



CROP POLLINATION ASSOCIATION INC.

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Federal Minister for the Environment
Hon Greg Hunt, MP
PO Box 6022
House of Parliament
CANBERRA ACT 2600

CHEMICAL LABELLING

Current chemical label wording is not standardized, is ambiguous and not legally enforceable.

The beekeeping industry has had thousands of beehives killed or severely knocked (most of the bees killed) by agricultural chemicals in the last two years. Not one prosecution has occurred despite several obvious violations of the current chemical label. For example 'DO NOT SPRAY ON FLOWERING PLANTS'. There were many witnesses that saw this chemical sprayed on a flowering crop. This resulted in a significant bee kill which cost the beekeeper over \$200,000 in direct costs and lost contracts/production over the next two years. This figure did not include labour costs.

The above incident (chemical sprayed in contravention of the label) did not result in any prosecution. There was no investigation on the chemicals effect on beneficial native insects/marsupials such as native bees, butterflys and gliders that would be visiting the flowering crop.

A lot of agricultural crops rely on pollination by managed bees to increase yield, oil content or improve quality. The pollination industry is acutely aware that at times chemicals need to be sprayed on crops. To provide some protection for our industry and other beneficial pollinators such as native bees, etc label wording needs to be standardized and legally enforceable.

Most new chemicals entering the market are systemic neuro (brain) toxins. Long term research (10+ yrs) has not been conducted on how these chemicals affect native nocturnal marsupials that are pollen and nectar gatherers, native bees, aquatic species and humans. Surely the precautionary principle should apply.

The latest insecticides to be registered are the result of mixing two insecticides together. This increases the efficacy (insect killing efficiency) dramatically (up to 1000%) over the efficacy for each insecticide. Given that these are brain toxins what research has been done on human health and the effect on other beneficial animals and insects in our complex ecosystems?

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Research has also not been conducted in regard to synergism between these chemicals and other chemicals, water etc. Sometimes the metabolites that are produced with this mixing (the result of chemicals mixing with other liquids eg water) can be more deadly than the original chemical mixture.

In rural areas a lot of domestic drinking water is rainwater captured from roofs. A roof area is a great area to catch spray drift from the application of these insecticides. What research has been done on this? In the USA most farm water is from wells where the aquifer has filtered the water and also given the insecticides time to be broken down before humans drink the water. That is not necessarily the case here in Australia. What long term research has been done on human health with regard to this?

Another large difference between USA and Australia – all health issues in the USA are primarily funded privately through health insurance. Whereas in Australia a lot of the health issues will be treated and paid for from the public purse (taxpayers).

What the pollination industry would like is:

Label wording to be standardized,

Label wording to be legally enforceable, and

Distance to bees and houses to be mentioned on all labels.

(Legal spray drift wording on labels to read similar to 'DO NOT SPRAY 500m UPWIND of beehives or houses'.)

Distribution List

Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority

For Information

Federal Minister for Agriculture

Federal Minister for Health

Federal Minister for the Environment

Senator Christine Milne

NSW & Vic state Member for Agriculture

NSW & Vic state Member for Health

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Plant Health Australia

Environmental Protection Authority

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Australian Honey Bee Industry Council

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