

For: State and County Offices

Signup Deadline for 2009 Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honey Bees, and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP) and Documenting Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD) for Honey Bee Losses

Approved by: Acting Deputy Administrator, Farm Programs



1 Overview

A Background

Signup for 2009 livestock, honey bees, and farm-raised fish losses under ELAP began September 14, 2009. 7 CFR 760.207 provides that, in addition to submitting a notice of loss at the appropriate time, producers must file an application for payment no later than 30 calendar days after the end of the calendar year in which the loss occurred.

With respect to honey bees, ELAP compensates producers for honey bee colony losses because of CCD. However, since the exact cause of CCD has **not** been identified, State and Federal officials are reluctant to officially certify that honey bee colonies died from CCD. Therefore, the National Office is making a technical correction to 7 CFR Part 760 with respect to documentation requirements for honey bee producers to be eligible for ELAP benefits for honey bee colony losses caused by CCD.

B Purpose

This notice notifies State and County Offices:

- that ELAP signup for 2009 livestock, honey bees, and farm-raised fish losses ends **COB February 1, 2010**
- of possible documentation requirements that will be acceptable for honey bee colony losses caused by CCD
- to notify honey bee producers of possible documentation requirements.

Disposal Date	Distribution
January 1, 2011	State Offices; State Offices relay to County Offices

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1 Overview (Continued)

C 2009 ELAP Signup Deadline

The signup deadline for 2009 ELAP ends COB February 1, 2010. In addition to filing a notice of loss according to 1-LDAP, paragraph 295, producers must file a manual application for payment on the applicable FSA-918 or FSA-930 and supporting documents, provided in 1-LDAP, subparagraph 296 E, by **COB February 1, 2010**.

Exception: Supporting documentation of proof of 2009 losses may be filed after COB February 1, 2010, if the application was filed timely.

2 Documenting CCD for Honey Bee Colony Losses

A CCD Documentation

The documentation honey bee producers must provide to be compensated for honey bee colony losses because of CCD under ELAP will **not** be finalized until the technical correction to regulations is published in the FR. However, the following possible types of documentation are under consideration as acceptable proof of honey bee colony losses because of CCD:

- for 2008 and 2009 calendar year losses, the producer's self-certification that the loss of honey bees was because of CCD and documented by the existence of at least 3 of the following 5 identified symptoms of CCD:
 - loss of live adult bee populations in hives
 - rapid decline of adult bee population, leaving brood poorly or completely unattended
 - absence of dead adult bees inside the hive and outside the entrance of the hives
 - absence of robbing of collapsed colonies
 - at the time of collapse, varroa mite and nosema populations are **not** at levels known to cause economic injury or population decline
- for 2010 and 2011 calendar year losses, third party certification, as described in subparagraph B, that the loss of honey bees was because of the existence of at least 3 of the 5 symptoms of CCD
- proof of beginning and ending inventory of honey bee colonies as provided in 1-LDAP, subparagraph 261 E

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2 Documenting CCD for Honey Bee Colony Losses (Continued)

A CCD Documentation (Continued)

- proof of good management practices, as provided in subparagraph C
- any additional documentation the producer may have, such as State health certifications for varroa mite or nosema levels reflecting the lack of mites or disease.

B Third Party Certifications

Third party certifications of 2010 and 2011 honey bee colony losses because of CCD may be acceptable when the third party certifies to **all** of the following:

- specific details about how the third party has knowledge of the honey bee colony loss
- the affiliation of the third party

Note: The third party must be an independent source who is **not** any of the following:

- affiliated with the farming operation
- hired hand
- “family member” defined as a person to whom a member in the farming operation or their spouse is related as lineal ancestor, lineal descendant, sibling, or spouse.
- telephone number and address of the third party
- the loss of honey bees was because of the existence of at least 3 of the 5 symptoms of CCD provided in subparagraph A.

COC shall review third party certifications and determine **all** of the following:

- documents provided as evidence of honey bee inventory are acceptable
- honey bee inventory is reasonable based on documents provided
- claimed losses are reasonable
- third party is a reliable source in a position to have knowledge of loss.

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2 Documenting CCD for Honey Bee Colony Losses (Continued)

C Documentation of Good Management Practices

Honey bee producers are responsible for providing documentation to COC to substantiate good management practices. COC shall establish what documentation is considered acceptable to substantiate good management practices. Documentation of good management practices may include, but is not limited to, documentation established by COC to substantiate that the producer provided the following:

- adequate feed for honey bee colonies
- preventive treatments for varroa mites and disease
- other proper maintenance practices.

3 Action

A County Office Action

County Offices shall immediately notify honey bee producers, by all available means, of the possible types of documentation that may be acceptable for documenting CCD for honey bee colony losses. Honey bee producers should be advised to begin compiling their loss documentation according to this notice.

B State Office Action

State Offices shall ensure that County Offices:

- are immediately informed of the contents of this notice
- immediately publicize the contents of this notice by all available means.