



# Hive Lights

May 2009  
Vol 22 # 2

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Canadian Honey Council



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## Canadian Honey Council

The Canadian Honey Council (CHC) is the national organization of the Canadian beekeeping industry and Hivelights is the industry's magazine. Our association is an "organization of organizations". One of the benefits of belonging to our member organizations is that all members receive a copy of Hivelights magazine. In order to receive Hivelights you must be a current member of your provincial association. International subscribers can receive our high quality magazine for a fee of \$50 Canadian per year.

Schools, libraries, non beekeepers, university or government personnel can receive Hivelights magazine through special membership as "Friends of Canadian Apiculture".

Please contact the CHC office for more information.

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# HiveLights

May 2009 Vol 22 #2

A flying honey bee with pollen on a willow plant (*Salix caprea*, *Salicaceae*). The bee is powdered with yellow pollen.



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# Canadian Honey Council

Heather Clay, Chief Executive Officer, CHC

## Forging a New Direction

Project funding for Forging a New Direction has come to an end. For the past three years, the federal government program, Advancing Canadian Agriculture Agri-Food, supported the initiative of the CHC to restructure and reorganize the national association. A summary of the outcome of the consultative process can be found on page 12. Our national association is better positioned to help build a dynamic and prosperous honey bee industry now and for the future. Our member associations have enthusiastically embraced the concept of CHC being an organization of organizations. The CHC is an integral part of the provincial network of associations. It acts on behalf of all beekeepers in the national interest of the industry. Any issues of concern can be discussed at the provincial level and then brought to the national level by the provincial director. It is important for beekeepers to remember that the CHC is their organization and that we are all working together on industry issues.

## Hive Health Committee

The CHC held a hive health meeting in January to prepare a strategic plan of action for addressing the situation of continuing honey bee losses. A committee was formed to continue the momentum of that meeting and to develop a research plan that will address hive health issues and the importance of an integrated hive health network information system. Baseline data is essential and we are working with the provincial



apiculturists to develop a standardized data collection system that will provide hive health information and flag any concerns before they become a crisis. A prototype hive health information system was developed for the CHC. It can be viewed on the website [www.hivehealth.ca](http://www.hivehealth.ca).

ca.

## Emergency Registration Amitraz

The CHC applied for and received Emergency Use Registration (EUR) for Apivar® (amitraz) for the treatment of varroa mites in August 2008. Normally an EUR is granted for one year but Arysta Life Sciences NA (ALSNA), the owner of the active ingredient amitraz, was not planning to continue holding the registration past 27th April, 2009. Consequently the EUR expires on that date. In a turn of events ALSNA has agreed to give the rights to amitraz to its sister company, Arysta Life Sciences America (ALSA). At the same time the company has asked the Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) for re-instatement of amitraz registration. This is very good news for beekeepers as it allows us to request an extension of the deadline for the EUR. After lobbying from CHC and a great deal of goodwill on the part of Arysta the product may be available for a longer period of time. The company has indicated that it will pursue full registration of amitraz and is in the process of discussions about data requirements with the PMRA. More information about the possible extension of date will be available on the CHC website when it is available.

## C-BISQT

The CHC has undertaken the development of an On farm food Safety program for the production of honey. In January 2009 the

Canadian Food Inspection Agency conducted a technical review of the Good Production Practices (GPP) manual that the CHC has produced for the Canadian Bee Industry Safety Quality Traceability (C-BISQT) program. After a week of meetings in January the technical review team produced a report with over two hundred Adjustment Needs Requests (ANR's). These items must each be addressed and responded to in a timely manner by our industry. The CHC core committee (Tim Townsend, Rudy Gelderblom, Rhéal Lafrenière and Heather Clay) are working on the responses. After the changes have been approved the manual will be translated and made available for distribution. It is expected that a GPP manual will soon be available to all beekeepers wanting to implement an on farm food safety program.

## New Sponsor

The CHC has approached a number of suppliers for support of the new organization. In November 2008, Odem International provided a welcome kick off to the campaign by becoming the first sponsor of the CHC. We are happy to announce that Bayer CropScience, a company that is heavily involved in the production of hybrid canola seed, has shown its support of the beekeeping industry with a contribution to assist the CHC with its activities. We appreciate the acknowledgement of the importance of a national organization by our industry sponsors.

## Canadian Honey Bee Industry Convention

The next Canadian Beekeeping Conference will be held in conjunction with the American Beekeeping Federation in Orlando Florida. We are expecting a larger than normal turnout so be sure to book early at the Wyndham resort. Details of the 12-16 January meeting are on the CHC website [www.honeycouncil.ca](http://www.honeycouncil.ca)

# 2009 Directors

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# Regional Reports

## Maritimes

As an exceptionally long cold and snowy winter begins to draw to a close the New Brunswick Beekeepers association the Nova Scotia Beekeepers Association and the Prince Edward Island Beekeepers Cooperative Association have all completed their Annual general meetings. All three associations are in the process of reinventing themselves in order to maintain their relevance to the industry and their membership. Although this is a long and laborious task with many challenges it promises to yield results that will ultimately improve the beekeeping industry in Atlantic Canada.

As wild blueberry producers faced with the potential of another year of low prices strive to maximize yields demand for pollinators remains significantly ahead of supply, indicating another year of imported bees from outside of the region.

Although too early to know how they will emerge from winter general consensus is that the bees went into winter in reasonably good shape. The next few weeks will begin to tell the true

tale as to winter losses.

Local demand for honey is strong and we are beginning to see some upward movement in the price at the retail level.

price at the retail level.

If we can get decent spring and summer weather combined with the increasing demand for pollinators and for honey 2009

has the potential to be a good year for the maritime bee industry.



Tom Trueman

## Manitoba

New (APP) Advance Payment Program Administrator for MBA

Effective January 1, 2009, MBA has arranged for the Manitoba Corn Growers association, Inc. to administer all aspects of the Beekeepers/Honey Producers Crop Advance program. This move is being made at this time, as our present administrator, Lois Simpson has given notice she will be retiring from her roles with the MBA this July. Only paid up members of the MBA will be able to access the program as they have done in the past.

