

July 16 2013

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Via E-Mail

Public Attitudes re: Bee Health and Neonicotinoid Pesticide Ban

First Contact is pleased to present the results of an automated survey of 1,000 residents of the provinces of British Columbia, Alberta, Ontario and Quebec conducted from July 11 to 14, 2013, on behalf of the Ontario Beekeepers Association and the Sierra Club of Canada.

The automated poll was conducted in English in three provinces and in English and French in Quebec. The sample was drawn to reflect the relative proportion of the population across the provinces and to provide proportional rural and urban representation.

The questionnaire was designed to test the public's awareness of bee kills, their awareness of the cause, now shown to be neonicotinoid pesticides, and their support for a ban on these specific pesticides at the federal and provincial levels.

The study found that 85% of Canadians polled were aware of the importance of bees for the agricultural industry. Of the total sample, 66% supported a ban on neonicotinoid pesticides, with support highest in Ontario (69%) where recent bee kills have been widely publicized. Among respondents who were aware of the link between neonicotinoids and bee kills, 78% supported a ban.

Of the 66% of respondents who support a ban, 95% said they would support a ban by their provincial Minister of Agriculture should the federal government not take action.

Only 10% of respondents reported that they did not support a ban. When asked if they would support a ban if they knew bee-safe and effective pesticides are available to farmers, that number further declined to 6%.

First Contact, founded in 1997, provides live survey research, automated survey research, and direct contact between NGO's, trade unions and political parties and their members, stakeholders and the public.

Mike O'Neill

Matt McDowell



Overall Summary Results Table

Total Responses: 1035

Voter Contact Management

Question 1	Are you aware that we rely on honey bees to pollinate fruit and vegetable crops?	I was aware 882 85%	I was not aware 153 15%		Total 1035	
Question 2	Are you aware that in recent years beekeepers have suffered an unusual amount of bee kills which are threatening honey bees and other pollinating insects in Canada and the world?	I was aware 763 79%	I was not aware 203 21%		966	
Question 3	Were you aware that scientists have linked the use of certain pesticides, called neonicotinoids, with the severe decline of Canada's bee population, and that these pesticides have been banned in Europe?	I was aware 468 50%	I was not aware 473 50%		941	
Question 4	Would you support a ban on the use of neonicotinoids in Canada?	I would support a ban 608 66%	I would not support a ban 90 10%	I am Unsure 222 24%	920	
Question 5	If the Canadian federal government does not act to ban neonicotinoids, would you support a ban by your provincial government?	I would support a ban 558 94%	I would not support a ban 16 3%	I am Unsure 21 4%	595	
Demographic	Which of the following best describes you:	I am 18-25 61 7%	I am 26-40 144 17%	I am 41-60 322 37%	I am 61 or older 339 39%	866
Demographic	Which of the following best describes you:	I am male 314 37%	I am female 526 62%	Neither 11 1%	851	
Demographic	Province of Participants*	British Columbia 166 16%	Alberta 138 13%	Ontario 488 47%	Quebec 243 23%	1035
Demographic	Is the postal code zoned as urban or rural	Urban 587 57%	Rural 448 43%		1035	

* Note: Sample is weighted to reflected Canadian population proportions (BC-15% | AB-13% | Ont-45% | QC-27%)



Comparing Aware/Unaware Respondents and Ban support

Voter Contact Management

		Question 4				
		Would you support a ban on the use of neonicotinoids in Canada?				
		I would support a ban	I would not support a ban	I am Unsure	Total	
Question 3	Were you aware that scientists have linked the use of certain pesticides, called neonicotinoids, with the severe decline of Canada's bee population, and that these pesticides have been banned in Europe?	I was aware	362	36	64	462
			78%	8%	14%	50%
		I was not aware	246	54	158	458
			54%	12%	34%	50%
Total		608	90	222	920	
		66%	10%	24%		
		Question 5				
		If the Canadian federal government does not act to ban neonicotinoids, would you support a ban by your provincial government?				
		I would support a ban	I would not support a ban	I am Unsure	Total	
Question 3	Were you aware that scientists have linked the use of certain pesticides, called neonicotinoids, with the severe decline of Canada's bee population, and that these pesticides have been banned in Europe?	I was aware	336	8	12	356
			94%	2%	3%	60%
		I was not aware	222	8	9	239
			93%	3%	4%	40%
Total		558	16	21	595	
		94%	3%	4%		

