



MALTA BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION

Affiliated to: APIMONDIA

Email : maltabeekeepersassociation@gmail.com
Website : <http://www.maltabeekeepersassociation.com>

Avviż

Il-Malta Beekeepers' Association [MBA] kellha laqgħa mal-uffiċjali tad-Direttorat għar-Regolazzjoni Veterinarja DRV fuq il-ħanfusa iż-żgħira tal-ġebħa (kaxxa tan-naħal) u mard notifikabbli ieħor fl-4 t'Ottubru 2019 ġewwa d-Dipartiment għar-Regolazzjoni Veterinarja u Saħħa tal-Pjanti. L-MBA stqarret illi ħarġet direttiva għall-membri tagħha sabiex iwaqqfu l-importazzjoni kollha mill-Italja u Sqallija minħabba is-sejba riċenti tal-ħanfusa iż-żgħira tal-ġebħa *Aethina Tumida*. Kif ukoll, illi saru seba' kaxxi sentinella f'punti strateġiċi f'Malta u Għawdex sabiex iris monitoraġġ aħjar ta xtutna.

Mistoqsija dwar il-prekawzjonijiet li qed jittieħdu, id-DRV stqarrew illi qed issir laqgħa kull xahar fil-livell tal-UE propju fuq din it-tema. Meta ġiet irrappurtata il-ħanfusa iż-żgħira tal-ġebħa fl-Italja, żdiedu s-sorveljanzi biex jħarrku l-attivitajiet illegali. Komplex jgħidulna illi l-esportazzjoni ġiet pprojbitha f'dawra mejt ta' 20 kilometru mis-sors irrappurtat u sorveljanza estensiva f'dawra mejt ta' 100 kilometru. Intqal ukoll illi jekk dan l-insett jiġi rrapportat fin-nofsinar ta' Sqallija, Malta wkoll tkun pprojbita milli tesporta. Id-DRV huwa determinat illi joħloq għarfien u kuxjenza dwar dawn il-pesti u beħsiebu jintroduċi kaxxi sentinelli fi tnejn u għoxrin lokalita madwar Malta



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u Għawdex. Kemm i-darba jkun hem rapport ta' iżolat ġie spjegat illi tiskatta l-proċedura segwenti:

1. Verifikazzjoni ma' laboratoru referenza fl-UE li ġiet irrappurtata il-ħanfusa iż-żgħira tal-ġebħa
2. Jekk ikkonfermata, il-moviment tal-kolonji jiġi mwaqqaf sa madwar 20km dawra mejt mis-sors tar-rapport.
3. Il-kolonja infestata tkun meqruda u l-ħamrija ta' madwar sa 5 metri bogħod tkun trattata.

L-MBA m'għandiex risposta ċara ta' x'jiġri jekk ikun hemm diversi rapporti, anki jekk dan ifisser li bid-distruzzjoni tal-kolonji kollha tkun qed tiġi estinta in-naħla endemika ta' Malta *Apis mellifera ruttneri*. Id-DRV issuġġerit illi Malta jkollha bank sikur barra minn xtutna bis-sotto-speċi tan-naħal Malti.

Id-DRV saħqu illi in-naħal għandu jirrapporta millewwel jekk jissuspetta li għandu xi tip ta mard fil-kolonji tiegħu. L-MBA ser jibqgħu jaħdmu sabiex jiggwidaw lill-membri biex ikunu konformi mal-obbligi legali.

L-MBA staqsiet jekk Malta tistax tkun iddikjarata ħielsa mill-American Foul Brood [AFB] minħabba illi l-aħħar rapport kien sar ħafna snin ilu. Saħqet illi jekk jinstab li huwa l-każ, għandu jsir kull sforz sabiex Malta tibqa tgawdi



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dan l-istat. Id-DRV għandhom jiċċekjaw id-dokumentazzjoni tagħhom f'dan ir-rigward u jevalwaw il-vantaġġi tat-tali dikjarazzjoni.

Id-DRV organizza laqgħat fuq is-suġġett fit-12 u 13 ta' Frar f'Malta għal ħabta ta' 09:00 ta' filgħodu. L-MBA esprimiet b'mod immedjat illi il-ħin u l-ġranet magħzula ma kienux addattati minħabba li l-maġġoranza tal-membri tagħha m'humiex naħhala fuq bażi full-time. L-MBA talbet lid-DRV taqsira tal-informazzjoni u l-preżentazzjoni relattiva sabiex tkun tista tiġi mwassla lill-kommunita' ta' naħhala fi ħdanha.



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Notice

The Malta Beekeepers' Association [MBA] had a meeting with the Veterinary Regulation Directorate [VRD] officials about Small Hive Beetle and other honeybee disease/threats on the 4th October 2019 at the Veterinary and Phytosanitary Regulation Department. The MBA informed the VRD that a directive was issued for its members to stop imports from Italy and Sicily due to the presence of the Small Hive Beetle *Aethina Tumida*. Also, seven sentinel hives were placed in strategic areas in Malta and Gozo to monitor closely our borders.

Asked about the current precautions being taken on this, the VRD explained that there are monthly meetings at EU level also dealing on the subject. When the outbreak was reported in Italy, they have increased surveillance and targeting illegal activities. Exports were banned within around 20km radius from outbreak source and intensive surveillance was done within 100km radius from source, they said. It was mentioned that should this pest outbreak in southern Sicily, Malta will also be blocked from exporting. The VRD is committed to create more awareness about this pest and intends to introduce sentinel hives in twenty two localities around Malta



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and Gozo. Should an isolated outbreak occur in Malta, it was explained that the sequential procedure would be as follows:

1. Verify with an EU reference laboratory that there is an outbreak of SHB;
2. If confirmed, colony movement will be banned within 20km radius from source;
3. The infested colony shall be destroyed and the surrounding 5m soil will be treated.

It is still not clear what might happen in case multiple outbreaks are reported in Malta despite specifically stating that the destruction of all hives means the extinction of our endemic honeybee *Apis mellifera ruttneri*. The VRD suggested that Malta should have a backup bank of the maltese honeybee sub-species overseas.

The VRD stressed that should any beekeeper suspect a disease in any of their beehives, they are urged to notify them immediately. The MBA will continue working on guiding its members to be in line with legal obligations.

The MBA asked if Malta can be declared free from American Foul Brood [AFB] since the last reported outbreak was many years ago. And if so,



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effort has to be made so that Malta retains that status. The VRD are to check their records and the advantages of declaring such status.

Meetings were organised by the VRD on 12 and 13 February in Malta at around 9:00am. The MBA immediately highlighted that the time and days chosen were not appropriate in view that most of its members are not full-time beekeepers. A summary of the information and the presentation was requested to the VRD so that it is disseminated through our beekeeping community.