



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

MEDIA RELEASE

## **A Cocktail of Bee-harming Pesticides Found in North American Honey**

**October 5, 2017 (Ottawa)** - New research, published in *Science*, today, found widespread contamination of bee-harming neonicotinoid pesticides in honey around the world. Friends of the Earth Canada CEO, Beatrice Olivastri, said, "The discovery of a cocktail of bee-harming pesticides in honey samples across North America, Europe and Asia reinforces the need for a complete and permanent ban on neonicotinoid pesticides." Olivastri went on to say, "The study also highlights the importance of knowing what pesticides are being used when and where and end up making their way into the food we eat."

Canada does not require pesticide use reporting though the European Union and the United States do. Friends of the Earth believes pesticide users should be required to report time and location of use - this will provide much needed information on the cocktail of pesticides encountered by honey bees and wild, native bees.

"Instead of acting to ban neonicotinoids, first the Harper Government and now Mr. Trudeau's Liberals keep telling us all is well. It's not. Bees collect nectar and pollen from their environment and, like the canary in the coal mine, they provide early warning of toxins. This study points to the urgent need to ban neonics," says John Bennett, Senior Policy Advisor, Friends of the Earth. "We also have the right to know what pesticides are being used where and when - it's time for Canada to require pesticide use reports."

Maximum, median and average concentrations in positive samples were highest in North American, Asian and European samples: the highest being in North American (86%), followed by Asia (80%) and with multiple contaminations of more than one neonic being most frequent in North America, Asia and Europe. Thiamethoxam dominated overall concentrations found in North America but three neonics (thiamethoxam, imidacloprid and clothianidin) were recorded in at least 50 % of the samples in North America.

Almost nine out of ten Canadians (89%) believe "pesticides" are the most important threat to bees [according to a poll](#) conducted on behalf of Friends of the Earth Canada in May 2017 by Oracle Poll Research.



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**End Notes:**

New Study: A Worldwide Survey of Neonicotinoids in Honey, Mitchell E.A.D, Mulhauser B, Mulot M, Mutabazi A, Glauser G and Aebi A, Science, October 5, 2017

Health Canada originally allowed neonicotinoid pesticides on the market on a conditional basis in the early 2000s eventually issuing nearly 50 such conditional registrations. It continued to renew the registration despite the failure of the chemical industry to meet the conditions. These decisions are now [the subject of a court case](#). In Canada millions of acres of corn, soy, canola and other crops are treated with neonicotinoids.

**Friends of the Earth Canada** ([www.foecanada.org](http://www.foecanada.org)) 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.