			I was aware	I was not aware	Total
Question 1	Are you aware that we rely on honey bees to pollinate fruit and vegetable crops?	BC	145	21	166
			87%	13%	
		AB	128	10	138
			93%	7%	
		ON	426	62	488
			87%	13%	
QC	183	60	243		
	75%	25%			
	Total	882	153	1035	
		85%	15%		
Question 2	Are you aware that in recent years beekeepers have suffered an unusual amount of bee kills which are threatening honey bees and other pollinating insects in Canada and the world?	BC	131	26	157
			83%	17%	
		AB	108	25	133
			81%	19%	
		ON	367	88	455
			81%	19%	
QC	157	64	221		
	71%	29%			
	Total	763	203	966	
		79%	21%		
Question 3	Were you aware that scientists have linked the use of certain pesticides, called neonicotinoids, with the severe decline of Canada's bee population, and that these pesticides have been banned in Europe?	BC	79	74	153
			52%	48%	
		AB	59	72	131
			45%	55%	
		ON	249	193	442
			56%	44%	
QC	81	134	215		
	38%	62%			
	Total	468	473	941	
		50%	50%		



Comparing Responses Between Provinces
Questions 4 & 5

Voter Contact Management

		I would support a ban	I would not support a ban	I am Unsure	Total	
Question 4	Would you support a ban on the use of neonicotinoids in Canada?	BC	98	13	39	150
			65%	9%	26%	
		AB	83	9	36	128
			65%	7%	28%	
		ON	297	43	92	432
			69%	10%	21%	
		QC	130	25	55	210
	62%	12%	26%			
	Total	608	90	222	920	
		66%	10%	24%		
Question 5	If the Canadian federal government does not act to ban neonicotinoids, would you support a ban by your provincial government?	BC	93	1	4	98
			95%	1%	4%	
		AB	80	0	2	82
			98%	0%	2%	
		ON	272	6	10	288
			94%	2%	3%	
		QC	113	9	5	127
	89%	7%	4%			
	Total	558	16	21	595	
		94%	3%	4%		



Comparing Responses Between Urban and Rural
Questions 1 to 3

Voter Contact Management

		I was aware	I was not aware	Total	
Question 1	Are you aware that we rely on honey bees to pollinate fruit and vegetable crops?	Urban	488	99	587
			83%	17%	
		Rural	394	54	448
			88%	12%	
Total	882	153	1035		
		85%	15%		
Question 2	Are you aware that in recent years beekeepers have suffered an unusual amount of bee kills which are threatening honey bees and other pollinating insects in Canada and the world?	Urban	425	118	543
			78%	22%	
		Rural	338	85	423
			80%	20%	
Total	763	203	966		
		79%	21%		
Question 3	Were you aware that scientists have linked the use of certain pesticides, called neonicotinoids, with the severe decline of Canada's bee population, and that these pesticides have been banned in Europe?	Urban	259	272	531
			49%	51%	
		Rural	209	201	410
			51%	49%	
Total	468	473	941		
		50%	50%		



**Comparing Responses Between Urban and Rural
Questions 4 & 5**

Voter Contact Management

		I would support a ban	I would not support a ban	I am Unsure	Total	
Question 4	Would you support a ban on the use of neonicotinoids in Canada?	Urban	349	49	123	521
			67%	9%	24%	
		Rural	259	41	99	399
			65%	10%	25%	
Total	608	90	222	920		
		66%	10%	24%		
Question 5	If the Canadian federal government does not act to ban neonicotinoids, would you support a ban by your provincial government?		I would support a ban	I would not support a ban	I am Unsure	
		Urban	317	9	12	338
			94%	3%	4%	
		Rural	241	7	9	257
			94%	3%	4%	
Total	558	16	21	595		
	94%	3%	4%			