

# 2017 APIMONDIA NEWSLETTER

N°3



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PH:The President in Dubai with from left Mohammad Najeh, the supplier and importer of the package bees, Dr. Thani Bin Ahmad, Minister of Climate Change and Environment, UAE, Dr. Ahmed Al Ghamdi, our wonderful Professor from Jeddah, Emre Yildirim, Apimaye Beehives from Egypt and Mr. Sultan Al Elwan, The Deputy Minister.



# APIMONDIA NEWSLETTER

## Editorial

As we come to the close of 2016 and enter a new year its good to take time to reflect on the past twelve months. My dad always told me that every day in beekeeping is a school day, you learn something new and he also added, with a wry smile on his face, the day you think you know it all, your doomed - if you are not careful the bees will always catch you out, he would add.

Well 2016 has been a serious learning curve for me, coming in as President and following in the footsteps of my predecessor Gilles Ratia was, as I saw it, a somewhat daunting task. Many times during the past year I have referred to and complimented Gilles for all his efforts as President and indeed Asger Jorgenson too, the previous President.

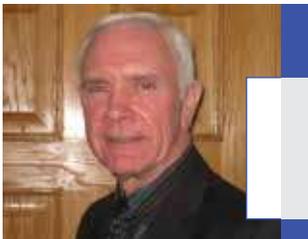
My role, as I see it, is to be a link between the beekeepers and the scientists. In Universities and Research Centres across the world excellent work is being carried out into all aspects of beekeeping, whether its Varroa, Nosema Cerena, GMO's, Small Hive Beetle (SHB), Foul Brood or Adulterated Honey, beekeepers are seeking answers to the myriad of difficulties now facing us all.

Over the past year I have visited twelve countries and the common denominator is that beekeepers are being stretch like never before. The problems facing us vary from country to country and region to region – bee losses, cost increases, what to use to treat varroa, will the SHB arrive and what should we do if we get the Asian Giant Hornet (*Vespa Mandarinia*), are just some of the questions being posed.

In Eastern Bloc countries and the Arab World there is a wonderful beekeeping industry with many excellent beekeepers. In Africa too, judging by my 'What's App', many countries have educational programmes to assist members in enhancing their beekeeping knowledge and who are looking at their beekeeping practices to see if they can improve their production and thereby their incomes. In October I had the pleasure of visiting Dubai to witness the arrival of an Cargo Plane carrying a load of package bees – about 6,000 each load. From early September to the end of October a plane per day of honeybees arrives in both Dubai and Jeddah from Egypt. This was truly an amazing sight and to see the airports ground handling staff, wearing bee suits, remove the bees from the plane after first of all altering the temperture on the plane before removing them.

Hopefully Apimondia can play a role in helping everyone and this means better communications between all of us.

Across the world this is holiday time for some of you and not for others but I always remind myself that the honeybee does not recognise, religion, nationalities or borders, so at the end of 2016 can I wish you all happiness and good beekeeping for 2017.



*Philip McCabe*

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**By Etienne Bruneau (BEL)**  
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## Apimondia Scientific Commission on Technology and Quality

The symposium ApiBio 2016 took place in Santiago del Estero (Argentina) from 7 to 10 September and it was attended by 300 delegates, mainly from central and south America. Most of the 400 beekeepers came from Central and South America. Spanish was the language of the Congress, even if several presentations were Portuguese and in English.

This conference gave us the opportunity to be acquainted with Copsol, the local organizer and other organizations working in organic beekeeping. The presentations and posters invited us to return to a beekeeping that is better in tune with nature. The knowledge on the biology of bee colonies allows us to better determine comfort conditions for them. Stingless bees present real opportunities, but we find that the synergy between them and honeybees is a real talking point.

When discussing obstacles to the development of organic beekeeping, varroa is the main natural enemy for development. Various alternatives for its control were analyzed. The presence of residues in beeswax is also a limiting factor but some beekeepers organizations have overcome this difficulty.



Different systems and organic certification were presented - these tools represent opportunities for producer organizations to conduct consumer promotion in defence of beekeeping that has an important social role. The features, changes and trends of the global market of organic honey were also discussed.

