Program:

BEES ON THEIR KNEES?

FACTORS AFFECTING HONEY BEES AND OTHER POLLINATORS

June 15, 2015
PROGRAM

Welcome and Introduction

JANE DEMARCHI
MODOERATOR

Distinguished Speakers

DR. KEVIN HACKETT
SENIOR NATIONAL PROGRAM LEADER
USDA, AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH SERVICE
BELTSVILLE, MD

&

DR. JEFF PETTIS
RESEARCH ENTOMOLOGIST
USDA, ARS BEE RESEARCH LABORATORY
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Open Forum

Closing

JANE DEMARCHI

NATIONAL C-FAR IS a nonprofit, nonpartisan, consensus-based and customer-led coalition that brings food, agriculture, nutrition, conservation and natural resource stakeholders together with the food and agriculture research and extension community, serving as a forum and a unified voice in support of sustaining and increasing public investment at the national level in food and agricultural research, extension, and education. For additional information, go to www.ncfar.org; or contact Tom Van Arsdall, Executive Director, at tom@vanarsdall.com.
ABSTRACT
Much of our food supply flies on the wings of bees. It is through pollination, the movement of pollen to fertilize flowers, that bees provide fruits, nuts and vegetables in our diet; one third of our diet depends on bees or other pollinators. Pollinators are in decline worldwide due to a variety of factors and the common honey bee is the most easily recognized and most used pollinator in modern agriculture. Honey bees suffer from a variety of pests and diseases and recent bee die-offs have been linked to these pests as well as stress from pesticide exposure and poor nutrition. Over the past 10 years beekeepers in the US have lost on average about 30% of their hives in the winter; this rate is too high for beekeeping to remain profitable. Research is looking for specific answers to individual stressors in bees but more is needed. USDA and other government agencies are working to improve bee health by adding bee friendly plants to public spaces, farms and individual backyards which can provide vital habitat and nutrition for a wide variety of pollinators. With a concerted effort, we can reverse the trend of pollinator decline, improve honey bee health and continue to enjoy the fruits, nuts and vegetables that pollinators provide.

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES
Kevin Hackett, Ph.D., is Senior National Program Leader for the USDA, Agricultural Research Service, with program responsibility for crop pests and beneficial insects, including pollinators. He is co-chair of the Federal Colony Collapse Disorder Steering Committee. Other major responsibilities include his role as co-chair of the Federal Interagency Committee for Invasive Terrestrial Animals and Pathogens. Kevin holds B.S. and M.S. degrees from Rutgers University in Entomology, and a Ph.D. from the University of California, Berkeley in Insect Pathology. Prior to joining the National Program Staff, he worked as Eastern Coordinator for the John Muir Institute for Environmental Studies, followed by 16 years as an insect pathologist for USDA/ARS in Beltsville, where his research focused on spiroplasmas, the smallest bacteria.

Jeff Pettis, Ph.D., is a research Entomologist in the USDA-ARS Bee Research Laboratory in Beltsville, Dr. Pettis leads a broad research effort to improve colony health by limiting the impact of pests and diseases on honey bee colonies. His research areas include; IPM techniques to reduce the impacts of parasitic mites and disease, effects of pesticides and pathogens on queen health and longevity, host-parasite relationships and bee behavior. Dr. Pettis serves on several international committees concerning bee health and is frequently interviewed by the media for his opinions on worldwide pollinator declines. Dr. Pettis received undergraduate and MS degrees from the University of Georgia and his doctoral degree in Entomology from Texas A&M University in 1992.
SEMINAR SERIES DESCRIPTION

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