

18B.055 COMPENSATION FOR BEES KILLED BY PESTICIDE; APPROPRIATION.

Subdivision 1. **Compensation required.** (a) The commissioner of agriculture must compensate a person for an acute pesticide poisoning resulting in the death of bees or loss of bee colonies owned by the person, provided:

- (1) the person who applied the pesticide cannot be determined;
- (2) the person who applied the pesticide did so in a manner consistent with the pesticide product's label or labeling; or
- (3) the person who applied the pesticide did so in a manner inconsistent with the pesticide product's label or labeling.

(b) Except as provided in this section, the bee owner is entitled to the fair market value of the dead bees and bee colonies losses as determined by the commissioner upon recommendation by academic experts and bee keepers. In any fiscal year, a bee owner must not be compensated for a claim that is less than \$100 or compensated more than \$20,000 for all eligible claims.

Subd. 2. **Applicator responsible.** In the event a person applies a pesticide in a manner inconsistent with the pesticide product's label or labeling requirements as approved by the commissioner and is determined to have caused the acute pesticide poisoning of bees, resulting in death or loss of a bee colony kept for commercial purposes, then the person so identified must bear the responsibility of restitution for the value of the bees to the owner. In these cases the commissioner must not provide compensation as provided in this section.

Subd. 3. **Claim form.** The bee owner must file a claim on forms provided by the commissioner and available on the Department of Agriculture's Web site.

Subd. 4. **Determination.** The commissioner must determine whether the death of the bees or loss of bee colonies was caused by an acute pesticide poisoning, whether the pesticide applicator can be determined, and whether the pesticide applicator applied the pesticide product in a manner consistent with the pesticide product's label or labeling.

Subd. 5. **Payments; denial of compensation.** (a) If the commissioner determines the bee death or loss of bee colony was caused by an acute pesticide poisoning and either the pesticide applicator cannot be determined or the pesticide applicator applied the pesticide product in a manner consistent with the pesticide product's label or labeling, the commissioner may award compensation from the pesticide regulatory account. If the pesticide applicator can be determined and the applicator applied the pesticide product in a manner inconsistent with the product's label or labeling, the commissioner may collect a penalty from the pesticide applicator sufficient to compensate the bee owner for the fair market value of the dead bees and bee colonies losses, and must award the money to the bee owner.

(b) If the commissioner denies compensation claimed by a bee owner under this section, the commissioner must issue a written decision based upon the available evidence. The decision must include specification of the facts upon which the decision is based and the conclusions on the material issues of the claim. The commissioner must mail a copy of the decision to the bee owner.

(c) A decision to deny compensation claimed under this section is not subject to the contested case review procedures of chapter 14, but may be reviewed upon a trial de novo in a court in the county where

the loss occurred. The decision of the court may be appealed as in other civil cases. Review in court may be obtained by filing a petition for review with the administrator of the court within 60 days following receipt of a decision under this section. Upon the filing of a petition, the administrator must mail a copy to the commissioner and set a time for hearing within 90 days of the filing.

Subd. 6. **Deduction from payment.** The commissioner must reduce payments made under this section by any compensation received by the bee owner for dead bees and bee colonies losses as proceeds from an insurance policy or from another source.

Subd. 7. **Appropriation.** The amount necessary to pay claims under this section, not to exceed \$150,000 per fiscal year, is appropriated from the pesticide regulatory account in section 18B.05.

History: 2014 c 312 art 13 s 11