



# Protecting Pollinators on the Farm

Best management practices primer



# Introduction



Bees are vitally important to the sustainability of agriculture.

The estimated value of the contribution of bees to Canadian agriculture is over \$3 billion.<sup>1</sup>



Farmers are well known to be excellent stewards of the land.

Following these Best Management Practices (BMPs) will help maximize the benefits of seed treatments and protect pollinators on the farm.



BMPs are approaches based on science that support healthy crops, healthy bees and a healthy environment.



As with any crop protection product, it is always important to **read and follow all label directions**



# Best management practices – Before planting



## Communication is key

- Learn about bees that may forage on your land
- Know how to contact beekeepers that may be in your area
- Talk to neighbouring beekeepers
  - Discuss alternate locations for hives or ways to shield bees during planting



## Store and handle treated seed properly

- Store seed under suitable conditions
  - Protect seed from the elements and pests
- Wear appropriate personal protective equipment when handling treated seed
- Do not reuse empty seed bags for any other purpose



# Best management practices – Before planting



## Check your machinery and seed

- Clean and maintain planting equipment
- Use high-quality seed that is free of excessive dust
- Do not load or clean planting equipment near bee colonies and avoid places where bees may be foraging, such as flowering crops or weeds
- Check that the planter is set up correctly and calibrated for correct depth and seed placement
- Don't start the planter where emitting dust may come in contact with bee colonies or foraging bees
- Manage dandelions and other flowering weeds in the field before planting to reduce exposure of bees to seed dust.
- Depending on the type of planter, deflectors may be an option to reduce the off-field movement of seed dust generated during planting. Check with your equipment dealer or manufacturer





# Best management practices – During planting



Avoid transfer of dust from the seed bag into the planter



Manage your seed lubricant

- **A dust-reducing agent is the only seed lubricant permitted for use when planting corn and soybean seed with a pneumatic (vacuum) meter planter**
- **Carefully follow use directions for this product**



Plant at the recommended seeding rate



Check for exposed seed, especially in headlands and rough area

- Spilled or exposed seeds and dust must be incorporated into the soil or cleaned-up from the soil surface



Be aware of wind direction when planting near flowering crops or weeds



# Best management practices – After planting



Pour/vacuum treated seed from the seed box and return to the bag from which it came



Dispose of empty seed bags and seed lubricant containers according to provincial regulations



Do not leave empty bags or left-over treated seed in fields

For more details on Best Management Practices, visit us at:



[www.beehealth.ca](http://www.beehealth.ca)

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