During this event, we (Lucas Martinez, vice President of Apimondia, Nicola Bradbear, Head of the Standing Commission, Bees for Development and Etienne Bruneau) arrived to find a common agreement between the beekeeping group of IFOAM and Apimondia for the organization of future ApiBio symposia. The 5th ApiBio Symposium is planned to take place in Germany in 2018.

*The Symposium was attended by 300 delegates.  
Mainly from central and south America.*

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South America is now facing a big problem of contaminants in honey, related to the intensive use of Glyphosate. The MRL for this herbicide in European countries is 50 ppb and many honeys exceed this level. For organic honeys, the problem is also present, even if the contamination is not so important. Sources of contamination may for example come from harvesting by bees of contaminated water. It should be known that Glyphosate is typically used in the presence of genetically modified crops, and these crops are forbidden within 12 km of hives in organic certification.

At European level, the COPA COGECA sends its reaction to the preliminary results of the Commission's coordinated control plan for the honey sector. This document tries to find practical solutions to avoid this big problem of adulterated honeys that deconstructs our markets. The final report of the Joint Research Centre on the situation of adulterated honey is now in the hands of the Commission and should be published shortly.



*The delegation of beekeepers from Peru*

Today it is very difficult to find beeswax at a fair price on the market. This has led some traders to import poor quality wax (residues or wax synthetic fibres).

Many beekeepers have had problems with this type of wax (rejection of the foundation by bees, abnormal constructions, larval mortality - brood mosaic ...). Many government departments are now working to clarify the situation. This beeswax has no legal definition, which does not make things easier.

Our next event was the 5th & 6th ApiQuality / Apimedica International Symposium in Rome on 22-25 November 2016.

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## Apimondia Scientific Commission on Apitherapy

Between the 14-th and 18-th of September 2016, the Kazakhstan National Beekeepers Union “Bal-Ara” and the Federation of Beekeeping Organizations Apislavia organized the XXI-st Congress of Apislavia, which took place in Almaty at the Kazakhstan hotel. Scientific sections, a technical commercial exhibition, a national honey fair were also organized during the Congress. Technical tours were also organized for all the participants.

Apitherapy had its section on September 14-th. During the whole day, the session discussed problems related to the main topic: *“Current requirements to quality and safety of beekeeping products. Apitherapy, prevention of diseases and treatment of people within the complex therapy using bees and beekeeping products”*.

The sessions had as moderators 2 medical doctors - Doctor Nazigul Konyrtaeva and doctor Aygul Imangalieva – Director Api-Center Almaty. Among the speakers, important researchers and medical doctors presented some part of their large experience in working with bee products. Honey massage and bee sting therapy (apipuncture) were also presented. I have been honoured by the invitation from the organizers - the National Union of Beekeepers from Kazakhstan - to have 2 presentations on the physiology and medical applications of royal jelly and bee venom. Both morning and afternoon apitherapy sessions were very important opportunities for debates and for sharing lots of knowledge and practical experience.



Honey Massage Demonstration



Participants of Apitherapy Section



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On Thursday September 15-th, the Formal Opening of the Beekeeping Exhibition and Republican Fair of Honey as well as the Grand Opening of the XXI-st Congress of Apislavia were honoured by the presence of Mr. Sergey A. Tereschenko - President of the Kazakhstan National Beekeepers “Bal-Ara”, Gulmira Isayeva - Vice Minister of Agriculture of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Ľudovít Gál – President of The Federation of Beekeeping Organizations Apislavia, Philip McCabe - President of the World Federation of Bee Keepers’ Associations of Apimondia, Ziya Sahin - President of Turkish beekeepers Association, organizer of the 45-th Congress of Apimondia in Istanbul (Turkey), Jiří Píza – President of the International Meeting of Young Beekeepers IMYB (Czech Republic). During the Official Dinner, we really enjoyed a remarkable opportunity to get acquainted with just a little part the indigenous Kazakh traditional music and dance.

