

## Agricultural Producer Pollinator Protection Best Management Practices

To minimize the impact of crop protection products on managed pollinators, the following practices are recommended. These practices focus on the importance of initiating and maintaining good lines of communication between producers and beekeepers. Note: These practices only apply to those products that pose a potential risk to pollinators as indicated on their labels.

1. Read product labels thoroughly. Check carefully for any language regarding risk to pollinators. This information is often found in the Environmental Hazards section of the label, or for some products, is indicated by the bee hazard icon.
2. Establish an ongoing line of communication with beekeepers with hives on property adjacent to your fields/vineyards/orchards. Pick the media for communicating that fits the people involved. Producers are also urged to use the VDACS online communication tool, just as beekeepers are urged to participate by posting hive locations.
3. If producers are renting land for agricultural production, they should communicate with the landowner about hive locations and obtain contacts for the beekeepers involved.
4. If producers are contracting product applications, they should provide information to commercial applicators regarding known beekeepers and the location of hives that could be impacted by applications.
5. Utilize economic thresholds and other IPM (Integrated Pest Management) practices to determine if crop protection is warranted.
6. If applications are warranted and there is a potential for impact on managed pollinators, please use the procedures listed below.
  - a. When possible, select products with low toxicity to bees, that are repellent to bees, or have short residual activity. Note: Products with short residual activity may result in multiple applications and can therefore increase potential for pollinator exposure. A list of pesticides is available at <https://extension.entm.purdue.edu/publications/E-53.pdf>.
  - b. Notify the beekeeper of the expected application time.
  - c. Abide by spray drift advisories (often found on product labels).
7. When planting seeds treated with insecticides, when possible, utilize alternatives to talc/graphite if alternatives will provide the performance needed to assure accurate seeding. Talc and graphite can cause the insecticide treatment to come off of the seeds during planting creating insecticide-containing dust that can drift onto hives and flowering plants or otherwise be picked up by bees. Talc/graphite alternatives can reduce drift and exposure by bees to insecticides used to treat seeds.