



News Release

For immediate release

Government of Canada Investing to Keep Bee Industry Buzzing

Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, August 24, 2011 - The Government of Canada is helping the beekeeping industry develop new strategies to respond to a decline in honey bee colony populations. Member of Parliament Kelly Block (Saskatoon-Rosetown-Biggar) announced today on behalf of Agriculture Minister Gerry Ritz an investment of up to nearly \$370,000 to the Saskatchewan Beekeepers' Association.

"Ensuring a more profitable and sustainable future for the bee industry in Saskatchewan will benefit farmers, industry, and the environment," MP Block said. "This project will help farmers and the entire industry increase profitability and find ways to improve pollination of fruits and vegetables to help promote a balanced ecosystem."

This program will evaluate existing disease control methods and adapt these to suit Saskatchewan-specific climatic conditions and beekeeping seasons. Suitable tools will be incorporated in a management program that will reduce colony mortality, increase honey production and improve profitability for beekeepers.

"This money will be used to help with the ongoing battle beekeepers are facing with our ever changing world," said Calvin Parsons, President of the Saskatchewan Beekeepers Association. "This is an opportunity to have significant scientific help with problems we and our honeybees face. Science based answers are what our industry is looking for along with a practical management approach. Research applicable to our climatic conditions will be particularly valuable."

"Bee colony mortality is a serious issue that affects all segments of the agriculture and agri-food sector," said Allen Kuhlmann, Chair of the Agriculture Council of Saskatchewan. "ACS is pleased to be able to work closely with organizations such as the Saskatchewan Beekeepers Association and commit CAAP funding towards challenges that could have serious consequences not only to our sector, but to our food supply and economy as well."

Over the past four years, beekeepers in Saskatchewan have been losing high numbers of honey bee colonies due to disease, pest resistance to treatment methods, and increased demand on honey bee colonies to provide pollination services. This project is part of a continued effort to provide better breeding practices which began through research on disease control methods at the Saskatoon Research Centre long before colony collapse syndrome first came into prominence in 2007.



This project is being funded by the Canadian Agricultural Adaptation Program (CAAP). In Saskatchewan, CAAP is delivered by the Agriculture Council of Saskatchewan (ACS). CAAP is a five-year (2009-2014), \$163-million national initiative that aims to help the Canadian agricultural sector adapt and remain competitive. Eligible CAAP projects could be in areas of traceability, environment, climate change, capacity development, pests and diseases, and more.

The Next Phase of Canada's Economic Action Plan, coupled with other Government of Canada programs and initiatives such as CAAP, continues to help farmers by focusing on creating jobs and strengthening the economy. Investments in new and emerging market opportunities will help build an even stronger agriculture industry and Canadian economy for the future.

For more information on CAAP, please visit www.agr.gc.ca/caap.

To learn more about ACS, please visit www.agcouncil.ca.

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