



LAND STEWARDSHIP PROJECT

LEWISTON OFFICE
180 East Main St, Box 130
Lewiston, MN 55952
507-523-3366

MINNEAPOLIS OFFICE
821 East 35th St, #200
Minneapolis, MN 55407
612-722-6377

MONTEVIDEO OFFICE
117 South 1st St
Montevideo, MN 56265
320-269-2105

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Members of the House Agriculture Finance & Policy Committee,

The Land Stewardship Project's mission is to foster an ethic of stewardship for farmland, promote sustainable agriculture, and develop healthy communities. Our membership is made up of over 4,500 Minnesota households of farmers, rural residents, and residents of cities from Winona to Duluth to Moorhead.

Our farm and food system depend on our pollinator populations. Farmers will be unable to feed our communities or provide economic benefit to our state without stewarding the health of our pollinators. When we care for the soil and our pollinators, we are cultivating vibrant rural communities, healthy microorganisms, clean water, productive crops, a sustainable climate, and resilient land and local economies.

In addition, one of the Land Stewardship Project's greatest priorities is cultivating healthy soil. Our Soil Health Program works with farmers directly to advance adoption of sustainable and regenerative practices. In addition, thousands of LSP members and supporters have come together over the last year to build a strong legislative campaign to win effective policies and meaningful investments into soil health, farmers, and rural communities.

The five principles of soil health are: 1) armor the soil, 2) minimize chemical, physical, and biological disturbance, 3) increase plant diversity, 4) keep living roots in the soil, and 5) integrate livestock.

Minimizing disturbance means limiting chemical application and tillage, as well as ensuring the land has adequate grazing and resting periods.

Finally, many of our farmers who have reduced or eliminated chemical use on their land are experiencing chemical drift that threatens their added value and certification.

Therefore, the Land Stewardship Project strongly supports inclusion of:

- Requiring a written warning on packaging for neonicotinoid-treated seed.
- Banning selling seed treated or coated with neonicotinoids as food, feed, oil, or ethanol feedstock.
- Banning on disposing of seed treated or coated with neonicotinoids in a manner not consistent with the product label, where applicable, or near a drinking water source, creek, stream, river, lake, or other surface water, in compost, or by incineration within a home or other dwelling.

These are important steps forward to addressing our dwindling pollinator populations, countless Minnesota households without adequate drinking water, and degrading topsoil. However, we strongly encourage adding provisions that would:

- Enact a state-wide chlorpyrifos ban.
- Requires rulemaking for the safe and lawful disposal of unwanted or unused pesticide coated or treated seed.

- Raise the dicamba registration fee.
- Continue University of Minnesota research on pollinators with raised pesticide fees, including research on pesticide, parasite, and climate disruption impacts on pollinators.

Our farmer and rural members depend on our leaders, like yourself, to take action. Please support these provisions.

Sincerely,

The Land Stewardship Project Soil Health & Climate Organizing Committee

Contact: Amanda Koehler, LSP Policy Organizer, akoehler@landstewardshipproject.org, 612-400-6355.