

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
David Heath CBE MP

Minister of State

Department for

Environment Food and Rural Affairs

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 12 June 2013 16:26

To: davidheath@davidheath.co.uk; HEATH, David

Subject: BBKA Winter Loss Survey

Dear Mr Heath

We have met in the past at the APPG on Honey Bees and you were particularly helpful and informed during the various debates held during 2008-2010 when we were campaigning for increased Bee Health Research Funding. This was in many ways successful in precipitating greater support of the NBU and the establishment of the Insect Pollinator Initiative. More recently we have been involved in commenting on the neonicotinoid pesticide issue. You will know that whilst not against a ban on neonicotinoids, the BBKA looked for proper field-based research before coming to a conclusion on whether to restrict the use of these compounds. The Commission having taken its decision, presents us all with great difficulties as to how proper and valid research can be carried-out in the field under the moratorium, the very data that we know is missing!

I thought that you would wish to see the attached results of the BBKA Winter Loss Survey which we have just released. This has been ongoing for six years, being regarded as the best such survey given its stable research protocol and randomised approach to recruitment. The results are worrying though not surprising, given the truly horrendous 'winter' which we experienced and which effectively started back in April 2012 and ran on into 2013! The situation may be worse given that we closed the survey on 31 March and there have been reports of continued subsequent losses.

It is interesting to note that losses over the last five years were reduced until this year, during a period in which neonicotinoid use grew substantially. We are concerned about the practices and substances that will inevitably be employed post 1 December 2013 and we want to see a risk/impact assessment undertaken in order to establish what stewardship and husbandry steps might be taken to mitigate the situation going forward. We had a meeting with Lord De Mauley recently on this subject, but I know that this is an issue which impinges on your responsibilities in no small way too.

The BBKA would be happy to meet you at your convenience to discuss these results and the post-neonicotinoid situation if that would be helpful.

Kindest regards

[REDACTED]

BBKA [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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