'Est.

Notre dépendance à long terme vis-à-vis des emballeurs de miel américains a placé nos producteurs de miel canadiens dans une position fragile lorsqu'ils négocient les prix de leurs miels. Pour faciliter les exportations de miel canadien sur le marché mondial, nous sommes en train d'élaborer un calendrier pour se rendre à plusieurs foires alimentaires au cours des deux prochaines années. Afin de rendre notre présence à ces salons de l'alimentation aussi prospère que possible, nous dresserons une liste des producteurs de miel canadiens intéressés à distribuer aux clients potentiels.

Une forte gelée dans les bleuetières dans les provinces de l'Est a incité de nombreux producteurs de bleuets des régions du Nord à louer des ruches dans leurs champs à floraison tardive, ce qui a déclenché une guerre d'enchères au Québec. Les prix ont augmenté à 175 \$ la ruche.

Dans le but de donner une orientation à long terme à l'industrie apicole canadienne. Le Conseil canadien du miel a décidé de demander au Conseil canadien pour les ressources humaines en agriculture de faciliter l'élaboration d'un plan stratégique pour les quatre à cinq prochaines années. Bonne saison !

## Ontario



Albert Devries

Spring in Ontario was weeks late and quite cold and wet. This added stress proved to be too much for many small hives that had made it through winter only to die with spring around the corner. The OBA surveyed it's members regarding winter loss. From the approximately 235 respondents it was revealed that one in three beekeepers lost 70 percent or more of their hives this past winter. Fortunately, the transition to warm weather was quite sudden and strong hives where able to grow quickly.

Planting of corn and soybeans was delayed in many parts of the province because of regular rain. It was towards the end of the planting season that the fields got dry and dusty and bee-kills linked to late season soybean planting occurred. Many beekeepers are frustrated that this is still happening after six years of reporting this problem. We have had more warm weather so far this season than the whole of last season. This is shaping up to be a good year to recover from high winter losses.



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\*Ovstite, L, Parshin, R & Hatjiev, F (2015) Long term effects of a food supplement HiveAlive™ on honey bee colony strength and Nosema craniospore counts. Journal of Apicultural Research

“ I have been very impressed with the product so far. I work closely with another local beekeeper and follow similar treatment protocols. He takes my hives to CA for almond pollination. Early in the fall both of us had losses of 20%, but around Thanksgiving when I was helping him get things packed up I noticed his hive strength was much less than mine. As a result he has also incurred greater losses. One main difference in our operations is HiveAlive.

Steve S. (200 colonies, Michigan)

“ The colonies we fed with HiveAlive last year had only 15% loss so far compared to the 25% for the rest. They appeared to build up very well. There were 75 that we started from packages on 4/7 and split into 300 on 6/10. My close beekeeper friend who runs about 300 colonies bought the same packages of bees on 4/7. He did split them, although not the same buildup. He did not use HiveAlive. He has about 35% loss on those so far. He plans to buy some this week.

Nick S. (1,000 colonies, New York)



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## Saskatchewan



Jake Berg

The start to the 2018 beekeeping year has been an interesting one in Saskatchewan. Most reports in early March were of strong and very healthy bees, but a cold snap in the end of March - early April changed that. By mid to late April, when most beekeepers could get into the hives and do some work, the picture had changed dramatically in some parts of the province. We have pockets of very high winter loss in the province with some beekeepers reporting losses of upwards to 70%. Most of these losses are being blamed on little to no snow cover and extremely cold weather in early April. It was definitely a good year to winter bees indoors as the indoor winter loss provincial average is around 14%. Even with the high loss reports, the provinces average winter loss is 28% which is much lower than some beekeepers had expected and a welcome surprise. Most beekeepers in Saskatchewan have spilt or made nucs to get back to their regular operating numbers. This years honey crop will definitely be impacted by the higher than normal winter loss. At the time of writing this, late June, our bees are looking quite strong and healthy and building up very nicely for summer honey flow. The SBDC held their Annual Field Day June 16 in Big River, SK.

The SBDC's Technical Adaptations Team (TAT) was there to demonstrate some of the research they've been working on this year like the application of oxalic and formic acid. The demonstrations and information provided were presented very well and useful to all in attendance.

Here's to wishing everyone a safe & prosperous honey flow!!

## Alberta



Neil Specht

Just home from the Beaverlodge field day, I had to leave at 3 in the afternoon due to weather considerations between Beaverlodge and home (Eatonia, SK). I apologize on missing some of the meeting.

The ABC Board met the day before in Grande Prairie. At the ABC board meeting there were a lot of positives in the works to secure the supply chain of Fumagillin to the industry. It appears that CHC and many others are also working on this. The hope is that the ABC, CHC and all interested parties can work together/collaborate on getting Fumagillin available ASAP.

On that note, let's hope CAPA can pen something soon on the state of what we do and don't know on the replacements for Fumagillin. I'm sure the snake oil salesmen will be selling hard. I hope that CAPA will have some advice for us on a Fumagillin replacement. At least on what not to do next. Maybe in this issue. If not let's try to share that information on CHC's Webb site.

Another good thing ABC is also working on an international trade workshop or seminar, they will do in conjunction with Agriculture and Forestry International Market Development team at the 2018 ABC Convention. It's primarily for interested Albertans, but my hope is, with CHC help we might make that more nationally relevant. So watch for more on that coming soon.

At home lately we have had more general moisture, increasing the optimism for the honey crop. We have made up our pollination numbers and strength from the winter Losses. Love those bugs. Bees are amazing creatures.

## British Columbia



Stan Reist

This report is made up with the help from other reports, which I am not going to paraphrase or try to copy,

The 29th of May was The Day of the Honey Bee and as such we the BCHA were invited to the provincial Legislature to receive the proclamation from the Provincial Agriculture Minister, regarding this. In the announcement was a grant of \$100,000 dollars for small bee projects within the province. We had a display of hives on the legislature lawn, for the visitors to ask questions and see.

Province celebrates Day of the Honey Bee with support for Bee Health Research

VICTORIA –The front lawns of the Provincial Legislature were a-buzz today,

as honey bees and other native pollinators were feted for their critical role in B.C.'s sustainable food system, as crop pollinators and honey producers, and to raise awareness around the current plight of bee health within the province and globally.

Minister of Agriculture Lana Popham was joined on the steps of the Legislature by representatives of the BC Honey Producers Association, the Capital Region Beekeepers Association, Feed the Bees, and members from 4-H British Columbia where she announced BeeBC, a \$100,000 funding program that supports community-based research on bee health.

"On Day of the Honey Bee, we gather together to celebrate these amazing creatures who do so much for our quality of life here in B.C., whether they're pollinating crops for our agricultural sector or providing B.C. honey to British Columbians," said Minister of Agriculture, Lana Popham. "Our government is taking the added step of supporting a growing, thriving B.C. bee community by funding the BeeBC community research program, to help address concerns around bee health and develop a larger provincial population of honey bees and native pollinators."

The BeeBC program will provide funding to smaller scale community-based projects that support the health of B.C.'s bees. Delivered by the Investment Agriculture Foundation, the fund will provide up to \$100,000 over two years to support small scale regional or community-based projects to research, explore, field-test and share information about best management practices associated with bee health.

The beekeeping industry of BC appreciates the growth in interest in bees and small-scale beekeeping throughout BC. We express our appreciation to Minister Lana Popham for recognizing the Day of the Honey Bee, and for the support of the Ministry of Agriculture in enabling the BC Honey Producers Association to continue to support and improve the beekeeping industry. Bees are still having a hard time and with our partners, this funding will be put to good use in projects to research, field-test and share information about best management practices associated with bee health. We will work to support community beekeeping, to meet the needs of so many crops for pollination, and to supply the growing demand for authentic local honey.

Kerry Clark, President  
BC Honey Producers Association

The Government has increased support for the honey bee industry since taking office last summer. Late last year, the province signed on as a co-sponsor to a three-year study to determine the impact fungicides have on honeybee colonies, with a contribution of \$25,000 to support that research. Last week, two new inspectors were added to the provincial apiculture team. The new inspectors were appointed to the northwest region of the province, covering the McBride-Prince George-Vanderhoof and Telkwa-Smithers-Terrace regions.

Honey bees play an important part of B.C.'s agriculture sector as pollinators of crops, contributing an estimated \$470 million to the economy in B.C. Across Canada, they have an economic contribution estimated at over \$2 billion.

The Blueberry study by Marta Guarma is under way with the support of the Provincial Governments funding and other sources. Samples are being taken for processing at a later date. And by all accounts things are progressing nicely. With the participation of the growers and the beekeepers.

The number of hives for pollination of blueberries this year was down slightly and although there were some shortages I am lead to believe it was not disastrous, however the price per colony was up slightly to a reported \$160. Heard in passing was the comment, well the Washington state beekeepers only charge \$35.00 per hive. It's interesting to note they may only get \$35.00 a hive for pollination but they receive \$210 - \$215. A lb. for honey whereas our beekeepers on get \$140. Lb. for honey going to the US.

Our AGM is in Victoria the fall in Oct, and plans and speakers are well in hand as I understand although the venue is not the largest we are assured it will accommodate us.

The BCHA still has no direct information how the antibiotics will be delivered this year after the December 1st deadline, what I have seen is an E-mail with the explanation of how the system is supposed to work and responsibilities of the Veterinarian and with the client relationship. Most other provinces have this all worked out and have Vets trained but not us. I have an assumption that by now most people have a two year supply of Oxytetracycline, so that will hold them for now, and we won't have to bother the Vets, We will still have the services of the bee inspectors who are more than qualified to diagnose foulbrood and how to deal with it and I guess after that it will be a lot cheaper and more efficient to kill the colony with 2 oz. of gas and remove the frames dig a hole and a quart of gas burn the frames and send the boxes to Iotron for irradiation. Just another example of the Government meddling in affairs that they know nothing about, and destroying a

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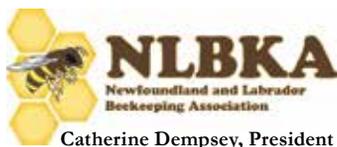
We are in the midst of moving hives into pollination of Cranberries, and tonight we will take the last load into Iron River. The ones in the Duncan area are



Stan catching swarms in trees

almost ready to remove and then the move is into the mountains for the fireweed crop fingers crossed.

