Special Beekeepers Fund in Ontario Program (SBF)
Frequently Asked Questions

Q. What is the purpose of the Special Beekeepers Fund in Ontario Program (SBF)?

A. The purpose of the SBF is to help alleviate the financial pressures faced by Ontario's beekeepers as a result of a higher than normal mortality rate of Ontario honey bees in the 2006-07 winter season, due to extraordinary winter conditions.

Q. How much funding has been allocated to the SBF?

A. The government has committed up to $2.4 million in one-time funding to the Special Beekeepers Fund in Ontario Program.

Q. Who is eligible for SBF funding?

A. In order to access this one-time funding assistance through the SBF, delivered by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA), beekeepers must meet the following criteria:

- Be registered with OMAFRA, as required under the *Bees Act (R.S.O. 1990, Chapter B.6)*;
- Have experienced bee colony losses greater than15 per cent as a direct result of extraordinary winter conditions from November 1, 2006 to April 30, 2007, inclusive; and
- Submit their applications by the program deadline of **5:00pm Eastern Standard Time (EST) on August 8, 2007.**

Q. Is the SBF a competitive process?

A. No, the SBF is an entitlement-based program. Any beekeepers in Ontario who are registered with OMAFRA before submitting an application will be considered. To be entitled to program funding, applicants must have experienced bee colony losses greater than 15 per cent of their active bee colonies as a direct result of the extraordinary winter conditions from November 1, 2006 up to and including April 30, 2007.

Q. How do eligible beekeepers apply for SBF funding?

A. Eligible beekeepers in Ontario wishing to participate in the SBF should do so by completing an application and submitting it to the Rural Community Development Branch of the Ministry before the application deadline.

The application form is available on the Ministry's website at the following address: www.omafra.gov.on.ca

These forms can also be requested by telephone from the Agricultural Information Contact Centre at 1-877-424-1300 or by e-mail at: ag.info.omafra@ontario.ca

Q. What is the deadline to submit applications to participate in the SBF?

A. The application deadline is **5:00 pm Eastern Standard Time (EST) on August 8, 2007.**

Completed applications should be post-marked on or before the application deadline of 5:00 pm Eastern Standard Time (EST) on August 8, 2007 and submitted to the following address:

Special Beekeepers Fund
Rural Community Development Branch
Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs
4th Floor, 1 Stone Road West
Guelph, Ontario
N1G 4Y2

Note: SBF applications submitted after the application deadline of 5:00pm EST on August 8, 2007 closes will be deemed to be ineligible and will not be processed for payment.

Q. How much SBF funding will each eligible beekeeper receive?

A. Individual funding allocations under the SBF will be determined in accordance with entitlement. The available $2.4 million in total SBF funding will be evenly distributed across the number of colonies of bees lost as a direct result of the extraordinary winter conditions between November 1, 2006 and April 30, 2007.

Each applicant will receive a funding amount determined by the number of lost colonies identified in their submitted applications net of the 15 per cent assumed provincial average industry standard loss.

Although the level of provincial funding to each eligible Ontario beekeeper cannot be determined until after the program application deadline closes and the level of uptake is assessed, eligible beekeepers will receive no greater than $225 per colony of lost bees above the 15 percent assumed provincial average industry standard loss.

Q. Should I reduce my claimed losses by the provincial average industry standard loss?

A. In the application, applicants need not deduct the number of colonies of bees they are claiming as lost by the industry standard loss of 15 per cent.

When completing the SBF program application form applicants should provide the total number of colonies of bees lost during the period from November 1, 2006 to April 30, 2007 as a direct result of the extraordinary winter conditions.

As part of OMAFRA's application review and approval process, the Ministry will deduct the 15 per cent from the number of colonies of bees claimed as loss during the time period. The net loss will then be used for the calculation of the funding amount entitlement for each beekeeper.

