PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

Most beekeepers in the southern part of the state waited patiently for the tallow flow to start but record cool temperatures delayed the nectar flow until late May. There was more than enough moisture for a good nectar flow and honey crop. Honey prices are stable, so hopefully the trend will continue through harvest time.

LBA and honeybee research committee members held a meeting the end of May to discuss this fall’s 17th annual Field Day at the Baton Rouge Lab. The event will be held on Saturday, October 19, 2013. Each year’s event brings more people out to the lab for the latest information on honeybees and beekeeping. With the increased interest in beekeeping, we expect another large crowd this year.

The LBA also held a board meeting to discuss the Field Day and arrangements for our 2013 state convention. The 2013 convention will be held in Covington, Louisiana on the first Friday and Saturday in December. Your assistance on suggestions for speakers and topics is important to us, so please contact a Board member if you have ideas.

The American Honey Producers have just returned from Washington D.C. after a week of pushing for passage of the 2013 Farm Bill. In 2012 when the House could not pass the Farm Bill, Congress extended the 2008 Farm Bill through 2012 with no funding. This meant that Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP) and for honeybee research was not funded. Basically the “Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008” authorized up to $50 million in a calendar year for ELAP. Assistance would go to eligible producers of livestock, honeybees and farm-raised fish that sustain losses due to disease and/or adverse weather or other conditions but the funding promised in the 2008 Act was not provided. Read the article from “Politico” in this issue of our newsletter for an explanation.

Additional funds are requested for honeybee research, the marketing loan program, CRP (Conservation Reserve Program), and NIFA (National Institute of Food and Agriculture) research funding to include specialty crop pollinators.

Much needed pesticide research is going to begin in Baton Rouge in June in collaboration with the lab in Stoneville, Mississippi. Pesticide issues have been considered a major part of Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD) losses in this country as certain pesticides have been banned in Europe due to pollinator mortality.

The LBA continues to promote our “Member Get a Member Campaign.” Please refer those interested in membership in the LBA to our labeekeepers.org website, where they can join through PayPal or by submitting an application and fee.

Joe Sanroma, President
Louisiana Beekeepers Association Inc.

Honey Bees and Beekeeping, a Legacy of Service to Louisiana Agriculture.
OUR BATON ROUGE HONEY BEE LAB

The Honey Bee Breeding, Genetics and Physiology Laboratory in Baton Rouge is part of the Agricultural Research Service (ARS) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). The mission of USDA-ARS is to develop means to solve agricultural problems of broad scope and of high national priority. Through fundamental and applied research, ARS tries to ensure continuity of an adequate supply of high quality food and fiber products to meet the needs of the American people and to provide products for worldwide export. Honey bees fill a unique position in contemporary U.S. agriculture. They pollinate more than 90 food, fiber and seed crops valued at $9 billion annually. In addition, the small but vigorous beekeeping industry produces honey, beeswax and other products for direct consumer use. Beekeeping also is a hobby for more than 100,000 people in the United States.

The mission of the Honey Bee Breeding, Genetics and Physiology Research Unit is directly related to improving honey bee stock and honey bee management. This broad mission includes components related to problems caused by varroa mites, tracheal mites, nosema and small hive beetles. The devastating problems caused by varroa mites and the serious problems caused by tracheal mites are targeted as the most critical. Scientists are engaged in breeding and testing honey bees for resistance to mites, evaluating mite-bee interactions to better describe breeding criteria, and evaluate stock production processes to explore and solve stock problems caused by mites.

For the past 16 years Louisiana beekeepers and USDA laboratory personnel have partnered to bring beekeeper to our Baton Rouge facility for a Field Day. Each year the number of beekeepers that attend the event has grown. In 2012 a total of 254 individuals joined us for this all-day event.

The following press release provides information on the 2013 Field Day, which will be held October 19, 2013. Additional details on program activities will be posted in upcoming LBA newsletters. Please join us!

17th ANNUAL FIELD DAY AT THE USDA HONEY BEE LAB IN BATON ROUGE

The USDA Honey Bee Breeding, Genetics and Physiology Laboratory and the Louisiana State Beekeepers Association will hold the 17th Annual Field Day on Saturday, October 19, 2013. The event will be held at the laboratory, located at 1157 Ben Hur Rd. This is near the intersection of Nicholson Drive (Hwy 30) and Brightside Dr., which is about two miles south of the LSU football stadium.

Gates will open at 9:30 a.m.; activities are scheduled from 10:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. A nonrefundable pre-registration fee of $25.00 is required for attendees 12 years of age and above. Children eleven and under must stay with their parents at all times. You must pre-register by October 1, 2013. You may register on-line at labeekeepers.org and pay through PayPal or credit card or you may mail your registration form that is located on the labeekeepers.org web site and your check payable to the Louisiana Beekeepers Association to: David Ferguson, P.O. Box 716, Brusly, LA 70719. If you do not pre-register by October 1, 2013, the cost will be $30.00 per person.