I am quite sure there are things that have escaped me right now but this will have to do.



Catherine Dempsey, President

to build a commodity here almost from scratch. We are lucky to have a few experienced apiarists and they are rather evenly spaced across the province, which is a help to our beginner apiarists. They are also the only producers of our queens and nucs, so growing our industry will be slow, depending on spring conditions each year. However, we see this separation from the mainland as an opportunity to avoid many of the problems affecting other provinces.

The island of Newfoundland's isolated position in the Atlantic Ocean marine climate with late springs, a lot of rain drizzle and fog around the coastline, means that our season is already about 8 weeks shorter than other provinces. Combining a lack of agricultural development and limited forage means that beekeepers and honey bees face a lot of challenges. The isolation has its positive side and we are grateful (lucky?) that we are still free of Varroa and tracheal mites, small hive beetle and wax moth. The bee health reports indicate that although low levels of some pathogens have shown up, the only disease that has been showing itself at a discernable level in the past few years is Nosemas. Newfoundland beekeepers are very serious about working to keep our population relatively "clean".

After honey bee importation to the province was curtailed in 1980, overwintering became a necessity, and a strain of honey bees was developed on the west coast of the island by the Skinner family. Our honey bees are basically *Apis mellifera ligustica* (Italian), and bred to be gentle, winter-hardy, and economical users of winter

Please permit me to introduce the Newfoundland & Labrador Beekeeping Association to the other members of the Canadian Honey Council. We are definitely the new kids on the block, with an enthusiastic group of beekeepers, starting



Bernie Rousseau



The staff of the Manitoba Cooperative Honey Producers (MCHP) were recently recognized by winning the Health, Wellness and Safe Workplace Award for Small/Medium businesses, presented by the CPHR (Chartered Professional in Human Resources) at their HR Excellence Awards. The award recognized the work that MCHP has done in recent years to develop a 'safety culture'.

The formal safety journey at Bee Maid/MCHP began a number of years ago, but in recent years, there has been an increase in employee engagement and the growth of a 'safety culture'. As a foundation for their safety program, the Joint Health & Safety Committee maintains an annual safety calendar to ensure that safety activities and training are sustained year after year. In addition, the coop encouraged employee engagement and saw improvements through the introduction of Layered Safety Audits and the increased frequency of Joint Health & Safety Committee meetings. They also found that forums, such as safety talks by the site manager during daily huddles, were instrumental in growing the safety culture.

With the continued efforts, employee adherence to personal protective equipment requirements and performing daily equipment inspections became the norm in the workplace. Employee engagement regarding safety concerns also improved



and was instrumental in changing work practices.

The past and continued efforts caught the attention of the CPHR and Bee Maid and MCHP were thrilled that the team was recognized with this significant award.

stores of honey. They have a fast build up in the spring and are good honey producers (if the forage is available). Our association is interested in how genetic diversity can be maintained, and how to breed characteristics to maximize Varroa resistance in case it ever arrives. We suspect that combining the challenges of extremely late springs, with the attendant difficulties Varroa brings would make it almost impossible to commercially manage bees if Varroa makes it to our island.

Our provincial association is working to nurture the many new beekeepers in the province, to protect our native pollinator species, and to encourage growth of commercial operations across the island. The association had its founding meeting in November, 2014, and incorporated in January 2015. We are not sure, but we think we are the only association in the country that included protection of our native pollinators in our mandate and objectives. If any other groups have done the same we would like to know. There are about 120 members, working approximately 50 apiaries. Most are small operations, but the numbers who are now considered commercial have grown from three to ten. Our commercial set ups are much smaller in size than the thousands of hives managed in other provinces. We have under 1,000 hives in total in the province, but we probably don't have the forage to support large scale operations yet. But slow and steady, in step with the growth of agriculture, and with educating farmers and municipalities is the approach we intend to follow.

We have already made some connections to other associations, researchers and individual beekeepers across the country, in the United States and Europe. We thank them for the advice and information that they have shared with us. We hope that learning about the different challenges faced in different provinces will allow us to see the "big picture" across the country, and adapt your experience to our own situation.

We look forward to working with the CHC and the other provincial associations for the betterment of beekeeping in Canada. ■



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Look for another Apimondia Montréal 2019 newsletter in next Hivelights.

Rod Scarlett, Steve Pernal and Pierre Giovenazzo  
Apimondia Montréal 2019 executive committee

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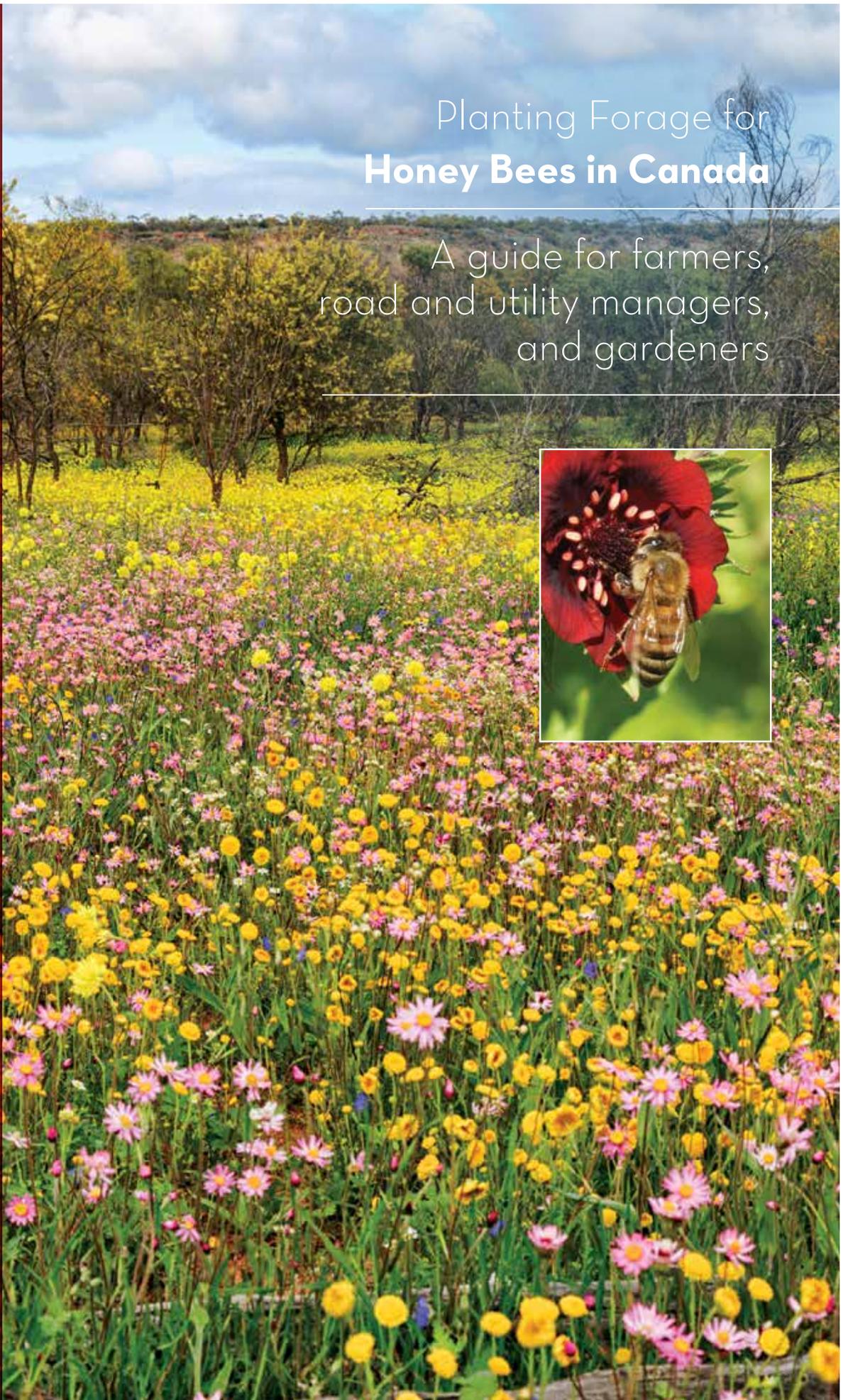
# Planting Guide

## Planting Forage for **Honey Bees in Canada**

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A guide for farmers,  
road and utility managers,  
and gardeners

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This guide entitled *Planting Forage for Honey Bees in Canada: A guide for farmers, road and utility managers, and gardeners*, was produced by Pollinator Partnership Canada. The guide was commissioned for discussion purposes by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) on behalf of the Bee Health Roundtable, an industry-government forum.

The content of this guide does not necessarily reflect the opinions or interests of the entire Bee Health Roundtable membership or AAFC, nor does it necessarily reflect the opinions or interests of all parties interviewed during the researching of this guide.

The recommendations resulting from the guide are not binding on any participant of the VCRTs or AAFC.

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## Why Support Honey Bees?

About 1 in every 3 bites of food we eat is a result of pollination by animals, mainly bees. While all different types of wild bees pollinate our food, managed honey bees are the main pollinator of agricultural crops in Canada and globally. In Canada, between \$3.15 to \$4.39 billion per year are attributed to the beekeeping industry resulting from managed pollination services of crops such as canola, blueberries, and other orchard and field crops. And, the high-quality honey that is produced and enjoyed in Canada would not be possible without healthy bee colonies with access to nectar-producing flowers.

Honey bees and wild bees both rely on nectar and pollen for healthy and productive populations. Unfortunately, beekeepers in some areas are finding it increasingly difficult to find large areas with good nectar and pollen plants for bees. Crop plants can provide good resources, but often are only in bloom for a short period, and do not provide the diversity of pollen and nectar that is crucial for bee health. An additional concern with solely using agricultural crops for honey bee forage is that there is potential for pesticide exposure.

