



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 \$2 billion
- 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 help 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**

Always read and follow label directions.

Bringing plant potential to life

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