

## NEWS RELEASE

### Seed Trade Urges Governments to Base Decisions in Science

**Ottawa Wednesday November 26, 2014** – The Canadian Seed Trade Association (CSTA) is extremely disappointed and concerned that the government of Ontario appears to have completely disregarded science with its recently announced targets for reductions in the use of neonicotinoid treated seed.

At the same time that the government of Ontario was announcing that it will take steps to reduce the number of acres planted with neonicotinoid treated seed, Health Canada's Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) released preliminary results of its bee health monitoring project. PMRA's scientific work found that the number of bee death incidents reported during planting in Canada was down by 70% in 2014 compared to 2013. In Ontario the number of incidents reported during planting was down even further, by 79% in 2014 compared by 2013.

"Seed suppliers and farmers were the first to take decisive action when dust from the planting of treated seed was shown to have a negative impact on bees in Ontario and Quebec," said CSTA President Dave Baute. "The collaboration and commitment was unprecedented. But all of that work and its positive results, as shown in PMRA's assessment, were completely ignored by the government of Ontario with this decision."

Neonicotinoid seed treatments have been a very useful tool for farmers over the last decade. Because the active ingredient is applied directly to the seed and incorporated into the soil, seed treatments reduce the risk of exposure to beneficial insects, targeting only the pests in the soil that can cause up to 30% crop loss. And because the amount of active ingredient introduced into the environment is substantially lower: only 1% of the amount in foliar sprays which were used in the past; seed treatments have a much smaller environmental footprint. The technology also facilitates a no-till, precision agricultural system that protects our fragile soils, reducing erosion, compaction, and loss of nutrients.

"The seed industry and the farmers it serves don't take this 'business' of farming lightly," said Mr. Baute. In fact, it's not just our business; it is our way of life. We live where we work; in the environment that we influence. We carry a heavy responsibility to produce high quality and affordable food for a growing world population in a way that minimizes the risk to nature. We can't do that without using innovative and specialized tools in an environmentally sustainable way. We will continue to trust in the science, and urge our provincial and federal policy makers to do the same."

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**For Information** or to arrange an Interview, please contact the Canadian Seed Trade Association  
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