Keeping honey bee colonies healthy has become increasingly challenging over the last decade due to an interacting array of factors including diseases such as the *Varroa* mite, exposure to pesticides, and lack of forage. Remarkably, providing honey bees with better forage, might also help with the other health problems bees are facing, because improved nutrition results in bees that are better able to fight off pests and diseases, and cope with pesticide exposure. A great side-benefit of creating forage for honey bees is that the same plants also provide floral resources to native bees. And, if honey bee forage is created as long-term habitat, the areas can also provide nesting resources for native bees and habitat for a diversity of wildlife.



Photo: Diane Wilson

## About This Guide

This guide provides an overview of where and how honey bee forage can be created in Canada. It has been developed to provide general information to farm, road, and utility land managers, while also being useful to urban landowners wanting to enhance honey bee forage and bee habitat. The primary focus of the guide is forage creation for honey bees, but provides information for creating forage and habitat that also will help native bees and other pollinators. The guide covers three strategies for helping honey bees and other pollinators under the headings: **Preserve, Restore, and Maintain**. These sections are meant to be general guidelines applicable to many different types of land. Later in the guide, there are sections with more detail and considerations for different land types: **1. Farms, 2. Roadsides, 3. Utility Corridors, and 4. Urban Gardens**. Under each land type, links to further resources are provided to guide land managers to more specific technical documents.

The guide provides a plant list of honey bee attractive pollen and nectar plants. The list focuses on native plants, specific to 4 broad Canadian regions, that are beneficial to honey bees and other wildlife. Introduced plant species are also included when they provide value nectar and/or pollen resources. This includes valuable cover crops and other non-native but non-invasive species that are readily available throughout parts of Canada. The plant list in this guide is not intended to be an exhaustive list of all native and introduced plants that are valuable to honey and other bees, but rather highlight the best, most accessible plants, with a range of height, habit (woody and herbaceous), and bloom periods. Choose from the list plants that meet your needs for creating honey bee forage and pollinator habitat.

The budget, size of the project area, and timeline all factor into how your project will progress and take shape. The general steps provided in this manual are for your convenience and reference; use the information that is applicable to your specific project.



Photo: Steve Fletcher



Photo: Derrick Ditchburn

## Honey Bees

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Honey bees (*Apis mellifera*) are managed for pollination services and honey production throughout the world. They represent one species of the estimated 20,000 species of bees globally. Honey bees are not native to Canada, but rather were imported from Europe in the 1600s. Managing honey bees for agricultural pollination services is a newer phenomenon that has grown throughout the 20th century. Today managed honey bees are essential partners in the pollination of row crops including alfalfa, fruit and nut trees, berries, and field vegetables to name a few. Other common managed bees include bumble bees, leafcutter bees, mason bees, and mining bees. The managed non-*Apis* bee industry is growing in size but is nowhere near that of the honey beekeeping industry.

Honey bees have much larger foraging ranges than native bees, up to 5 km, but generally stay 2 to 3 km from hives. Conversely, native bees forage much closer to their nest sites, generally only a few hundred meters, depending on species. These differing foraging ranges create unique differences in forage and habitat requirements for honey bees and native bees.

### *A year in the life of a honey bee colony*

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Honey bees are unique in that they are truly social bees that live in a colony where they divide tasks and roles between workers, have a queen, and persist in the colony over multiple seasons and years. This lifestyle is very uncommon in the pollinator community but it has made honey bees successful in many landscapes.

### *Winter*

---

A honey bee hive has a seasonal cycle that repeats from year to year. During the winter a hive is dormant and the queen stops laying eggs. The bees in the colony surround the queen and keep her warm. The colony survives the Canadian winter by feeding on honey stores that were collected the previous year.

### *Spring*

---

When the weather gets warmer and spring flowers start to bloom the colony becomes more active. Overwintering foragers leave the hive to collect pollen and nectar; the queen has been laying eggs (between 1000 to 1500 each day) and the colony is ready for spring.

## Summer

In early summer the colony is very active. Foragers leave daily to collect pollen and nectar and many new worker bees emerge. By early to mid summer the colony has grown very large and strong. Workers start to produce new queen cells that will produce new queen bees (in warmer climates this can occur earlier in the spring as well). After a new queen hatches, the old queen leaves taking some worker bees with her. This is called swarming. Most beekeepers manage bee colonies to avoid swarming by splitting them in late spring and early summer.



## Fall

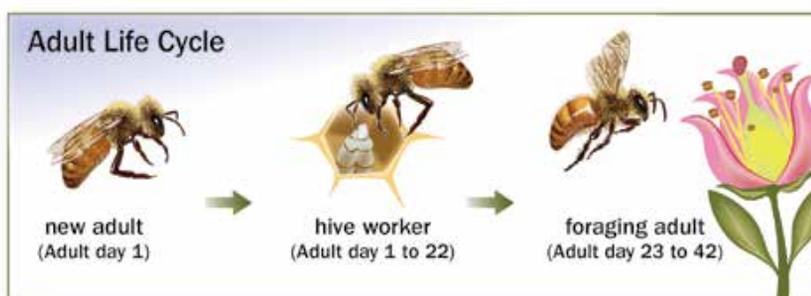
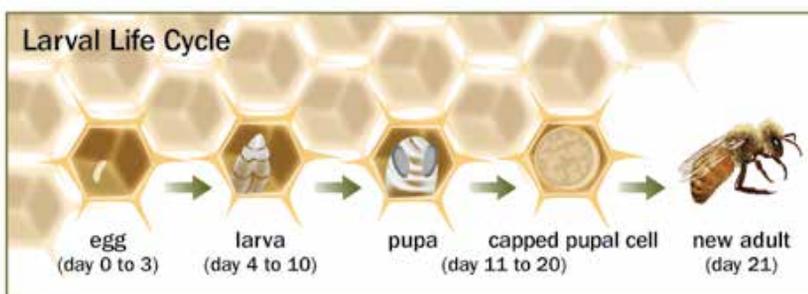
By the fall, flowers have stopped blooming and are producing fruit. The colony works on storing food and foraging for nectar slows. The worker bees and the queen will spend the winter feeding on stored honey, waiting for the spring bloom of flowers. While a honey bee colony can live through multiple years, worker bees have limited lifespans of approximately 40 days.

As a honey bee ages, it cycles through various tasks inside and outside the hive. Right after emerging from their pupa, worker bees work to build combs and take care of other developing larvae. When they get older they leave the hive and become foragers, bringing back pollen, nectar, and other plant products to the hive. Queens live longer, commonly 1 to 3 years. When a colony has a weak or older queen, or loses a queen unexpectedly due to illness, new queens are produced to replace the old queen.

Honey bee colonies are active from early spring to fall, requiring pollen and nectar sources throughout this active period. Beekeepers can move colonies from one area to another throughout the season so that honey bees have enough food. Increasing urban areas, more road and utility corridors, and larger, less diverse farms have decreased options for where beekeepers can find diverse and abundant forage for bees.



**Worker Honey Bee Life Cycle**



Illustrations: Margerite Moyer

## Where to Put Honey Bee Forage

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Honey bee forage can be preserved or created wherever there is room for flowering plants that have honey and nectar. However, there are a few key land types where addition of forage can have the biggest impact on honey bee health and honey production: **1. Farms, 2. Roadsides, 3. Utility Corridors, and 4. Urban lands.**

All of these areas have the potential to contain a large abundance and diversity of bee-attractive floral resources, and beekeepers can use these areas to pasture their colonies when they are not being used for crop pollination. While not much is known at this point about possible impacts of honey bees competing with native bees for floral resources, caution should be taken with putting large numbers of honey bees in natural areas where native pollinators thrive. Note that this guide does not include conservation areas and other more 'natural' environments for enhancement of honey bee floral resources.

### *Native bees*

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There are over 900 species of native bees in Canada. A few species, including the common eastern bumblebee and the blue orchard bee, have been domesticated and are managed for crop pollination, but the vast majority of native bees are wild. Most species live a solitary life while a minority are social and form colonies. Generalist species, like bumblebees, forage on a wide variety of crops and wildflowers, while specialist species, such as the squash bee, are dependent on a limited group of plants for survival.

### *Solitary bees*

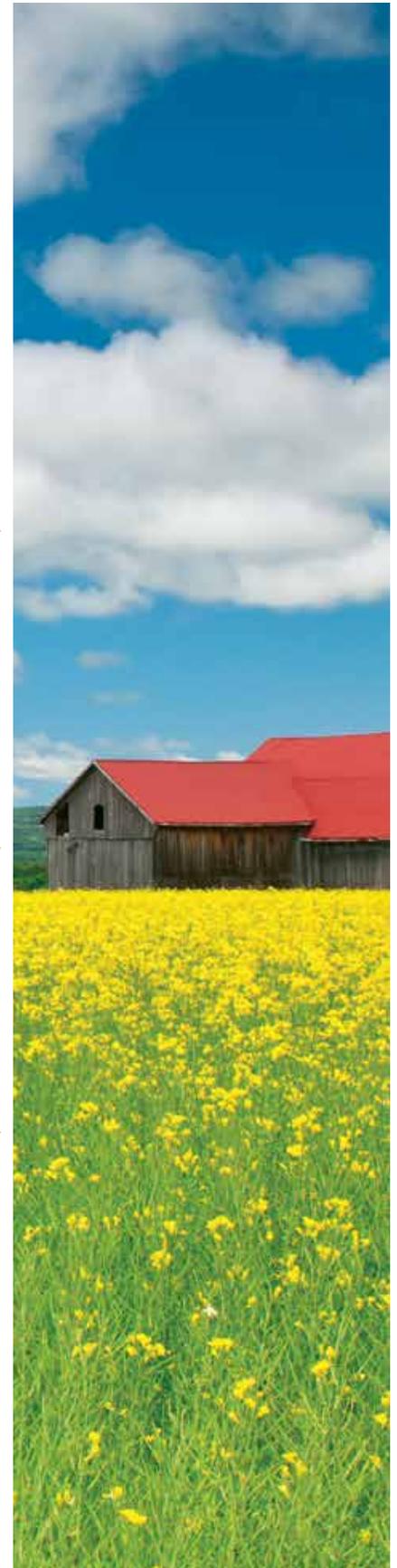
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About 70% of solitary bees, such as sweat bees and miner bees, nest in the ground by excavating small vertical tunnels. Carpenter bees, most leaf cutter bees and mason bees nest in hollow twigs, cavities, or in wood. Different solitary bees are active at different times of the growing season; Some are only active in the spring, summer or fall, while others are active throughout the season. Solitary bees pose very little stinging risk at any time.

