



APIMONDIA

International Federation of Beekeepers' Associations

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President

January 2009

New Year message

Beekeepers around the world have met major problems in the last few years with massive losses of colonies and fluctuating honey markets. For many beekeepers, times have been tough. Many have asked themselves whether beekeeping is still a profitable enterprise.

The causes for colony losses have not yet been found, but we have established close co-operation among scientists and beekeepers to find solutions. Probably the problems are complex, since there may be more than one reason for these losses. In some instances the losses of colonies are caused by a combination of multiple determinants.

Scientists and beekeepers have compiled a list of possible factors to be investigated. The "Coloss" (Colony Losses) network, with the participation of Scientists and Beekeepers from 35 countries, is investigating the problems from many different points of view. At the next Apimondia Congress in Montpellier, France, scheduled to take place on 15 - 20 September 2009, we will all be able to hear about the latest findings as well as discuss with the scientists working on these problems. To solve this predicament with colony losses we need to work closely together among Scientists and Beekeepers to find solutions and we must be willing to look at all possibilities with open minds.

The world honey markets are experiencing difficult times. Low production of honey in major production areas of the world, combined with the global economic crisis, makes the future prospects unclear. The major honey traders and their organisations will meet at the Congress in Montpellier, giving us all a possibility to learn about the future prospects for apiculture worldwide. We are aware of the importance of apiculture for biodiversity and food production: the Congress will also be a possibility to share this knowledge with a larger audience.

I am pleased to announce that the preparation of the Congress is well underway. We have many sections of the programme ready and we are receiving more inputs through the papers submitted. I warmly invite you to visit the Congress website www.apimondia2009.com where you will find information about the scientific programme, submission of abstracts, the large ApiExpo with a variety of items and specific products to meet all beekeepers' needs. There will also be honey judging, contests and an attractive rich social programme. Beekeepers, scientists, honey traders, equipment producers, innovators and friends will meet in Montpellier: in one word, the Congress is for all involved in apiculture worldwide.

Montpellier is really worthwhile visiting. It is an old city in the South of France with high quality beekeeping and bee products in the region. You will find excellent food and wine and valuable tourist opportunities. For Apimondia and the local organiser, the Union Nationale de l'Apiculture Française, the preparations of the congress in Montpellier have the highest priority on our common agenda.

Nevertheless, Apimondia has other activities. We organise conferences and seminars on more specific topics in the years between the Congresses. In this respect, Apimondia has been very active in 2008. The following international events were organised by Apimondia in co-operation with other organisations:

- 2nd Apimondia International Forum “Apimedica and Apiquality”, Rome, Italy;
- 1st Apimondia Honeydew Symposium, Burgas, Bulgaria;
- 2nd OIE-Apimondia Symposium “Diagnosis and Control of Bee Diseases”, Freiburg, Germany;
- Apimondia Symposium on Good Management Practice (GMP) and Good Beekeeping Practice (GBP), Bucharest, Romania;
- 2nd International Apimondia Symposium “Selection, Queen Breeding and Instrumental Insemination”, Nuevo Vallarta, Mexico;
- 10th International ICPBR Symposium “Hazards of Pesticides to Bees”, Bucharest, Romania;
- 1st International Beekeeping and Pine Honey Congress, Mugla, Turkey.

The members of the Executive Council of Apimondia have also participated in many other events throughout the world distributing and collecting information.

During the last few years the activities of Apimondia have considerably increased. This is due to constant inputs from the Executive Council members, the General Secretariat in Rome and the Apimondia Foundation FIITEA in Romania. Apimondia benefits also from the active collaboration of the members of the International Honey Commission (Apimondia’s scientific advisor on bee product quality), as well as co-operators from many Beekeepers’ Organisations, Universities and scientists from the world over.

Of course, we also rely on the tremendous support we receive from our members, without whose support we could not achieve what we do. May I take this opportunity to thank all of you for your continuous contributions in making beekeeping a wonderful way of living.

May I wish you all a Prosperous New Year.

Looking forward to meeting you all in Montpellier,

Asger Søgaaard Jørgensen