### MBA Fee and Levy

As of March 6 2009, the Honey Producers Administration Fee Regulation became law. The regulation is made



under the Manitoba Honey marketing Plan Regulation, Manitoba Regulation 244/87R. This plan, which outlined administrative procedures for MBA, was originally put into place in 1992. Since that time, MBA has encouraged volunteer membership, in resolutions from the 2007 Annual meeting; MBA directors took action to extend membership to additional Manitoba honey producers.

Every producer with 50 hives or more must pay an annual basic fee of \$200, plus a levy of \$0.40 per colony (to a max. 1000 colonies), to the MBA. Alberta and Saskatchewan associations have taken similar approaches. The main difference is they have separate organizations to collect fees and levies. The MBA has noted their success.

#### Honey and Livestock Insurance

The MBA requested the Manitoba agricultural Services Corporation (MASC) to look into providing coverage for honey bee over winter protection, plus coverage for honey production during the summer.

Paul Gregory, Safety Net Committee Chair noted "in light of the uncertainty of details within the AgriStability program, we want coverage for both the bees and honey".

A formal request has been sent to Paul Bonnet, Vice President, Research & Program development, MASC. The request sought coverage for honey production to begin summer 2010, and winter loss insurance to begin in the fall. The plan calls for the MBA committee to work with MASC to develop a suitable program. To help this process, several documents have been translated from the Quebec plan which already has these two components. We are also looking into what Alberta has done. As part of the strategic Plan developed last year,



Art Bergmann, centre, receiving BEE Hive Award from MBA President Todd Yakimishen, after hearing toast from Lorne Peters.



Roman and Helen Pankiw centre receiving the S.A. Bedford Award from Todd Yakimishen, MBA president on left, with Lorne Peters giving the toast to the family



Herb and Naomi Isaac receive the MBA Honorary Life Membership Award from MBA president, Todd Yakimishen while Earl Dueck provides the introduction.

the MBA is committed to providing leadership in relation to the health of the beekeeping industry.

#### Working towards a Solution

The National Sunflowers Association of Canada, Inc (NSAC) & Manitoba Beekeepers Association (MBA) are working on a collaborative approach to ensure members of both organizations will benefit while protecting pollinators.

When honey producers reported concerns about having bees located near Confectionary Sunflower fields, directors sought to understand the issues and background. The MBA made a formal request to NSAC, to meet and discuss their production needs, while taking into account reducing the risk to honeybees. MBA offered to work together in a collaborative effort to present a common message to our respective memberships.



Bruce Podolsky

NASC began developing a strategy to mitigate honey bee pollinator risks. Strategies will include increased awareness of pesticide effects on foraging bees. Other elements include working with provincial entomologists and apiary specialists with regard to spray timing, plus featuring an information articles in their newsletter. NASC welcomed the opportunity for both boards to work together on this issue.

# BeeMaid



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## MBA 103rd Annual Beekeepers Convention

The MBA held their 103rd convention March 6 & 7th 2009 in Winnipeg. This is the second year we held it on a Friday and Saturday, allowing people to attend that have Monday to Friday jobs.

Over 100 people attended the Research Symposium, and about 80 people attended the first ever Social Mixer Evening, where MBA recognized several of its members for their contributions to our industry.

### Field Day and Summer Picnic

Manitoba Beekeepers Association together with the Red River Apiarist's Association invite all to attend a summer Field Day at Norte Dame de Lourdes, Manitoba

**Date:** Saturday 20 June 2009 at 12:00 noon.

**Location:** BBQ Lunch and Tour to take place at French Bee Farm. Food cost \$10.00, bring your own lawn chair.

**Directions:** Travel along Hwy. #2 to junction of Provincial Road #244 south. Travel south about 13 km to town of Notre Dame. Turn west (right) on main St. And keep going just past the "Blue" Co-op store, and turn south (left), you will come across a French bee sign. This is the place.

For more information, call Jim Campbell at (204) 467 5246 or Rheel Lafreniere at (204) 945 4825.

## Red River Apiarist Association (RRAA)

The RRAA are a group of hobby beekeepers in and around the city of Winnipeg. This group of about 70 members have just developed a new web site under the name [www:BeekeepingManitoba.com](http://www:BeekeepingManitoba.com) They meet the second Tuesday of most months and recently viewed pictures of a beekeeping trip to Chile and Cambodia. In March, they offer a one year free membership to anyone attending Dr. Currie's "Beekeeping for Beginners" course at the University of Manitoba.

### Brandon Area Beekeepers Association (BABA)

The BABA along the MBA will have a booth at the Brandon Winter Fair this March. They will have the MBA's display and backdrop along with an observation hive.

## Saskatchewan

This Saskatchewan winter has been brutally cold and long. Saskatoon broke a record in December for 25 consecutive days with highs below -25°C. January through March hasn't fared much better and as we approach April forecasters are calling for below normal into mid April. Many areas of the province did not receive much snow until late winter but the Southeast has been on the edge of several winter storms heading into MB. The full effect this weather

will have on the outdoor wintered colonies remains to be seen until some warmer weather arrives.

Those that winter indoors are reported colonies are looking good heading into spring. Those that have had the opportunity to peak at some colonies outdoors are reporting mixed results. The Saskatchewan Beekeepers Development Commission (SBDC) hosted a special meeting and formic/oxalic demonstration and Q&A in March. The acid demonstration and Q&A was very informative. It was clear to those in attendance that acids have the ability to be an effective tool against mites. However, it was also clear that there are many different products and techniques to apply these products and timing is crucial. Some producers, using the same products, reported different results for efficacy and colony disruption based on the timing and method of their applications. What was clearer than ever is that our industry lacks the extension/technical support to help determine what products are best under different conditions and timing. This goes for all products beyond mite control as well. Each year, we see more products on the market for the health benefits of our bees – do they work? Are all spring pollen supplements effective? Patties, liquid or dry? Do feed stimulants work? Do all mite products work? How do they work best?



Corey Bacon

As such, the commission board, after consulting with members at the AGM and special meeting, have decided to raise check-off fees from \$0.50/colony to \$1.00/colony. Participation in the check-off is mandatory for all producers with 100 or more producing colonies but is still a refundable check-off by written request. It was clear at the special meeting that a majority of beekeepers would support a joint venture with government to see this extension/technical support in Saskatchewan a reality. Our two associations (SBA and SBDC) will continue to push government towards that goal.