The registration fee covers expenses including coffee, pastries and a great-catered lunch that includes Bar B Q Chicken Leg Quarters, Smoked Sausage, Jambalaya (Chicken, Pork, & Sausage), Red Beans and Ham over White Rice, Garden Salad with choice of 4 Dressings, Fresh Baked Honey Wheat Rolls, Mixed Emotions Pudding and Coke Products.

The Field Day will include activities for beginners, intermediate and more experienced beekeepers. The new intermediate beekeeping course was a hit last year and it will be offered again with a variety of workshops focused on the beekeeper with a moderate amount of experience that is now ready to take it to the next level! There will be a variety of workshops geared to more experienced beekeepers, i.e., queen rearing, breeding and selection, and a new instrumental insemination workshop. There also will be workshops showcasing the USDA laboratory’s research.

For additional information please contact Beth Holloway (225-767-9288), Sandra Hineman (225-767-9280) or Joe Sanroma (318-346-2805). May News Release by Margaret Prell, LBA Secretary, 985-863-3641.
BEES BRING NEW BUZZ TO CAPITAL HILL

David Rogers, POLITICO, May 13, 2013

Can the farm bill help save the bees? Can the bees help save the farm bill from itself?

It’s an only-in-Washington drama that opens Tuesday and Wednesday as the Senate and House agriculture committees mark up their new five-year plans, which are worth tens of billions of dollars to American farmers over the next decade.

The powerful crop insurance industry and old-line commodity lobbies like rice, cotton and corn will be at the table defending their share. But the big newcomer is the bee, which has been disappearing in record numbers and become a symbol of much that is haywire in the current system.

Indeed, the number of honeybee colonies in the U.S. fell by nearly a third this past winter according to government data released last week. That’s a big jump from the prior winter and the latest evidence of a steady decline that recently led Europe to impose new pesticide restrictions — alarming corporations like Germany’s Bayer AG with major operations in the U.S.

Native American bees as well as the honeybee — more often used in managed pollination — are affected, and the threat to agriculture is real. Billions in annual farm income could be lost given the bee’s importance to scores of specialty crops from tomato and pumpkin patches to fruit trees and California’s almond industry.

Most important politically, the bee’s plight puts a face — or stinger — on long-standing complaints about the insular nature of Washington’s approach to farm policy.

“I consider it one of the world’s very crucial issues, I mean that most sincerely,” said Rep. Alcee Hastings (D-Fla.), that rare combination, a former zoology student with a seat on the House Rules Committee. “If you don’t have no bees, you don’t have no food.”

“If you held a pistol on me, I couldn’t name you a beekeeper,” Hastings told POLITICO. “My interest is if we don’t do something, we’re going to end up with major problems down the road. And I’m also surprised with major agricultural interests, the agribusinesses. I don’t understand their failure to just weigh in on this particular matter.”

Hastings helped raise the alarm in the 2008 farm bill when he used his position on the rules panel to insert language intended to help bees and other pollinators by promoting more forage and authorizing $20 million in annual research.

The forage efforts, led by the Natural Resources Conservation Service, have had some real success. But the dollars and reach of the NRCS are limited. And proponents complain that little of the research money ever materialized even as Washington paid out close to $7 billion last year to help subsidize the premiums charged farmers on their crop insurance.

Those premium subsidies are sure to increase again in the new farm bill. The Congressional Budget Office late Monday released its score of the Senate package showing a nearly $5 billion increase in the crop insurance title, measured against a $2.7 billion cut from the Conservation Reserve Program.

All of which raises the question: Why not cut 1 or 2 percentage points from crop insurance to buy some protection for the farmer’s friend, the bee?
In truth, it’s often the case that the big row-crop producers of corn or cotton, for example, care less about bees. And any tampering with crop insurance is treason in the Agriculture committees. But privately many lawmakers readily admit the subsidies are too high and helping the bee might also help improve the farm bill’s image.

The committees learned the hard way in the previous Congress that they pay a price for living in a bubble and not expanding their political base. Certainly, few agriculture-related issues match the bee crisis in popular culture.

There was the 2008 film “The Happening” with Mark Wahlberg as a Philadelphia science teacher. Ellen Page of “Juno” is a big bee fan. The Pollinator Partnership, a San Francisco-based nonprofit, boasts a Washington lobbyist who lives on a houseboat and a disparate list of backers from Burt’s Bees skincare and Haagen-Dazs ice cream to Bayer itself. The House even has its own CP2C pollinator caucus, which sounds like a character in “Star Wars” — and is almost as eclectic.

