

April 29, 2014

Good day Your Worship and Councillors:

Over five years ago, I began an ambitious campaign to change the world and to transform the way people viewed their place in it. This is the fifth 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 about the alarming Honey Bee decline in Canada.

Many people have yet to 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 also critical in dairy, beef and pork production. 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 causes of Honey Bee disappearances. The most sinister among them is irresponsible pesticide use, such as neonicotinoids: clothianidin, thiamethoxam and imidacloprid. This matter is currently a source of passionate 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.

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) suggested that Canada sustained a national average of honey bee deaths of 29.3 % in 2011. Another source indicated that in 2012 almost 99,000 hives died or became unproductive. Also according to CAPA, in 2013 the national average of honey bee deaths was 28.6%. This same 2013 report confirms that one Canadian province lost almost half of its bees and no province was shown to have a sustainable loss of 15% or lower. The national loss of honey bees is twice what is considered sustainable. Alarmingly, Honey Bees have been disappearing at

percentages considered unsustainable for over fifteen years. Yet, the populace is largely unaware of this threat or what it truly represents.

The primary of all known solutions to this crisis is education, awareness and proactive government participation. 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 the "Day of the Honey Bee" 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 provinces and municipalities representing over 25% of the country. 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 necessary action to save this critically important creature and prevent a permanent loss of color and vitality in our world. It was further hoped that this support would galvanise the Federal Government to take necessary steps to safeguard this important insect pollinator.

With the support of over 70 municipal governments, May 29, 2010 was recognised as the first annual "Day of the Honey Bee". It was recognised in official declaration by three provinces – Saskatchewan, Manitoba and British Columbia. This important venture was also 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.

In 2011, "Day of the Honey Bee" was endorsed for a second time by Saskatchewan, Manitoba and British Columbia; and supported by 163 municipal governments across Canada. In 2012, this day was celebrated by three provinces; and 179 municipal governments; while many were issued in perpetuity! Last year, almost 200 municipal governments issued a proclamation and this day was an even greater success. Additionally, many municipalities sent letters of endorsement to their Provincial Government and the Federal Government of Canada, calling for a declaration of a new National Day in Canada. In other words, since 2010 there have been 328 municipal governments and 3 provincial governments which have supported "Day of the Honey Bee" – or what represents almost 30% of Canada.

Furthermore, because of this amazing support, more people learned about the plight of Honey Bees. All across Canada, hundreds of activities and events were

planned for May 29th and the week surrounding this date. The potential that this day possesses is undeniable. If given official support by this Council "Day of the Honey Bee" can serve to educate the people, stimulate local economy, farmer's markets and fairs; produce revenue for local beekeepers, as well as generate research funding.

Nonetheless, even though almost a third 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 Government of Canada. However, it is my hope that with my words, you may contribute to this continued success with the wisdom and authority your station affords.

And now therefore, I do humbly request the following:

- (a) That your Worship and Council, on behalf of your citizenry, resolve to proclaim May 29th, 2014 as the fifth annual "Day of the Honey Bee;" and, further, if bylaw allows, that this proclamation be issued in perpetuity (see sample Proclamation below);
- (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 if there is a municipal ban on beekeeping within your influence, that in collaboration with your provincial apiarist and respecting provincial regulations, that your Worship and Council resolve to lift this ban and formally sanction "backyard" or hobbyist beekeeping within your jurisdiction;
- (d) That your Worship and Council resolve to support the establishment of a recognised "Day of the Honey Bee" by your Provincial Government, by writing a letter of endorsement to your respective Member of the Legislative Assembly, and the Minister of Agriculture for your province and your local media (See Form Letter below).
- (e) That your Worship and Council resolve to support a recognised "National Day of the Honey Bee" by the Federal Government of Canada, by writing a letter of endorsement to your respective Members of Parliament, to Alex Atamanenko, Member of Parliament for BC Southern Interior. alex.atamanenko.a1@parl.gc.ca; and the Honourable Gerry Ritz, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (See Form Letter below).
- (f) 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, beekeeper-groups or other parties, that they be given copies.

By these requests, it is my goal that through collective proclamation, more of your citizenry 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,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Clinton Ekdahl', with a stylized, cursive script.

Clinton Shane Ekdahl
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Proclamation
Day of the Honey Bee
May 29, 2014

- Whereas,* Clinton Shane Ekdahl has applied to Council to proclaim May 29, 2014 as Day of the Honey Bee and that this day serves the broader public interest;
- Whereas,* A third of all the food Mankind consumes exists because of the tireless work of Honey Bees and seventy percent of our food crops are pollinated and partially, if not completely, dependent upon this keystone species;
- Whereas,* Honey Bees are disappearing at alarming and unsustainable rates all over the world for reasons not fully explained by science; but with the most likely cause being pesticides;
- Whereas,* Survival of the Honey Bee is surely linked with our own;
- Whereas,* This issue transcends all trivial human barriers of nationality, language, skin color, income, identity, ability, disability, sexuality, gender, religion, age, politics or membership;
- Whereas,* 328 jurisdictions representing almost 30 percent of Canadians have already endeavored to support "Day of the Honey Bee;"
- Now Therefore,* I, _____ Mayor of _____
do hereby declare May 29, 2014 as "Day of the Honey Bee" and in issuing this proclamation, ask our citizens to recognise this day.

Official Municipal Seal.