### *Bumble bees*

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Bumble bees are especially effective pollinators because they 'buzz' pollinate; By vibrating their entire body at a high frequency, they are able to dislodge pollen in tight flowers that are inaccessible to other bees. Bumble bees nest underground in abandoned rodent burrows or above ground in bunching grasses and plant litter. They can also be found nesting in houses or barns. Wild bumble bees form small colonies that are initiated in the spring by queens that have overwintered in the ground. These queens build colonies that last a season and produce a new generation of queens at the end of the season. The next generation of bumble bees is dependent on the survival of these new queens who mate, overwinter underground and repeat the cycle the following spring. Bumble bees are active from April until October and feed on flowers throughout that time. Although bumble bees are defensive around their nests, and will sting, they pose little stinging risk when they are foraging unless disturbed.



## How to Preserve, Enhance, Maintain

There are many ways to approach creation of honey bee forage and bee habitat on farms, along roadsides and utility corridors, and at your home in the city. The key aspects of creating forage for honey bees are there are an abundant and diverse set of honey bee-attractive plants that provide successive blooms throughout the time when honey bees are active, and there are minimal applications of potentially harmful chemicals. If the goal of your land management is to provide a more broadly-serving habitat that will benefit native bees, and perhaps other beneficial insects and wildlife, additional considerations such as nesting sites, host plants, and connectivity need to be considered.

The options that are available for a land manager fall within three categories: actions that preserve existing areas, methods to enhance areas, and techniques to maintain safe, high-quality bee forage and habitat.

Managers of farms, utility corridors, and roadsides, and urban land owners should know that both small and large actions play in creating benefits at local, regional, and even national scales. Local, site-specific actions add up to significant change. By considering

these three simple actions, you can help to support honey bees and other pollinators.

### *Action 1: Preserve*

One of the simplest things you can do for honey bees and other pollinators is to keep the sources of food and shelter for bees that are already on your land or the land you manage. These bee resources are found in the semi-natural areas on farms, roadsides, public lands, and utility corridors. Fence lines, riparian buffers, pastures, and roadsides are considered semi-natural because they are often mowed or sprayed and contain mixes of native and non-native vegetation.

Farm lands provide excellent opportunity for providing honey bee forage and bee habitat simply through preservation. Preservation of riparian vegetation, hedgerows, and meadows in marginal land can be a win-win because these areas can provide forage for honey bees, enhance native bee populations that aid crop pollination, and provide resources for natural enemy insects that prey on pests.



Stephen Buchmann



On roadsides, flowering vegetation is often abundant and needs minimal intervention to provide good bee forage and habitat. Similarly, utility corridors may provide good floral resources for bees without a lot of input; however, enhancement and proper management can greatly increase these areas value as a source of honey bee forage and bee habitat.

While there is not much natural or semi-natural land in urban areas, aspects of your yard can be preserved for bees such as piles of wood for bee nesting. Or, consider leaving ‘weeds’ in your grass; enjoy the colour of the blooms and watch honey and native bees forage!

If the goal is to preserve all pollinators, ‘scrubby’ areas with downed trees, brush piles, and open soil are excellent nesting areas for native bees. Assessing existing landscapes for their value to honey bees and native bees, and then preserving areas that are providing resources are simple, low-input ways to help pollinators.

### *Action 2: Restore and Enhance*

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The best thing you can do for honey bees and other pollinators is to restore the disturbed landscape with flowering vegetation in as many areas as possible. There are many types of land that can be used to enhance honey bee forage and habitat for pollinators. Enhancement should be tailored to the land type, goals of enhancement, area, budget, and maintenance options. Identifying goals and pre-planning will maximize success and ensure that you provide the best forage and habitat given your resources.

When restoring an area for both honey bees and native bees, it is important to consider food and nesting resources. While honey bees primarily need nectar and pollen from flowers, native pollinators depend on floral resources as well as non-compacted soil and woody vegetation for nesting. In restoration planting projects, it is important that bloom periods coincide with pollinator activity to sustain both plant and pollinator populations. This can be achieved by planting flowers and shrubs that are in bloom from early spring through fall, to ensure continuous nectar and pollen sources.

Depending on your land type and objectives, consider enhancing land through activities such as:

- Increasing the diversity of native flowering plants, forbs, and shrubs to offer blooms all season.

- Planting cover crops in agricultural areas that provide pollen and nectar for honey and native bees.
- Planting introduced, non-invasive plants that are desirable to the land manager while providing an abundance of nectar and pollen for honey and native bees.
- Providing nesting spaces in logs, nest block or bee hotels.

Sometimes only small areas are available for enhancement such as boulevards on roads or hedgerows adjacent to crops. These are perfect places to create floral rich pollinator patches.

### Plant Selection and Design

- Honey bees and native bees depend on nectar and pollen for nutrients and energy. Since flowering plants provide pollen and nectar resources, it is important that bloom periods are continuous from early spring through fall.
- While introduced plants can provide excellent pollen and nectar for honey bees and native bees, attempt to include native plants as the primary floral resource. This will help ensure a healthy ecosystem by providing resources for native, beneficial insects.
- In restoration planting projects, cluster plants together. This makes for more efficient foraging by honey bees and other pollinators.
- Do not include non-native grasses in seed mixes.
- Decide whether seeds, plugs, potted plants, or a combination of plant sources will be used.
- If you are aiming to enhance habitat for native bees in addition to creating honey bee forage, leave patches of bare, undisturbed soil for ground-nesting bees. You can plant woody shrubs and integrate downed logs for cavity-nesting bees wherever it is practical to do so.



## Site Preparation and Invasive Species

How you prepare your site for new pollinator plantings will depend on what type of land you are managing. Generally, the removal of invasive plant material is one of the first actions needed in developing honey bee forage and pollinator habitat. Pollinator-friendly native plants have little opportunity to establish and thrive unless invasive plants are removed. Each of the specific land-type sections have links to guides that provide more technical advice on preparing your site and controlling invasive species in the most efficient ways possible. Some general site preparation techniques include:

- Identify invasive plants during the planning stages and set a manageable threshold of tolerance.
- Research options for plant removal that are the most efficient, successful, and least harmful for your land type. For small-scale plantings in urban areas, hand removal will have the least environmental impact. In larger areas, tilling, cover sheets, and chemical control may be needed.
- Install desired plant material as quickly as possible after the invasive plants have been removed.
- Monitor the site frequently and have a plan in place for additional removal as needed.

### *Action 3: Maintain*

Once forage and habitat have been preserved or established for honey bees and native bees, proper maintenance, that reduces harm to bees and maximizes floral resources, is crucial. Consider modification to standard activities such as:

- Reducing or changing the timing of mowing.
- Avoiding and limiting the use of herbicide in pollinator habitat.
- Leaving old branches and woody shrubs with pithy stems for nesting.
- Allowing trees and other woody vegetation to grow further from the roadway in areas where they are not an impediment to visibility or the clear zone.

Managing habitat for honey bee forage and native bee habitat is easier when you follow tried and tested Best Management Practices (BMPs). The following BMPs have proven to be beneficial to many projects; however like any land management initiative use what is applicable to your site and disregard what is not helpful.



## Integrated Vegetation Management

Integrated Vegetation Management (IVM) is a systematic integrated approach to managing vegetation. It applies the right intervention method at the right place and the right time to control vegetation. IVM makes use of manual, cultural, mechanical, and chemical methods to target undesirable species in the landscape while minimizing environmental impacts and risks.

1. Scout the area identifying and/or mapping the location of unwanted plants that are present.
2. Define threshold levels of plant abundances and/or growth heights based upon your management goals, priorities, and abilities. Management thresholds will differ depending on the plant species you encounter, as well as your objectives. For example, determine whether you wish to prevent the plants growth in height, or completely eliminate it from the site (as may be the case for certain invasive plant species).
3. Use as many IVM practices as practical in concert with one another. These will include manual/mechanical, biological, and chemical practices.
4. Evaluate the results. Keep accurate records and modify the unwanted vegetation management program as needed.

