

# Government Relations Report

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On January 6, 2016, the United States Environmental Protection Agency announced its preliminary risk assessment for the neonicotinoid pesticide imidacloprid, which indicates a threat to some pollinators. EPA's assessment, prepared in collaboration with California's Department of Pesticide Regulation and Canada's Pest Management Regulatory Agency, indicates that imidacloprid potentially poses risk to honey bees when the pesticide comes in contact with certain crops that attract pollinators.

This announcement is welcome news for beekeepers whose bees have been negatively impacted by imidacloprid under many scenarios, since this pesticide was initially registered for use by EPA in the early 1990's. This most recent risk assessment was conducted using an enhanced risk assessment procedure which analyzed various effects of imidacloprid on the entire colony in addition to adult bee mortality.

This new risk assessment indicates that imidacloprid residues in cotton and citrus may pose a risk to honey bee colonies since they were detected in amounts greater 25 parts per billion, the level of concern EPA has set for this product.

EPA has announced a 60-day period, beginning January 15, 2016, for interested parties to submit comments on this preliminary risk assessment. The ABF will be preparing comments for the docket and interested ABF members are urged to do the same.

This re-evaluation began in 2009 and is the first of four preliminary risk assessments on the neonicotinoid products most toxic to bees. The other products being reevaluated, whose revised risk assessments will be released in December 2016, include clothianidin, thiamethoxam, and dinotefuran.



## State Pollinator Protection Plans

Many states have been developing Managed Pollinator Protection Plans (MP3's) as suggested by the Environmental Protection Agency. ABF officers and others are continuing discussions with various state and federal government agencies on this issue and some of us are planning to attend an MP3 symposium in Washington, D.C., in March. ABF members are encouraged to become engaged on this issue in their home states, as many state departments of agriculture are seeking input from their state and local bee industry representatives.

The following resolution, which was approved by the membership at the recently concluded ABF convention in Florida, can be used as a guide for use in your own state:

WHEREAS, Pollinator Protection Plans are being developed by many states across the nation; and,

WHEREAS, these plans include bee registries in order to keep track of apiary locations so that beekeepers can be notified of impending pesticide applications; and,

WHEREAS, moving bee hives away from all pesticide applications is an impossibility and not a sustainable means of reducing bee hazards from pesticides on a broad scale; and,

WHEREAS, non-apis pollinators should be protected by these plans as well as honey bees; and,

WHEREAS, all such plans must be designed to specifically comply with FIFRA's primary goal of preventing unreasonable harm to man and the environment; now,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the American Beekeeping Federation work to ensure that state pollinator protection plans truly protect all pollinators and that no pollinator protection plans contain elements that are less restrictive than Federal pesticide law; and,

FURTHER, that the ABF continue to stress the fact that clear, enforceable pesticide label language is the best way to protect honey bees and all pollinators from the risks of pesticide exposure.

Please contact the ABF office if you have any questions about this issue of great importance to the future of the beekeeping industry.

## Have You Caught The Buzz?

Sent via e-mail monthly to all ABF members, *ABF E-Buzz* is a key member benefit and is published to inform members about ABF activities, as well as key happenings in the beekeeping industry.

If you haven't been receiving the newsletter, please be sure to contact the ABF office at [info@abfnet.org](mailto:info@abfnet.org) or 404.760.2875 to ensure we have your most up-to-date contact information. Also, if you wish to contribute content to the newsletter, please contact Tim Tucker, *ABF E-Buzz* editor, at [tuckerb@hit.net](mailto:tuckerb@hit.net). We welcome your submissions!