Honey prices in Saskatchewan continue on an upward trend. In the last three months, we have seen honey prices climb from \$1.40/lb to \$1.70/lb. Considering conditions in other honey producing countries, expectations are that prices will remain stable or climb over the following months. This year Saskatchewan will be offering the spring advance to our beekeepers through the federal government AMPA-APP. Producers are eligible for advances beginning April 1st for up to \$100,000 interest free with a deadline to repay of August 31st 2010 or at such a date they sell their 2009 crop. As usual those that do not wish to participate in the spring advance will be eligible for the fall advance in September.

## Alberta

It has been a long winter here in Alberta. In the southern part of the province, there has been above average snowfall. In the latter part of February there was warmer weather and winds to melt some of the snow in the southwest, but there is still a lot left in the southeast. There hasn't been too many reports of beekeepers accessing their hives at the beginning of March. Some early reports of northern beekeepers over wintering in B.C. suggest average winter losses. Here in the south there have just been a couple of beekeepers looking in a few hives that have been finding a wide range of over wintering success. There still is a lot of concern of the affects of high mite loads in the fall and potential nosema issues.

We have been hearing reports of honey prices moving up slowly which has been a pleasant surprise. The inventory in Alberta is almost gone. Some producers that normally sit on a lot of inventory have moved their honey out due to these higher prices. It looks like canola pollination acres are slightly down this year due to a higher inventory of seed than first expected.



Jerry Poelman

Here in the province of Alberta we have been trying to establish a system with the provincial government to help beekeepers monitor their varroa and nosema levels. This has been a very tedious exercise as we try to form a cohesive working group that has the same goals and a shared cost approach which would include our commission, the provincial government, and as well the support

from our canola seed companies. This has been a good example of industry working with us, as we have received a lot of support from Bayer CropScience and Pioneer Hi-bred International. The Alberta government has seen the need for this and added their support as well. We hope that if we could get extension personnel to help beekeepers better educate themselves at monitoring their honey bee diseases that we could improve the bee health in Alberta. It would also help us identify varroa resistance to current controls and potential nosema outbreaks quicker.

## British Columbia

As of the middle of March we still have snow on the ground in most parts of B.C. Winter has been long and hard. High beehive mortality is expected.

The retail price of locally packed honey continues to rise. At the start of the New Year the highest price I saw

on shelves in Vancouver was \$13.99/Kg. Since then, several producers have raised their wholesale prices pushing the retail prices as high as \$16.00/Kg.

Meanwhile, the large retail chain stores have honey on offer for \$5.99/Kg. Despite this price difference, local producers have a steady demand for their product. I suspect the increased desire of consumers to buy local products may be responsible.

Yvonne Herbison from the PMRA office in Kelowna attended the BCHPA semi-annual meeting in Kamloops held on March 7. Yvonne presented a slide show and answered questions concerning the PMRA's inspection program in B.C.. For several years Yvonne has administered an inspection program that monitors the chemicals used in beehives. The goal of this program is to encouraging beekeepers to use only legally registered chemicals in their hives and to use registered chemicals in accordance with the label instructions. The PMRA is using a graduated system of warnings and fines in this campaign.

Each fall the BCHPA annual convention is held at a different location so that beekeepers get to see a new part of the province. Given our mountainous terrain, sometimes getting

there is half the fun. One year, a pair of beekeepers arrived at the Thursday night wine and cheese party to announce they had hit a deer while driving to the convention. Not wanting to let the animal go to waste, they had thrown the carcass in the back of their truck and asked for help in butchering it. B.C. beekeepers were up to the challenge and setting down their wine glasses, soon had the animal gutted out in the corner of the hotel parking lot. There was



Ted Hancock

some debate about what to do with the pile of offal but no resolution was reached. In the morning the coyotes had solved the problem by cleaning everything up during the night.

This fall's convention will be held the weekend of October 24 in Victoria. I am pleased to announce that Randy Oliver from California will be our keynote speaker.

Victoria is a very cosmopolitan city full of high powered politicians and little old English ladies who like to wear stylish hats and drink tea while looking at well manicured flower gardens. I know the beekeepers in Victoria will excel at hosting our convention and I encourage you to attend, but please, no road kill.



## Supports Bee Research in Canada



Lorne Peters

Bee Maid Honey is proud to announce that they will be contributing financial assistance to the following research projects this coming year:

Dr. Stephen Pernal, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Beaverlodge Research Station, Beaverlodge, Alberta

A study on the integrated Management of Nosema & Detection of Antibiotic Residues. *Nosema ceranae* is an emergent world-wide pathogen, and it, in combination with *N. apis*, has been linked to wide scale depopulation of colonies in North America and Europe. This study will search for more effective chemotherapeutic controls for these parasites and generate a modern antibiotic residue dataset for fumagillin-based therapies.

and

Dr. Dave Shutler, Associate Professor, Acadia University Wolfville, Nova Scotia

To study the effects of over-wintering environment on *Nosema* disease in western honey bees (*Apis mellifera*). Western honey bees (*Apis mellifera*) are parasitized by two microsporidians, *Nosema apis* and *Nosema ceranae*.

Pathology and management of *N. apis*, the only previously known microsporidian parasite of western honey bees, is well-described; however, it is less understood in *N. ceranae*, a parasite formerly restricted to Asian honey bees (*Apis cerana*). *N. ceranae* appears to be more virulent than its congener, therefore, it is important to study factors that may affect disease development. The objective is to study effects of indoor and outdoor overwintering on *N. ceranae* disease in western honey bee colonies. It is not known how overwintering can be incorporated into an integrated pest management approach to *Nosema* control.

Bee Maid considered project proposals in the area of apiculture or pollination research. Preference was given to the area of honey, and the production of pure quality honey in the Canadian beekeeping industry. Bee Maid Honey is the marketing organization owned by the Alberta Honey Producers Cooperative Ltd. and the Manitoba Cooperative Honey Producers Ltd. Both member owned Cooperatives have led the beekeeping industry in their support for beekeeping research.

