

EPA Approves Pesticide Highly Toxic to Bees

Recently the EPA stated their intention to protect our honeybees. Their declaration to find solutions to the honeybee population decline is now proven to be an empty promise with the approval of the new pesticide called sulfoxaflor. Though the EPA classified this pesticide as being highly toxic to bees, the pesticide has been granted unconditional registration, which means that the pesticide has met certain criteria including, "...that the product will perform its intended function without unreasonable adverse effects on the environment, and that when used in accordance with widespread and commonly recognized practice, the product will not generally cause unreasonable adverse effects on the environment..." For more on conditional and unconditional regulation, see the EPA's Pesticide Registration Manual.

The EPA stated that sulfoxaflor does not demonstrate substantial residual toxicity to exposed bees. They also state that the effects are not "catastrophic effects" expected from the use of sulfoxaflor.

The EPA claims that they have collaborated with the agency's counterparts in Australia and Canada to review 400 studies in order to support its decision. These studies are not currently available in public scientific literature.

In order to address the dangers the insecticide poses to bee populations, the agency approved a reduced application rate and increased the time interval between applications from what the registrant Dow AgroSciences LLC requested.

Sulfoxaflor labels will state, "Do not apply this product at any time between 3 days prior to bloom and until after petal fall." And "Notifying known beekeepers within 1 mile of the

treatment area 48 hours before the product is applied will allow them to take additional steps to protect their bees. Also limiting application to times when managed bees and native pollinators are least active, e.g., before 7 a.m. or after 7 p.m. local time or when temperature is below 55°F at the site of application, will minimize risk to bees.”

So it is up to the ones applying the insecticide to insure bee safety by applying only as indicated and to inform their “known” beekeeper neighbors. And 48 hours is hardly time to insure hives are relocated to safe areas.

For more on Sulfoxaflor Approval check out:

- EPA Approves New Pesticide Highly Toxic to Bees
- Dow AgroSciences Receives U.S. EPA Registration for Sulfoxaflor
- Dow’s Sulfoxaflor OK’d in the U.S.