

Southern Plant Board

April 10th-13th, 2005

St. Augustine, Florida

Resolution # 7

National Honey Bee Certification

Whereas, the USDA/APHIS is now allowing the importation of honey bee queens and packaged bees from Australia and New Zealand under free trade negotiations and;

Whereas, U.S. beekeepers find certification standards for exporting honey bees to other countries severely restrictive and without a means of certifying them as apparently free of certain non-endemic pests not known to occur in the U.S. because no national survey/certification program exists. Necessary surveys include but are not limited to include pests such as *Tropilaelaps clareae*, Kashmire virus, and other pests/diseases not known to occur in the U.S. Certification/surveys are needed to allow U.S. shipments to other countries not known to have such pests and also to dis-allow shipments from countries known to have them once proven they do not exist in the U. S. and;

Whereas, the Africanized honey bee (*Apis mellifera scutellata*) (AHB), poses a serious threat to the public safety and the viability of the beekeeping industry in the Southern States and;

Whereas, since 2005, 59 of 653 suspicious swarms trapped in Florida and 5 of 39 swarms caught near the Port of Mobile in 2004, have been identified as being Africanized to varying degrees using approved diagnostic tests and;

And whereas, countries in South and Central America will likely request permits to ship honey bees to the U.S., which will be genetically Africanized.

Therefore be it resolved, that the Southern Plant Board at its 2005 annual meeting in St. Augustine, FL hereby requests the following:

- (1) That the USDA/APHIS (PPQ) and/or the USDA/APHIS/VS (VS) fund and initiate a national survey/certification program sufficient to allow U.S. shipments of honey bee queens and packages to foreign countries.
- (2) That PPQ/VS, the Apiary Inspectors of America (AIA) and respective State Departments of Agriculture work cooperatively to develop a plan to accomplish such a certification program, keeping in mind that several states have the infrastructure and knowledge to assist and provide guidance.
- (3) That SPB member states and other states known to have AHB infestations, AIA and PPQ/VS work cooperatively to develop a certification program to certify beekeepers to ship non-AHB queens and packaged bees within the

U.S. and to foreign countries, keeping in mind that AHB infestations must be delimited in the U.S.

- (4) That PPQ/VS not allow commercial shipments from countries where AHB exists, keeping in mind that such shipments will be intended for pollination as established colonies or intended for installation into managed bee equipment as packages or queens and will likely be in proximity to commercial migratory beekeeping operations in the U.S.
- (5) That SPB member states, AIA and USDA/CSREES work cooperatively to develop and implement a uniform AHB Action Plan for the Southern states including Best Management Practices (BMP's), outreach and other activities.

Motion: Tomm Johnson

Seconded by: Gray Haun

Distribution:

Bill Hawks, Under Secretary, USDA

Gus Douglass, Chairman, Animal and Plant Industries Committee, NASDA

Dr. Ron DeHaven, Administrator, USDA-APHIS

Dr. Richard Dunkle, Deputy Administrator, USDA-APHIS-PPQ

Gary Cunningham, Associate Administrator, CSREES

Harry Fulton, President, Apiary Inspectors of America

David Ellingson, President, American Beekeepers Association

Steve Park, President American Honey Producers Association

Southern Plant Board Member States

National Plant Board, Board of Directors