

Agricultural Commercial Applicator 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 apply to only 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. Commercial Applicators should be provided information by the producer and/or the landowner regarding known beekeepers and the location of hives that could be impacted by applications.
3. When possible, establish an ongoing line of communication with beekeepers with hives on property adjacent to fields/vineyards/orchards where the commercial applicator will be making an application. Pick the media for communicating that fits the people involved. Commercial Applicators are also urged to use the VDACS online communication tool, just as beekeepers are encouraged to participate by posting hive locations.
4. Utilize economic thresholds and other IPM (Integrated Pest Management) practices to determine if crop protection is warranted.
5. 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. The applicator will coordinate with the grower/producer to notify the beekeeper of the expected application time.
 - c. Abide by spray drift advisories (often found on product labels).