



Friends of the Earth
Les Ami(e)s de la Terre

Protecting the Earth for tomorrow / Pour protéger l'avenir de la Terre

Northern Ontario citizens want bee-safe plants and seeds

Friends of the Earth Canada finds overwhelming support in Northern Ontario for action by gardeners and farmers to save bees from neonicotinoids

(Ottawa, ON, July 7, 2014) A poll commissioned by Friends of the Earth Canada indicates very significant public concern about the use of bee-killing pesticides in plants from garden centres from large retailers.

“The use of bee-killing neonic pesticides in nursery plants is widespread,” says Beatrice Olivastri, CEO Friends of the Earth Canada. “But our polling shows that 92.2 per cent of people in Northern Ontario think gardeners should be able to buy plants that are neonic-free. An overwhelming 89.1 per cent of Northern Ontario respondents think farmers should have the option to buy seeds not coated with neonic pesticides.”

The [poll](#) demonstrated that in Northern Ontario:

More than seven out of ten respondents (73.5%) are concerned with pesticides such as neonics contaminating soil and ground water sources in Ontario.

Almost nine out of ten respondents (89.1%) think farmers should have the option of being able to purchase seeds that are not coated with neonic pesticides.

More than eight out of ten (82.9%) are concerned about the wide spread killing of honey bees by the use of neonic pesticides in Ontario.

More than nine out of ten (92.2%) believe gardeners should be able to buy plants that are free of bee-poisoning neonicotinoids from garden centres.

Bees can be exposed to neonicotinoid pesticides via several routes: contact with contaminated dust during crop planting or from consuming pollen or nectar from the treated crop or from flowering plants.

Last week, Friends of the Earth Canada released their [testing](#) on flowering plants from garden centres showing a widespread pattern of contamination of flowering plants expected to be “bee-friendly”.

“Clearly, Northern Ontario residents are concerned about the impact of neonics pesticides. They want to take action in their own backyards and ensure farmers can protect bees” says Ms. Olivastri. “I read this poll as strong support for government action to ban neonics. But in the face of government inaction on the ban, people can insist on neonic-free garden plants and neonic-free crop seed. And, they can sign [Friends of the Earth's petition](#).”

The Oraclepoll Research survey was commissioned by Friends of the Earth and conducted between May 23 and May 27, 2014. A total of 1000 people were surveyed with a margin of error of +/- 3.1%, 19/20 times.

[For full poll results, click here.](#)

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For more information or to schedule interviews, contact:

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***Friends of the Earth Canada** is the Canadian member of Friends of the Earth International, the world's largest grassroots environmental network campaigning on today's most urgent environmental and social issues. For more information, please visit <http://foecanada.org/>.*

***Gardeners Beware 2014** reported that 51 per cent of the total samples contain the bee-killing neonicotinoids. Some flowers contained neonic levels high enough to kill bees outright (assuming comparable concentrations are present in the flowers' pollen and nectar). Further, 40% of the positive samples contained two or more neonicotinoids. Garden plant samples were collected from top garden retailers from 18 cities across Canada and the United States. Canadian samples were collected in London (Ontario), Montreal (Quebec) and Vancouver (British Columbia). For the full report, please visit <http://www.becausecanada.org/>.*