## Mowing

Mowing is the most common management technique on road right-of-ways and utility corridors used to control or eliminate unwanted vegetation and growth. On crop and road edges, mowing keeps weeds in check. In urban areas, mowing grass (and weeds) is standard for most home owners. There are several BMPs that can

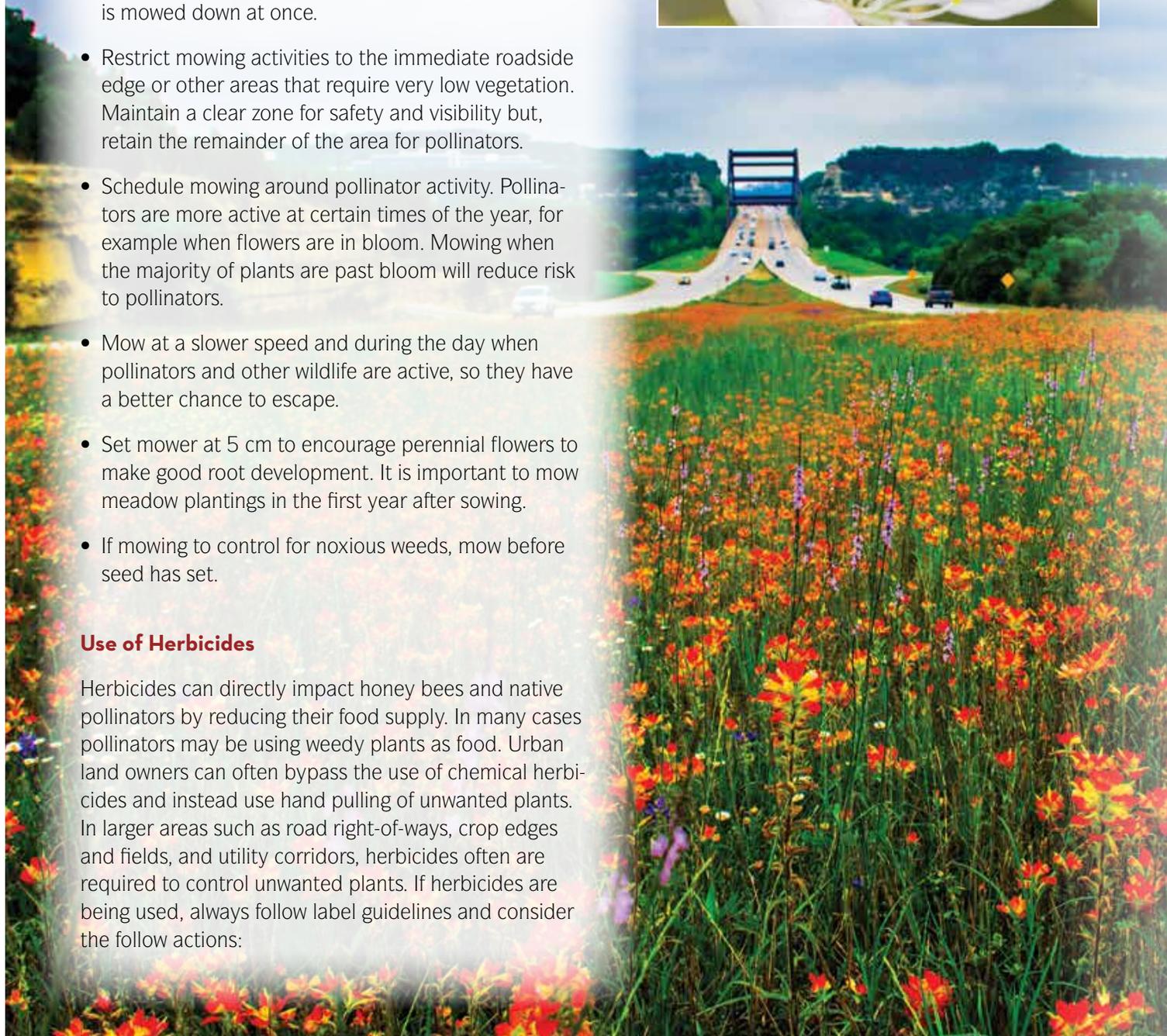


be applied to mowing regimes to reduce the amount of insect mortality. Not only can honey bees and other pollinators be harmed by mower blades, but they are also adversely impacted when large swaths of floral and nesting resources are removed. Most of these techniques apply to road rights-of-way, utility corridors, and crop edges on farms, rather than urban grass plots. Use a combination of bee-friendly mowing practices that apply to your land type.

- Leave patches un-mowed so not all pollinator forage is mowed down at once.
- Restrict mowing activities to the immediate roadside edge or other areas that require very low vegetation. Maintain a clear zone for safety and visibility but, retain the remainder of the area for pollinators.
- Schedule mowing around pollinator activity. Pollinators are more active at certain times of the year, for example when flowers are in bloom. Mowing when the majority of plants are past bloom will reduce risk to pollinators.
- Mow at a slower speed and during the day when pollinators and other wildlife are active, so they have a better chance to escape.
- Set mower at 5 cm to encourage perennial flowers to make good root development. It is important to mow meadow plantings in the first year after sowing.
- If mowing to control for noxious weeds, mow before seed has set.

### Use of Herbicides

Herbicides can directly impact honey bees and native pollinators by reducing their food supply. In many cases pollinators may be using weedy plants as food. Urban land owners can often bypass the use of chemical herbicides and instead use hand pulling of unwanted plants. In larger areas such as road right-of-ways, crop edges and fields, and utility corridors, herbicides often are required to control unwanted plants. If herbicides are being used, always follow label guidelines and consider the follow actions:



- Carefully diagnose your weed problem. Before applying herbicide, make sure the weed population has reached a level where chemical control is necessary.
- Minimize the use of herbicides. This will allow the growth of floral resources that honey bees and other pollinators need to survive. If herbicide treatments are necessary, consider applying before or after pollinator forage plants have bloomed.
- Avoid creating pollinator food deserts. If possible, treat the managed landscape in thirds.
- Minimize drift and broadcast spraying.
- If using a motorized spray rig, always shut off the sprayer when making turns at field ends near gardens, ponds, or other areas that may be used by pollinators and other wildlife.
- Do not spray when wind is blowing toward known pollinator habitats or areas where honey bee hives are placed.
- When doing hand removal of persistent multi-stemmed woody plants, consider carrying a spray bottle of herbicide on your belt and directly spray the cuts as you work through the site. This will avoid over spraying or killing desired plants, and spraying the cuts immediately will prevent the cut from healing over and allowing the undesired plant to persist and thrive.



Photo: Bill Lewis

## Insecticide Use

Although unlikely for roadsides, utility corridors, and even urban gardens, you may need to use an insecticide in your management program if you are combating invasive pests. When you use insecticides you could unintentionally harm honey bees, other pollinators, and other beneficial insects. When using any insecticide, following label guidelines and careful, coordinated timing can significantly reduce beneficial insect mortality.

- Use an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) approach to address potential pest issues.
- Carefully diagnose your pest problem through monitoring, and, before you apply an insecticide, make sure the pest population has reached a level where chemical control is necessary.
- Complete insecticide application before pollinator foraging plants bloom. Most pollinator poisoning occurs when bee-toxic insecticides are applied during the bloom period. This is the time when pollinators are most likely to be attracted to flowers.
- Time applications to take place when foraging honey bees and other pollinators are least active.
- Minimize insecticide drift and opt for very targeted spray techniques. Use a back-pack applicator if possible.
- Consider having a buffer zones around known pollinator habitat to create an area to intercept possible drift from insecticide sprayed sites.
- Check the weather forecast before pesticide application and be mindful of changing weather conditions during application. Optimal conditions are: mild breeze (> 5 to < 10 km/h) with considerable mixing of surface air, wind direction away from sensitive areas, cool and humid conditions.
- Do not spray when wind is blowing toward known pollinator habitats or areas where honey bee hives are placed.
- Always shut off the sprayer when making turns at field ends, near gardens, ponds, or other sources of water that may be used by pollinators.

Canada has approximately 68 million hectares (167 million acres) of farm land. Many farms already have a lot of great bee forage and habitat! Farmers are business people as well as stewards of their land, and must balance economic return with sustainable ecological services. Enhancing and protecting floral resources for honey bees and other pollinators on farms presents both challenges and rewards. Enhancing floral resources on farms can have the added bonuses of healthier bee colonies for better crop pollination, beekeepers seeking out your farm for pasturing, enhanced native bees that also provide pollination services, and greater predator and parasitoid insect that help control crop pests. Some considerations for farm enhancement of honey bee forage and pollinator habitat include:

- Assess what habitat you have for food and nesting for pollinators and consider leaving it. This could be riparian vegetation, crop edges with wildflowers, hedgerows, and marginal land.
- Enhance areas such as crop edges and marginal lands with native or introduced, non-invasive flowers from seed mixes or starter plants.
- In perennial crops, consider adding low growing flowering herbaceous plants between rows
- Consider other ways you can manage your farm to help honey bees and pollinators. Ideas include, mowing less in areas with wildflowers, adopting IPM measures to help reduce pesticide applications and planting cover crops that have nectar and pollen for bees.
- Check for local and national programs that may support your efforts to enhance honey bee forage and native bee habitat on your farm.



Photo: Lee Solter



### Resources for creating honey bee forage and bee habitat on farms:

Pollinator Partnership Eco-Regional Planting Guides: <http://pollinator.org/canada.htm>

Ontario Ministry of Food and Rural Affairs, "Technical Guide for Preserving and Creating Habitat for Pollinators on Ontario's Farms"

Agriculture, Pêcheries et Alimentation Québec, "Prime-Vert" (<http://www.mapaq.gouv.qc.ca/fr/Productions/md/programmesliste/agroenvironnement/Pages/primevert.aspx>)

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, "Native Pollinators and Agriculture in Canada" <http://www.fs.fed.us/wildflowers/pollinators/documents/Ag-CanadaNativePollinators.pdf>

Xerces Society, "Farming for Bees" [http://www.xerces.org/wp-content/uploads/2008/11/farming\\_for\\_bees\\_guidelines\\_xerces\\_society.pdf](http://www.xerces.org/wp-content/uploads/2008/11/farming_for_bees_guidelines_xerces_society.pdf)



## Roadsides

With over 1 million km of roads in Canada, marginal habitats such as roadsides are a significant, yet often overlooked resource for honey bee forage. In landscapes fragmented by urbanization and agriculture, roadsides are an increasingly important source of diverse and abundant floral and habitat resources. They can support native vegetation, provide floral resources for honey and native bees, create important habitat for wildlife, and may help support the pollination needs of neighbouring farms. Because roadsides require continuous management for accessibility, visibility, and user safety, maintenance of an early successional stage habitat can have positive impacts for floral resources. There are management techniques and challenges that are unique to roadsides and should be considered when creating honey bee forage and bee habitat.

- While adhering to safety standards for visibility, consider reducing mowing and pruning to allow roadside with herbaceous plants, shrubs, and trees to flower.
- Most local, native plants that support pollinators are not tolerant to salt. If salt is used on roadways

in the winter, consider the hydrology of the area so that run-off will not carry salt into areas of pollinator plantings.