On September 16-th, large debate on various problems of beekeeping from various member countries of Apislavia as well as actual topics related to honey market, quality standards, frauds related to bee products were discussed. Mr. Etienne Bruneau – President of APIMONDIA Scientific Commission on Technology and Quality made 2 very interesting presentations and President Philip McCabe made a comprehensive presentation on Apimondia International Federation of Beekeepers’ Associations.

The last day of the Congress was dedicated to the ceremony of awarding the participants for the honey contest as well as to the closing ceremony with the resolutions of the 21-st Apislavia Congress. The technical tours which concluded the day were organized in various locations as: a nomadic apiary “Baiserke” and “Honey Bee” industrial complex and a stationary mountain apiary “100% real honey”.



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**By Mulufird Ashagrie (ETH)**  
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## Apimondia Regional Commission for Africa

Between 21st and 25th September 2016, Rwanda hosted the 5th edition of ApiExpo Africa, the largest honey trade business event in Africa. The event is a brand of ApiTrade Africa, which works to promote trade in African bee products globally. This year's event was organised under the theme "Driving socio-economic transformation in Africa: the role of commercial beekeeping", was organised side by side with the General Assembly of African Apiculture Platform (AAP), a platform which brings together beekeepers and policy makers from all the 54 Member States of the African Union.

This Expo also went down in history as the first ever graced by the next hosts of Apimondia Congress. In a show of solidarity, Apimondia Congress 2017 hosts, Turkey, chose to participate at the event to mobilise African beekeepers for Apimondia Congress Istanbul, in September 2017. We look forward to strengthen Africa's position within Apimondia through the office of the Commissioner of Africa, currently held by Mr. Mulufird Ashagrie of Ethiopia.

ApiExpo Africa 2016 attracted hundreds of exhibitors of different bee products and beekeeping technologies. There were also several concurrent events which included conferences, business meetings, training workshops, beekeepers football match, Umuganda Community service and technical tours taking place at and around Kigali, the host City.

While opening the Minister of Agriculture and Animal Resources of Rwanda, Dr. Gerardine Mukeshimana, reiterated the commitment of the Government of Rwanda to continue supporting commercial beekeeping in the rural areas as a way of helping the farmers earn more income from bee products.

On his part, the Chairman of ApiTrade Africa, Mr. Harun Baiya, highlighted the major areas of work which ApiTrade Africa will focus on over the next few years. These include the following:

1. Improving the image of commercial beekeeping in Africa by working with honey processors and exporters to improve their quality and visibility in the target markets.
2. Improving the capacity of intermediary organizations to start business events and trade fairs in their respective countries so as to popularize honey consumption and utilization of bee products within their own borders. We shall help them plan and manage these forums.
3. Improving the capacity of our members to competitively sell honey, beeswax and other bee products in the domestic, regional and export markets
4. Strengthening partnerships with organizations whose work positively reinforces the vision of promoting apiculture in Africa.

The greater vision of ApiTrade Africa revolves around the following themes:

1. Africa having a common united voice on beekeeping as an industry which supports food security, environmental protection and wealth creation agenda of the continent.



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2. Africa having a strong reputation to host international business forums and command international trade in apiculture. This is possible. What we have demonstrated in Rwanda here is evident. Why then can't we bid to host Apimondia Congress events here in Africa? The last time Africa hosted Apimondia Congress was in 2003 in Durban, South Africa! The facilities are now in Rwanda and everywhere else in Africa. The spirit and resolve is strong. And ApiTrade Africa is willing to promote this bid if we are united behind it.
3. National Governments in all the 54 AU Member States committing a considerable budget towards not only agriculture, but also apiculture. A strong apiculture sector is a good recipe for agricultural development through pollination services. We know that at least 35% of all our food crops and cash crops are pollinated by bees.
4. Hundreds of Small and Medium Enterprises, working with thousands of small-holder beekeepers across the continent, to take the uniquely produced natural and organic bee products from Africa to the world. The markets exist locally, regionally and outside the continent. As a private sector body, we are ready to work with them.
5. We also see the regional economic communities and all the policy structures working together to move the apiculture agenda of Africa, in the same manner we have seen happen in the coffee sector, tea sector, dairy sector, grain sector as well as other developed agricultural value chains.



