

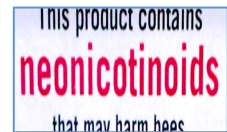
Garden Centers Can Protect Maryland's Pollinators

Managers of garden stores and nurseries can play an important role to protect bee populations on which we all rely for a large part of our food supply!

Bee populations in Maryland and globally have been dying off in massive numbers since at least 2006, threatening a 1/3 of our food supply that relies on pollination. More than 1100 scientific studies indicate that neonicotinoid pesticides – “neonics” – are a major cause of the ongoing bee die-off.



1. **Garden centers are beginning to respond** – phasing out their sales of neonic products – including Lowe’s, and Maryland’s Bhenkes and Cavanos. In addition, BJ’s Wholesale Club and Home Depot are labeling neonic-treated plants so customers can make informed purchases.
2. **“Bee-friendly” plants are often contaminated.** A 2014 study by Friends of the Earth found that just over half of the garden plant samples it tested in 18 US and Canadian cities – sold as “bee-friendly” – were contaminated with neonics.
3. **Nursery and garden store managers can check with their suppliers** as to which plants were treated with neonics in their seed stage and/or sprayed with neonic products later on. Neonics are systemic pesticides. Often the seeds are treated and then the pesticides permeates the entire plant, thereby becoming toxic for bees.
 - **JOIN** Lowe’s garden stores and BJ’s Wholesale Club, which are phasing out all neonic-treated products on their shelves and focus on selling safer alternatives. Many local garden stores are doing the same. **You can too.** Nurseries around the country are asking their suppliers in the meantime to label plants that are treated with neonics – or are neonic-free and bee-friendly. A growing number of customers want to know!
 - More than 1100 scientific studies indicate that neonics are largely to blame for the ongoing bee die-off that is threatening our food supply.
 - The European Union has banned the worst most harmful neonic pesticides. And the US Environmental Protection has declared a moratorium on approving new uses of neonics. Unfortunately, however, EPA’s decision leaves the bulk of neonic pesticide use in place within the USA for several more years.
 - Neonic pesticides also have been found to kill certain birds, such as songbirds, as well as pollinating insects such as butterflies, beetles and wasps.
 - See www.BeeAction.org for a list of neonic pesticides.



Chemical names for neonic pesticides include: Acetamiprid, Clothianidin, Dinotefuran, Imidacloprid, Nitenpyram, Thiamethoxam, Thiocloprid.