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# Honey Bee Losses: An 18month cycle

Fletcher Colpitts, Chief Apiary Inspector, New Brunswick Agriculture, Fredericton NB

## FOR MOST OF THE BEE KEEPERS IN NEW BRUNSWICK, THE WINTER AND SPRING

of 2008 was much better for colony survival than 2007. Average loss for the province was about 30% compared to 61% for the year before. In 2007 some beekeepers experienced losses of 60-80 percent with some at 100 percent.

After speaking to beekeepers in other parts of Canada and the US there seems to be a pattern of over wintering hive survival and losses. This pattern can occur within areas or in individual operations in the same area. It is called “an every other year” or “18 month cycle”. It starts with colonies wintering poorly for various reasons producing a higher than average winter loss. Throughout the following spring and summer colonies build up well with splits being taken to recover the winter loss. The beekeeper takes extra care of rebuilding colonies—possibly with new queens and clean equipment. The next winter and spring the colonies are strong with less than average losses. Another good summer seems to be underway. Confident that the colonies are strong, the beekeeper reduces monitoring and preventative treatment. However by late fall, which is about 18 months from our starting date, negative circumstances in the colonies may already be established that will result in a poor wintering season.

These negative circumstances directly affect the bees emerging in late summer and early fall. These bees are the wintering bees that are necessary to ensure the colony survival into the following year. For strong colonies to emerge in spring these winter bees must have the following three attributes.

1. Good health with low levels of viruses and pathogens
2. Adequate numbers

3. Low stress during the 6 month wintering environment

The adverse effects of a harsh winter with a small cluster of winter bees can be minimized if the winter bees are healthy. Healthy winter bees are long living and able to raise young bees in the spring. The health of our bees has been deteriorating since the arrival of tracheal mites and varroa mites. Before the mites arrived, viruses, bacteria and fungi were not much of a problem. Now however, these pathogens enter the bees through the puncture wounds from the mites and shorten the life of the honey bee by half. Many of the winter bees do not survive, as they should, till spring making the winter cluster smaller. It is important to have varroa and tracheal mites under control in summer. By fall the damage has been done to the wintering bees and it is too late for wintering success.

It is important to have an adequate number of winter bees. Care must be taken in summer not to allow the brood area of the hive to be filled with honey. This reduces the area the queen has to lay which in turn reduces the number of winter bees that hatch.

Shelter, ventilation and food stores must be provided to allow a stress free winter environment for the bees. Weather is the uncontrollable part of winter. It may not be possible for bees to have cleansing flights for months at a time. Also the weather may cause an ice crust to form on the hives, a factor that can be deadly.

The summer following the poor spring, mites are usually in low numbers because of the small amount of brood in the colonies and splitting. However the next spring, when the colonies are stronger and have early brood, the mite count is much higher. These pathogenic mites, mainly varroa, can increase to very high numbers over summer so by fall the winter bees are severely damaged. When these damaged winter bees meet with a harsher than average winter, the result is a very high loss situation, such as occurred in 2007.

So as we enter the second summer of the 18 month cycle, we should always be vigilant, watching our varroa mite levels. It is also important to watch for congestion of honey in the brood area during August and September.

As we gain better knowledge of varroa mite controls along with better colony management we will be able to level out our winter losses and break out of the “every other year” syndrome.

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# Forging a New Direction

Prepared by Green Isle Consulting Inc., Victoria BC

Over the past three years the Canadian Honey Council has re-invented itself to meet significant challenges facing the Canadian honey bee industry. Major contributions of time and energy from industry stakeholders working in focus groups, committees, provincial associations, the project steering committee and the CHC Board of Directors has resulted in a revitalized, restructured, and more sustainable organization better positioned to serve the industry.

## New purpose

Canadian Honey Council, the national voice of the Canadian honey bee industry, is dedicated to building a dynamic and prosperous honey bee industry that promotes “100% Canadian” and acts as the instrument for achieving a sustainable Canadian honey bee industry in the global economy.

## Guiding Principles:

- Continue to serve the Canadian honey bee industry.
- Be the definitive unified national voice of the industry.
- Represent the Canadian honey bee industry as a whole while respecting regional differences .

## New roles

Roles of the Board and Executive are stated in new by-laws approved by Corporations Canada.

Roles of Board Standing Committees and the CEO are detailed in policy and protocols contained in the Board Manual.

## Guiding Principles

- Undertake only roles that serve the stated purpose
- Lead, encourage and support

## New national office

Canadian Honey Council has a full-time Chief Executive Officer. The national office is in Calgary and is supported by a part-time office manager and others, across the country, working at distance for the CHC.

## Guiding Principles

- Make optimum use of technology
- Be near a national transportation hub

## New membership

The CHC is now an “organization of organizations” and membership is defined in new by-laws and policy. Policy ensures that producer organizations hold a majority of positions on the Board; however, other organizations who wish to join may apply for membership and will be considered by the Board in accordance with membership policy.

## Guiding Principles

- Provide benefits to the members of member organizations

- Be primarily a producer organization
- Acknowledge that the industry is broader than just beekeepers

## New board of directors

Each member organization has at least one representative on the CHC Board of Directors. Directors elect members of the Executive (Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer and Secretary). Directors may serve 3 consecutive 2-year terms. Board effectiveness and the responsibilities of Directors are defined in the new Board Manual.

## Guiding Principles

- Limit CHC Board Directors to board members of member organizations
- Expect Directors to represent the views of their organization and the Board to act in the best interests of the national industry
- Consult industry stakeholders not on the Board

Letter to the editor

## Save the Bees - Donation to Research

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am not a BEE keeper, just a lover of bees, distressed ones from CCD.

I hope that the Government have the sense (as if!) to contribute large sums of cash for research.

Please accept my donation to the CBRF.

Yours sincerely

Victoria Mazzuchin  
Hanmer, Ontario

## New participation

Members of member organizations are encouraged to participate in:

- national research symposia;
- ad hoc committees;
- stakeholder meetings.

Individual beekeepers are expected to make their priorities clear to their own organizations so that each CHC Director is informed enough to make sound decisions on behalf of the entire industry.

