

For Further Information on this Statement, Contact:
Laurie Davies Adams, Executive Director, Pollinator Partnership
lda@pollinator.org or (415) 362-1137

May 8, 2009—via E-mail

The Honorable Herb Kohl, Chair
The Honorable Sam Brownback, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration,
and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

RE: Request for \$20 Million in FY10 Allocation to USDA for Pollinator Research

Dear Chairman Kohl and Ranking Member Brownback:

The undersigned organizations urge the Subcommittee and the Committee to allocate \$20 million in Fiscal Year 2010 to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to implement the new pollinator research provision authorized in the 2008 farm bill.

Honey bees are at serious risk. Today, Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD), a host of other pests and pathogens, climate change, habitat loss and other threats to the health and population of honey bees and other pollinators in North America could jeopardize the integrity of our food supply and healthy wildlife ecosystems.

The requested allocation for FY10 is a wise investment, as honey bees and other pollinators are essential partners in agriculture and in healthy ecosystems, as are native pollinators. Honey bees and other pollinators make possible the production of well over \$15 billion in agricultural products in the U.S., and as much as \$250 billion worldwide.

The leading recommendation in a 2006 National Academy of Sciences, NRC report, the **Status of Pollinators in North America**, is to conduct critical research. At a June 26, 2008 oversight hearing convened by the House Agriculture Subcommittee on Horticulture and Organic Agriculture on the status of pollinator health including CCD, witnesses from our organizations were joined by leading researchers in identifying critical research needs that remain unfunded.

The pollinator research provision in the Farm Act of 2008, attached as Exhibit 1, authorizes \$20 million per year in funding from FY08 through FY12. We appreciate that Congress did include \$800,000 for FY09 in the USDA, Agricultural Research Service budget targeting CCD research. However, research is needed on a broad range of threats to honey bees and other pollinators, and no appropriations were made to fund the farm bill pollinator research provision in FY08 or FY09.

Investments in honey bee and pollinator research at the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) have been stagnant for years and continue to fall far short of identified needs. The requested funding will underwrite critical unmet honey bee and pollinator research priorities that can lead to scientific outcomes urgently needed to address pressing health challenges plaguing honey bees and threatening the economic viability of beekeepers.

We continue to neglect the health of our pollinating partners at our own peril. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully Submitted,

American Beekeeping Federation
Häagen-Dazs
Pollinator Partnership

Pollinator Research ¹

“(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.

¹ P.L. 110-234, amends section 1672 of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 5925).