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## Development of a Commercial Beekeepers Field Guide

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**Project No.:** 15-POLL2-vanEngelsdorp

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**Project Cooperators and Personnel:**

Bee Informed Partnership (BIP) Tech-Transfer Team members  
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Rob Snyder and Ben Sallmann, University of California Cooperative  
Extension  
Ellen Topitzhofer and Dan Wyns, Oregon State University  
Megan Mahoney, Texas A&M  
Karen Rennich, Bee Informed Partnership Executive Director,  
University of Maryland

**Objectives:**

Develop a hand-held field guide that provides basic information on managing commercial colonies. The guide will be designed to be easy to use and written so it will be accessible by both beekeepers and their crews. Funding from the California Almond Board helps to support the travel, lodging and per diem of the tech teams to meet at the University of Maryland to begin work on the field guide.

**Interpretive Summary:**

A three-day tech team summit was held at the University of Maryland during July 6-8, 2016 that focused on creating a detailed outline of the full scope of the field guide. In attendance were all tech team members (7) plus Karen Rennich, Dr. Dennis vanEngelsdorp, Andrew Garavito (UMD Apiary Manager), Dr. Marla Spivak and Dr. Kirsten Traynor (UMD). Funding from the California Almond Board supported the travel, lodging and per diem of the tech teams to meet at the University of Maryland to begin work on the field guide. Kirsten has been funded by Project Apis m. to conduct the editing, layout and secure printing of the final guide.

**Materials and Methods:**

N/A

## **Results and Discussion:**

After lengthy discussions at the summit regarding best management practices seen by ~90 commercial operations in the US, a final outline that is exhaustive in detail has been generated and we are beginning to complete each section. It is anticipated that this full color guide, divided into sections by management practice, will be approximately 300 pages. The guide will cover all topics related to commercial beekeepers such as, but not limited to: a case study of successful operations; crew operation; truck prep; home base requirements, a beekeeper's calendar; basic bee biology; pollination preparation; safety; equipment; honey production; Varroa; queen rearing; colony management; apiary management; problems; and a quick reference guide. (knots, conversion charts, etc.).

We have been able to access the graph artist who works for Brushy Mountain Bee Farm to generate any graphics that will highlight key points in each section. The guide will be photo and graphic intensive with minimal text so that this guide can be used with non-English speaking crew and beekeepers.

We are currently planning on an initial printing of 2,000 manuals. The estimate for the full color, 4"x6" bound pocket guide is about \$5/each at this volume and the BIP Board has approved funding up to \$12,000 to print the guide. We hope to have a draft for review by several commercial beekeepers and leaders in industry by the American Beekeeping Federation/American Honey Producers joint meeting in January 2017 in Galveston, TX. Several BIP Board members have also expressed interest in reviewing the guide. We are scheduled to have this guide available by summer of 2017.

## **Research Effort Recent Publications:**

N/A

## **References Cited:**

N/A