Q. When will I receive SBF payments?

A. After the SBF application deadline closes, Ministry staff will undertake a thorough review of all applications that are submitted before the application deadline to ensure SBF eligibility.

The one-time payments will be sent out to eligible Ontario beekeepers approximately five (5) weeks after the application deadline of August 8, 2007 closes.

Q. Will my SBF payment be counted towards any Canadian Agricultural Income Stabilization (CAIS) funding I may receive?

A. Payments made to eligible Ontario beekeepers who are also registered with the Canadian Agricultural Income Stabilization (CAIS) program funding will be included in income calculations generated by CAIS.

Eligible beekeepers receiving SBF funding will receive from the Ministry either an AGR-1 or income statement, depending on if the payments are made to a corporation or individuals, for income tax purposes.

Q. Do I need to be registered with the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs prior to submitting my SBF application?

A. Yes, in order to access one-time SBF assistance beekeepers in Ontario must be registered with OMAFRA, as required under the Bees Act (R.S.O. 1990, Chapter B.6), prior to submitting their application.

Q. If I was not registered with the Ministry prior to the announcement of the SBF on June 25, 2007 am I still eligible for program funding?

A. If you were not registered with the Ministry prior to the announcement of the SBF and you wish to participate in the program, then you must register with the Ministry prior to submitting your SBF application before the deadline of August 8, 2007.

Regardless of your intention to access the SBF, all beekeepers in Ontario must be registered with the Ministry as required under the Bees Act (R.S.O. 1990, Chapter B.6).

The Ontario beekeepers registration form can be requested by telephone from the Food Inspection Branch by telephone at (519) 826-3595 or by e-mail at: cassandra.etheridge@ontario.ca. Beekeeper registration form requests can also be sent by mail to:

Doug McRory (c/o) Cassandra Etheridge
Provincial Apiarist
Food Inspection Branch, 5th Floor NW
1 Stone Road West
Guelph, Ontario
N1G 4Y2

SBF applications received from beekeepers not registered with the Ministry will be deemed ineligible.

Q. If I am currently registered with the Ministry but my information has changed since my most current registration, can I update my registration information before I submit my SBF application?

A. Yes, registered beekeepers in Ontario can update their registration information prior to submitting an SBF application to the Ministry. For the purpose of the SBF, updates must be made prior to submitting an SBF application and before the SBF application deadline of **5:00pm Eastern Standard Time (EST) on August 8, 2007**.

The Ontario beekeepers registration form can be requested by telephone from the Food Inspection Branch by telephone at (519) 826-3595 or by e-mail at: cassandra.etheridge@ontario.ca. Beekeeper registration form requests can also be sent by mail to:

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Guelph, Ontario
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Q. How will my SBF allocation change as more colonies of bees are registered as lost with the Ministry?

A. Since the available $2.4 million in total SBF funding will be evenly distributed across the number of colonies of bees lost as a direct result of the extraordinary winter conditions between November 1, 2006 and April 30, 2007, the per colony of bees unit compensation amount is determined by the number of colonies of bees reported as lost.

Although the level of provincial funding to each eligible Ontario beekeeper cannot be determined until after the program application deadline closes and the level of uptake is assessed, eligible beekeepers will receive no greater than $225 per colony of lost bees above the 15 percent assumed provincial average industry standard loss.

Q. I'm keeping the bees as a hobby, not as a business, do I have to be registered to access SBF funding?

A. Registration with OMAFRA is required of all beekeeping operations in Ontario. Whether the beekeeping is for hobby or profit, registration with the Ministry is required under the Bees Act (R.S.O. 1990, Chapter B.6).

Q. Who do I contact if I have questions or need additional information?

A. Any questions on the SBF program can be directed to OMAFRA's Agricultural Information Contact Centre (AICC) from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm, Monday to Friday, excluding statutory holidays.

The AICC can be reached toll free at: 1-877-424-1300, or by e-mail at ag.info.omafra@ontario.ca