PRESS RELEASE

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Groups Call for Protection of Honey Bees on Earth Day

(Washington DC, April 19, 2013) With honey bees suffering a devastating decline as high as 90 percent as Earth Day approaches, national environmental groups, Beyond Pesticides and Center for Food Safety, launch a campaign called **BEE Protective** to support nationwide local action aimed at protecting honey bees and other pollinators from pesticides. Pollinators are a vital part of the environment, a barometer for healthy ecosystems, and critical to the nation's food production system. The campaign launches on Earth Day when people and communities across the country come together to affirm the importance of protecting the environment for a healthy population and economy.

This grassroots campaign is part of a larger effort to protect bees from rapid declines spurred by harmful pesticides and Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD). The launch comes one month after beekeepers, Center for Food Safety, Beyond Pesticides, and Pesticide Action Network North America filed a lawsuit against EPA calling for the suspension of certain neonicotinoid pesticides.

"It is time for us as a community to come together and take action to protect our pollinators from bee-killing pesticides," said Jay Feldman, executive director of Beyond Pesticides. "We are providing the public with the tools needed to make a difference in communities, schools, and homes one landscape at a time —to nurture pollinators and support the essential services they provide."

BEE Protective is releasing a variety of educational materials, including a **BEE Protective Habitat Guide**, providing information on creating native pollinator habitat in communities, eliminating bee-toxic chemicals, and other advocacy tools. The campaign also encourages municipalities, campuses, and homeowners to adopt policies that protect bees and other pollinators from harmful pesticide applications and create pesticide-free refuges for these beneficial organisms. In addition to scientific and regulatory information, **BEE Protective** also includes a model community pollinator resolution and a pollinator protection pledge.

"These toxic chemicals are being used without scrutiny in communities across the country, so much so that we're facing a second Silent Spring. A growing number of concerned citizens are ready to step up to protect bees; this new educational campaign will give them the tools they need to have an impact," said Andrew Kimbrell, executive director of Center for Food Safety.

Pesticides, specifically neonicotinoids, have increasingly been linked to bee declines. These chemicals are used extensively in U.S. agriculture, especially as seed treatment for corn and soybeans. Agriculture is not the only concern however, as pesticide applications in home gardens, city parks, and landscaping are also prime culprits in the proliferation of these harmful chemicals. The systemic residues of these

pesticides not only contaminate pollen, nectar, and the wider environment, but have repeatedly been identified as highly toxic to honey bees.

With one in three bites of food reliant on bees and other species for pollination, the decline of honey bees and other pollinators demands swift action. The groups say that mounting scientific evidence, along with unprecedented annual colony losses at 40 to 90 percent this year, demonstrate the impacts that these pesticides are having on these fragile species. **BEE Protective** supports a shift away from the use of these toxic chemicals and encourages organic methods and sustainable land management practices.

With today's **BEE Protective** launch, the groups urge the public to take action to protect pollinators from the misuse of pesticides that are threatening our environment and our food supply.

See also
Beyond Pesticides' Pollinators and Pesticides
Center for Food Safety
Honey Bee Haven