Caught in the middle are giants like Bayer. In the past year, its CropScience unit in the U.S. has established its own “bee team” to pull together internal resources. While Bayer’s critics roll their eyes, the company gave away wildflower seeds as part of a past promotion with the Pollinator Partnership. And it relies on bees itself in developing its hybrid canola seed in Canada.

When pressed by POLITICO recently about the bees, House Agriculture Committee Chairman Frank Lucas (R-Okla.) wouldn’t commit to doing anything but didn’t run away. Instead, he waxed eloquent on the alfalfa fields of his boyhood and sent a reporter off to read his floor speech on the 2002 farm bill, when he chaired the conservation subcommittee on the Agriculture panel.

“American farmers and ranchers are the original conservationists of this country,” Lucas boasted then. “The farm bill’s purpose is to assist in providing us with the tools to competitively produce food and fiber. … Congress encourages producers to do so in an environmentally friendly manner.”

The bee’s allies would answer that one such “friendly manner” would be to devote a little less land to corn and leave more buffers in clover, alfalfa or wildflowers. Scientists themselves argue over the greatest cause of the bee’s decline: pesticide use or the rise of the varroa destructor, a parasitic mite that feeds on honeybees. But there’s broad agreement that a better-nourished bee is better able to withstand these threats.

“It’s such a win-win,” said professor May Berenbaum, who heads the Department of Entomology at the University of Illinois at Urbana. “Even the sparring forces in the science community agree that bees are better off if better nourished. The human parallels are obvious. A person who is starving or malnourished is more prone to disease.”

“Pollinators are in trouble and need our help,” said Laurie Davies Adams, executive director of the Pollinator Partnership. Proponents would like to see more wildlife-friendly seed mixtures for farmers for cover crops and an expansion of the NRCS’s efforts by targeting the millions of acres in the CRP as a source of forage for pollinators.

With this in mind, Sen. Heidi Heitkamp (D-N.D.) is promoting an amendment that would put the honeybee — a European import — on equal footing with native American bees.

For the NRCS, the major funding source has been the Environmental Quality Incentives Program. NRCS’s acting director, Jason Weller, told POLITICO there has been a concerted effort to piggyback on water conservation projects, for example, to encourage farmers to plant cover crops that can double as forage for bees.

“We’ve had workshops, and we’re trying to get the word out to the farmers,” Weller said. “Don’t forget to plant for the pollinators.”

Footnote: POLITICO is an American political journalism organization based in Virginia that distributes its content via television, the Internet, newspaper and radio. Its coverage of Washington, D.C., includes the U.S. Congress, lobbying, media and the Presidency.
SENATE AMENDMENT(S) TO THE 2013 FARM BILL

Section 1 – Ensuring Priorities in the Specialty Crop Research Initiative

Amendment Description:

Section 7305 of S. 954 extends the Specialty Crop Research Initiative at USDA. This specialty crop research and extension initiative seeks to address the critical needs of the specialty crop industry by developing and disseminating science-based tools. One of the eligible uses of funds is for efforts to identify and address threats from pests and diseases, including threats to specialty crop pollinators. This amendment ensures that no less than 10% of the funds provided for this program are dedicated to each of the established categories for funding, including for the specialty crop pollinators category. This amendment is consistent with current law.

Amendment Language:

Amend Section 412 of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (7 U.S.C. 7632), by:

1. Striking subsection (h)(1) and replacing with the following:
   a. (1) Mandatory funding for fiscal years 2014 and every year thereafter

   Of the funds made available under subsection (h)(3), the Secretary shall ensure that no less than 10 percent shall be allocated to activities under each of paragraphs (1) through (5) of subsection (b), and that emphasis be placed on mitigating threats to specialty crops associated with managed pollinator health declines.

Section 2 – Pollinator Report

The Secretary shall:

1. produce a report within 180 days of enactment that summarizes all funds expended by the Department over the most recent five years on researching managed pollinator declines, including expenditures by the National Institutes of Food and Agriculture, whether federally conducted or through extension grants, and by the Agricultural Research Service. The report shall specifically identify and list applications for competitive grants for such research over the same period that were either funded or denied funding; and

2. consult with the Secretary of the Interior and the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to produce a report on the impact of pesticides that have been registered, conditionally or otherwise by the Administrator, on populations of honey bees, wild bees and other beneficial pollinators of agricultural crops, ornamental plants, wild plants and other plants. To the extent, in the Administrator's view, scientific studies are inconclusive on the impact of pesticides on honey bee health, or where additional research is needed, the Administrator shall identify those deficiencies and provide recommendations to Congress.

