



# Saskatchewan Beekeepers' Association

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Dr. Carlos Castillo, PhD  
Applied Scientist Manager  
P.O. Box 1118, 1 Research Road  
Beaverlodge, AB T0H 0C0

February 9, 2015

Dear Dr. Castillo:

## **Re: National Honey Bee Health Survey**

The Saskatchewan Beekeepers' Association (SBA) discussed your request of support for the Beekeepers Commission of Alberta, National Honey Bee Health Survey at our board meeting Jan 23<sup>rd</sup>. While the board supports developing a national data base on the health of Honey Bees in Canada in principle, we are uncomfortable with the way this project attempts to tackle the task. From the information presented to the board, we feel that the design of this project is flawed in such a way that any results from the project would be questionable at best. We do not have confidence in the reliability of the data collected and ultimately any results.

The SBA would like to highlight a few of the concerns with this research project. Our concerns include:

1. Sample collection does not appear to be consistent between regions or provinces, or collected in a manner guaranteeing a meaningful, representative result,
2. the lab used to analyze the samples (the National Bee Diagnostics Centre) is not an accredited lab, thus bringing into question reliability of results,
3. the data will not be made accessible, without prejudice, for review by Provincial Apiculturists of the province where the bees were sampled,
4. the data collected in this study will not be a reliable representation of the state of health of honey bees in Canada because the project has been designed to gather the majority of the data primarily in only two of the 10 Canadian Provinces, with only a small sampling of bees being tested in the other Canadian Provinces, and
5. not all partnerships with necessary regions or provinces are in place indicating poor planning and poor project development, the study should have received the endorsement of all the provinces before the study began.

For these reasons the Saskatchewan Beekeepers' Association board has decided that they will not support the Beekeepers Commission of Alberta, National Honey Bee Health Survey at this time. If our concerns are addressed we would consider future participation in this health survey.

Sincerely,

**Jake Berg, President**  
Saskatchewan Beekeepers' Association