



*SERVING THE INTERESTS OF THE BEEKEEPERS OF ALBERTA SINCE 1933*

## **ALBERTA BEEKEEPERS**

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June 3, 2009

Dear Beekeepers,

The Alberta Beekeepers Commission supports the Bee Health Research project carried out by Dr. Medhat Nasr. We feel that this project will be a beneficial project to our producers, as there will be hive health assistants helping producers monitor their Varroa mite load this spring and again in the fall. Producers will receive immediate results to their Varroa loads as the bees are being inspected. The hive health assistant will also collect samples of bees to test for Nosema. Nosema levels will be reported in a timely manner for treatments. The Commission's Board believe that beekeepers will be able to maintain healthy and strong colonies with this hands-on training and assistance. Determining Varroa and Nosema levels at critical times of the year should help us foresee elevated levels of disease and possibly identify control failures thus helping producers make corrective actions. In addition to the surveillance program of Varroa and Nosema, Dr. Medhat Nasr will also be screening new products for control of Varroa mites. Thus, the industry will be able to have a sustainable program for pest management.

This program comes at a cost. Each producer will be asked to pay a \$250 dollar fee that is payable to the Alberta Beekeepers Commission. For you this means you will have a bee health assistant come to your operation once this spring and again in the fall. The Commission is also paying an additional fee to support this project. We have also received funding from other companies. This is part of a large research project to help us maintain healthy strong hives. The project was accepted for funding by the Alberta Crop Industry Development Fund based on matching funds by the beekeeping industry.

Alberta Beekeepers Commission negotiated with Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development and the stakeholders to establish this project in response of reported high losses in the last three years. This is a first step in our development of a sustainable healthy industry. It is a voluntary project and we hope you will see the potential benefit from your participation. The bee health is paramount goal for industry sustainability.

**The Alberta Beekeepers Commission**