## Guiding Principles

- Offer a wide range of opportunities for participation in activities
- Decision-making is the responsibility of the Board

## New communication

Hivelights and CHC websites have been enhanced. Directors are expected to ensure communication with their own organizations is accurate and regular. The CEO communicates with the Boards of member organizations and others through a new monthly newsletter Bee-TALK. The national office distributes Hivelights to members of member organizations.

Policy is in place for external and internal communication.

## Guiding Principles

- Establish and use proper channels of communication
- Communicate accurately, openly and in a timely manner

- Communicate in English and French, as appropriate

## New operating budget

The operating budget is primarily supported by member organizations. The CHC Board determines member fees based on a formula that includes the number of Directors and hive numbers in each province (using StatCan data). How each organization pays its fees is left entirely to its own discretion. Fiscal responsibility is held by the Board and once the annual budget is approved by the Board, the CEO is responsible to manage it. A new Sponsorship Program has been established to encourage other organizations to support the work of the CHC. CHC projects are often funded by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada.

## Guiding Principles

- Secure funding for the operating budget from member organizations and sponsors
- Seek additional funding for special projects from governments, allied industries and others

## New conferences

The new policy defines CHC's role in national events such as conferences and research symposia as assisting with planning and promotion. When CHC enters "event" partnerships, e.g. with provincial associations, this role is defined in a letter of understanding.

## Guiding Principles

- Assist with conferences and other events that

serve the membership and advance the industry

- Ensure that conferences and other events generate revenue for the operating budget

## Strategic priorities

The CHC is now acting on four strategic priorities:

- **HIVE HEALTH** - thriving, productive livestock (Hive Health Baseline, Management and Stock Replacement Research Proposal, Oxalic Acid Registration, Battery Box Proposal, Proposal for Bees on Comb)
- **MARKET ACCESS/SHARE** - increased demand that supports better prices (Pierre the Bear,

School Kits for Grades 1 – 12, participation in American Bee Federation Trade Show)

## FOOD SAFETY -

top quality products that instill consumer confidence (CBISQT Good Practices Manual, Product Traceability Proposal)

- **LABOUR and SUCCESSION** - people to work in the industry now and in future (Foreign Worker Program Proposal, Beekeeper and Worker Training Proposal)

Assistance for CHC restructuring was provided by Agriculture Agri-Food Canada.

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# Plants For Bees:

# Apple

Douglas Clay, Research Scientist, Calgary AB

Common Name: Apple

Scientific Name: *Malus domestica*  
Borkh. (sometimes listed as *Pyrus* sp.)

#### Native Range:

Apples and crab apples are members of the same genus, *Malus* spp. all of the Rosaceae family. The domestic apple is believed to be native to the Caucasus mountain region bordering southeastern Europe and western Asia near the modern city of Alma-Ata, Kazakhstan. Some believe the crab apple (*Malus sieversii* (Ledeb.) M. Roem.) is the original source of the domestic apple.

The apple was historically one of the first fruits to be cultivated. Possibly the most common fruit in the world (at least in temperate climates). Apples come in a wide variety of sizes and colors. Though a temperate fruit, a select few varieties can be grown in subtropical and tropical climates.

The Greeks were growing several varieties of apples by the late 300's BC, and later the ancient Romans also grew

the fruit. Researchers have even found the charred remains of apples at a stone age village in Switzerland.

#### Canadian Distribution:

Although apples are Canada's most important tree fruit crop, we do not make the top 10 of apple producing countries. Production is approximately a half million tons annually – about 1% of world's crop. Ontario, B.C. and the Maritimes are the major apple regions of Canada.

The Annapolis Valley Apple Blossom Festival in Nova Scotia is one of a number of springtime celebrations based on apples.

European settlers brought apple seeds and trees with them to the New World. Apple trees from France were growing in Annapolis Royal, NS as early as 1635. In 1796, John McIntosh discovered a variety of apple in Ontario that is today enjoyed by people around the world--the McIntosh apple!

Twenty to thirty species of crab apples occur in the temperate regions of North America, Europe and Asia. Two are native to Canada, the Pacific crab apple (*Malus fusca* (Raf.) Schneid) from BC and the sweet crab apple (*Malus*

*coronaria* (L.) Mill.) from southwestern Ontario. Many other species have been introduced. Crab apples tend to be cross fertile and freely hybridize. Authorities recognize approximately 800 crab apple varieties.

#### Description:

*Malus* spp is a deciduous tree growing to about 5 to 8 m while some crab apples and varieties of domestic apples are dwarf and even 'vine' type trees. The prairie crab apple (*Malus ioensis* (Wood.) Britt.) is large and grows to 9 m in height while many other species are smaller. Generally the apple is a multi-stemmed tree with a spreading rounded crown. The branches bear showy white flowers from mid April to early June. Individual trees bloom from 2 to 14 days with a mean of about 9 days. The five petal blossoms are white to pink, fragrant and in a flat-topped showy cluster. Some varieties flower in alternate years. The apple fruit can be yellow to green to red depending on the variety. Crab apple fruit are from 1 to 3 cm across while domestic apples can be >12 cm. The fruit matures August to October.

The bark is red-brown to dark gray with small narrow scales. The twigs are also red-brown to gray with numerous short lateral shoots, some bearing terminal thorns. Leaves of the apple are alternate, dark green, elliptical, and up to 10 centimetres long. The edges are toothed along the irregular lobes.

#### Ecology:

Apples prefer full sun. They can tolerate a wide range of soil types (pH 5.0 to 7.5 – preferred 5.5 to 6.5). Most 'wild' crab apple grow in moist, open woodlands often along lakesides and stream banks. The plant requires good drainage.



Honey bees pollinating apple flowers in Nova Scotia's Annapolis Valley.



There are over 7,500 cultivars of apples, each with a different range of preferred habitat. The average apple tree needs 750-1000 hours of chilling each winter in order to ensure flowering. Chilling is defined as temperatures between 0°C and 8°C. Temperatures below 0°C have no effect on chilling hours, while temperatures above 8°C have a negative effect, resulting in the tree needing additional chilling hours for proper flowering.

#### Methods of Reproduction and Spread:

Apples can be bought as bare root, potted, or balled small trees from nurseries. Most domestic varieties are grafted to hardy root stock, but apples can also be grown from seed, and seeds are often the source of new varieties.

