



In Canada, legislation concerning bees and beekeeping falls under provincial jurisdiction. For this reason, provincial governments maintain apiculture programs involved in the administration of bee legislation and the delivery of extension services.

Federal Involvement in Bees and Beekeeping

There is no specific bee legislation under federal jurisdiction. Regulatory responsibilities are administered by the federal government under various statutes and include:

- Import of bees and bee related products into Canada. The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) in consultation with provinces, determine approved sources from which honeybees can be imported.
- Regulations concerning honey processing and marketing. CFIA administers various statutes and regulations to ensure food safety and quality of honey across the country.
- Registration and use of pesticides and drugs in honeybee colonies for disease control. Health Canada's Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) is responsible for farm chemicals and pesticides. CFIA administers the registration, distribution and usage of veterinary drugs.

Federal non-regulatory involvement in apiculture includes limited support of apiculture research at various facilities and assigned administrative personnel in Ottawa. Much of the regulatory and non-regulatory activities have been administered in consultations with provinces and industry.

Provincial Legislation

Most Canadian provinces have enacted bee legislation whose primary purpose is to assist the beekeeping industry of controlling diseases and pests. Legislation was also required to regulate the movement of colonies across regions and provinces to reduce the risk of disease introduction and spread. Provincial bee legislation was first introduced in the early 1900s to control American Foulbrood disease. Since then, amendments have been applied to the *BC Bee Act* to reflect the conditions under which beekeepers operate their colonies. In January 2015, the provisions of the *BC Bee Act* were repealed and replaced by the *Bee Regulation* under the *Animal Health Act (AHA)*.

The AHA is comprised of provisions and regulations that, when fully implemented, would prevent or significantly reduce the economic impact diseases and pests have on the province's honeybee population. There are sections defining the authority and obligations of the Government in response to the detection of disease and pest, and it identifies obligations of the beekeeper. In order for the Ministry of Agriculture to implement disease control procedures and strategies, it must be able to determine the location and inventory of colonies in any area. For this reason, it is a legislated requirement of all beekeepers to register and their apiary locations.

The AHA allows for the implementation of regulations through permits and orders. Best management practices by beekeepers often meet or exceed the requirements of the AHA.

Conformity to International Agreements

Canada is signatory to the WTO (World Trade Organization) agreement and NAFTA. These agreements include provisions for jurisdictions to address animal and plant health concerns under prescribed rules and standards. The principles applied to these standards are included in the SPS (Sanitary and Phyto-Sanitary) agreement. Even though the international agreements deal with international trade, it is important that provincial legislation abides by the same principles so that regulatory authority can be enacted when justified. Failure to meet the principles of the SPS agreement may result in legal challenges and deprive the province the opportunity to enact regulatory measures.

Municipal Legislation

Municipal and regional authorities may pass Bylaws that regulate the keeping of bees within their jurisdiction. Most often these Bylaws have been introduced to minimize public nuisance and do not address concerns of bee health.

Bylaws restricting the keeping of bees are most often in place in urban areas. Beekeepers, who have duly registered with the BC Ministry of Agriculture as required by the AHA, may still be in violation of local Bylaws. Please note that provincial beekeeper registration data are not shared with other jurisdictions.