



Bees Need Our Help!

Most people know how crucial bees are to pollinating many of our flowering plants, trees, and row crops. Many of you even know about declines in Honey Bee and other bee populations. This article is going to highlight the dangers of Neonicotinoid pesticides. I'm talking about pesticides like imidacloprid, also known as Merit. This is a pesticide that works very well for boring insects like Emerald Ash Borer, and sucking insects like Magnolia Scale. But, is very bad for bees if applied to Roses or other flowering plants when bees are present. It's sold in big box stores as Bayer Advanced Tree and Shrub treatment. By the way, I asked Dr. Smitley why Magnolias were not on his flowering plants to avoid using Neonics with, and he said most flower too early in the season. That's good, because I've controlled Magnolia Scale for 4 years with one strong application of Imidacloprid as a soil drench.

I know Neonicotinoid is a mouthful, but if you really want to sound in the know, just call them Neonics, with the accent on the last syllable. I attended a good seminar in January with Dr. David Smitley from MSU, called "Bee Friendly Management Strategies For Arborists". Neonics have been banned in Europe since 2013, and are under review here in the US.



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Most Neonics have been shown to lower the bee immune system's response in a **cumulative** effect. They're also suspected in disrupting bee navigation.

The positive news from Dr. Smitley, is that there is a single, relatively Bee safe Neonic out there called "Tristar", or Acetamaprid. It's available in liquid form.

Let's all be more cognizent of sparing our bees from extra stress in these trying times.