From the Board's Desk
Research Update

Colin McCaig, Research Committee Chairman

Here it is May already and I imagine that like us at Philpott Honey, you all are extremely busy. I hope that things are going well and all your hives are strong and healthy.

Research is an ongoing process with many people trying to find better and safer chemicals to battle the varroa mite, Nosema Ceranae and American Foulbrood, to name a couple of the big ones. In addition, there is research ongoing to improve foraging crops so that they do not disappear and leave our bees with nothing to live on. This research involves many individuals that dedicate themselves to better our industry.

Dr. Medhat Nasr is one such person. He devotes countless hours to bettering the beekeeping industry. His current project is titled **DEVELOPING A PEST MONITORING SYSTEM WITH EFFECTIVE CONTROL OPTIONS FOR VARROA MITES AND NOSEMA DISEASE IN HONEY BEES.**

The key objectives of this project are:

I. **Develop a honey bee pest monitoring system for Varroa mites and Nosema disease:**

a) Identify and quantify seasonal abundances and distributions of Varroa mites and their resistant strains as well as the new Nosema fungal disease in Alberta.

b) Validation and adaptation of a model for predicting pest population outbreaks and treatment time in Alberta.

c) Develop a web based Interactive Information System with Geographical Information System (GIS) to support the management and control of bee diseases.

d) Study factors affecting winter kill of bee colonies by evaluating currently used beekeeping management systems to identify efficacies of treatments, and optimization of treatments.

II. **Screen and evaluate three new control miticides for controlling existing resistant Varroa mites to add more adequate tools for Varroa mite control options.**

III. **Conduct an outreach educational program**. The outreach educational program includes on farm demonstrations to illustrate and facilitate the implementation of the developed management system.

Dr. Stephan Pernal is continuing his research on Nosema Ceranae and the detection of antibiotic residues in honey. Making our bees healthier and keeping our product free of contaminates is a goal that all beekeepers strive to achieve and can with the work of Dr. Pernal.

Dr. Maya Evenden from the University of Alberta is doing research on red clover. This project is directly addressing a new and devastating problem for Albertan forage seed and honey producers. The goal of the current project is to develop this pheromone into a monitoring

program to detect and predict populations of red clover casebearer (RCC). This will improve the output of red clover and will directly benefit the beekeeping industry.

The total commitment for the Alberta Beekeepers Commission of these three projects is $44,000. That is not, however, the total cost of these projects. Alberta Crop Industry Development Fund, (ACIDF) supports many research projects and has made sure that the Alberta Beekeepers' industry get their fair share. Alan Hall and Doug Walkey deserve our thanks as they go the extra mile to help us with applications and getting our projects passed through their Board. Both Alan and Doug are more than willing to talk on the phone and answer all questions, no matter how trivial. They want to see our industry be as successful as possible and they understand the difficulties in obtaining research dollars. Without their help, we would have the funding support and be in a position of being able to get our projects off the ground. We thank you. And do keep up the great work that you do.

If anyone is interested in looking at the actual research proposals, they are posted on the Alberta Beekeeper website.

Colin McCaig
Research Committee