

Resolution NO. 1:

Requesting USDA to Establish a Task Force on Africanized Honey Bees

Africanization of feral honey bee colonies is occurring as confirmed by recent findings in south Florida, the Northeast U.S., the New Orleans area and a host of other areas in the U.S. The threat to agricultural pollination, to public safety and harm to pets and livestock increases accordingly.

Natural expansion and accidental transportation of the Africanized honey bee, *Apis mellifera scutellata* (AHB), is becoming a nationwide issue and no longer a regional one, which makes it more difficult to study, to plan strategy and to disseminate factual information to those in need.

Therefore, at its annual meeting on January 10, 2007, the Apiary Inspectors of America (AIA) requests USDA to organize a working task force to meet at least annually and as needed otherwise to address concerns in AHB research, health and public concerns, regulatory issues and other related matters. Such a group would serve to unify industry, regulatory and public entities while acting as an advisory group on all AHB issues. Members could include but not be limited to representatives of USDA agencies, Regional and National Plant Boards, industry delegates, AIA, National Association of State Departments of Agriculture and universities.

Audience:

To: Secretary of Agriculture
David Hackett

Copy: NASDA
National Plant Board and Regional Plant Boards
American Honey Producers Association
American Beekeepers Federation
Other industry organizations
AIA member states

Resolution NO. 2:

Requesting a National Survey for Exotic Honey Bee Pests

USDA/APHIS/PPQ-VS is receiving more petitions from foreign countries to export packaged honey bees and queens to the United States. In order to protect the U.S. beekeeping industry from the introduction of exotic pests, especially *Tropilaelaps clareae*, *Nosema cerana*, *Apis mellifera capensis*, other *Varroa* species as well as other species of pests not yet found in the U.S. a national survey is justified. Of particular concern is a petition from Germany where *Nosema cerana* is known to exist and is near Spain where extensive losses to honey bee colonies has occurred.

Such a survey is also needed to help create foreign markets for U.S. honey bees and expedite exportation of honey bees.

Therefore, the Apiary Inspectors of America (AIA) at its annual meeting on January 10, 2007, requests USDA/APHIS/PPQ-VS to fund and implement a national survey for exotic pests as soon as possible. Such is necessary to establish a baseline on which scientific decisions can be made to allow the safe importation and exportation of honey bees.

Be it further resolved that AIA go on record thanking Wayne Wehling and Colin Stewart of USDA/APHIS/PPQ for efforts put forth in drafting and submitting a protocol and budget to be considered for such a survey. AIA also encourages all states to participate in such a survey with in-kind service and other matching funds as affordable.

Audience:

To: Secretary of Agriculture
Ric Dunkle

Copy: Regional Plant Boards
National Plant Board
American Honey Producers Association
American Beekeeping Federation
Other industry organizations
AIA member states

Resolution: No. 3

New Standard definition for Africanized Honey Bees

During the last two years the African honey bee (AHB) has been detected extensively in south Florida, southern Arkansas and Louisiana and recently in the New Orleans area and as well as other parts of the United States. Stinging incidents involving humans, pets and livestock are increasing and public concern is at high levels. Legal issues, both civil and regulatory, are dictating that a legal definition of Africanization be established on which sound legal decisions can be made.

Currently, USDA standards for identification of AHB define Africanization as occurring when a 90% probability is reached using USDA-ID testing. However, phenotypic characteristics, especially aggressiveness, may be manifested at lower probability levels. Regulators especially need an official USDA-ID protocol of testing to declare a sample as Africanized at a 50% level of hybridization in order to address public safety concerns and on which regulatory programs and action plans can be based.

Therefore, the Apiary Inspectors of America (AIA) at its annual meeting on January 10, 2007, requests the National Plant Board through the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture to request USDA-ARS to redefine Africanization to meet the needs of the regulatory and legal communities. Such request includes the study of new methods as needed for faster identification in the field and laboratory. Genome studies, volatile chemical markers, ELISA testing and other methods as technological advances are made should be considered. Methods now being used were developed some 20 years ago. With new technology, such as single nucleotide polymorphism (SNP chip), easily attainable and with public safety needs now better determined, methods of AHB identification must be updated to meet these challenges and produce results in the field or laboratory within 24 hours to meet emergency management needs.

Audience:

To: Regional Plant Boards
National Plant Board

Copy: AIA member states
David Hackett
Secretary of Agriculture

Discussion: do we name specific places or regions? Left them out.

Audiences:

National Plant Board, USDA, NASDA

Resolution: No. 4

Development of a Harmonization Plan among states to allow movement and certification of honey bees being transported as European.

The spread of the Africanized honey bee, *Apis mellifera scutellata* (AHB), both naturally and man assisted, poses threats to the public safety and bee industry's ability to remain viable to pollinate agricultural crops in the United States. As such it dictates that states work in unity to develop actions plans and certification plans to facilitate interstate movement of colonies for pollination and the sale of packages honey bees and queens.

Therefore, the Apiary Inspectors of American (AIA) at its annual meeting on January 10, 2007, recommends that a harmonization plan be developed among states through AIA and/or the National Plant Board to manage the movement of honey bees under a voluntary compliance program for states in agreement. Such a plan would specify protocols necessary to certify honey bees as European and offer guidance for states to adopt laws and regulations for uniformity.

Be it further resolved that AIA ask USDA/APHIS and/or USDA/ARS to provide support of such a program by providing identification of samples after and approved FABIS protocol or other approved screening method has been done at the state level. AIA further requests that USDA adopt a policy to support the states in this endeavor. Be it further resolved that USDA/APHIS provide funds as grants to facilitate sampling and screening as needed in states not having a regulatory program budgeted.

Audience:

To: National Plant Board
Secretary of Agriculture
David Hackett
Ric Dunkle
AIA member states

Copy: National Beekeeping Organizations
Regional Plant Boards