NATIONAL
Varroa Mite Management
PROGRAM

Quick reference spray application guide

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This quick guide has been developed as a reference document for all staff and contractors involved in the application of horticultural sprays to minimise their impact to pollination. For more detailed information on how to manage horticultural sprays during pollination please refer to your pesticide plan, pollination guide or pollination agreement or direct consultation with an agronomist.

Before applying any horticultural sprays, it is important to understand what alternate pollinators are living in and around your crops. Keeping in mind that the management of alternate pollinators requires a year-round management plan.

Basic requirements

- Continually review the types of horticultural sprays used on your farm to ensure that it meets the needs of the beekeeper as well as all your pest control needs
- Communication about the types of horticultural sprays used to ensure all parties are happy with the type of chemicals being used
- Always read and follow the chemical labels, including adjuvants
- Purchase horticultural sprays as early as possible to avoid the need for substitutions with a horticultural spray that may be toxic or harmful to bees
- Maintain accurate spray application records
- Monitor local conditions to ensure minimal horticultural spray impacts to apiary sites
- Be aware of the cumulative effect of the horticultural sprays when mixing with an adjuvant or when using more than one horticultural spray type together
- Ensure all horticultural spray containers and spray application units are stored and cleaned appropriately to reduce the risk of bee access through smell attractant or seeking moisture.

Before Bloom

- Limit the use of horticultural sprays with labels that read “dangerous to bees” or “toxic to bees”
- Ensure any pre-bloom horticultural spray applications that must be done have enough time for the residual times and toxicity levels to have cleared before hives arrive for pollination
- Discuss the timing of your pre bloom horticultural spray applications with your beekeeper to ensure there is no systemic impact on the bees once they arrive on your property
- Notify neighbours a minimum of 14 days prior to hives arriving to reduce the risk of bee death from neighbouring spay programs. The Beeconnected app is highly recommended to enable the sharing of information between growers and beekeepers.

During Bloom

- If horticultural sprays applications must occur due to unforeseen circumstances, communication with the beekeeper must be had to ensure the bees are always kept safe
- Due care to be taken when using fungicides to ensure that there is no impact on the hives
- Surfactants, adjuvants, should be minimally used with fungicides during bloom. Always read the label to ensure bee safety
- Adhere to the agreed notice time discussed with the beekeeper to allow for the movement of hives when necessary
- Water sources should be managed to prevent contamination from horticultural spray applications
- Preventative weed maintenance requiring herbicides to be done around the hive sites has minimal impact on the health of the hives
- Monitor hives and bee activity, if you notice anything unusual or a large number (1 cup) of bees dead at the entrance to the hives, notify your beekeeper immediately and if possible and safe, collect a sample of the dead bees and freeze until your beekeeper comes.

After Bloom

- Revise how successful your pollination and pest and disease control were within your crop
- Discuss outcomes with beekeeper, agronomist and any other interested parties to ensure succeed for the next season
- Talk with your neighbours to make sure they too have finished pollination, before beginning post pollination spray activities.