Root pruned trees transplant most easily.

#### Honey/Pollen Potential:

Because many of the cultivated crops in Canada are not native to the Americas, native pollinators are often inefficient or unsuitable. Thus honey bees (*Apis mellifera* L.) native to Europe are often used to pollinate crops such as apples introduced from these same regions.

Apple blossom honey is a light golden color and may have a hint of apple in its scent. Apple blossoms are an important source of nectar during the spring in southern Canada and in the northern USA. Bees collect both nectar and pollen from the apple blossom. This can produce an early spring honey crop, often mixed with dandelion honey. It granulates quickly. The nectar is one of the highest in sugar content - over 50%.

Although the harvest is variable, colonies can collect up to 45 kg per colony from apple blossom. During a

good year a colony can increase from 1.3 to 3.6 kg/day but there are many years when the gain is negligible.

#### Reference:

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## Canada's Favourite Apples

Since the 1980's many new varieties of apples are being grown. These include Gala, Fuji, Ambrosia, etc. and have supplemented and in some cases replaced the old favorites such as McIntosh, Spartan, Red and Golden Delicious, Gravenstein, Cortland, Jonagold, etc.

The crab apples were an important fruit for native peoples with access to them. They were harvested in the late summer and early fall and either eaten fresh or stored under water. Because of their acidity, the apples did not require further preservation.

# New folding container system for honey and wax

Geoff Todd, Canadian Honey Council, Calgary AB

TOTE SOLUTIONS LTD of Abbotsford, British Columbia has announced two new container solutions for packing bulk honey for shipping.

LIQUIFOLD 65 Intermediate bulk container is a 65 gallon collapsible container system designed for the easy and efficient handling of liquid products. Already successfully proven in the honey and food industry the container provides an Eco friendly, cost saving and logistically efficient solution for honey and wax handling. It has been designed to compete with cardboard totes, but offers a stronger package which is not susceptible to moisture and can be reused if recovered.

Benefits to Honey & Wax producers:

- Simplifies handling throughout the logistics process.
- Significantly reduces packaging costs compared to traditional alternatives.
- Being returnable and re-usable, Liquifold reduces packaging waste and associated costs.
- Flat pack ability reduces space and costs during storage and transportation. 12 flat packed Liquifold 65's can be shipped on one pallet space.
- The use of an internal, disposable liner provides air, moisture and contaminate free conditions for any product. It also removes the need to wash the container before re-use and eliminates product to container dedication.
- It has the approval of FDA, Kosher, HACCP and CFIA.
- Thick container walls provide insulation against temperature

damage and can also be heated if required.

- Sight gauge provides visual check on liquid level.

## Heating

Thermostatically controlled heater mats positioned under the liner prior to filling, aid the flow of high viscosity products like honey.



## Decanting

Liquifold is easily emptied using aseptic valve/cutter systems, which pierce the liner's sealed membrane, as the valve is attached. Liners do not require venting during the



decant process, maintaining air free conditions.

## Identification

Containers have large areas for labelling and offer a number of ID options including bar code marking.

## Filling

Various connectors are available for attachment to filling lines, ensuring a sealed and sterile fill. Liners are supplied flat, in vacuum and specially folded to ensure a perfect fill every time.

## Safe Stacking

Stacking Locks ensure the cover and skid interlock when stacked, allowing a safe self supporting column in storage and distribution.

LiquiFold O.T. (one trip) Intermediate bulk container provides an economic solution where container recovery is not possible or uneconomic. The container is disposable or reusable and weather resistant.

It presents a safe, strong, one trip answer for the transportation of honey. Liquifold OT is:

- Manufactured from recyclable material, so it is both cost effective and environmentally friendly.
- Supplied flat packed to reduce storage and transport costs and can be quickly assembled ready for use.
- Featured with a sterile inner liner providing an air, moisture and contaminate free environment for any product

For information contact Colin Stephens at Tote Solutions Ltd P. O. Box 10226 Clayburn Plaza, Abbotsford, BC V2S 8K5 TEL: 778-808-4987 or email: info@totesolutions.com web site: www.totesolutions.com

Foldable – Liquifold containers can be easily and quickly collapsed when empty for space-saving storage and distribution.

# Vita Research Awards

Vita (Europe) Ltd Press Release

Vita Research Awards help unscramble and combat the current honeybee crisis

2009 Award to develop a green biotech anti-varroa product

2007 Award highlights the global spread of viruses

A project to develop a new, green bio-control agent to combat the varroa mite that is decimating the world's honeybee colonies has won the Vita 2009 Research Award. Meantime, the results of the Vita 2007 award have just been released providing further evidence that three viruses, almost certainly induced by the varroa mite, are implicated in honeybee losses across the globe.

The 2009 Vita Research Award is being awarded to a team of researchers at the University of Parma, Italy. They have already discovered several fungi that can kill varroa and their next crucial step, for which Vita has awarded the research prize, is to ensure that the fungi are perfectly safe for bees and will be effective in the warm, humid environment of the hive.

Meanwhile, the results of the 2007 Vita Research Award, just announced, provide important further evidence that three viruses implicated in the demise of honeybee colonies are global rather than regional in distribution. Working in Jordan, Dr Nizar Haddad applied the latest molecular (DNA) techniques to detect honeybee viruses. With the first work of its type in the region, he showed that three of the six main honeybee viruses were widespread in Jordan – and by implication in neighbouring countries. These three viruses – Acute Bee Paralysis Virus, Sac Brood Virus, and Deformed Wing Virus – never before conclusively identified as being widespread in Jordan have been implicated in recent colony deaths in many other parts of the globe.

Jeremy Owen, Sales Director of Vita

(Europe) Ltd said: “The biannual international Vita Research award series which we launched in 2005 is exceeding the hopes we had for it. The two completed studies thus far have produced vital information with practical implications for treatment.

“As the largest dedicated honeybee health company in the world, we are eager to foster much-needed new research to combat threats to honeybees. The next award will be in 2011 and I would encourage researchers across the world to consider making an application and to talk to us soon.”