- Reduce the use of herbicides. If chemical control is necessary, keep the application area as targeted as possible.
- There is not a lot of information on how much bees and other pollinators cross roads, and how much mortality results. So far, it seems that the benefits of having pollinator forage on roads outweigh the possible negative impacts of mortality from crossing roads.

### Resources for creating honey bee forage and bee habitat on roadsides:

Ontario Ministry of Food and Rural Affairs, “Technical Guide for Enhancing, Managing, and Restoring Habitat Along Ontario’s Roadsides”  
[www.pollinator.org/Canada/LandManagerGuides](http://www.pollinator.org/Canada/LandManagerGuides)

Xerces Society, Pollinators and Roadsides, multiple overview and technical documents: <http://www.xerces.org/pollinator-conservation-roadsides/>

## Utility Corridors

In Canada, right-of-way (ROW) areas and other utility landscapes such as wind and solar constitute vast tracts of land that can be ideal for creating and managing honey bee forage and pollinator-friendly landscapes. There are over 800,000 hectares of land associated with the network of transmission and distribution lines stewarded by various utility companies that provide electrical and hydrocarbon energy transmission and distribution. In addition, large areas have been devoted to solar arrays and wind generating projects. Solar and wind energy continues to grow in Canada, with hundreds of solar and wind farms currently in operation, and many more in the planning phase. ROW landscapes are abundant and accessible, which makes them ideal sites for beekeepers to pasture their bees during specific seasons. Utility landscapes could offer valuable honey bee forage and pollinator habitat when they are managed correctly.

- Enhancing these landscapes by planting native and introduced, non-invasive plants will help honey bees, native bees, and other wildlife.
- Correct honey bee hive placement along ROWs is key, as bees should not be placed near towers or other structures that line workers might have to access, or too near utility access roads. It is also vital that ROW managers and beekeepers communicate about the location of bees along ROWs and any planned pesticide applications.
- Reduce mowing and pruning to allow herbaceous and woody plants to flower.
- If herbicide treatments are determined to be the best action, limit them to certain sections and avoid times when forage flowers are in bloom.

### Resources for creating honey bee forage and bee habitat along utility corridors:

Ontario Ministry of Food and Rural Affairs, “Technical Guide for Enhancing, Managing, and Restoring Habitat Along Ontario’s Utility Lands” [www.pollinator.org/Canada/Land-ManagerGuides](http://www.pollinator.org/Canada/Land-ManagerGuides)

Pollinator Partnership, “Plight of the Pollinator: Save Money, Time, and Energy with IVM and Energy Rights-of-Way for Wild Pollinators” <http://www.pollinator.org/PDFs/NAPPC.broch.ROW.rx7.pdf>



## Urban Yards and Gardens

Even if you only have a small yard in town, you can help enhance forage for honey bees and native pollinators using the simple steps outlined in this guide. Increasingly, beekeepers have hives in urban areas and honey bees are a common site in many urban and suburban communities. Urban habitats have a great diversity of flowers and nesting sites for native bees, and with some planning, we can ensure continued and increased floral resources for honey bees and habitat for native pollinators.

- Avoid using herbicides in urban areas. Hand pull plants, and consider leaving ‘wild flowers’ such as dandelions in your yard (which are great for honey bees). If you use herbicides avoid broad spraying—use a small squirt gun, or paint brush to target only the plants you want.
- Consider less mowing. More municipalities are understanding that a bit of diversity in lawns is okay, and a great thing for pollinators. Let flowers in lawns bloom and observe the pollinators.
- Try to incorporate flowers with different bloom periods so that there are flowers available in your yard from early spring through fall.
- Plant native (or non-invasive introduced) plants that are good for honey bees and other pollinators using the plant lists that are in this guide and others.
- Avoid showy, hybrid, ornamentals. They tend not to have much pollen or nectar for bees.
- Practice Integrated Pest Management in your flower and vegetable gardens to keep insect pests under control.
- Honey bees and native bees need water sources. Keep gardens watered so there are small puddles or add a moving water feature to your garden.
- Native bees need nesting sites as well as food from flowers. Leave small patches of brush, open soil, or add nest boxes to your yard.

# Share the Success

## Opportunities to Share the Success

Let the community know what your organization and partners are doing for pollinators!

- Create a website, Facebook page, or a Twitter account to keep the public informed and engaged.
- Take before and after pictures.
- Post pictures of planting activities and the pollinators that you hope to attract.
- Provide planting lists so that your neighbours can also plant for pollinators.
- Hold meetings to communicate the status of the pollinator habitat throughout the course of the project. Invite partners and contributors to speak and be available for questions.
- Request outreach materials from the Pollinator Partnership ([www.pollinator.org](http://www.pollinator.org))
- Register this site with the S.H.A.R.E. (Simply Have Areas Reserved for the Environment) program at: <http://www.pollinator.org/SHARE.htm>.
- Hold a Pollinator Week event and add it to the Pollinator Week Event Calendar at [www.pollinator.org](http://www.pollinator.org).



Photo: Laurie Adams

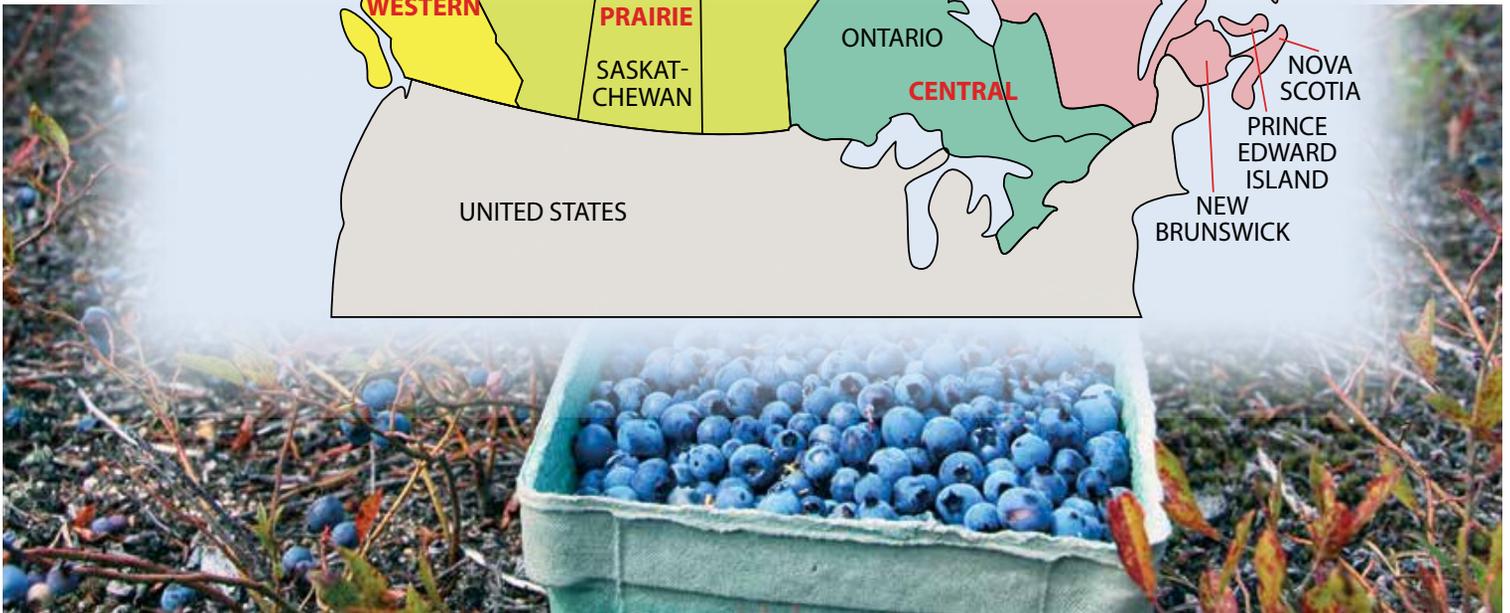


Photo: Racquel Morris



## Plant List Regions:

- WESTERN (W)** British Columbia
- PRAIRIE (P)** Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba
- CENTRAL (C)** Ontario and parts of south western Quebec
- EASTERN (E)** Quebec, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick



## Honey Bee Plant List

The list of plants for honey bee and native bee forage is in four broad regions of Canada,

**Western (W)** = British Columbia, **Prairie (P)** = Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, **Central (C)** = Ontario, **Eastern (E)** = Quebec, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick.

The list is not meant to be exhaustive, rather it includes common plants known to be very good for honey bees. It focuses mainly on native plants that are beneficial to honey and native bees, but includes some commonly used garden and agricultural plants that are introduced and non-invasive. Plant height and bloom period will vary with climate. It is best to find local sources for your plants and check to see that your selections are native to your region. Most of these plants should be easy to find from your local nursery. A large number of woody and herbaceous plants are what works for your region, soil, sun exposure, size of planting, goals, and your vision.

