

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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