



SABIO

South African Bee Industry Organisation

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SABIO Chairman's Report for the AGM 10 April 2010

It gives me great pleasure to present my report for the 2009/10 year. I, on behalf of SABIO, extend a warm welcome to all members here. A similar warm welcome is extended to guests and visitors. We hope that this will be a useful meeting; that the workshop and talks will stimulate discussion and increased knowledge about bee diseases.

I quote from my comment in the last Bee Journal:

"Where to from here? How do we overcome the 'toxic mix'?"

I was extremely heartened by the meetings in Pretoria in January. There was a definite commitment from government to listen to us expressing a willingness to respond to our needs. We as an organisation must develop this and grow in order to give our industry an opportunity to 'lift-off' and fly. The NAMC report has finally been signed by the minister and we need to recall those who contributed to it so that we can workshop a way forward. Issues of finance, a Beekeeping Act and the other recommendations, together with comments from the Minister need to be blended together so that we can become the industry we have so long striven to be – responsible for so much more than just our own short term interests - serving the interests of the amazing insects we work with, agriculture in general and being a proud role player in our fascinating and vital industry. May 2010 finally turn challenges into achievements. Let's turn the toxic mix into something special to all of us.

The Bee Industry this year has been dominated by the discovery of AFB in South Africa. It involved effort from the ARC, DAFF and SABIO in order to try and control and manage the disease. We are still short of test results and waiting to see how our bees respond to the bacillus in the longer term. AFB was an unexpected shock and the result has been numerous meetings, drafting and re-drafting of regulations and the realization that our industry and government were and still remain challenged by the threat of this disease and how best to cope with it. The weaknesses in our industry predicted by the NAMC Report and the survey of the industry done by the UCT School of Economics in 2008 have been more than realized and this makes it imperative that we return to these assessments of the industry and implement suggested changes concentrating on the priorities the we see fit to implement. We need to change weaknesses into strengths so that the desired objectives become a reality. Good progress was made in 2008 at the Beacon and Dr Conradie's survey and suggestions will be invaluable in our future implementation of the NAMC recommendations. I shall return to this vital issue later in my report with a brief PowerPoint presentation.

Before proceeding, I need to say farewell to "Oupahansie". Hans has been involved with SABIO since its inception in 1994. He has always endeavored to 'keep the ship afloat' and been loyal to the interests of the industry during his long term of office. He tendered his resignation to expire on the 9 April but I am sure that he will be here to support the day and learn more about AFB. He did agree to edit the second journal this year so will need to report on the day's proceedings in that issue anyway. Thank you Hans for always being willing to serve and in spite of differences and clashes we have always been able to be honest with each other and settle things amicably. I am sure that we will not lose contact in future and Hans will follow SABIO's growth with interest.

Just as we say goodbye to Hans we welcome Jan Barnard who will be manning the office at Rietondale in future. Jan has plenty of experience in training, has worked for Tshwane Municipality and run his own business. We have agreed that he may continue lecturing part time on condition that we have notice of this and members are able to leave messages if he is out of office. We look forward to a long and happy association.

Ursula has also put in sterling work for SABIO. She has been an invaluable addition to the management team but now needs more time off to devote to her studies. She will continue until the end of May and then Jan will be by himself.

While dealing with people who have contributed to the running of SABIO I must thank fellow Board members for their support. A special thank you goes to Eddy and Theunis who have given unstintingly of their time when called upon to do so. There have been many more meetings this year than normal because of the AFB outbreak and whenever I have asked for their support it has been given without question. A sincere thank you. At times it feels as if we are on a treadmill but it is occasions such as this when we are forced to take stock that we realize that we are making progress albeit slower than we would often like to admit.

The important decision regarding registration of beekeepers will need to be decided at this meeting. JanHendrik has agreed to delay the submission of the draft regulations until the 16 April so we still have time to make an informed decision. I have all along said that disease control was essentially the responsibility of government but we were appointed the authority and have built up momentum in this regard which would be a pity to lose. We will anyway have to continue with the registration process if we pick up on our mandate to introduce statutory levies as this will be an integral part of the levy process. I shall say more about that in a minute but let us consider the problem for a minute.

Registration for disease control can never be a basis for membership of SABIO membership. SABIO needs to offer its members a service and represent the industry nationally. My concern is that we are at present doing the registration; the problem is that existing regulations only provides for a one off registration, which makes the registration data difficult to manage and keep up to date. The legal penalties for not registering are non-existent at present which makes deviance difficult to correct. If the government takes over this function then certain issues need to be agreed upon such as what happens to existing numbers? Who will inspect and enforce registration? What happens to those who fail to register? Are funds available to man an office and provide inspectors to check on beekeepers throughout country? What will this registration process cost? The bottom line is that we need to have a complete and up to date register of beekeepers and if this is necessary for disease control then what is the best way to achieve this Govt or SABIO?