Section 3 – Interagency Task Force on Declining Honey Bee Health & Commercial Beekeeping Industry

There shall be established an interagency task force to assess all federal efforts currently in place to address the serious worldwide decline in honey bee health as well as to assess federal efforts to mitigate commercial threats to the stability of American commercial beekeeper operations, which are essential to ensuring an adequate managed bee supply to pollinate crops in the United States. The task force shall report to Congress annually, beginning no later than nine months from the date of enactment, with an overview of current federal activities and recommendations for improving honey bee health, including recommendations on expanding federal bee health research across agencies, ensuring uniform and effective pesticide application and pesticide enforcement nationally, and improving coordination of activities across federal agencies and with beekeeper and agricultural stakeholders. The task force shall be comprised of officials from at least the United States Department of Agriculture, the United States Environmental Protection Agency, the United States Food and Drug Agency, and the United States Department of Commerce.
USDA & EPA RELEASE NEW REPORT ON HONEY BEE HEALTH

WASHINGTON -- The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) today released a comprehensive scientific report on honey bee health. The report states that there are multiple factors playing a role in honey bee colony declines, including parasites and disease, genetics, poor nutrition and pesticide exposure.

"There is an important link between the health of American agriculture and the health of our honeybees for our country's long term agricultural productivity," said Agriculture Deputy Secretary Kathleen Merrigan. "The forces impacting honeybee health are complex and USDA, our research partners, and key stakeholders will be engaged in addressing this challenge."

"The decline in honey bee health is a complex problem caused by a combination of stressors, and at EPA we are committed to continuing our work with USDA, researchers, beekeepers, growers and the public to address this challenge," said Acting EPA Administrator Bob Perciasepe. "The report we've released today is the product of unprecedented collaboration, and our work in concert must continue. As the report makes clear, we've made significant progress, but there is still much work to be done to protect the honey bee population."

In October 2012, a National Stakeholders Conference on Honey Bee Health, led by federal researchers and managers, along with Pennsylvania State University, was convened to synthesize the current state of knowledge regarding the primary factors that scientists believe have the greatest impact on managed bee health.

Key findings include:

Parasites and Disease Present Risks to Honey Bees:
- The parasitic Varroa mite is recognized as the major factor underlying colony loss in the U.S. and other countries. There is widespread resistance to the chemicals beekeepers use to control mites within the hive. New virus species have been found in the U.S. and several of these have been associated with Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD).

Increased Genetic Diversity is Needed:
- U.S. honeybee colonies need increased genetic diversity. Genetic variation improves bees thermoregulation (the ability to keep body temperature steady even if the surrounding environment is different), disease resistance and worker productivity.
- Honey bee breeding should emphasize traits such as hygienic behavior that confer improved resistance to Varroa mites and diseases (such as American foulbrood).

Poor Nutrition Among Honey Bee Colonies:
- Nutrition has a major impact on individual bee and colony longevity. A nutrition-poor diet can make bees more susceptible to harm from disease and parasites. Bees need better forage and a variety of plants to support colony health.
- Federal and state partners should consider actions affecting land management to maximize available nutritional forage to promote and enhance good bee health and to protect bees by keeping them away from pesticide-treated fields.

There is a Need for Improved Collaboration and Information Sharing:
- Best Management Practices associated with bees and pesticide use, exist, but are not widely or systematically followed by members of the crop-producing industry. There is a need for informed and coordinated communication between growers and beekeepers and effective collaboration between stakeholders on practices to protect bees from pesticides.
- Beekeepers emphasized the need for accurate and timely bee kill incident reporting, monitoring, and enforcement.

Additional Research is Needed to Determine Risks Presented by Pesticides:
- The most pressing pesticide research questions relate to determining actual pesticide exposures and effects of pesticides to bees in the field and the potential for impacts on bee health and productivity of whole honey bee colonies.
Those involved in developing the report include USDA's Office of Pest Management Policy (OPMP), National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA), Agricultural Research Services (ARS), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), National Resource Conversation Service (NRCS) as well as the EPA and Pennsylvania State University. The report will provide important input to the Colony Collapse Disorder Steering Committee, led by the USDA, EPA and the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS).

An estimated one-third of all food and beverages are made possible by pollination, mainly by honey bees. In the United States, pollination contributes to crop production worth $20-30 billion in agricultural production annually. A decline in managed bee colonies puts great pressure on the sectors of agriculture reliant on commercial pollination services. This is evident from reports of shortages of bees available for the pollination of many crops.

The Colony Collapse Steering Committee was formed in response to a sudden and widespread disappearance of adult honey bees from beehives, which first occurred in 2006. The Committee will consider the report's recommendations and update the CCD Action Plan which will outline major priorities to be addressed in the next 5-10 years and serve as a reference document for policy makers, legislators and the public and will help coordinate the federal strategy in response to honey bee losses.


