

Canada, U.S. aligned on collaborative approaches to improving bee health

Ottawa May 21, 2015 - Canada's National Bee Health Roundtable applauds the Obama administration for releasing its practical, solutions-focused *National Strategy to Promote the Health of Honey Bees and Other Pollinators* earlier this week.

"After a comprehensive consultation process, the U.S. Pollinator Health Task Force concluded that addressing bee health challenges will take a collaborative, multi-pronged approach. This is very much aligned with the approach the Bee Health Roundtable (BHRT) is taking here in Canada," says Rod Scarlett, co-chair of the BHRT and executive director of the Canadian Honey Council.

The White House report emphasizes the importance of collaboration when it comes to bee health. The BHRT is itself built on a collaborative model, made up of a wide range of stakeholders, governments and experts all working towards a common goal.

Among the priorities shared by both the White House and the BHRT are: improving nutritional sources for pollinators; mitigating pollinator losses from pests, pathogens, pesticides and other causes; engaging in public education; and improving research and innovation, including the development of new pest control tools for beekeepers.

Bee health is a complex issue that affects a wide range of stakeholders. By working together with all partners who have a stake in this issue, the BHRT is making meaningful progress here in Canada. A number of priority areas outlined in the U.S. report have already been initiated as projects and work is well underway in areas such as public/private partnerships, forage and nutrition research, facilitating access to new hive health products, and the promotion of best management practices.

"Bee health is not an issue that is confined by borders. As such, the BHRT is pleased to see that our priorities align closely with those of our partners in the U.S. and we look forward to exploring further opportunities to collaborate on this important issue with our neighbours to the south," says Scarlett.

"We've seen a lot of engagement from stakeholders on this issue willing to work together to ensure the continued prosperity of the beekeeping industry here in Canada. It's these kind of collaborative approaches that will result in real solutions to bee health challenges," says Scarlett.

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About the Bee Health Roundtable

The Bee Health Roundtable (BHRT) is committed to producing, through inclusive discussion, an increased understanding of the risks involved where agriculture and apiculture intersect, and undertaking timely activities aimed at reducing or eliminating these risks. The group is made up of a cross-section of stakeholders including those from industry, academia, and provincial and federal governments.