Bee diseases kept us fully occupied this year. The NAMC Section 7 analysis, which we debated with the permission of the NAMC, but without the signed consent of the Minister has now been signed and the NAMC has shown a willingness to support us in implementing the recommendations of the report. We are delighted about this and plan a workshop involving all interested stakeholders to refine and prioritize the recommendations to set the process in motion of implementing suggested improvements. This is no easy task and will require the support of all role-players in the industry. I shall now outline some of the developments which have already been discussed. I have on many an occasion referred to the colourful and fascinating individuality of beekeepers in general. This however does not make it easy to implement any general scheme for a national strategy for our industry. This problem is not confined to our country and is a world wide tendency in the beekeeping fraternity. We fiercely cling to the belief that to serve our precious bees best we need to maintain our independence and individuality. Any national strategy needs to acknowledge this, but if we are to protect and serve the interest of our members, our bees and be a meaningful pressure group able to serve these interests then we have to find common ground in order to lobby effectively to protect our interests. We are a small group but the role we play in agriculture and the environment means that we have a responsibility to the "greater good".

I do not believe that the question, "Where to from here?" can be answered without a serious study of the NAMC document. Progress was made discussing the report in 2008 and I shall I shall try to sum this up and then offer suggestions as to how to move the industry to the 'next level'.

If we consider targets recommended in the report they can be summed up as follows. These need to be considered together with how they are to be achieved:

PowerPoint Slide 1

To achieve our goals we need an effective funding base for the industry. This brings us back to support from all role players in the industry and proper record keeping.

PowerPoint 2

The various possible means of implementing statutory levies may be listed as follows(See table below).

PowerPoint 3 & 4 (Table 1 & 2)

The success of any industry depends on its support base. As I have mentioned this is not uniform in the bee industry

PowerPoint 5,6 & 7

The NAMC lists 24 recommendations. According to the returns from beekeepers the priorities were listed as follows.

PowerPoint 9 &10 (Table 3)

Table 1: Tax options (Beatrice Conradie)

Type of tax	Unit levy	Taxable		Estimated takings
		units	Compliance	
<i>Existing voluntary levy</i>				
Registration fee	R150	500	64%	49 800
Hive levy if >100 hives	R1.50	70 000	23%	<u>24 500</u>
Total voluntary				74 300
<i>Taxing hives</i>				
Hive levy all	R1.67	301 000	68%	341 800
Hive levy if >30 hives	R1.67	280 000	87%	406 800
Hive levy if >100 hives	R1.67	250 000	87%	326 500
<i>Taxing apiary sites*</i>				
All existing apiary sites	R16.34	30 600	68%	340 000
Existing apiaries if >30 hives	R16.34	29 000	87%	412 300
Apiaries with 5km diameter	R40.00	10 000	68%	272 400
<i>Taxing output</i>				
All honey	7c/kg	7 500 t	50%	251 250
Honey if >100 hives	7c/kg	6 225 t	50%	208 500
Honey if >100 hives	15c/kg	6 225 t	50%	
Honey jars (1% tax)	3c/jar	5 mil	87%	130 500
Honey jars (3% tax)	6c/jar	5 mil	87%	261 000
Honey jars (4% tax)	9c/jar	5 mil	87%	391 500

Table 2: Support for a statutory levy (Beatrice Conradie)

	Large	Small	All
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Are you in favour of a statutory levy?			
Agree or strongly agree	65%	72%	68%
Disagree or strongly disagree	19%	3%	12%
Should hobbyists be exempted?			
Agree or strongly agree	16%	31%	21%
Disagree or strongly disagree	59%	55%	59%
Which of the following is most feasible?			
Agree or strongly agree with none	22%	15%	17%
Agree or strongly agree with hive tax	28%	31%	29%
Agree or strongly agree w. apiary site tax	19%	35%	29%
Agree or strongly agree with honey tax	31%	15%	24%

The lack of funding for research and the need for this to keep us as a leader in Africa for information and technology needs to be emphasized. In addition we need to become custodians of the accumulated research done by the PPRI and ARC, which we may lose if not preserved and built upon.

Table3: Policy priorities for the bee industry (Beatrice Conradie)

	Supported* by % of		
	Average	Large	Small
Build awareness of honey quality standards	4.63	93%	95%
Regulate honey imports & exports	4.61	83%	95%
Review CARA legislation wrt Eucalypts	4.54	90%	86%
Secure government funding for research	4.43	93%	89%
Compile industry statistics	4.43	97%	83%
Remove inconsistent laws	4.35	97%	83%
Steer research	4.34	93%	89%
Draft integrated Beekeeping Act	4.33	93%	83%
Establish competent honey laboratory	4.27	83%	89%
Secure other funds for research	4.26	89%	84%
Develop niche markets	4.19	90%	78%
Be represented on Agric Trade Forum	4.13	82%	81%
Assess feasibility of new projects	4.13	76%	89%
Liaise with forestry industry	4.11	79%	81%
Liaise with DWAF	4.06	76%	78%
Coordinate training	4.04	71%	78%
Get NQF accreditation for bee courses	3.97	90%	73%
Reconstitute SABIO's board	3.97	76%	75%
Statutory levy	3.89	72%	65%
Generic advertising	3.81	79%	62%
Appoint dedicated extension officers	3.78	82%	65%
Develop an industry food safety plan	3.91	67%	68%
Give money for transformation	3.40	59%	42%
Remove import tariffs	2.01	14%	16%

There are plenty of other areas of concern for the industry but I really feel that if we seriously analyze then implement the recommendations we will really establish a sound basis for our industry to build on.

Thank you

John Moodie 10/04/10