*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: By EPA, Molly Hooven (News Media Only), hooven.molly@epa.gov, Phone: 202-564-2313 or 202-564-4355, and by USDA, Michelle Saghafi (News Media Only), Michelle.Saghafi@oc.usda.gov, Phone: 202-720-6959.

**RESULTS FROM OVERWINTERING SURVEYS**

Here’s a summary of the results below and a link to the survey page, where you can download the excel file, if you want. In addition, as you may be aware, there also was another survey by BeeInformed.org

**Quick Summary of Statistics**

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<tr>
<th>Country-Wide Average Loss</th>
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<tr>
<td>Country-Wide Average Loss (Comercial)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Country-Wide Average Loss (Hobbiest)</td>
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<td>Country-Wide Average Loss for Un-Treated Hives</td>
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<td>Country-Wide Average Loss for Treated Hives</td>
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**Results For Different Treatment Methods**

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<tr>
<td>Country-Wide Average Loss for Api Life Treated Hives</td>
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<td>Country-Wide Average Loss for Mite Away Treated Hives</td>
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<td>Country-Wide Average Loss for Essential Oils Treated Hives</td>
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<td>Country-Wide Average Loss for Oxalic Acid Treated Hives</td>
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<td>Country-Wide Average Loss for Hops Treated Hives</td>
<td>13.87%</td>
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**McCabe Survey:**

http://thistlecreekhoneycompany.appspot.com/BeeSurveyResults.html

**BeeInformed Survey:**

http://beeinformed.org/2013/05/winter-loss-survey-2012-2013/

Preliminary survey results indicate that 31.1% of managed honey bee colonies in the United States were lost during the 2012/2013 winter.
EUROPEAN UNION RESTRICTS NEONICS

Dr. Eric Mussin, University of California Davis, March/April 2013

For many years, beekeepers and environmentally interested individuals have expressed the opinion that the use of neonicotinoid insecticides (“neonics”) have interfered with the ability of honey bees and native bees to conduct their life activities properly. Since laboratory studies have detailed the disruptive effect on those insects, it was suggested that the same things were happening in the field. Unanticipated losses of formerly strong honey bee colonies, and easily observable decreases in bumble bee sightings, correlated well with increased use of neonics.

In Europe, registration and use of various pesticides are based on the “precautionary principle.” Basically, that means that a chemical is rated on its innate toxicity to honey bees and other non-targets, similar to the requirements of the U.S. EPA. Then, a second component enters the equation: likelihood of honey bees and non-targets to become exposed to the toxicant. This second factor is considered by EPA, but not as strongly as it is in Europe. If the sum of the toxicity and likely exposure is large enough, then the European Commission can restrict or prohibit the product’s use. A report published by the European Food Safety Agency (EFSA) concluded that the neonicotinoid pesticides posed a “high acute risk” to pollinators, including honey bees, but that a definitive connection between the chemicals and loss of colonies in the field remained to be established.

The complaint against the neonics was brought to the European Commission a while ago, and the members originally voted that not enough scientific information existed to warrant a ban on the products. In the following appeal, the members voted to allow the Commission to prepare new restrictions concerning the use of the products. The restrictions are intended to accomplish two goals: 1) prevent large-scale environmental contamination by dust from agricultural planting equipment and 2) reduce exposure of honey bees and other flower-visiting insects to residues of neonics in nectars and pollens.

Beginning in December of 2013 or sooner, no more neonic-treated crop seeds will be sold or planted in the E.U. Neonics will be withdrawn from use by the general public. Neonics still may be used on plants that are not attractive to honey bees, or other foraging bee species, as forage plants (such as winter cereals).

What might we expect to see as results from this large-scale experiment? First, if large-scale contamination of the air through which bees are flying, contamination of weeds in agricultural fields, along the borders of the fields, and out in the environment no longer happens, then we would anticipate no longer hearing complaints about honey bees and bee colonies dying shortly after the plantings have taken place. Second, we might anticipate the problems of colony population depletion, sometimes to the point of colony loss, proposed to be due to exposure of bees to residues of neonics in nectars and pollens, would no longer be seen.

However, it is not likely to be that simple. The substantial losses, closely following neonic-coated seed planting, might drop off. But, other colony population problems may not become better for some time. Analyses of residues of pesticides in beeswax, stored pollens, and bees themselves in the U.S. suggest that there are myriad chemicals stored in the hives that are likely to be impacting honey bee physiology negatively already, including a few detections of very low levels of neonics. Since the neonics tend to persist in soil and woody perennials for prolonged periods of time, it is likely that bee exposure at low levels will persist. If the dosage levels of neonics that induce physiological impacts on honey bees are below current levels of detection (LOD), then it will be extremely difficult to determine this effect.

