



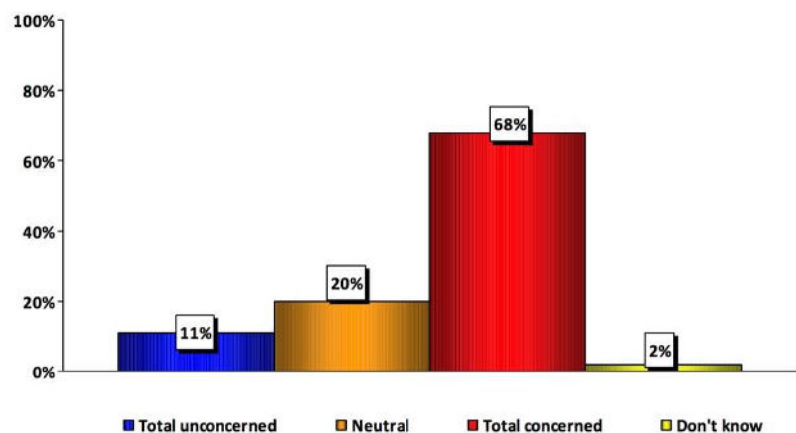
Friends of the Earth
Les Ami(e)s de la Terre

Friends of the Earth National Poll Finds Majority of Canadians believe pesticide exposure most important threat to bees

June 27, 2017, Ottawa – Most Canadians (89%) believe “pesticides” are the most important threat to bees [according to a poll conducted](#) on behalf of Friends of the Earth Canada in May by Oracle Poll Research. Almost eight out of ten believe the loss of suitable floral resources was important (79%). More than six out of ten also cited other threats as important - habitat loss 68%, disease 67%, climate change 66%, and modern intensive agriculture 65%. Friends of the Earth believes that all these threats to bees are very important and are cause for urgent action by all concerned.

In total, 68% of all Canadians surveyed said that they were concerned or very concerned, compared to only 11% not or not at all concerned, while 20% had a neutral opinion (neither concerned nor unconcerned) and 2% were unsure. Total concern was highest in Quebec (76%) and BC (75%), followed by Ontario (66%), Manitoba / Saskatchewan (65%), while lowest in Alberta (60%) and the Maritimes (59%).

Q2. “How concerned are you about the health of honey bees and the conservation of wild, native bees in Canada? Please use a scale from one not at all concerned to five very concerned.”



“We are impressed with the depth of concern for bees from Canadians across all ages and backgrounds and, that people in urban and rural settings share the same levels of concern for bees. But, we do need to help Canadians better understand the importance of wild, native bees,” said Beatrice Olivastrri, CEO, Friends of the Earth Canada. Almost seven out of ten Canadians don’t know that the pollinating role of wild, native bees cannot be replaced by honey bees.

Despite high public concern, Environment Canada has not acted to [protect six wild, native species recommended for protection](#) by the scientists working as the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC).

“In fact, our poll demonstrates more than enough public concern and support for the federal government to act comprehensively to protect all wild, native pollinators. We need to invest in science, policy, and practical measures to protect Canada’s over 855 species of wild, native bees from pesticides, habitat loss and other big threats,” says Ms. Olivastrri. Other countries like the United States and the United Kingdom have national pollinator policies designed to protect bees. Canada does not.



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For more information, contact:

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Friends of the Earth Canada (www.foecanada.org) is the Canadian member of Friends of the Earth International, the world's largest grassroots environmental network campaigning on today's most urgent environmental and social issues.

Reactions to the poll:

"It's encouraging that most Canadians care about bees but disappointing that, so few know about the wonderful diversity of more than 850 species of bees we have in our country" says Laurence Packer, Professor of Biology at York University and author of "Keeping the Bees" and co-author of "Bees, An Up-Close Look at Pollinators Around the World". "Surely everyone should be learning how to help with the two most pressing environmental issues of our time, saving the bees and stopping climate change." *Dr. Laurence Packer contact (416) 736-2100 ext. 66524 xeromelissa@mail.com.*

"Pollinator health is vital to our food security. The production of local fruits and vegetable relies on both wild bee and honey bee pollination. While Ontario Beekeepers have had to carry the cost of replacing thousands of colonies lost to pesticide exposure, this is not the case with wild bees. They simply die out."

Dennis Edell, Director, Ontario Beekeepers' Association deesbeeshoney@gmail.com

"Canadians have enjoyed and continue to enjoy the rich resources our natural environment provides. Pollination by wild bees is a free ecosystem service which allows for the productivity of agricultural crops and wild spaces. The decline of certain native pollinators has shown us we have taken this service for granted for too long. Mitigating known threats to Canadian pollinators is critical to our resilience in our agriculture and ecosystems going forward."

Dr. Sheila Colla, York University (416-841-0516) collasheila@gmail.com

Survey Methodology

All surveys were conducted by telephone using live operators at the Oracle poll call center facility. Interviews were completed between the days of May 14th and May 24th 2017. The margin of error for the total N=2000 sample is $\pm 2.2\%$, 19 times out of 20.