

BEES ARE DYING; IT'S UP TO US TO SAVE THEM

Last month, 50,000 dead bees were discovered littering a parking lot in Oregon. Then last week, a shocking 37 million bees were reported dead across a single farm in Ontario.

After years of research, scientists have finally figured out what's causing the massive bee die-offs all around the world, from China to the UK: It's a class of dangerous pesticides called neonics. And here's the wildest thing -- **even though we know they're killing the bees, in most parts of the world, neonics are still in widespread use.**

Independent American garden store owners are critical to the fight to stop neonics and save the bees. If you live in the US, your local garden store owner down the street probably sells neonics to your neighbors, who are in turn spraying them on their flowers and poisoning bees all around you. Collectively, **these independent garden stores are the largest single group of commercial pesticide distributors in the world.**

That's why Bonide, one of the largest corporate producers of neonics, is spending a pile of cash to try to buy the trust of these small business people. This August, Bonide is sponsoring the largest gathering of independent garden store owners in the world: The Independent Garden Center Show in Chicago. Bonide's name -- and their spin -- will be everywhere: From the conference program to the exhibit hall.

We can't allow the pesticide industry to have the only voice there. So we came up with a crazy plan: **We want to fly in activist beekeepers who've been watching their bees die for years, and buy them tickets to the conference. They'll take their case directly to the garden center owners** -- talking to them at their booths, distributing scientific research, holding press conferences and more. They'll get the convention buzzing about the dangers of neonics, and convert garden center owners to the side of science, the bees, and our environment.

[Will you chip in \\$4 today to fly beekeepers to Chicago, to fight back against pesticide industry spin at the largest annual gathering of independent garden store owners in the world?](#)

The corporations that make neonics, like Bonide and Bayer, are on the defensive. **Thanks in part to intense grassroots activism, the EU just implemented a trial ban against neonics for the next two years. But we have to keep up the momentum** if we want to save bees worldwide -- and the US is the next key battleground.

The global pesticide industry will do anything to protect its profits -- and as usual, the US is ground zero for corporations trying to ward off regulation at any cost. **Neonics corporations are following the playbook written by Big Tobacco regarding lung cancer and Big Oil on climate change** -- pouring millions into lobbying and fake science to stop decision-makers from taking action. They're pumping out their own industry-backed studies to undermine the work of legitimate scientists, then claiming that there isn't enough conclusive evidence to make a decision -- that we should continue to wait, for years, while the bees die off.

And Big Pesticide is also taking its spin straight to America's independent garden store owners -- because the prospect of these small business owners turning against them is terrifying. That's why Bonide is sponsoring the conference in Chicago -- and it's why we have to make sure the bees' interests are represented in full force. **The best people to speak for the bees are beekeepers themselves.** If together we can raise at least \$30,000, we can bus in a swarm of friendly beekeepers from across the region, buy them conference tickets, put them up in nearby hotels, print flyers and banners for them, and hold a huge press conference. If we raise enough money, we will even be able to fly in activists from Oregon that helped pass the neonics ban there.

As the garden store owners pour into the convention hall, we want them to be met by **this swarm of friendly beekeepers telling their stories.** Once they return home, they'll be as fired up as we are, and will sow the seeds of a national movement to get neonics off the market for good. **If independent garden stores stopped selling the bee-killing pesticides, it would be a huge blow to the neonics industry** and create massive additional momentum for legislation to save the bees. And the best part

of all: Once independent garden stores begin banning neonics, the pressure will double down on major retailers like Home Depot and Lowe's to follow suit.

[Can you donate \\$4 today to bring the bees' plight to the attention of the small business people who are selling neonics in local communities?](#)

The bee die-offs in Oregon and Ontario aren't flukes. This winter, the British Beekeepers Association recorded its worst loss in its history. In China, the situation has gotten so bad that farmers are forced to hand-pollinate their trees. **In the biggest kill yet, a large commercial beekeeper in the United States watched in helpless horror as a mind-boggling 500 million of his bees died ³like crazy² -- 80% of his entire total.**

Neonics are made to be water-soluble, so the vast majority is washed off the seeds in the first rainstorm. Over 90% of the pesticide washes away, to end up in the soil and groundwater, where they will persist for years -- the pesticides break down incredibly slowly, so that every year the crops are sprayed again, 80% of the pesticide from the previous year is still in the soil. Over the years, the surrounding ground and water continues to get more and more toxic, to the point that the pesticide is working its way up the food chain and killing off birds.

We are reaching the point where our global ecosystem is straining, and the threat to the bees is becoming a threat to all of us. As bees die off, up to a third of the food we consume is threatened, and food prices are already being affected around the world. That's why we have to step up now to get out the truth. Big pesticide companies may be trying to rewrite the record, but **together the SumOfUs community can help cut through the noise and ensure the safety of our ecosystem for future generations.**

[Click here to join with SumOfUs members all over the world to crowdfund a swarm of activist beekeepers to take on the pesticide industry in Chicago.](#)

***** More information:

The New York Times: [Mystery Malady Kills More Bees; Heightening Worry on Farms](#), 28 March, 2013 The New York Times: [2 Studies Point to Common Pesticide as a Culprit in Declining Bee Colonies](#), 29 March 2012