Beautiful array of The Apiary Rwanda Ltd stand during ApiExpo Africa 2016

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At the closing of the event, there was a general consensus about the future collaboration to boost the impact of ApiExpo Africa, and the work of ApiTrade Africa generally, across the continent. The key decisions which were taken include the following:

1. Greater collaboration and synergy between government and private sector led initiatives at the regional and continental level: drawing on the different mandates of African Union institutions and private sector led initiatives such as ApiTrade Africa.
2. AAP endorsed ApiExpo Africa as the premium investment and trade promotion event for the continent and therefore AAP will work with ApiTrade to ensure relevant and engaging expos in future.
3. AU-IBAR to provide support to ApiTrade Africa as a continental private sector initiative to promote trade and investment and in particular to enhance private sector involvement in promoting intra-African trade in bee products, within the precincts of the on-going Bee Health Project.
4. The host of the 6th edition of ApiExpo Africa is Nigeria. Nigeria provides a very unique opportunity to mobilise beekeepers, honey businesses and policy makers in the West African region. It will be the first West African country to host such events. There is also a general sense that the apiculture sector is emerging at just the right time in Nigeria as an alternative source of revenue for the government in the wake of the collapse of the oil prices; oil being the major foreign exchange earner for the country.

We are aware that there are so many challenges which still impede the growth of the honeybee industry in Africa today, and that no single entity can claim to know how to fix them at any one time. We, therefore, liken our work to that of a progressive movement, whose mission can only be accomplished over time. It is a journey we are on. We shall continue to lobby like-minded partners to support commercialization of beekeeping in whatever way they can. For some, it is about providing conducive policy environments to the private sector, while for others, it will be providing financial incentives to enable the private sector do commercial transactions, gain skills and technologies. We therefore pledge to widen our partnership with many organisations and many countries so as to achieve.

If we do this together, Africa shall surely rise!

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## Apimondia Regional Commission on European

For the majority of European countries, 2016 will be remembered as the worst year in terms of production for 35/40 years.

The Mediterranean region, home to the top honey-producing countries, was hit hardest of all, with France and Italy in particular seeing production decimated by 75/80%, while in Spain it fell by 50%.

Eastern Europe and the Balkans also reported significant drops in production levels.

For the first time we have been confronted by the negative impact of climate changes, no longer restricted to a local level but a “continental” phenomenon, affecting everything from citrus honey production in southern Europe, to acacia and then honeydew in the north, resulting in increases in consumer prices.

This was compounded by the impact of agricultural pesticides which, as well as being partly responsible for the decline in production, also significantly weakened bee colonies across vast areas. In addition to the adverse effect on bees (which, in some cases, have been wiped out totally), we are also beginning to find residues of agricultural pesticides in honey, one such example being “Glyphosate”.

As regards health emergencies, in Italy “aethina tumida” (small hive beetle) was detected in an apiary outside the red zone but for now it remains confined to the Calabria region although autumn, which brings a population reduction in colonies, could see a negative development on this front. As I write, counteractive measures remain in place and consist of the destruction of apiaries found to contain even a single infected insect, plus a ban on the movement of beekeeping material from the affected region.

This kind of production situation creates fertile terrain for food fraud: in a context where the product is in short supply and prices have shot up, we are faced with the fundamental issue of how to protect beekeepers and beekeeping. The arrival in Europe of adulterated honey or honey of uncertain origin, is now a reality that risks distorting the market, with negative repercussions for producers and consumers alike.

As soon as the gravity of the situation unfolding became apparent, I called a press conference with the Italian deputy-minister of agriculture (with responsibility for beekeeping), in Rome. We spoke about these matters and about the concern over the European situation, and the news was reported on national news programmes, on radio and in daily newspapers, with ample coverage on the Internet too.

In July I travelled to Andalucía to meet Spanish producers and at the end of November I have another meeting scheduled in Salamanca. Next week I am attending the Unaf congress in France to discuss these matters and in the winter I plan to visit Slovenia and several Eastern European countries to meet delegates and gain a better understanding of the global situation.

