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NATIONAL BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION of NEW ZEALAND (INC.)

An open letter to all beekeepers from the President

There is a perception that the Executive has and continues to promote the eradication option in respect of the present varroa mite incursion. It is appropriate that I reiterate the Executive's stance on this issue. Right from the very start of this exercise the Executive has actively promoted the preferred option as it has been conveyed by the membership.

Post varroa Branch meetings in Southland, Otago, Canterbury, Marlborough, Auckland and Waikato have all identified the eradication option as being preferred. On Monday 24th April an Industry task group of ten beekeepers issued the following statement:

“On the information available at present, we (NBA) consider that elimination is still possible and that survey work must continue to know as much about the spread as possible.”

Accordingly, and taking its direction from the membership, the Executive has and continues to support this view. One point that must be acknowledged however is, the final decision will be taken by Central Government. It will reflect not only the Beekeeping Industry's concerns, but will have regard to national considerations, in particular the effects on the beneficiary industries such as horticulture and agriculture.

The reality is, the beekeeping industry is one of, if not the smallest stakeholders in this whole overall national picture, particularly so in terms of export dollar values and employment.

The Government input to date is in excess of 2.35 million dollars. Therefore it follows that Central Government is now the major stakeholder in this exercise. It similarly follows that the Government will, taking advice from its own advisors, plus all industries involved, make the final decision.

Equally, that decision whatever it may be will be binding on all industries concerned, including beekeeping. This we shall have to live with for the foreseeable future. Whether it is eradication, containment or do nothing, and whether we collectively or independently agree, this is the reality.

The beekeeping industry has the assurance that it will be an equal party to all inputs leading up to the final Cabinet submission. This will be shared with other interested parties, particularly in horticulture and agriculture.

The executive has every confidence that the beekeeping industry will be fully involved at all levels leading up to the final Government decision. Experience to date has been such that the Executive is confident that its active participation, in partnership with Ministry of Agriculture and other beneficiary industries will continue and that the final decision will reflect the best interest of the country as a whole.

Yours faithfully

Terry Gavin
President