

Letter to Beekeepers Who Signed a Compliance Agreement for Certifying Beehive Equipment for Fire Ants

March 6, 2008

As you may know, the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) had previously required an inspection certificate from the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) certifying beehive shipments free of imported fire ants. Recently CDFA notified the department that **inspection certificates are no longer required** as CDFA is now inspecting each shipment for fire ants when the shipment arrives in California. The Arizona Department of Agriculture has also informed TDA that it does not require certification for imported fire ants for beehive equipment entering or transiting that state.

Therefore, **you will no longer have to request an inspection by TDA when shipping beehives to California.** However, CDFA has informed us that the occurrence of fire ants in shipments has increased lately. Consequently, TDA strongly encourages beekeepers to continue observing the management practices outlined in TDA's compliance agreement for certification of beehive equipment for fire ants. This is important to reduce the risk of shipping fire ant-infested beehives and to avoid any delays and treatment costs in California. If any new tactics to manage fire ants in beehives are discovered, TDA will work jointly with the Texas Beekeepers Association, Texas Apiary Inspection Service, and the Texas AgriLife Extension Service to communicate those to you.

Please contact me by phone at (512) 463-1145, or via e-mail at Shashank.Nilakhe@tda.state.tx.us if you have any questions.

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