

## **Ontario on the right track with restriction on bee-killing pesticides says Friends of the Earth Canada**

**(Toronto, ON November 25, 2014)** Today, Ontario announced North America's first phase down of bee-killing neonicotinoid pesticides used to coat corn and soy seeds. This decision should deliver a permanent reduction of 80 percent of neonicotinoids currently used to coat corn and soy seeds.

“We congratulate Ontario for its decision to control these systemic neurotoxin pesticides,” says Beatrice Olivastri, Chief Executive Officer, Friends of the Earth Canada. “Clearly, Ontario is reading the science and has decided it's time to act to protect our pollinators.”

The Ontario government will designate seeds coated with neonicotinoids as a new class of pesticides under Ontario's Pesticides Act and restrict their usage and sale. Sale and use of seed would be allowed under certain extraordinary conditions.

Of the almost seven million acres of field crops planted each year in Ontario, the two largest crops are approximately 2.4 million acres of corn and 2.5 million acres of soybeans. About 99 percent of corn seed and 60 percent of soy seed in Ontario are coated with neonicotinoid pesticides.

The Ontario government's release says “Scientific evidence shows that neonicotinoids harm bees by disrupting their ability to feed, navigate and reproduce, making them more susceptible to bacterium, virus, or other microorganisms that can cause disease.”

In Ontario, there are both wild and managed bee populations. Both make a significant contribution to Ontario's agriculture and environment. In addition to bees, wild pollinators include butterflies, flies, beetles, and other insects.

“We hope every concerned citizen will let the Premier know this is a good step forward during the 60 day comment period. While Friends of the Earth Canada would prefer a faster rollout for 2016 planting season, we are pleased that this is a permanent, controlled reduction of 80 percent,” says Olivastri.

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### **For more information, 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.*