



Proclamation of Balkan Federation of Apicultural Associations

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EUROPEAN BEEKEEPING ISSUES AND SUGGESTIONS FOR THEIR PROMOTION AND DEVELOPMENT UNDER COMMON AGRICULTURAL POLICY OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

Meliferous bees have been, and will be in the future firmly connected to mankind existence. It is not by chance that genius Einstein said: "If for any reason the bees die on earth, not later than in four years the whole mankind disappears". At the present time, in connection with the use of herbicides, pesticides and other means to protect plants killed most of the insects that before used to pollinate and preserve the nature. Only the meliferous bees as nature pollinator, are often killed by various reasons, but every year the beekeepers bring back the number of bee colonies. Need to add that in most regions of Europe environment conditions are such that beekeepers every 2-3 years gather normal harvest of honey. But they also maintain the number of bee families that pollinate the nature, despite the fact that they do not receive any income.

In connection with this, the leadership of the European Union should take into account and take care of the development of beekeeping and to solve its problems:

1. Industry, use of chemicals, electronics destroys bees of Europe and at this stage nobody is able to protect the beekeepers. By statistics of beekeeping organizations of EU members, the number of bee families for the last 50 years have significantly reduced, and in some countries the reduction goes down to 30 - 40%. A similar situation exists in the U.S., where in a number of areas bee families decreased by 50-60%.

On the other hand in countries like China, Brazil, Argentina, India, Mexico, Australia, according to FAO data for the last 50 years, the number of colonies increased more than 50%. These countries increased their exports of honey to Europe, but they will not pollinate nature and agricultural plants of Europe. Governments of these countries are subsidizing the export of honey to Europe and create the conditions of unfair competition with beekeepers of Europe.

2. Meliferous bees not only support biodiversity of nature, but they contribute to increasing the quantity and quality of agricultural products. Scientific studies have shown that harvested crops may increase by 30 - 60% or more when pollinate, and that means that EU member states can get a few more billion euros. Can give an example - in Bulgaria every year approximately 600,000 ha are cultivated with

sunflower with an annual yield of about 2000 kg / ha. If pollinated the sunflower harvest increase by 30% and farms can get an additional about 300,000 tons of grain. This means that the country could realize an additional annual revenue of about 100 million Euro.

3. Beekeeping is the main and major originator of food for people and beekeeping products are primarily used for preventive and health goals. Therefore the quality of beekeeping products should be of serious concern on European market.

4. In the southeastern part of Europe tobacco production was forbidden. Tens of thousand people remain without jobs. They all live and work in the mountain and hills areas where there are excellent conditions for the development of beekeeping and honey production ecologically.

These are some of the main beekeeping problems in Europe. In order to solve them we have to include the following issues under the common agricultural policy of Europe:

1. To limit the death and disappear of bees and beekeepers should receive compensation if bees die through no fault of beekeepers;

2. Complete analysis and ban the use of drugs to protect plants that kill the bees;

3. Promote and assure funds for research programs in finding out causes of bees deaths that reduce the number of bee colonies;

4. Stimulate the development of each country programmes for a PC software concerning the number of bee colonies necessary for pollination of both agricultural and wild plants;

5. Funds to stimulate the development of medicine for bees which do not affect the quality of beekeeping products. Such a medicine produced in one E.U. country can be used in other E.U. countries without other obstacles.

6. Submit a proposal to amend the E.U. Agricultural Policy with the aim of promoting the beekeeping profession, by giving beekeepers assistance of around 30 Euros per bee colony;

7. Increase the profitability of beekeeping products based on ensuring good quality products on the European market. Take steps against fake honey and other beekeeping products. In order to achieve this we need to create a coordinated system of authorized laboratories to assist in standardization and quality control and increase the quality of beekeeping products on European market.

8. Encourage and ensure funding for educational programmes in order to increase the hygiene and correct beekeeping in order make the best of beekeeping products and determine the awareness of beekeepers on preventive and human health properties of beekeeping products.

9. Create the conditions for the integration of beekeeping within the new European Agricultural Policy.

10. Bees have no borders. Therefore Apimondia is kindly requested to take steps also in favour of other members of Apimondia in European countries from major beekeeping areas.

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