Canola Growers & Beekeepers Fact Sheet

Honey Bees and Canola: Connecting Farmers for Success

What beekeepers want you to know about beekeeping:

- Honey bees can travel up to 12 km from their hive in search of nectar, but more commonly travel 3 km. This means they are exposed to fields in a large radius.
- If honey bee colonies are moved, they need to be relocated a minimum of 3 km away from original location as they may struggle to reorient themselves and return to former location.
- Relocating colonies takes time to organize and may be dependent on certain ideal conditions such as cool weather, darkness, colony size, site accessibility and negotiations with landowners.

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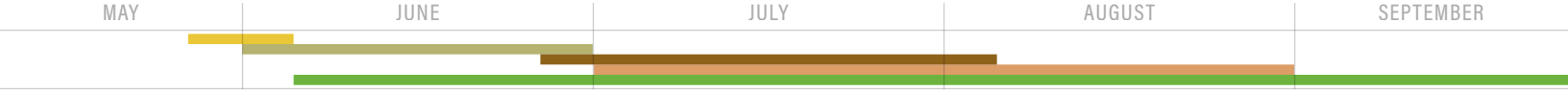
What canola growers want you to know about common canola pests:





Canola pest photos © Canola Council of Canada



FLEA BEETLES (2)

- Susceptible canola growth stages: Up to the four-leaf stage.
- Time of typical insecticide application (if thresholds met): **End of May to early June**

CUTWORMS (2)

- Susceptible canola growth stages: Seedling to rosette.
- Time of typical insecticide application (if thresholds met): **June**

DIAMONDBACK MOTH (2)

- Susceptible canola growth stages: Seedling to ripening.
- Time of typical insecticide application (if thresholds met): **Late June to early August**

LYGUS BUG (2)

- Susceptible canola growth stages: Flowering to ripening.
- Time of typical insecticide application (if thresholds met): **July to August**

GRASSHOPPERS (2)

- Susceptible canola growth stages: Rosette to ripening.
- Time of typical insecticide application (if thresholds met): **Early June to September depending on various factors.**

BEEKEEPER TIP

To avoid potential insecticide spray damage to hives during critical flea beetle windows, delay placing hives in summer yards or along fields where canola is just emerging.

Best Management Practices:

If insecticides are warranted, there are a few simple steps for protecting bees while managing canola pests during the growing season.

COMMUNICATION:
Communication between beekeepers and farmers is crucial. Beekeepers should inform farmers of nearby fields on hive locations as they are placing them.

CONTACT INFORMATION:
The Manitoba Bee Act states that all beekeepers must post a sign with their contact information at any apiary site.

NOTICE:
Giving a beekeeper 48 hours notice before any application can give them enough time to relocate or cover nearby hives as necessary.

PRODUCT CHOICES:
Consider using insecticides with minimal impact on pollinators.

APPLICATION TIMING:
Spraying in the evening is the best thing a farmer can do to protect bees and get the full benefit of the residual effect of the product. If spraying in the evening is not an option, spraying very early in the morning can also reduce exposure to bees as they are most active during the day.

APPLICATION METHODS:
It is important to always read and follow product label instructions, and check pre-harvest intervals when applying an insecticide.

Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership
Manitoba Beekeepers' Association
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Calls to Action:

Beekeepers:

- Inform farmers of nearby fields on hive locations as you are placing them.
- Post your contact information at any apiary sites.

Farmers:

- Keep an eye out for nearby hives.
- Before applying an insecticide, check if it could impact bee health, and if so, take mitigating measures to reduce exposure.

Did You Know?

There are close to **1000 beekeepers in Manitoba** and **115,000 hives.** Commercial beekeepers manage the vast majority (95 percent) of those hives.

Manitoba produces more than **8,500 metric tonnes** (nearly 20 million pounds) of highly prized smooth, water-white honey per year – with a value of **over $50 million**[3].

The managed bee industry (honey bees and leafcutter bees) **contributes up to $150 million** in increased pollination to canola, alfalfa and other crops grown in the province per year.

Over the past ten years, Manitoba has planted over **3.3 million acres** of canola producing an average of **2.9 million metric tonnes.** Manitoba planted **3.3 million acres in 2024**[4].

SOURCES:

1. Manning, R. and J. Boland. 2000. A preliminary investigation into honey bee (Apis mellifera) pollination of canola (Brassica napus cv. Karoo) in Western Australia. Australian Journal of Experimental Agriculture. Vol. 40, No. 3: 439-442
2. Canola Council of Canada. (2015). Canola Insect Scouting Guide. https://www.canolacouncil.org/download/130/agronomy-guides/2558/insect_scouting_guide-2
3. Province of Manitoba. Managed Bees (Honey Bees and Leafcutting Bees). Province of Manitoba – Agriculture. https://www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture/crops/apiary
4. Province of Manitoba. The Manitoba Advantage in Canola. Province of Manitoba – Agriculture. https://www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture/protein/protein-sources/raw-comm/canola.html

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This resource was prepared by the Manitoba Canola Growers and the MB-KRTP.

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