Additionally, removal of neonics from a significant segment of the market suggests that other compounds are likely to be substituted to control pests currently kept subdued by the neonics. Some of the older chemistries that no longer are available were losing their effectiveness against the pests due to selection for resistance, anyway. They are likely to be replaced by newer chemistries that may or may not have detrimental effects on exposed pollinators, including honey bees. The inadequacies in the U.S. to demand definitive, long-term studies on honey bee brood development and adult longevity, following exposure to sub-lethal doses of the compounds, means that we may find things will not be a whole lot better when we removed uses of neonics from our registrations. It will be interesting to watch this experiment unfold from a distance.
IGNORING BEE CRISIS, EPA GREENLIGHTS NEW ‘HIGHLY TOXIC’ PESTICIDE

Despite new findings that prove a heightened crisis in US bee populations and a recent ban in Europe on similar chemical applications, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has approved a “highly toxic” new pesticide. The agency granted sulfoxaflor, a product of the Dow Chemical Company, “unconditional registration” for use on vegetables, fruits, barley, canola, ornamentals, soybeans and wheat, among others, despite the EPA’s own classification as “highly toxic to honey bees.”

The “EPA continues to put industry interests first to exacerbate an already dire pollinator crisis,” writes the group Beyond Pesticides.

According to the Washington Examiner, the EPA’s studies on the chemical’s long-term effect on bees proved to be “inconclusive due to some issues with the study designs” and thus the EPA has proposed simply reducing the amount applied.

New language for the sulfoxaflor labels reads, “Do not apply this product at any time between 3 days prior to bloom and until after petal fall,” during heightened pollinator activity. Further, they approved an additional “advisory pollinator statement”: Notifying known beekeepers within 1 mile of the treatment area 48 hours before the product is applied will allow them to take additional steps to protect their bees. Also limiting application to times when managed bees and native pollinators are least active, e.g., before 7 am or after 7 pm local time or when temperature is below 55°F at the site of application, will minimize risk to bees.

Though the EPA believes this advisory to be “robust” enough to protect pollinators, environmental advocacy groups such as Beyond Pesticides believe such statements “understate the risks to bees” and are unrealistic since systemic pesticides, including sulfoxaflor, “continue to exist in the plant (including pollen and nectar) for longer periods of time...and therefore expose bees to residues longer than suggested.”

In addition to harming bees, sulfoxaflor has been known to cause tumors and carcinomas in mice and rats and has been classified as “suggestive evidence of carcinogenic potential.” Dismissing these concerns, the EPA points to the “need for sulfoxaflor by industry and agriculture groups to control insects no longer being controlled by increasingly ineffective pesticide technologies” proving the ongoing and harmful nature of unsustainable techniques such as pesticide sprays.

Following Europe’s announcement last week that they would suspend the use of bee-harming neonicotinoids in an effort to combat the rampant colony collapse crisis, many hoped the U.S. would announce similar reforms. However, following this week’s announcement, groups say it is clear the EPA will continue to pursue an “irresponsible” and “counterintuitive” agenda in regards to bee health and the environment. The “EPA continues to put industry interests first to exacerbate an already dire pollinator crisis,” writes Beyond Pesticides.

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http://www.commondreams.org/headline/2013/05/09-3


*Excerpts from an article by Lauren McCauley, staff writer, published on Thursday, May 9, 2013 by Common Dreams. Submitted by Pam Caillouet, CABA Member, June 2013.

NEW BEEKEEPING CLUB UNDER CONSIDERATION

The first meeting of the Ruston/Lincoln Parish Beekeepers will be Tuesday, July 16th at 7:00 PM at the LSU Ag Center building, 201 N. Vienna Street, Downtown Ruston across from the Dixie Theater. The meeting will determine if there is interested in forming a club and what experience we have among us. Refreshments are available! For more information call the Ag Center at 318-251-5134 or Tom Faber at 318-251-2319.
THE SMALL HIVE BEETLE

The small hive beetle (*Aethina tumida*) is a beekeeping pest. Endemic to sub-Saharan Africa, the small hive beetle (SHB), was first discovered in the United States in 1996 and has now spread to most states. The movement of colonies infested with SHB by migratory beekeepers in Florida may have been the first evidence of beetles transported to other states. Findings also indicate transport of the beetles in packages.

Internationally, the SHB has spread to Australia, being first identified at Richmond, NSW in 2002. Subsequently it has affected many areas of Queensland and New South Wales. It is speculated that a combination of importing queens from other countries and beekeepers moving their hives has caused the spread.

In Canada, the SHB has been detected in Manitoba (2002 and 2006), Alberta (2006), Québec (2008, 2009), and Ontario (2010). In the Prairie Provinces, measures were taken to control the pest and SHB’s failed to establish a population. It is still to be determined whether SHB has been able to establish a resident population in Ontario or Québec.

