



27 July 2020

Jenni McLeod  
The Bee Collective  
3 Jervis Street  
SOUTH ARM TAS 7022  
0448 515 867

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Dear Mr Bourke

**Re: Fipronil poisoning #1**

I am writing to you regarding my concern about the recent findings following mass bee deaths in the North of Tasmania.

All registered beekeepers in Tasmania received the correspondence from Biosecurity sent to the TBA Secretary. It is deeply concerning that the source of the bee deaths, attributed to fipronil, has not been identified. You may recall in April last year a beekeeper lost 340 hives in Griffith NSW, also attributed to fipronil.

As a member of the Southern Tasmanian Beekeepers Association, I would like to know the TBA position on fipronil use and what you are doing to prevent further bee deaths such as the ones we have been notified about.

This is important for the future of bees and all pollinators, especially as more people engage in backyard beekeeping.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Warm regards

Jenni McLeod

CC: President Southern Tasmanian Beekeepers Association  
Tasmanian Junior Beekeepers  
Save the Bees Australia



the backyard  
tasmanian beekeepers

ph 0448 515 867  
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# TASMANIAN BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION INC.

[www.tasmanianbeekeepers.org.au](http://www.tasmanianbeekeepers.org.au)

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28/7/2020

Ms Jenni McLeod  
3 Jervis Street  
South Arm. Tas 7022

Dear Ms McLeod,

In reference to your letter regarding bee deaths due to the exposure to the chemical fipronil the incident has been advised to the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA).

The TBA strongly encourage beekeepers to report immediately any suspicious bee deaths to the DPIWE Spray Referral Unit so as all incidents can be reported to the APVMA who have the power to cancel registration of fipronil.

Attached is a letter from Stuart Bowman, Registrar of Chemical Products, DPIWE. This letter is an open letter to landowners to consider the risks associated with insecticidal spray on bees. This letter has been sent to all branches to pass on to members and can be distributed by them to landowners in their area to enable an awareness of the effect spraying chemicals has on the bee populations.

The TBA have been for many years trying to find ways to educate landowners and spraying contractors on the use of chemicals and to spray according to the labels on the products. (e.g. meetings with the TFGA)

This is an ongoing issue and we encourage all bee deaths to be reported, the more information collected the better the issue can be dealt with the APVMA.

Thank you for your concern.

Sincerely,

Lindsay Bourke  
President.

# Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment

BIOSECURITY TASMANIA

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11 June 2020

Dear landowner

Recently, Biosecurity Tasmania (BT) investigated the mass death of bees from apiaries in the north west of Tasmania. The investigation determined that the cause of death was exposure to the chemical fipronil. Bees are particularly sensitive to this chemical and the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) has been advised of the adverse impact that fipronil had on bees in this incident.

Fipronil is an insecticide that is used on various crops in Tasmania. There is also a large number of other chemicals used to control insect pests in agricultural and horticultural production that are known to be toxic to honey bees.

A common cause of bee poisoning is spraying a crop where bees are known to be foraging without first advising the beekeeper. Spray drift that may or may not be associated with a temperature inversion may also cause bee poisoning. This is where a pesticide or other chemical, applied to a crop that is not in flower, has drifted onto a crop where bees are foraging.

The importance of bees in crop pollination must not be underestimated and growers must ensure they take appropriate steps to minimise the risk of inadvertent bee poisonings. If there is an apiary near the property where insecticide is planned to be sprayed and bees are known to be foraging on the crop, the owner of the apiary must be notified to minimise the risk. Beekeepers also have an obligation to notify neighbouring growers when placing their bees at a new location.

'BeeConnected' is an ideal method of keeping both growers and beekeepers in touch with each other. Growers and Beekeepers, within 10km of one another, once registered, will be notified so that they can discuss their activities further using the secure messaging service. Details of the website are provided below.

Spraying during a temperature inversion is not only risky to bees but also other agricultural and horticultural crops when using herbicides. Fine spray particles may drift long distances during an inversion. Information on temperature inversions can be found at the Grain Research and Development Corporation (GRDC) website listed below.

I would like to ask you to consider the risks associated with insecticidal sprays on bees and how the potential for such incidents can be reduced by using 'BeeConnected'.

**Information****Location**

- A collaborative tool for beekeepers, farmers and spray service contractors
- Nation-wide, user-driven smartphone app
- Facilitates best-practice pollinator protection
  
- Requirements for chemical use and applicable law in Tasmania
  
- Process for reporting adverse incidents
- Details of registered chemicals and usage labels
  
- Details of Temperature Inversions

BeeConnected  
[www.beeconnected.org.au](http://www.beeconnected.org.au)

DPIPWE website  
[www.dpipwe.tas.gov.au/agriculture/agvet-chemicals/](http://www.dpipwe.tas.gov.au/agriculture/agvet-chemicals/)

Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA)  
[www.apvma.gov.au](http://www.apvma.gov.au)

GRDC website  
[www.grdc.com.au](http://www.grdc.com.au)