

Apiary Inspectors of America 2000 and Continued, 2022

Honey Bee Imports

Author: Revised by 2022 AIA Resolutions Committee

The Apiary Inspectors of America (AIA) appreciates the action taken by USDA-APHIS to protect the United States border from further introduction of honey bee pests and pathogens. For the purpose of this resolution, when the term “honey bee” is used, the authors refer to *Apis mellifera*.

The apiary inspectors are concerned about possible importation of harmful subspecies of honey bees (example, *Apis mellifera scutellata* a.k.a. Africanized Honey Bees) and new pathogens, pests, and parasites (example, Tropiclaelaps mite, Asian Giant Hornet). In the mid-2000s, honey bee colonies from other countries were imported to supplement domestic colonies used for pollination in the United States. While the market for these imported packages is relatively small, the risk of introducing a new honey bee pathogen, is high. Furthermore, an introduced disease or parasite could rapidly spread throughout the continental United States as colonies are moved to pollinate crops. At this time, when United States’ bee losses of 25-35% are attributed to varroa mites, viruses, and other pathogens, it would be irresponsible to introduce a new problem. Because international packages are known to have exceptionally high virus titers, the AIA expresses gratitude that the USDA-APHIS rescinded the invitation to import package bees from abroad.

AIA simultaneously has been working to mitigate the movement of Africanized bees in the United States due to concerns for public safety. AIA is deeply concerned about the potential for importation of Africanized honey bees and other harmful subspecies of honey bees from other countries to have undesirable effects on the honey bee populations in the United States. Once bees move into the United States, they can move freely between the states. Currently, states are saddled with an increased number of stinging incidences due to Africanized bees. Direct importation of Africanized bees and other undesirable species of insects such as the Asian Giant Hornet could increase stinging incidents and other burdens, such as hive slaughter events, on honey bee hives in the United States.

At the annual meeting of the AIA on January 12, 2022, the AIA resolves that:

- 1) USDA-APHIS-PPQ discuss with North American Plant Protection Organization (NAPPO) members, encouraging NAPPO agreement to protect North American beekeeping from the risk of pest, parasite or pathogen introduction into North America. The AIA believes that there is a strong need for NAPPO members to agree to uniform standards on the acceptance of queen bees and packages into NAPPO member states. We strongly encourage APHIS to petition NAPPO partners to allow each State Apiary Inspection Program to review data from a specific country before allowing that country to import bees into the United States.
- 2) USDA-APHIS-PPQ require that countries requesting importation into the United States produce survey data of equivalent rigor to that being conducted by the APHIS and AIA.
- 3) If the above conditions cannot be met, the USDA-APHIS-PPQ continues protecting American agriculture by keeping United States borders closed to honey bee introductions.

Audience: USDA-APHIS PPQ
NASDA

Copies to: Canadian Association of Professional Apiculturists
American Association of Professional Apiculturists
Executive Director, NAPPO, Biological Control Committee
National Plant Board

2022 RESOLUTIONS

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Apiary Inspectors of America 2005 and Continued, 2022

Continuance of the National Honey Bee Survey

Author: *Revised by 2022 AIA Resolutions Committee*

Apiary Inspectors of America (AIA) recognizes and appreciates that since 2009 USDA-APHIS- PPQ has organized and funded the National Honey Bee Survey.

In recent years, tremendous losses of honey bee colonies have been due to a variety of causes including Varroa mites, parasites, viruses and diseases, many of which are introduced. For example, several viral diseases introduced into the United States honey bee populations are vectored by introduced parasites. These events prove that the United States beekeeping industry is vulnerable to exotic pests and pathogens and the USDA should continue measures to prevent the introduction of these maladies. Thus, a continuing survey effort is vital for ensuring the rapid discovery of any novel pest, parasite, or diseases into the already-stressed honey bee population and to adhere to international policy and trade agreements in order to restrict movement of honey bees into the United States.

Be it resolved that the Apiary Inspectors of America at its annual meeting on January 12, 2022, recognizes the importance of a nationwide monitoring program and requests that USDA, both APHIS and ARS, provide a permanent funding source to maintain surveys of honey bee colonies not only for *Tropilaelaps* species, but for virus complexes, *Varroa* species and their variants, other species of honey bees as well as other organisms capable of adversely affecting honey bee health. Such survey should continue to utilize current infrastructure among cooperating state agencies to collect and prepare samples for USDA analysis.