The Vita research award, valued at around Euros 10,000, was launched in 2005 with well-known beekeeper President Viktor Yuschenko of the Ukraine as patron. The first award was made to Dr Alexandros Papachristoforou of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki for his work on chalkbrood control. He discovered that Apiguard, a varroa control product, also had a major inhibitory effect upon chalkbrood and this finding has given beekeepers another weapon in their armoury in fighting chalkbrood which in many parts of the world debilitates and even kills honeybee colonies.

For more information

<http://www.vita-europe.com/>

## Doug McRory Retires as Ontario's Provincial Apiculturist

Heather Clay, CEO, Canadian Honey Council, Calgary AB

After 24 years as Ontario's Provincial Apiculturist Doug McRory has announced his retirement. Doug is a graduate of University of Guelph specializing in apiculture and entomology. He went on to become provincial apiculturist in Manitoba 1967-1971. For a period of twelve years he was a commercial beekeeper but gave it up to become Provincial Apiculturist for Ontario in 1985. Throughout the years he has been dedicated to the honey bee industry and always kept the beekeepers at heart. His close friend Medhat Nasr says, “Doug was not one of a clique. He always did what he thought was best for the industry, even if it went against the thinking of the day. His colleagues respected him and government officials in Ottawa valued his advice. He knew how to work with the system rather than against it, to get the best results for the benefit of beekeepers.

Doug pushed for registration of useful chemicals and made the connections with the companies that were able to make it happen. He was very good for the industry in every way”.

Although Doug was active in assisting industry to get access to chemicals for the treatment of varroa and tracheal mites, he was acutely aware that this is a short term solution. The long term solution is bee breeding and stock improvement. To accomplish



► pg 18

this he spent a great deal of time promoting the Buckfast bee program in Ontario, encouraging Russian honey bee stocks as a commercial enterprise, lobbying for and maintaining Canada's best inspection program, establishing the successful Ontario Tech Transfer Program and working with key beekeepers to put Ontario at the top of Canada's bee breeding industry. The CHC recognized his efforts with the Fred Rathje Award in 2002.

Anyone who travels with Doug has observed his connections. He knows the majority of beekeepers in Ontario and many across Canada. He is welcome in their home and he has met most of their families. He knows the best places to eat for the best price and he is always sought after to speak at beekeeper's meetings. To be on Doug's large email list is to be part of his extended family. Beekeepers have been his life and life will be very different for him now that he is stepping aside. The Canadian Honey Council wishes him the best and offers Doug a heart felt thanks from all beekeepers in Canada for his important work, his mentoring and his pride in doing the right thing.

## City of Vancouver supplies free condos to boost urban bee population

By Gerry Bellett, Vancouver Sun



VANCOUVER — A \$90,000 project to increase the bee population in Vancouver is underway with volunteers now monitoring 53 new colonies of mason bees, living in their own "bee condos" in various parks and public spaces around the city.

The program began last year with 100 mason-bee condos being distributed to homeowners for placing in backyards, said Hartley Rosen, manager of Environmental Youth Alliance, the volunteer organization that is responsible for the initiative.

Residents taking a colony of 36 bees were expected to plant pollen-rich, bee-friendly plants and fruit trees and to garden

organically without the use of pesticides, Rosen said.

"They are expected to monitor the colony and see how the bees are doing and how many cavities in the condo are filled," he said.

"It's pesticides which are killing bees, so we want to encourage people to garden organically."

Rosen said the urban apiary project was inspired by the news that bee populations across North America are in decline.

"We do a lot of hands-on work with youth and this was a project to create awareness about the need to encourage the growth of bee populations in urban areas," he said.

Within the last month, 53 large condos, 50 of them capable of housing 72 bees each, and three super-sized hives which will be home to 720 bees each, have been placed in public areas around Vancouver.

The largest are a pagoda-shaped hive in Stanley Park near the Rose Garden, one resembling a Yaletown condo in Jericho Park and a pyramid-style structure in Everett Crowley Park.

That's 8,000 bees spread across a whole city, but Rosen said the hope is that the bees will reproduce.



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Sally Huffman Brown, OBA Marketing and Media Coordinator,  
Ridgetown, ON

In this economic challenging time creative methods of finding some financial support for agriculture producer associations has been recently achieved utilizing existing relationships and the belief that helping partners will help everyone at the end of the day.

Showcasing this philosophy, the Ontario Beekeepers' Association (OBA) and Heather Clark, sales representative of Dominion and Grimm, have

developed an arrangement where industry has offered to support agriculture.

The new arrangement replaces a previous one where OBA's delivery of their honey skep bottle was sold to producers and packers through the OBA office. With increasing administration and delivery costs, selling through the OBA office was no longer feasible. The whole program



Heather Clark, Dominion and Grimm, has arranged a container sales incentive program for OBA members.

looked like it was destined to be axed until an offer came to OBA from Heather. Heather states that, "I adore dealing with honey people and the industry as a whole. It has always been a joy to work with these customers. Since Dominion and Grimm has always been innovative and has a history of giving back to its customers it was not hard to convince my boss that by offering an incentive payment back to OBA from sales

of the OBA skep bottle was a win, win situation. Everyone benefits and the customers are happy with this arrangement."

Heather came to Dominion and Grimm after working 15 years within the packaging industry as a buyer. The experiences she gained have helped her to be an excellent sales rep for the Ontario industry because she believes that every customer should get the best pricing, through an open

and honest relationship and the best customer service available. "I believe that keeping my customers happy, keeps everyone happy, enthusiastic and energetic," states Heather.

It certainly seems to be working for everyone since OBA and Dominion and Grimm are both happy with what Heather has been able to provide to the industry and to her employer. Tim Greer, President of OBA states, "The agreement with Heather and Dominion and Grimm is beneficial to everyone and the industry is appreciative of this offer from Heather since she will be administrating the sales, delivery and customer service of the OBA skep bottles while still providing OBA with an incentive payment."