The SHB can be a destructive pest of honey bee colonies, causing damage to comb, stored honey and pollen. If a beetle infestation is sufficiently heavy, they may cause bees to abandon their hive. Its absence can also be a marker in the diagnosis of Colony Collapse Disorder for honey bees. The beetles can also be a pest of stored combs, and honey (in the comb) awaiting extraction. Beetle larvae may tunnel through combs of honey, feeding and defecating, causing discoloration and fermentation of the honey.

**Life History:** *Aethina tumida* was previously known only from the sub-Saharan regions of Africa where it has been considered a minor pest of honeybees. The life cycle information is known primarily from studies conducted in South Africa.

The SHB is a member of the family of scavengers or sap beetles. The adult beetle is dark brown to black and about one-half centimeter in length. The adults may live up to 6 months and can be observed almost anywhere in a hive, although they are most often found on the rear portion of the bottom board of a hive. Female beetles lay irregular masses of eggs in cracks or crevices in a hive. The eggs hatch in 2–3 days into white-colored larvae that will grow to 10–11 mm in length. Larvae feed on pollen and honey, damaging combs, and require about 10–16 days to mature. Larvae that are ready to pupate leave the hive and burrow into soil near the hive. The pupation period may last approximately 3–4 weeks. Newly emerged adults seek out hives and females generally mate and begin egg laying about a week after emergence. Hive beetles may have 4–5 generations a year during the warmer seasons.

**Damage to Colonies and Stored Honey:** The primary damage to colonies and stored honey caused by the SHB is through the feeding activity of the larvae. Hives and stored equipment with heavy SHB infestations have been described as a mess. A summary taken from various reports of damage caused by these beetles is listed below.

1. Larvae tunnel through comb with stored honey or pollen, damaging or destroying cappings and comb.
2. Larvae defecate in the honey which becomes discolored from the feces. The activity of the larvae causes fermentation and frothiness in the honey, developing a characteristic odor of decaying oranges.
3. Damage and fermentation cause honey to run out of combs, creating a wet, slimy mess in combs.
4. Heavy infestations and the slim left on the combs will cause bees to abscond from the hive. Some beekeepers have reported the rapid collapse of even strong colonies.

The most effective control against small hive beetle is maintaining colony strength. Coupled with minimizing empty frames of comb, this will all but eliminate the chances of colony failure.

**Prevention:** Prevention is the most effective tactic in controlling the SHB. Chemical controls are available but are of limited use. Good beekeeping management practices in the bee yard and in the honey house are sufficient to contain hive beetle problems in most cases. A combination of cultural and mechanical controls will usually help to maintain beetle infestations within a manageable range.
Keep bee colonies healthy and strong. Reduce stresses from diseases, mite parasitism and other factors. Maintain and propagate bee stocks with hygienic traits that are better able to detect and remove pests and diseased brood. Eliminate, requeen or strengthen weak colonies.

Use caution when combining colonies or exchanging combs and hive bodies because beetles and their eggs can be introduced into other colonies, which can be overwhelmed. Making splits from heavily infested hives can cause a serious outbreak if insufficient numbers of bees remain to protect the hive. Avoid over-supering hives, which increases the area that the bees must patrol.

Maintain a clean apiary and honey house to reduce attraction to beetles. Avoid tossing burr comb onto the ground around hives, which may attract pests. Adult beetles appear to prefer shady locations. If possible, place hives where they receive direct sunlight at least part of the day. Keep hives and frames in good condition. Warped, cracked and rotten hive bodies provide beetles with many places to hide and make them more difficult to detect by bees or beekeepers. When debris is left to accumulate on a bottom board, beetle larvae can complete pupation inside the hive. Regular cleaning or use of screen bottom boards can prevent debris build-up.

Honey that is removed from a colony should be extracted within 1-2 days. Wax cappings are an attractive food for beetles and should be processed quickly or stored in sealed containers. Honey supers can be removed from weak colonies to lessen the territory of combs that the bees must patrol. If not ready for extraction, these supers can be placed on strong colonies, in a manner similar to protecting them from wax moth infestations. However, if small hive beetles or their eggs are present on the combs, the addition of these beetles can be sufficient to cause the strong colony to collapse. Honey supers can be frozen at -12°C (10°F) for 24 hours to kill all stages of beetles before transferring supers to a strong colony. Store all empty supers under conditions of good air circulation of less than 50 percent humidity.

Pollen traps should not be left on heavily infested hives for extended periods. The unprotected pollen can serve as a substantial protein source for beetles as well as a protected breeding site.

