

Strategy for the Sustainability of the Honey Bee

Risks from Pests, Diseases and Undesirable Species Sub-group Action Plan and Timelines						
Agreed Priority Area	Sub- group Priority Rating (H, M or L)*	Actions	Outcome / Impact	Deadline	Monitoring	Implementation Group Rating (1°, 2°, 3° or 4°)**
Improve disease recognition competency and disease control measures	H	1. More and improved emphasis on disease section of preliminary, intermediate and senior syllabi.	Greater understanding of disease threat and measures of control. Beekeepers become more aware and able to respond to disease challenge. Impact: Beekeepers able to deal with diseases by more scientific methods.	Academic year 2013-2014	Assess exam performance to disease questions in written and practical exams at end of academic year.	1

		2. UBKA and INIB will promote increased sampling of bees to AFBI or with in-house equipment.	Plastic labelled pots supplied to Beekeepers with addressed envelopes for samples sent to AFBI. Impact: Increase sampling.	Spring 2012	AFBI to report on number of samples submitted. AFBI report in December.	
		3. All Associations to consider purchase of basic equipment for disease examination. Training for use. Practical apiary sessions to demonstrate healthy brood, disease inspection, disease control and apiary hygiene.	Acquire microscopes and dissection equipment with publications and visual aids. Impact: Training will show beekeepers that simple and rapid assessment of certain diseases such as Acarine and Nosema can be assessed. Education group to decide competency levels.	Spring 2013	UBKA and INIB to assist. Competency Development Sub-group can assist with training and assessment of proficiency either through senior microscopy exam or adapted intermediate exam.	
Disease Officer	H	Each association will be encouraged to appoint a bee health officer.	Bee Health Officer would promote bee health policies and good health strategies within each association. To be a source of	Autumn 2012	Monitored by all organisations. Up to date list will be maintained by this Sub-group.	1

			<p>sound scientific information and co-ordinate response to disease outbreaks. Job description has been formulated. Training can be assisted by AFBI and NBU.</p>			
Queen Rearing Programme	H	<p>A co-ordinated programme to rear more queen bees in Northern Ireland (NI) using the most experienced beekeepers. This cadre would encourage and support more queen rearers.</p>	<p>Set up a cadre of beekeepers experienced in queen rearing and breeding to increase the number of locally produced queens. Impact: The aim is to reduce the need to import queen bees into NI and thereby reduce the associated disease importation risk.</p>	Summer 2013	<p>Association apiary managers and health officers will be able to monitor the supply of queens to new and existing members.</p>	1
Disease Surveillance	H	<p>1. Cooperation between beekeeping organisations in promotion of biosecurity against exotic diseases, such as EFB, Small Hive Beetle,</p>	<p>Education of beekeepers on the contingency plan in face of a disease outbreak. Disease officers to be targeted initially.</p>	Autumn 2012	<p>Health officers will be given updated disease information and be familiar with contingency plans.</p>	1

		Tropilaelaps and Asian hornet.				
		2. Disease surveys and research into diseases present in NI.	<p>Biosecurity policies for all apiaries.</p> <p>Nosema survey, virus survey and identification of insecticide resistant varroa mites.</p> <p>Impact: Clearer understanding of the disease burden in bees in NI.</p>	Autumn 2012	Queen's University and AFBI. QUB co-ordinating Nosema project. Virus survey under consideration. Sub-group will liaise.	
Registration of beekeepers	H	Voluntary scheme for local beekeepers to join a register so that it is known who has and where hives are in the event of a notifiable disease outbreak. Co-operation required between all organisations.	<p>Registration of beekeepers is a common policy in many countries.</p> <p>BeeBase has attracted very good support but is not applicable to NI. A register would give an essential communication network for</p>	2013	To be confirmed.	2

			beekeepers in NI.			
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* Sub-group rate priority: high, medium or low

** Implementation Group assign rating: 1° - immediate; 2° - mid-term; 3° - long-term; 4° - not proceeding