

Southern Plant Board

April 10th – 13th, 2005

St. Augustine, Florida

Resolution # 8

HONEY BEE PEST AND DISEASE RESEARCH

Whereas, the devastation of honey bee colonies by miticidal resistant *Varroa destructor*, with losses approaching 50% in the southeast United States (US), occurring in 2005. Honey bees contribute to the production of 130 marketable crops in the United States and are known to provide \$15 billion to agricultural production through pollination annually. The honey bee is critical to maintaining natural vegetation, transferring pollen between flowers as it collects nectar and:

Whereas, the tracheal mite was discovered in the U.S. in 1985, the Varroa mite in 1987 and the small hive beetle in 2000, all serious pests of honey bees. The Varroa mite is now seriously resistant to the two most reliable products available for use. As a result Varroa mites and the viruses and bacteria it vectors are directly precipitating the dramatic loss of honey bee colonies in the SPB region and the rest of the United States and;

Whereas, California has been the first to experience the impact of honey bee shortages this year in almond production. California almond growers have a current requirement for one million honey bee colonies for pollination. This season, there was approximately a 400,000 colony shortfall. Colonies, still alive, in the south were purchased, leased, rented and transported to California at fees double of 2004 rates. This removed many still viable colonies from our region temporarily or permanently to the potential detriment of SPB States' agricultural pollination needs and;

Whereas, adequate funding is an essential core component to successful research on control measures of the Varroa mite, tracheal mite, small hive beetle, American foulbrood and other pests of honey bees in the southeast United States.

Be It Further Resolved that the SPB further requests NASDA and the USDA/ARS formally request the U.S. Congress to appropriate additional funds for USDA/ARS Honey Bee Research for the fiscal year 2006. Without additional resources devoted to apicultural research, this critical loss of managed honey bee colonies for pollination will very likely persist and/or intensify.

Motion: Richard Gaskella

Seconded by: Bill Dickerson

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

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