



Farm Bill Conference Report, Pollinator-Beneficial Provisions

*Pollinator Partnership Preliminary Analysis*¹

CONSERVATION

Administrative Requirements for Conservation Programs (P. 161)

“(h) ENCOURAGEMENT OF POLLINATOR HABITAT DEVELOPMENT AND PROTECTION.—In carrying out any conservation program administered by the Secretary, the Secretary may, as appropriate, encourage—

“(1) the development of habitat for native and managed pollinators; and

“(2) the use of conservation practices that benefit native and managed pollinators.

Statement of Managers (PP. 64-5):

Despite their value, native pollinators such as bees, butterflies, moths, flies, beetles, bats, or hummingbirds often are under-appreciated in terms of their contributions to the U.S. agricultural sector. Insect-pollinated crops directly contributed \$20,000,000,000 to the United States economy in 2000 alone. The Managers recognize that many native pollinator groups, particularly those important to agriculture, are facing a serious risk of decline as a result of habitat loss, degradation, and fragmentation, among other factors.

The Managers see conservation programs as an important tool for creating, restoring, and enhancing pollinator habitat quantity and quality. The Managers expect the Secretary to encourage, within appropriate conservation programs, measures to benefit pollinators and their habitat, such as using plant species mixes in conservation plantings to provide pollinator food and shelter; establishing field borders, hedgerows, and shelterbelts to provide habitat in proximity to crops; establishing corridors that can expand and connect important pollinator habitat patches; and encouraging related pollinator-friendly production practices. (Section 2708 of Conference substitute)

P2 NOTE: While the Statement of Managers first paragraph talks about native pollinators, the legislative language encompasses both native and managed pollinators, and the second paragraph in the Statement of Managers obviously applies to habitat and practices that can benefit both.

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) (p. 140)

“(3) SPECIAL RULE INVOLVING PAYMENTS FOR FOREGONE INCOME.—

In determining the amount and rate of payments under paragraph (2)(B), the Secretary may accord great significance to a practice that, as determined by the Secretary, promotes—

“(A) residue management;

“(B) nutrient management;

“(C) air quality management;

“(D) invasive species management;

“(E) pollinator habitat;

“(F) animal carcass management technology; or

¹ Page references to legislative language posted at <http://agriculture.house.gov/inside/Legislation/110/FB/Conf/CRIlang.pdf> and Statement of Managers posted at http://agriculture.house.gov/inside/Legislation/110/FB/Conf/statement_of_managers.pdf.

“(G) pest management.”

Review of Conservation Practice Standards (p. 157)

“(B) ensure, to the maximum extent practicable, the completeness and relevance of the standards to local agricultural, forestry, and natural resource needs, including specialty crops, **native and managed pollinators**, bioenergy crop production, forestry, and such other needs as are determined by the Secretary; and...”

RESEARCH

Pollinator Research (PP. 353-4)

“(h) **POLLINATOR PROTECTION.**—

“(1) **RESEARCH AND EXTENSION.**—

“(A) **GRANTS.**—Research and extension grants may be made under this section—

“(i) to survey and collect data on bee colony production and health;

“(ii) to investigate pollinator biology, immunology, ecology, genomics, and bioinformatics;

“(iii) to conduct research on various factors that may be contributing to or associated with colony collapse disorder, and other serious threats to the health of honey bees and other pollinators, including—

“(I) parasites and pathogens of pollinators; and

“(II) the sublethal effects of insecticides, herbicides, and fungicides on honey bees and native and managed pollinators;

“(iv) to develop mitigative and preventative measures to improve native and managed pollinator health; and

“(v) to promote the health of honey bees and native pollinators through habitat conservation and best management practices.

“(B) **AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this paragraph \$10,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2008 through 2012.

“(2) **DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE CAPACITY AND INFRASTRUCTURE.**—

“(A) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary shall, to the maximum extent practicable, increase the capacity and infrastructure of the Department—

“(i) to address colony collapse disorder and other long-term threats to pollinator health, including the hiring of additional personnel; and

“(ii) to conduct research on colony collapse disorder and other pollinator issues at the facilities of the Department.

“(B) **AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this paragraph \$7,250,000 for each of fiscal years 2008 through 2012.

“(3) **HONEY BEE PEST AND PATHOGEN SURVEILLANCE.**—

There is authorized to be appropriated to conduct a nationwide honey bee pest and pathogen surveillance program \$2,750,000 for each of fiscal years 2008 through 2012.