Species	Common Name	N/I	Region				Height	Colour	Bloom Period	Sun	Soil Moisture	Soil Texture
			W	PP	C	E						
<b>Wood Plants</b>												
<i>Acer</i> spp.	Native maples	N	X	X	X	X	12-20m+	red, greenish, yellow	March - April	sun to partial shade	dry to wet	sand, loam
<i>Amelanchier</i> spp.	Serviceberry	N	X	X	X	X	2-12m	white	March - April	sun to partial shade	moist, well drained	clay, sand, loam
<i>Artemisia campestris</i>	Field sagewort	N	X	X	X	X	0.3-1.0m	green/brown	July - September	sun	dry, well drained	sand
<i>Artemisia cana</i>	Silver sagebrush	N	X	X			0.5-1.5m	yellow	August - September	sun	dry to moist, well drained	clay, sand, loam
<i>Artemisia tridentata</i>	Big sagebrush	N	X				0.6-2.0m	yellow	June	sun	dry	sand, loam
<i>Chrysothamnus viscidiflorus</i>	Yellow rabbitbrush	N	X				0.2-1m	yellow	June - October	sun	well drained	sand, loam
<i>Cornus stolonifera</i>	Redosier dogwood	N	X	X	X	X	1.6-4.0m	white/cream	May - June	sun to partial shade	moist to wet, well drained	clay, sand, loam
<i>Crataegus</i> spp.	Hawthorns	N	X	X	X	X	3.5-11m	white	May - June	sun to part shade	dry to moist	clay, sand, loam
<i>Fraxinus</i> spp.	Ash	N	X	X	X	X	5-15m+	purple, yellow	May-June	sun to part shade	moist to dry	clay, sand, loam
<i>Gleditsia triacanthos</i>	Honey Locust	N			X		15-35m	white/cream, green/brown	May - June	sun to partial shade	dry to moist, well drained	clay, sand, loam
<i>Malus coronaria</i>	Sweet crab apple	N			X		0-12m	white/cream	April - May	sun to partial shade	dry to moist	clay, loam
<i>Prunus</i> spp.	Native cherry	N	X	X	X	X	5-20m+	white	March - June	sun	dry to moist, well drained	sand, loam

## Honey Bee Plant List

Species	Common Name	N/I	Region				Height	Colour	Bloom Period	Sun	Soil Moisture	Soil Texture
			W	PP	C	E						
<i>Purshia tridentata</i>	Antelope bitterbrush	N	X				0.6-1.8m	white, yellow	May - July	sun	dry, well drained	sand, loam, clay
<i>Quercus</i> spp.	Native oaks	N	X	X	X	X	5-30m+	greenish white	May-June	sun	dry to moist	clay, sand, loam
<i>Ribes</i> spp.	Native current and gooseberry	N	X	X	X	X	1-3m	greenish white, white, pink, red	March - June	sun to shade	moist to dry, well drained	clay, sand, loam
<i>Rosa</i> spp.	Wild rose	N	X	X	X	X	1-3m	pink to white	June-July	sun	well drained	clay, sand, loam
<i>Rubus</i> spp.	Raspberry	N	X	X	X	X	1-3m	white or rose purple	June - September	sun to part shade	moist	clay, sand, loam
<i>Salix</i> spp.	Willows	N	X	X	X	X	5-15m+	white	April-May	sun	moist	clay, sand, loam
<i>Sambucus</i> spp.	Elderberry	N	X	X	X	X	1.5-5m	white	May - June	sun to partial shade	dry to wet	clay, sand, loam
<i>Shepherdia canadensis</i>	Canadian buffaloberry	N	X	X	X	X	1-3m	yellow, white/cream	April-May	sun	dry to moist	clay, sand, loam
<i>Sorbus decora</i>	Showy Mountain Ash	N		X	X	X	5-10m	white/cream	June - July	partial shade to shade	moist	clay, sand, loam
<i>Symphoricarpos alba</i>	Snowberry	N	X	X	X	X	0.3-1.2m	pink	June - July	sun to partial sun	dry	clay, sand
<i>Tilia americana</i>	Linden or Basswood	N		X	X	X	up to 25m	yellow white	April - June	sun to partial shade	moist, well drained	sand, loam
<b>Forbs</b>												
<i>Achillea millefolium</i> var. <i>occidentalis</i>	Western Yarrow	N	X	X	X	X	0.3-0.9m	white, cream, pink	June - August	sun	dry to well drained	clay, sand
<i>Asclepias speciosa</i>	Showy Milkweed	N	X				0.4-1.2m	purple, pink	June - August	sun	dry to moist, well drained	sand, loam
<i>Asclepias syriaca</i>	Common Milkweed	N		X	X	X	0.5-1.5m	purple, pink	June - August	sun	moist, well drained	clay, sand
<i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>	Butterfly Weed	N			X	X	less than 1m	orange to yellow	May - August	sun	moist to dry	sand, loam
<i>Agastache foeniculum</i>	Blue Giant Hyssop	N	X	X	X	X	0.6-1.2m	blue, purple	July - August	sun to partial shade	dry, well drained	sand

## Honey Bee Plant List

Species	Common Name	N/I	Region				Height	Colour	Bloom Period	Sun	Soil Moisture	Soil Texture
			W	PP	C	E						
<i>Aster sagittifolius</i> ( <i>Symphotrichum cordifolium</i> )	Arrowleaf Aster	N	X		X	X	0.2-1.2m	blue, purple	August - October	sun to partial shade	dry, well drained	clay, sand, loam
<i>Aster umbellatus</i> ( <i>Doellingeria umbellata</i> )	Flat-topped White Aster	N			X	X	0.6-2.0m	white/cream	August - September	sun	moist to wet, well drained	sand, loam
<i>Balsamorhiza sagittata</i>	Arrowleaf Balsamroot	N	X				0.2-0.4m	yellow	May - June	sun	well drained	loam
<i>Baptisia tinctoria</i>	Wild Indigo	N			X		0-0.9m	yellow	May - September	sun	dry	sand, loam
<i>Borago officinalis</i>	Bee Borage	I	X	X	X	X	0.3-0.9m	blue	June - August	sun to partial shade	dry to moist, well drained	clay, sand, loam
<i>Brassica napus</i>	Canola	I	X	X	X	X	0.3-0.9m	yellow	May - August	sun	moist, well drained	loam
<i>Camelina sativa</i> 'Suneson'	Camelina 'Suneson'	I	X	X	X	X	0.6m	yellow, cream	June - July	sun to partial shade	dry to moist	clay, sand, loam
<i>Campanula medium</i>	Canterbury Bells	I	X		X	X	0.5-1.2m	pink, white, purple, blue	May - July	sun to partial shade	moist, well drained	sand, loam
<i>Chamerion angustifolium</i>	Fireweed	N	X	X	X	X	0.6-1.8m	purple, pink	July - September	sun	dry to moist, well drained	sand, loam
<i>Cleome serrulata</i>	Rocky Mountain Beeplant	N	X	X	X	X	0.3-0.8m	white/cream, pink	July - August	sun to partial shade	dry to moist, well drained	sand, loam
<i>Cosmos bipinnatus</i>	Garden Cosmos	I			X	X	0.3-1.8m	red, violet, white, pink	August - September	sun	dry to moist, well drained	sand, loam
<i>Coreopsis lanceolata</i>	Lanceleaf Coreopsis	N	X		X		up to 1m	yellow	May - August	sun to partial sun	moist to dry, well drained	sand, rocky
<i>Erigeron annuus</i>	Eastern Daisy Fleabane	N	X	X	X	X	0.3-1.2m	white/cream	May - October	partial sun to sun	dry, well drained	clay, sand
<i>Erigeron compositus</i>	Cutleaf Daisy	N	X	X			up to 1m	white, pink	May - August	partial sun to sun	moist to wet	sand, granite gravels
<i>Erigeron divergens</i>	Spreading Fleabane	N	X				up to 1m	white, pink, purple	March - November	partial sun to sun	moist to dry	sand
<i>Erigeron philadelphicus</i>	Philadelphia fleabane	N	X	X	X	X	0.15-0.9m	white/cream, purple	April - August	partial sun to sun	dry, well drained	clay, sand

## Honey Bee Plant List

Species	Common Name	N/I	Region				Height	Colour	Bloom Period	Sun	Soil Moisture	Soil Texture
			W	PP	C	E						
<i>Erigeron strigosus</i>	Prairie Fleabane	N	X	X	X	X	0.15-0.7m	white/cream	April - August	partial sun to sun	dry, well drained	clay, sand
<i>Eriogonum umbellatum</i>	Sulphur-flower Buckwheat	N	X				0.1-0.3m	white/cream, yellow	June - September	sun	dry	gravel
<i>Eriophyllum lanatum</i>	Common Woolly Sunflower	N	X				0.15-1.0m	yellow	June - September	sun	dry	clay, sand
<i>Eupatorium maculatum</i>	Joe-Pye Weed	N	X	X	X	X	0.6-1.8m	purple, pink	July - September	sun to partial shade	moist to wet, well drained	clay, sand, loam, humus enriched
<i>Eupatorium perfoliatum</i>	Common Boneset	N			X	X	1-1.5 m	white	July - September	sun	well drained to moist	clay, sand, loam
<i>Euthamia graminifolia</i>	Flat-top Goldentop	N	X	X	X	X	0.3-1.2m	yellow	July - October	sun	moist to well drained	loam
<i>Eutrochium purpureum</i>	Sweetscented Joe Pye Weed	N			X	X	1-2m	pink, purple	July - September	sun to shade	well drained, moist	sand, loam, clay
<i>Fagopyrum esculentum</i>	Buckwheat	I	X	X	X	X	1.5m	white	July - September	sun	moist, well drained	sand, loam, clay
<i>Gaillardia pulchella</i>	Indian Blanket	I			X	X	0.3-1m	red, yellow, brown	May - August	sun to partial shade	well drained	loam, sand, calcareous
<i>Gilia capitata</i>	Globe Gilia	I	X				0.3-1m	blue	May - July	sun	dry, well drained	sand, rocky
<i>Helenium autumnale</i>	Common Sneezeweed	N	X	X	X	X	1-1.5m	yellow, brown	July - September	sun to partial shade	moist to wet	clay, sand, loam
<i>Helianthus annuus</i>	Wild Sunflower	I	X	X	X	X	0.5-1.2m	yellow	July - October	sun	dry	disturbed clay, heavy sand
<i>Helianthus maximiliani</i>	Maximilian Sunflower	N	X	X	X	X	0.9-3m	yellow	July - October	sun	dry to moist	sand, clay, loam
<i>Heliopsis helianthoides</i>	Oxeye Sunflower	N		X	X	X	1m	yellow	July - October	sun	dry to moderately moist	clay, sand, loam
<i>Lavandula angustifolia</i>	Lavender	I	X		X	X	1.2m	purple	July - September	sun	dry to moist, well drained	sand, clay, loam
<i>Medicago sativa</i>	Alfalfa	I	X	X	X	X	0.3-1m	blue, yellow, purple	June - September	sun	dry, well drained	sand

