



ONTARIO BEEKEEPERS'
ASSOCIATION
Since 1881

BULLETIN

UPDATE ON SMALL HIVE BEETLE

November 2, 2017

Attention: Ontario Beekeepers

The OBA's Small Hive Beetle (SHB) Working Group has been meeting over the summer and fall and issues this update to keep Ontario beekeepers informed. Keep in mind that the situation is evolving as we locate new finds of small hive beetle. We will update you as appropriate, including at the upcoming Conference.

This year, inspectors reported 20 new finds in Ontario mostly, but not all, in the Niagara region. There were 11 new finds in New Brunswick. Small hive beetle has also been found in Alberta and BC.

The OBA SHB Working Group reviewed current inspection requirements and regulations and determined that further quarantine areas would not be effective at containing small hive beetle. Any regional lock-downs would also seriously impact the financial viability of the beekeepers within the quarantine zone.

Ontario currently imposes rigorous requirements for beekeepers moving hives out of SHB-positive yards. This includes both 100% top bar and 10% brood nest inspections. Beekeepers from Niagara or others with small hive beetle finds are obligated to file movement plans with the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) before they are permitted to move bees.

While movement plans address OMAFRA's desire for traceability, they have not been effective at limiting the spread of small hive beetle, and are time consuming for beekeepers to manage and for government to track. OBA's SHB Working Group believes that specialized management courses for small hive beetle would be far more effective and benefit the industry than additional regulations.

The primary mission of the SHB Working Group is to ensure Ontario bees are able to move into blueberry pollination sites in the Maritimes next spring with the caveat that a high level of biosecurity will be needed to mitigate the spread of small hive beetle. With new finds in proximity to New Brunswick's blueberry pollination areas, the reality is that even non-SHB Ontario colonies will be exposed to small hive beetle when they are placed near these locations. The OBA has been in touch

with the Canadian Association of Professional Apiculturists (CAPA) and is speaking directly with beekeeper associations in Québec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and PEI.

The OBA believes that adjustment of Ontario's small hive beetle financial assistance program for equipment (freezing comb) is needed to allow beekeepers to erect or bring in special structures, like reefer trucks or containers for freezing comb.

Given the fact that find locations are predominantly along the US border, small hive beetle has likely entered Ontario via the US, where the management of small hive beetle has become part of mainstream beekeeping.

Ontario beekeepers have almost seven years of experience with small hive beetle since the first finds were discovered in Windsor-Essex. Given Ontario's northern climate, small hive beetle likely has just one reproductive cycle per season, making this pest much more manageable than in warm, moist climates, like Florida, where it thrives. While no beekeeper needs or wants another pest, Ontario beekeepers' experience shows that the impact of small hive beetle on a beekeeping operation can be managed and in most cases small hive beetle causes far less damage than wax moth.

[Tom Congdon](#)

Chair, OBA SHB Working Group

[Jim Coneybeare](#)

President

[Dennis Edell](#)

Chair, Issues Management and Stakeholder Relations Committee