



December 1st, 2021

Megan Mahoney, Secretary, Regional Director

North Dakota Beekeepers Association

PO Box 55 Turtle Lake, 58575

Dear State Board of Agricultural Research and Education,

We, the North Dakota Beekeepers Association board of directors, are writing this letter in support of the proposed full-time position of research leader as well as a full-time technician at the Hettinger Research Extension Center, Apiary Research and Extension Program.

The beekeeping industry in North Dakota plays a vital role not only in the agricultural economy of the state, but also in the health of honey bees nation-wide. North Dakota is the number one honey-producing state in the nation. In 2020, North Dakota bees produced 38.6 million pounds of honey valued at over \$61 million. At least a third of all managed bee hives in the United States spend time in North Dakota on an annual basis. In 2021, there were 325 registered beekeepers, totaling over 740,00 hives in the State.

Although there are a large number of colonies present in North Dakota, beekeepers are lacking a non-regulatory entity to provide industry focused research, data, and extension services. The gap between boots on the ground beekeeping and scientific research is significant, and we believe that the funding of these proposed positions could narrow that distance by specifically addressing issues such as honey bee related genetics, varroa mites, pesticides, land use, and education. Because North Dakota is a major stronghold for the nation's honey bee colonies, the Apiary Research and Extension Program positions would be in the perfect location, and with collaboration and support from the State's beekeepers, will have positive impacts that reach far beyond the state borders.

Thank you for your consideration,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Megan Mahoney".

Megan Mahoney (Secretary)

North Dakota Beekeepers Association