## Honey Bee Plant List

Species	Common Name	N/I	Region				Height	Colour	Bloom Period	Sun	Soil Moisture	Soil Texture
			W	PP	C	E						
<i>Melilotus alba</i>	White Sweet Clover	I	X	X	X	X	1.2m	white, pink	July - August	sun	dry to moist, well drained	sand, clay, loam
<i>Onobrychis viciifolia</i>	Sainfoin	I	X	X	X	X	0.2 - 1m	pink, white, purple	June - August	sun	moist, well drained	sand, loam
<i>Phacelia tanacetifolia</i>	Lacy Phacelia	I		X	X		0.3-1m	blue	March - May	sun	dry	sand, rocky
<i>Physostegia virginiana</i>	Obedient Plant	N			X	X	0.3-1.2m	purple, pink	June - September	sun to partial shade	moist, well drained	sand, clay, humus-rich
<i>Pycnanthemum tenuifolium</i>	Narrowleaf Mountainmint	N			X	X	0.3-0.75m	white/cream	July - September	sun	moist to dry	sand
<i>Ratibida columnifera</i>	Prairie Coneflower	N	X	X	X		0.3-0.5m	yellow	May - October	sun	dry, well drained	clay, sand, loam, calcareous
<i>Ratibida pinnata</i>	Pinnate Prairie Coneflower	N			X		0.45 - 1.8m	yellow	June - September	sun to partial shade	dry to moist, well drained	sand, loam
<i>Rudbeckia hirta</i>	Black-eyed Susan	N	X	X	X	X	0.3-1.5m	yellow with dark brown center	June - September	sun to partial sun	moist to dry	sand, loam
<i>Solidago altissima</i>	Canada Goldenrod	N		X	X	X	0.6-2.1m	yellow	August - November	partial shade	moist	clay, sand, loam
<i>Solidago canadensis</i>	Canada Goldenrod	N	X	X	X	X	0.6-2.1m	yellow	August - November	partial shade	moist	clay, sand, loam
<i>Solidago gigantea</i>	Giant Goldenrod	N	X	X	X	X	1.2m	yellow	September	partial shade	moist	clay, sand, loam
<i>Solidago rigida (Oligoneuron rigidum var. rigidum)</i>	Stiff Goldenrod	N			X		1-1.5m	yellow	August - October	sun	dry to wet	clay, sand, loam
<i>Solidago speciosa</i>	Showy Goldenrod	N			X		0.6-2.1m	yellow	August - October	partial shade	dry	sand
<i>Symphyotrichum laeve</i>	Smooth Blue Aster	N	X	X	X	X	0.3-1.2m	blue, purple	August - November	sun	dry	clay, sand
<i>Symphyotrichum novae-angliae</i>	New England Aster	N	X		X	X	up to 1m	purple	September - October	sun to partial shade	moist, well drained	clay
<i>Symphyotrichum oolentangiense</i>	Skyblue Aster	N			X		up to 1m	blue to purple	September - November	sun to partial shade	dry to well drained	sand, loam

## Honey Bee Plant List

Species	Common Name	N/I	Region				Height	Colour	Bloom Period	Sun	Soil Moisture	Soil Texture
			W	PP	C	E						
<i>Symphotrichum puniceum</i>	Purplestem Aster	N	X	X	X	X	up to 2m	white, pink, purple	July - August	sun	moist	sand, loam
<i>Trifolium fragiferum</i>	O'Connors Strawberry Clover	I	X				0.1-0.3m	pink	July - August	sun	moist	loam
<i>Trifolium hybridum</i>	Alsike Clover	I	X	X	X	X	0.6-1.2m	white, pink	June - September	sun	moist, well drained	sand, loam, clay
<i>Trifolium incarnatum</i>	Crimson Clover	I	X		X	X	0.5m	scarlet, white	April - August	sun	moist, well drained	sand, loam, clay
<i>Trifolium pratense</i>	Red Clover	I	X	X	X	X	0.6m	rose-pink	May - September	sun	moist, well drained	sand, loam, clay
<i>Trifolium repens</i>	White Dutch Clover	I	X	X	X	X	0.1m	white/pink	June - September	sun	moist, well drained	sand, loam, clay
<i>Trifolium wormskioldii</i>	Cows Clover	N	X				up to 0.8m	red	May - September	partial shade	moist, wet	loam
<i>Verbena hastata</i>	Blue Vervain	N	X	X	X	X	0.6-1.8m	blue, purple	June - September	sun to partial shade	moist to wet, well drained	clay, sand, loam
<i>Verbena stricta</i>	Hoary Vervain	N			X		less than 1m	purple	July - September	sun	dry, drained to sandy	sand
<i>Verbesina alternifolia</i>	Wingstem	N			X		1.2-2.4m	yellow	August - October	sun to partial shade	moist, well drained	humus-rich
<i>Vernonia altissima</i>	Tall Ironweed	N			X		1.5-2.4m	purple	August - September	sun, partial shade	moist, wet	sand, loam, clay
<i>Vernonia gigantea</i>	Giant Ironwood	N			X		1-2.5m	purple	August - September	sun, partial shade	moist, well drained	sand, loam
<i>Vicia cracca</i>	Tufted Vetch	I	X	X	X	X	1-1.8m	purple	May - July	sun	dry	clay, sand
<i>Vicia villosa</i>	Hairy Vetch	I	X	X	X	X	0.6-1.5m	purple	June - July	sand, loam, clay	well drained	loam, sand
<i>Zizia aurea</i>	Golden Alexanders	N			X	X	up to 1m	yellow	May - July	sun to partial sun	moist to wet	clay, sand, loam

\*Use caution; can spread and become weedy



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# Beekeepers across Canada encourage to use BeeConnected to improve communication between beekeepers and farmers

*Jillian Bender*

It's well understood that honey bee health is complex and honey bees face pressures from a number of factors throughout the year including: pests and parasites like the Varroa mite, harsh weather like the long winter we just had, disease from bacteria and viruses, a lack of nutritious food sources and potential exposure to pesticides.

A number of groups have said that communication between farmers, beekeepers and pesticide applicators could be improved, so to that end, CropLife Canada and the Canadian Honey Council have partnered again this year to provide free access to a tool called BeeConnected.

"Bees and pesticides are integral and complementary components of sustainable agriculture, and our industry is proud to be playing a key role to ensure both beekeeping and agriculture continue to co-exist and thrive," said Pierre Petelle, president and CEO, CropLife Canada.

"We've heard from members of the Canadian Honey Council that the BeeConnected app is a great tool to improve anonymous communication between all registered users," said Scott Plante, chair of the Canadian Honey Council board of directors. "We endorse the app for use by beekeepers across Canada and encourage them to speak to farmers nearby to get signed up for the app too so activities can be tracked throughout the planting and growing seasons to further ensure honey bees are protected."

BeeConnected is an app that anonymously connects registered farmers, beekeepers and pesticide applicators – free of charge. This allows them to share information about where beehives are located and when pesticide applications will happen, all through the use of a web browser, iPhone or Android device.

Getting started with the app is easy. Users simply visit the website ([www.beeconnected.ca](http://www.beeconnected.ca)) or download the app from Apple store or Google Play and create an account right on their smartphone.

Farmers are then notified when a beekeeper logs a bee yard location within five kilometres of their property and beekeepers are notified when any crop activity is logged within five kilometres of their hives. All registered information is kept confidential and users are always anonymous.

Registered users can choose to use BeeConnected's built-in messaging service to coordinate and privately share information with specific users or they can broadcast their message to any relevant users registered within a five kilometre radius of their activity or hive.

Farmers, commercial pesticide applicators and beekeepers can also explore the in-app map to find any nearby activity that could affect them. But beekeepers can't see other beekeepers and farmers and pesticide applicators can't see other farmers and applicators.

"The goal of a tool like BeeConnected is to further help by improving communication between farmers and beekeepers about agricultural activity or hive locations with their neighbours with the end goal of helping prevent bees from being unintentionally exposed to pesticides," said Petelle.

To learn more about how the app works, head to [beeconnected.ca](http://beeconnected.ca)





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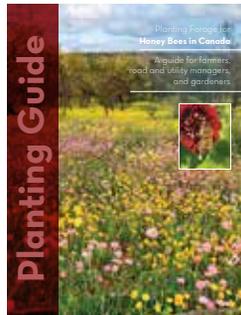
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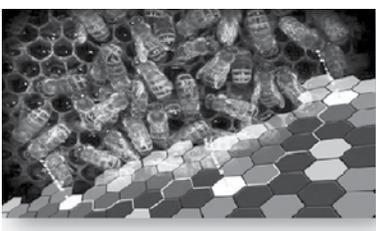
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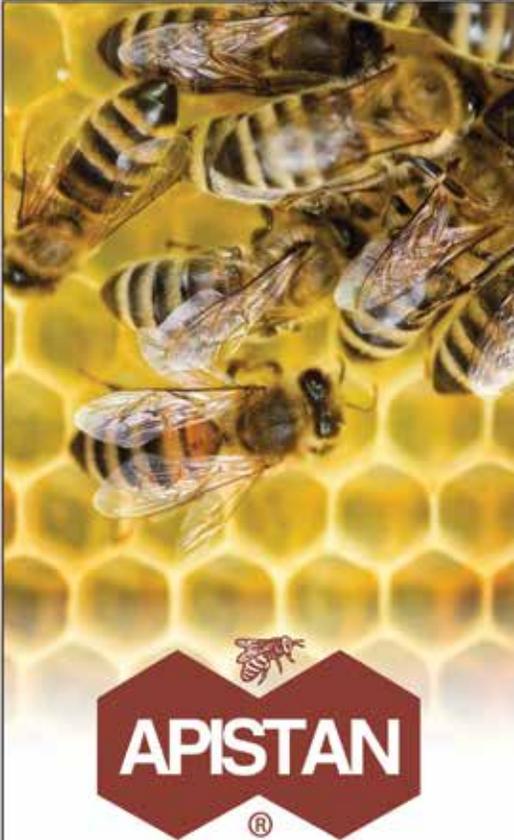
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