

March 8, 2013

Good day Your Worship and Councillors:

I have a vision of a future that requires change, but that change will not be possible without your continued support. Over four years ago, I began an epic campaign to change the world and to transform the way people viewed their place in it. This is the fourth time I have written to this Council; and I hope that you will continue to be a part of the change I speak of. I write again of the Honey Bee.

Many people still do not realise how important Honey Bees are to our way of life. This is troubling because Honey Bees are responsible for a third of all food we eat. Honey Bees are responsible for 70 percent of our food crop pollination. They are a keystone species; the very cornerstone to the sustainability of our agriculture and the primary basis of stability for our fragile environment. This issue is ever more severe because Honey Bees continue to die at alarming and catastrophic rates in Canada and in every country where they are raised.

There are many explanations offered to illuminate or shed light on the cause or causes of Honey Bee disappearances; foremost and most sinister among them being irresponsible pesticide use, such as neonicotinoids: clothianidin, thiamethoxam and imidacloprid. This is a matter that is currently both a source of passionately emotional and scientifically paramount debate between Canadian Beekeepers and Federal and Provincial Governments. Yet, the average person continues to be left in the dark regarding these concerns which have direct and profound impact on the health of not only wildlife but all citizens of this country. Bernard Vallat, the Director-General of The World Organisation for Animal Health, warned, that “Bees contribute to global food security, and their extinction would represent a terrible biological disaster.” Indeed, the demise of the Honey Bee would ensure the extinction of thousands of dependant animal and plant species, bring about the collapse of the food chain and guarantee the destruction of sustainable agriculture, our economy and the environment. As Honey Bees continue to perish, this represents a severe threat to the security of our Nation.

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According to the Canadian Honey Council, “The value of honey bees to pollination of crops is estimated at over \$2 billion annually.” The Canadian Association of Professional Apiarists (CAPA) suggests that Canada sustained a national average of honey bee deaths of 29.3 % in 2011. Another source indicates that in 2012 almost 99,000 hives died or became unproductive. This amount of loss is greater than what is considered sustainable. Alarmingly, Honey Bees have been disappearing at percentages considered unsustainable for over a decade. Yet, the average person is largely unaware of this threat or what it represents.

That is why that primary of all known solutions is education, awareness and active governmental participation in a resolution to this crisis. Without understanding that there is a problem, we have seen that the general public will take for granted the severity of this global crisis. It is for this reason that I began my campaign in 2009. While it proudly originated in Saskatoon Saskatchewan, it did not end until it spread from coast to coast and found root in distant countries. I had an inspired dream that if municipal governments across Canada were to be unified by a collective, singular proclamation in dedication to the Honey Bee, that more people, through media attention, would be made aware of their alarming decline... ..And resolve to take more necessary action to save this critically important creature and prevent the permanent loss of color and vitality on our wondrous planet.

Imagine a world without blueberries, apples, oranges, broccoli, herbs, almonds, peaches, pears, and over 90 other food crops! Alternatively, imagine a world where only the rich can afford to eat a grape or a peanut! There are Billions of people around the world that already have difficulty finding nourishment in the meagre food they have. Imagine a world where even the middle-class cannot afford fruits and vegetables... ..the lower class will cease to exist and no one will be privileged enough to donate produce to food banks. The poor will starve and there will be chaos; however, this fate is still preventable. It is not yet too late; and you can be an asset in turning aside my terrible predictions. Inform your citizenry of this crisis and with your authority, call on your Provincial Government and our Federal Government to give answer to our collective appeal.

In 7 provinces across Canada and with the support of over 70 municipal governments, May 29, 2010 was recognised as the first annual “Day of the Honey

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Bee”. It was officially recognised in declaration by three provincial governments – Saskatchewan, Manitoba and British Columbia and recorded in the Legislative Assembly Hansard of Alberta. The Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada suggested, “That the Government (of Canada) follow in the footsteps of the Province of Saskatchewan... ..by proclaiming May 29, 2010 as the National Day of the Honey Bee and that this be reported to the House.” As a result, “Day of the Honey Bee” is currently a Motion in the House of Commons, submitted by Mr. Alex Atamanenko, Member of Parliament for BC Southern Interior, currently serving on the Standing Committee for Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada.

In 2011, this special day was endorsed for a second time by Saskatchewan, Manitoba and British Columbia; and supported by 163 municipal governments across Canada.

In 2012, I once more sent thousands of letters. Last year “Day of the Honey Bee” was again celebrated by three provinces; and 179 municipal governments; while many were issued in perpetuity. The national average of support for “Day of the Honey Bee” is just over 25% of the population of Canada! “Day of the Honey Bee” has even been celebrated in The United Kingdom and Turkey. I dearly hope that this year, that you may add to this amazing success.

Furthermore, because of this amazing support, more people learned about the plight of Honey Bees. All across Canada and abroad, beekeepers, apiarists, beekeeping associations, farmer’s markets, postsecondary institutions, municipal groups and other concerned individuals planned activities and events on May 29th and the week surrounding this date, to educate and inform the public. The potential that this day possesses to stimulate the local economy, farmer’s markets and fairs; and produce revenue for local beekeepers, as well as generate research funding, if given official support by this Council, is as overwhelming as it is undeniable.

Nonetheless, even though more than a quarter of the population of Canada has supported the establishment of this day, I have not been able to gain the same level of success with many other Provincial Governments or the Federal

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Government of Canada. It is my hope that with my words, you may contribute to this continued success with wisdom and the authority your station affords.

And now therefore, I do humbly request:

- (a) That your Worship and Council, on behalf of your citizenry, resolve to proclaim May 29th, 2013 as the fourth annual “Day of the Honey Bee;” and (if bylaw allows) that this proclamation be issued in perpetuity;
- (b) That in the event proclamations are not issued as a matter of policy, that your Worship and Council please consider, for the purposes of educational awareness, making an exemption to that policy in order to greater serve the broader public interest;
- (c) That in the event there is a municipal ban on beekeeping within your influence, that in collaboration with your provincial apiarist and / or local beekeepers and respecting provincial regulations, that your Worship and Council resolve to antiquate this ban and formally sanction “backyard” or hobbyist beekeeping within your jurisdiction;
- (d) That your Worship and Council resolve to endorse the establishment of a recognised “Day of the Honey Bee” by your Provincial Government, by writing a letter of support to your respective Member of the Legislative Assembly, your respective Provincial Minister of Agriculture and your respective Provincial Apiarist.
- (e) That your Worship and Council resolve to endorse the establishment of a recognised “National Day of the Honey Bee” by the Federal Government of Canada, by writing a letter of support to all respective Members of Parliament of your jurisdiction and to Alex Atamanenko, Member of Parliament for BC Southern Interior. alex.atamanenko.a1@parl.gc.ca; atamaa@parl.gc.ca.
- (f) That your Worship and Council resolve to endorse the establishment of a recognised “National Day of the Honey Bee” by the Federal Government of Canada, by writing a letter of support to the Honourable Gerry Ritz, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada:

The Honourable Gerry Ritz
Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
1341 Baseline Road
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0C5

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Fax: 613-773-1081

(g) And that in the event a proclamation, endorsement and or response are issued, that the original be sent to the address and contact information provided in this correspondence below; for the purpose of keeping accurate tally and record; and that if copies of your response are to be sent to apiarists or beekeeper-groups that they be given copies.

By these requests, it is my goal that through collective proclamation, more of the populace will be made aware of the dire threats facing the Honey Bee; not only in your region but your province, across Canada and the world.

I thank you for your time and your considerations,

Sincerely,



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