Dominion and Grimm just announced that Heather will be their new representative for Western Canada. OBA has now fully launched the incentive program and feedback from the Ontario industry has been positive. Details of the offer can be found on the OBA website at: <http://www.ontariobee.com/index.php?action=display&cat=15>

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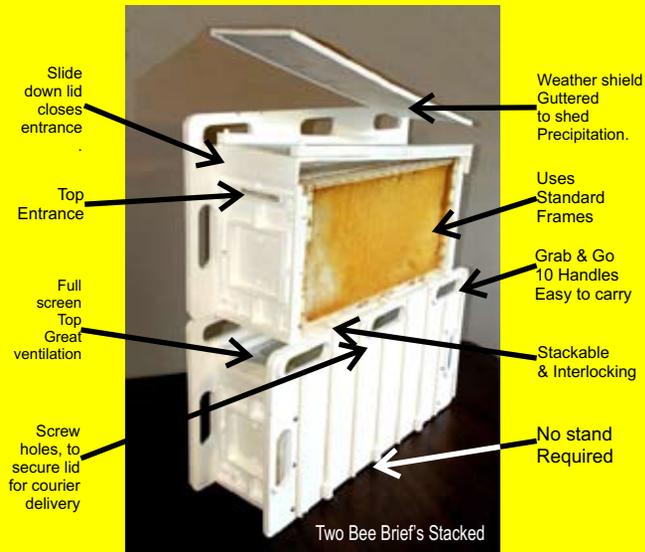
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# BeeCause – Canadian Artists Raising Money for Bee Research

Robin Honey, Honey Design, London, ON

Honey Design is a London, Ontario, based marketing and communications company. Our philosophy is that clients should not be separated from the creative process and that good ideas always come from collaboration. To celebrate Honey Design's 20th anniversary, our hive hatched a creative idea. We chose to celebrate creativity across multiple channels in support of two organizations that we care about, The Arts Project and the Canadian Bee Research Fund. Because we care about the arts and we care about honeybees we are holding an exhibition called BeeCause. The exhibition's theme is honey and the creative direction is indicative of Honey Design's philosophy: Truly innovative creativity comes from a clear statement of purpose without unnecessary restrictions.

## About BeeCause

Artists of all kinds, across Canada are invited to enter this juried exhibition and auction celebrating the theme of honey. Submitted artwork must be inspired by honey, in all its forms. From beeswax to honeycombs, and queen bees to killer bees, anything related to honey is encouraged. Any media is acceptable from photography to painting, drawing to sculpture, and mixed media. All entries will be displayed online, and the judges' top selections will be invited for exhibition and auction at the gala celebration at The Arts Project.

BeeCause, the exhibition, will take place at The Arts Project from September 14, 2009 - September 26,



2009. On the evening of September 17, 2009 Honey Design will host a special event, auctioning the artwork live, by telephone and online. The exhibition and auction will be in support of London's arts incubator, The Arts Project, and the Canadian Bee Research Fund, a Canadian research initiative focussing on the disappearance of honeybees.

## About the Arts Project

The Arts Project is a very unique organization in the London community as it is the means through which hundreds of artists of all disciplines are offered an opportunity to develop and showcase their work. The main goal of The Arts Project is to give artists the support to be creative and develop their work and to offer them an outlet for which they can share that work with the community. Visit [www.artsproject.ca](http://www.artsproject.ca)

## About The Canadian Bee Research Fund

Honeybees, via pollination, are responsible for 15 to 30% of the food we eat. But in the last two years the domesticated honeybee population - which most farmers depend on for pollination - has suffered annual colony losses averaging 28 to 35% with some regions of the country experiencing losses in excess of 60% of their colonies. Research is key to determining why this is happening. The Canadian Honey Council, the industry group representing both commercial and hobby beekeepers, and Canadian Association of Professional Apiculturists supports

research to solve this problem through the Canadian Bee Research Fund. [www.honeycouncil.ca/index.php/bee\\_research\\_fund\\_donations](http://www.honeycouncil.ca/index.php/bee_research_fund_donations).

## Entry Guidelines:

- The maximum dimension for artwork is 24x36 inches
- Selected artists to receive 30% of the purchase price or a tax receipt for the full value.
- Complete the online entry form at [www.because.ca](http://www.because.ca) and upload a photograph of your work online no later than June 30, 2009.
- Uploaded submissions must be in .jpg, .gif, or .png format.
- Maximum file size is 300 dpi, or no larger than 2 MB
- Be aware that the artwork image will be viewed by judges online for selection and inclusion in the exhibition and auction.
- Be aware that by submitting artwork photography and photographs online, the artist/photographer is granting Honey Design permission to use the images to promote BeeCause.
- Artists whose work is selected for exhibition and auction will be notified on July 30, 2009.
- Those artists and photographers whose work is selected must deliver their work, protected from handling, by September 14, 2009 to: The Arts Project, 203 Dundas Street, London, Ontario, Canada N6A 1G4, 519-642-2767

For more information please contact: Liisa Sheldrick, Honey Design, 519-679-6755 ext. 213 [liisa@honey.on.ca](mailto:liisa@honey.on.ca)

or visit BeeCause at [www.because.ca](http://www.because.ca)

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February 14, 2008 (TX)



Below, picture taken March  
18, 2008 (TX)

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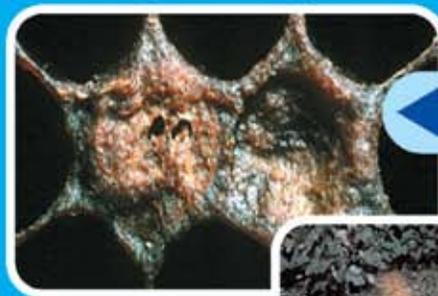
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**European Foulbrood (EFB)** is a bacterial brood disease caused by several agents the main being the bacterium *Melissococcus pluton*. It occurs most

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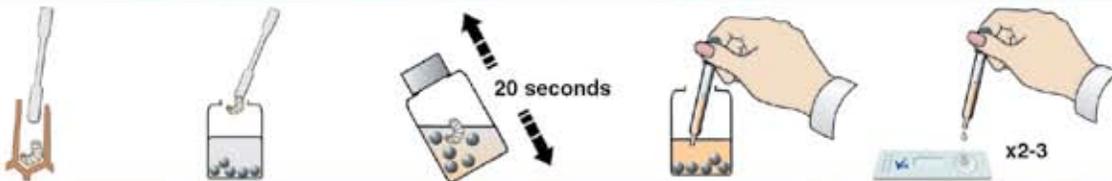
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