Audience: USDA-APHIS-PPQ
 U.S. Secretary of Agriculture

Copy to: National Plant Board
 Regional Plant Boards
 National Beekeeping Organizations
 Bee Informed Partnership
 NASDA

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Evaluation and registration of pesticides affecting honey bee colonies

Author: *Revised by 2022 AIA Resolutions Committee*

Pesticide residues at chronic and/or sub-lethal levels appear likely to be contributing to colony losses. Concerns identified by the research, regulatory and public communities point to the unknown effects of pesticides, including systemic insecticide, fungicide and herbicide products, on honey bees. Research has identified that risk to honey bees from pesticide activity can be both synergistic and cumulative when bees are exposed to multiple pesticides.

The Apiary Inspectors of America (AIA) exists for the purpose of protecting the health and welfare of honey bee colonies in the United States.

Be it resolved that the AIA, at its annual meeting on Jan 12, 2022, hereby expresses appreciation to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in its efforts on this issue.

Be it further resolved that the AIA requests the EPA continue to develop protocols to assess the risk of pesticide chemistries on honey bees, with particular interest in the potential sub-lethal and synergistic activities of pesticide chemistries under field conditions and take action as needed to understand the activity of pesticides on all life stages of honey bees and to ensure adequate protection of honey bees and other beneficial pollinators in the United States.

Be it further resolved that AIA would like to work cooperatively with the EPA and USDA in an effort to exchange knowledge regarding honey bee health concerns, and in the development of pesticide registration protocols affecting honey bee health.

Audience: USDA-APHIS-PPQ
 EPA
 U.S. Secretary of Agriculture
 Executive Director, North American Plant Protection Organization, Biological Control
 Committee

Copy to: National Plant Board
 Regional Plant Boards
 National Beekeeping Organizations
 Bee Informed Partnership
 Pest Management Regulatory Agency/Health Canada
 National Honey Bee Advisory Board
 AAPCO
 NASDA

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Invasive Vespid Survey Efforts

Author: 2020 AIA Resolutions Committee

Apiary Inspectors of America (AIA) recognizes and appreciates USDA-APHIS-PPQ for its efforts in survey and detection of invasive species.

Tremendous losses of honey bee colonies in recent years have occurred due to variety of causes. Many of the beekeeping industry's most pressing problems are a result of introduced viruses, pests and pathogens into the United States. The United States beekeeping industry is vulnerable to other pests, pathogens and diseases, and the USDA should continue measures to detect and prevent the introduction and spread of organisms into the United States.

During the Fall of 2019, USDA-APHIS-PPQ positively identified a specimen of Mandarin hornet, *Vespa mandarinia* Smith (Family: Vespidae), in Blaine, Whatcom Co., Washington state. *Vespa mandarinia* conducts group raids on colonies of European honey bees, resulting in the complete destruction of the colony. This wasp and other exotic vespids can enter the United States as colonies, or as individuals in soil and wood products, so multiple methods of survey are needed. A continued survey effort is vital for ensuring the rapid discovery of *Vespa mandarinia* and other vespids.

Be it resolved that the AIA at its annual meeting on January 12, 2022, recognizes the importance of the wasp monitoring program and requests that USDA, both APHIS and ARS,

1. Continue to develop and improve suitability models for *V. mandarinia* and other potentially invasive vespids;
2. Expand current monitoring programs funded by the USDA to include multiple survey techniques for detecting both colonies and individual exotic vespids, and;
3. Provide a permanent funding source to maintain surveys for exotic vespids.

Such survey should utilize current infrastructure among cooperating state agencies and be based on suitability models.

Audience: USDA-APHIS-PPQ
 U.S. Secretary of Agriculture

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 Regional Plant Boards
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Conversion of farmland to conservation programs

Author: Pollinator Committee, AIA

The Apiary Inspectors of America (AIA) appreciates the efforts of Farm Bill programs that create pollinator habitat, increase the availability of pollen and nectar, provide nest sites, and create a refuge from pesticides toxic to pollinators.

These programs include the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) and the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). Conservation Reserve Program enrollment reached a height of 35 million acres in 2007 and has declined every year since. Currently, 20.8 million acres are enrolled. Conservation Reserve Program acres have continued their steady decline despite an increase in the cap on enrollment.

Be it resolved that the AIA expresses support for the CRP and EQIP programs. We encourage an increase in the proportion of funding that both programs allocate to creating pollinator habitat.

Be it further resolved that the AIA requests that the USDA make the CRP program more attractive to farmers, through increased rental reimbursements, more flexibility of plant species and management options, and other measures to incentivize participation.

The Apiary Inspectors of America (AIA) supports practices that increase habitat for honey bees and native bees.

Audience: USDA
 U.S. Secretary of Agriculture

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