“(4) **ANNUAL REPORT ON RESPONSE TO HONEY BEE COLONY**

COLLAPSE DISORDER.—The Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate an annual report describing the progress made by the Department

of Agriculture in—

“(A) investigating the cause or causes of honey bee colony collapse; and

“(B) finding appropriate strategies to reduce colony loss.

Statement of Managers (PP. 322-3):

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with an amendment to move the research-related items of this provision to the research title of this Act to amend section 1672 of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 5925), and to move the conservation-related item of this provision to the conservation title of this Act.. (Section 7204)

(40) Pollinator protection

The House bill cites this section as the “Pollinator Protection Act of 2007”. It states Congress’ findings regarding the importance of bee pollination to agriculture and the concerns related to colony collapse disorder in the bee population. The provision authorizes appropriations, as follows:

- For the Agricultural Research Service at USDA – \$3 million for each of fiscal years 2008 through 2012 for new personnel, facilities improvement, and additional research at the USDA Bee Research Laboratories; \$2.5 million for each of fiscal years 2008 and 2009 for research on honey and native bee physiology, and other research; and \$1.75 million for each of fiscal years 2008 through 2010.
- For an area-wide research program to identify causes and solutions for colony collapse disorder.
- For the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service – \$10 million to fund grants to investigate honey bee biology, immunology, ecology, genomics, bioinformatics, crop pollination and habitat conservation, the effects of insecticides, herbicides and fungicides, and other research.
- For the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service – \$2.25 million for each of fiscal years 2008 through 2012 to conduct a honey bee pest and pathogen surveillance program.

The House bill requires the Secretary to submit a report to Congress on the status and progress of bee research projects. It amends the Food Security Act of 1985 to require the Secretary, when carrying out a conservation program other than the farmland protection program, to establish a priority and provide incentives for increasing habitat for pollinators and to establish practices to protect native and managed pollinators. (Section 11315)

Specialty Crop Research Initiative (P. 361)

“(b) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established within the Department a specialty crop research and extension initiative to address the critical needs of the specialty crop industry by developing and disseminating science-based tools to address needs of specific crops and their regions, including—

“(1) research in plant breeding, genetics, and genomics to improve crop characteristics, such as—

“(A) product, taste, quality, and appearance;

“(B) environmental responses and tolerances;

“(C) nutrient management, including plant nutrient uptake efficiency;

“(D) pest and disease management, including resistance to pests and diseases resulting in reduced application management strategies; and

“(E) enhanced phytonutrient content;

“(2) efforts to identify and address threats from pests and diseases, including threats to specialty crop pollinators;...

Statement of Managers (P. 191):

The House bill adds a new section, 413, to AREERA that establishes the Specialty Crop Research Initiative to develop and disseminate science-based tools to address the needs of specific crops and their regions, including work in plant breeding and genetics, safety, quality, and yield; efforts to identify and address threats posed by invasive species; marketing; **pollination**; and

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision...

OTHER—HONEY BEES

Apiary Insurance (PP. 508-9)

“(14) APIARY POLICIES.—The Corporation shall offer to enter into a contract with a qualified entity to carry out research and development regarding insurance policies that cover loss of bees.”

Supplemental Disaster Assistance (p. 513)

*“(C) HONEY.—In the case of honey, the term ‘farm’ means, in relation to an eligible producer on a farm, all **bees and beehives** in all counties that are intended to be harvested for a honey crop by the eligible producer.”*

Disaster Assistance (p. 522)

*“(e) EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE FOR LIVESTOCK, **HONEY BEES**, AND FARM-RAISED FISH.—*

*“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall use up to \$50,000,000 per year from the Trust Fund to provide emergency relief to eligible producers of livestock, **honey bees**, and farmraised fish to aid in the reduction of losses due to disease, adverse weather, or other conditions, such as blizzards and wildfires, as determined by the Secretary, that are not covered under subsection (b), (c), or (d).”*

Title IX, Supplemental Ag Disaster Assistance (p. 607)

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Supplemental Disaster Assistance (p. 616)

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Statement of Managers (PP. 337-43)

For the above 4 provisions, SEE explanation of the disaster assistance programs and inclusion of beekeepers in this section.

Excerpts Edited May 14, Tom Van Arsdall, Pollinator Partnership