Bees need farms and farms need bees. It’s that simple.

Farms need the pollination services provided by bees to grow up to a third of the crops that we produce. In return, bees need a safe environment in which to do their job.

Farmers should take an active role in protecting pollinators by making informed decisions about pesticide applications and other activities that may adversely affect bees. It starts with opening lines of communication with local beekeepers.

Working together, we can create a healthier environment for all pollinators and help keep agriculture North Carolina’s No. 1 industry.
Timing of Insecticide Applications
The most important way to protect honey bees is to restrict spraying to the times of day when bees are not likely to visit blooms—when plants are not flowering, late evening or during cool temperatures when bees are not active. Making applications late in the day (after 3 p.m., or ideally in the evening) in sensitive areas near hives will help mitigate many risks to bees. Remember: Always follow label directions and make applications when pests reach economic threshold levels.

Notify Ground & Aerial Pesticide Applicators of Hive Location(s)
Inform employees (and/or other contractual parties, including aerial applicators) of all apiary locations on or near the farm.

Wind Direction/Minimize Drift
Make insecticide applications only when winds are blowing away from hives. Select formulations and/or droplet sizes to minimize spray and drift to flowering plants or other sites attractive to bees—for example, ground cover or plants growing along fence rows and roadsides.

Application Notification
Labels of some insecticides known to be toxic to honey bees now state that beekeepers must be notified 48 hours before application. Also note that farmers are required to notify beekeepers of their intent to spray by aerial application when a pesticide labeled as toxic to bees is to be used within one-half mile of a registered apiary.

Pesticide Disposal
Dispose of unwanted pesticides and spray tank residuals safely according to label instructions. Do not contaminate water sources that honey bees may utilize. Farmers and homeowners can dispose of banned, outdated or unwanted pesticides, free of charge, through the N.C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Structural Pest Control and Pesticides Division, Pesticide Disposal Assistance Program. For more information or questions contact them at 919-280-1061.