

Jennings, Henry

From: cleanearth@tds.net
Sent: Friday, May 29, 2015 4:50 PM
To: Jennings, Henry
Subject: for June 5 BPC Meeting Participants

Henry – Please print this out and give it to Board members in their folders, and please also put it on the Agenda – not that anything ever seems to come of providing scientific information to the Board, but one must keep trying.

Board members – Please note in this article – circulated internationally by Reuters in England, that commercial beekeepers lost over 2000 honeybee colonies by pollinating blueberry fields in Washington County in 2014, and thousands more in other places.

How many colonies will be lost this year to growers' pesticide poisons? And how long before commercial beekeepers refuse to come up to Columbia Falls and other blueberry fields to pollinate the so-called "wild" blueberries?

We neighbors of blueberry fields have to depend on the blueberry growers' hired bees to pollinate some of our crops, like apple trees, since once the commercial bees are gone, we have NO BEES, and I mean NONE AT ALL, to pollinate late-blooming crops. Not a one! I will show anyone who wishes to come inspect my gardens and fields, where there is plentiful forage for bees – but the bees ARE NOT THERE.

No commercial bees, no native bees, virtually no pollinators at all excepting house flies and ants. It's pitiful.

The BPC has a responsibility to actually CONTROL pesticides. Now it appears all the Board does is approve new ones as they come available – a sick way to proceed given what we know about pesticides' toxicity to humans as well as wildlife, fisheries, birds, and, most especially, honeybees upon which we depend for our food.

I urge the BPC to actually DO SOMETHING to slow the use of pesticides in a serious way, and encourage growers to switch to organic methods – really, not pretend – so that all life forms, including people – can live in blueberry country free of the sicknesses and diseases brought upon us by their use of pesticide poisons.

Thank you for passing this on. How many more threats to life must we endure so a select few can profit? Time to stop poisoning one's neighbors, growers.

- Nancy Oden, Jonesboro, 434-6228, cleanearth@acadia.net

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<http://uk.reuters.com/article/2015/05/28/us-epa-agriculture-honeybees-idUKKBN0OD1P620150528>

Environment | Thu May 28, 2015 8:37pm BST
 Related: Environment

U.S. EPA proposing temporary pesticide-free zones for honeybees

By Carey Gillam



A colony of Italian worker bees congregates outside their hive while pollinating a blueberry field near Columbia Falls, Maine June 22, 2014.

Reuters/Adrees Latif

U.S. environmental regulators on Thursday proposed a rule that would create temporary pesticide-free zones to protect commercial honeybees, which are critical to food production and have been dying off at alarming rates.

The restrictions are aimed at protecting bees from "pesticides that are acutely toxic" to them, and would cover foliar applications when certain plants are in bloom and when commercial honeybees are being used to pollinate crops, the Environmental Protection Agency said in an 18-page outline of the rule. In foliar applications, the pesticide is put on the plant.

Honeybees pollinate plants that produce roughly a quarter of the food consumed by Americans, and beekeepers travel around the country with managed hives to help the process.

The rule, due to be published in the Federal Register on Friday, would apply to pesticide applications to blooming crops where bees have been contracted to pollinate and would cover 76 active ingredients used in pesticides, including a popular class of insecticide known as neonicotinoids.

Earlier this month, the U.S. Department of Agriculture said that honeybees had disappeared at a staggering rate over the last year. Losses of managed honeybee colonies hit 42.1 percent from April 2014 through April 2015, up from 34.2 percent for 2013-2014, and the second-highest annual loss to date, according to the USDA.

Commercial beekeepers reported adverse effects from pesticide applications to roughly 20,000 bee colonies pollinating almonds and roughly 2,000 colonies contracted to pollinate blueberries in 2014, and there are claims of tens of thousands more colonies similarly affected, the EPA said.

Beekeepers, environmental groups and some scientists say neonicotinoids, or neonics - used on crops such as corn as well as on plants used in lawns and gardens - are harming the bees.

But Bayer, Syngenta and other agrichemical companies that sell neonic products say mite infestations and other factors are the cause.

The White House has formed a task force to study the issue, and the EPA said Thursday it continues to conduct "chemical-specific risk assessments for bees" and will consider additional product-specific mitigation efforts.

Critics said the plan falls short because it does nothing about neonics used in seed treatments, applied before the seed is planted. The seed treatments have long-term damaging effects on bees as the neonics persist in the environment, critics say.

"EPA needs to take the next step and ban these poisoned seeds," said Lori Ann Burd, environmental health director for the Center for Biological Diversity.

