



COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Cathy Wolfe
District One
Sandra Romero
District Two
Karen Valenzuela
District Three

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

April 8, 2013

Don Hover
Director, WSDA
1111 Washington Street SE, 2nd Floor
PO Box 42560
Olympia, WA 98504-2560

Dear Mr. Hover,

We are writing to express our concerns regarding the Olympia Beekeeper's Association's substantial bee colony loss in 2012.

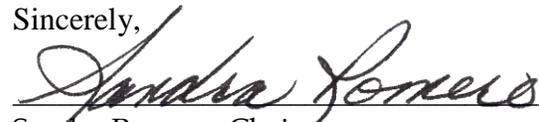
We share the beekeepers' deep concern and belief that immediate action on a local level is appropriate and necessary. Based on the science and action recommendations contained in the report of the Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation *Are Neonicotinoids Killing Bees?*, the Olympia Beekeepers Association has requested our assistance in implementing a restriction on the purchase, sale, distribution and application of the neonicotinoid class of insecticides for *ornamental use* to persons or entities with a valid WSDA pesticide applicator license. This class of insecticide includes but is not limited to imidacloprid, clothianidin and thiamethoxan. This will have no known impact on commercial agricultural use, as farmers are already required to hold a valid applicator's license to apply restricted use pesticides, nor on pet and other animal applications of neonicotinoid-containing products.

Entomologists generally admit that honeybee colony collapse disorder involves many factors – including mites, viruses, poor nutrition, and exposure to a diverse array of pesticides and other chemicals – but the science also clearly demonstrates the sub-lethal effects of long-term exposure to neonicotinoids on the ability of honeybees to forage and communicate. Even when exposed to relatively low concentrations of these insecticides, honeybee workers can become confused and disoriented, delaying or impairing their ability to return to their hive. Besides these behavioral effects, chronic exposure to low doses of neonicotinoids can also reduce breeding success, decrease metabolic efficiency, and reduce disease resistance. Because there is a great deal of concern over the rapid decline of insect pollinators, both domesticated and wild, and because the health of honeybee colonies is important for our state food security and economy, we hope to take a precautionary approach with home ornamental use of neonicotinoid-containing products, so as to minimize chronic exposure of honeybees to this class of compounds.

Mr. Don Hover
April 4, 2013
Page 2

Therefore, we are asking for your assistance in implementing the restriction on the purchase, sale, distribution and application of the neonicotinoid class of insecticides for *ornamental use* to persons or entities with a valid WSDA pesticide applicator license as noted above. Furthermore, we plan to also invite all members of the Washington State Association of Counties to join us in this request.

Sincerely,


Sandra Romero, Chair


Cathy Wolfe, Vice Chair


Karen Valenzuela, Commissioner