Utilize mechanical traps in the hive to reduce the number of adult beetles that can produce eggs, while also reducing the need for pesticides.

Control: The SHB is considered a secondary pest. The beetle is most often found in weak or failing hives and rarely affects strong hives. However, differences in the housecleaning traits of the bees found in S. Africa and the U.S. may mean very different responses to the beetles.

PDB (paradichlorobenzene) has been used for protecting empty stored combs. Coumaphos bee strips (Bayer Corporation) have been approved for use in hives for the control of SHB adults.

There are also several traps currently on the market. The more effective ones are the Beetlejail Baitable, Hood Trap, the Freeman Beetle Trap, the West trap, the Australian, AJ’s Beetle Eater and the Beetle Blaster. All these traps use non-toxic oil to suffocate the beetles.

**Pictures of Small Hive Beetle Adults, Larvae, and Comb Damage**

Pictures provided through wikipedia’s stock files. No other credit was provided.
PLEASE RENEW YOUR LBA MEMBERSHIP!

LBA memberships have almost doubled over the last two years. The LBA is excited about this growth and sincerely appreciates your membership support. If you have not completed and submitted your membership renewal for 2013, please use the membership application at the end of this newsletter and send your renewal to our treasurer as soon as possible. The January issue of our newsletter was your last issue if you allowed your membership to expire. Please don’t delay any longer and renew your LBA membership today.

Please feel free to make additional copies of this Bulletin and provide them to others interested in beekeeping and our organization. Reading the information provided below by our membership chairman will help you join us in our recruiting efforts by participating in our “Member Get A Member Campaign.” Prizes are awarded to the top three recruiters annually! The current campaign begins November 1st, 2012 and ends October 31st, 2013.

There are many challenges facing beekeepers. Our organization provides a voice to Louisiana beekeepers and lets state government know that we are an important part of Louisiana’s agricultural industry. There is strength in numbers, so help us help you through your membership support!

“MEMBER GET A MEMBER CAMPAIGN”

Membership in the Louisiana Beekeepers Association (LBA) is a privilege, but more importantly, an obligation. Louisiana beekeepers can only help themselves and their industry by participating in the dialogue that sets our state’s beekeeping policies. Anchored in a rich tradition of service, the LBA has always promoted a healthy, productive beekeeping industry. This can only be accomplished through a strong state beekeeping organization. To accomplish this we need the help of more beekeepers. Our current membership is growing but still consists of less than 50% of the state’s beekeepers. We have to continue to mobilize if we are to remain an effective voice for all Louisiana beekeepers.

You can help us and help yourself by joining the LBA today. Equally importantly you can recruit other beekeepers to join the LBA! To help increase our membership we are continuing our “MEMBER GET A MEMBER CAMPAIGN.” Simply talk to fellow beekeepers about their participation in their state beekeeping association through membership. In addition, ask their assistance and support in recruiting other LBA members. There is strength in numbers and if the LBA is to be the beekeepers voice we need a large membership.

Our membership application contains a referral blank to be used to list the member that recruited the new member to join the LBA. An award awaits three individuals (1st, 2nd, and 3rd place) that enlist the most new members in 2013. The award will be presented at our annual convention, which will be held in the St. Tammany Parish area the first weekend in December 2013. Please feel free to contact any officer or board member if you need more information on promoting membership in the LBA.

Thank you for your support,

Robert G. Taylor Sr.

LBA Membership Chairman

Rules for the "Member Get A Member Campaign"

1. Each year the contest start date is November 1st, continuing through the next calendar year to the contest end date of October 31st.

2. 1st place: Plaque and $50.00 check. 2nd place: Ribbon and $25.00 check. 3rd place: Ribbon and $10.00 check. The local club in which the first place winner is a member will win a one year associate membership valued at $25.00.

3. The winners will be contacted before the convention by the "Member Get A Member Campaign" chairman in order to see if they will be attending the convention. If they will not be attending, for whatever reason, their award will be sent home with a person of their choice. It is up to the winners to make these arrangements.

4. LBA officers and board members can participate in the contest, but cannot win the contest.
Commercial Business Ads

The Louisiana Beekeepers Association would like to thank all of our sponsors who have placed business advertisements with our organization. We encourage our membership and visitors to our website to consider the fine products and services they offer when selecting a vendor to fulfill their business and/or personal needs.

For all others who would like to advertise in the Bayou Bee Bulletin please submit an annual fee of $25.00 by check payable to the Louisiana Beekeepers Association. Upon receipt your business ad will be included in six issues of our newsletter annually and on our website. Post your fee to LBA Treasurer, Mr. David Ferguson, P. O. Box 716, Brusly, LA 70719.

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Thank you for your support,

Robert G. Taylor Sr.
LBA Membership Chairman

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