

Surveyor Quick Notes: COLOSS Basic Questionnaire 2009-10

Introduction

The COLOSS Cost action program expresses the need to achieve “reliable and internationally standardized data on colony losses, which can be compared between countries and years” (Cost Action FA0803 Proposal 2008).

Through various workshops we are now pleased to say we have come up with what we hope will be a simple set of questions that will meet this aim. You will note in the attached questionnaire there are two sets of questions, essential and optional.

The essential questions are those that all surveyors should conduct.

You will note that our target dates for these essential questions are October 1 through April 1. This may not be suitable for some, as weather may not permit the inspection of colonies on April 1. In these cases, a date of May 1 would be acceptable.

The optional questions, are optional and while we encourage you to use all or at least some of these. Your utilization of them is at your discretion. We fully understand that not all of these questions are appropriate for all regions. You should feel free to develop optional questions on your own if you feel those would be appropriate for your region.

Definitions and wording.

The COLOSS questionnaire is designed for general survey research to compare honey bee colony losses and possibly related factors between multiple regions and countries. In an attempt to be certain that the intent of the questions developed are understood we have developed the following points of clarification.

The questionnaire is directed to colonies which may be productive. The term productive colony is defined as a colony which could be used for honey production or pollination service. The word productive may be replaced by 'viable' in the relevant questions.

1. The questionnaire is directed to colonies which may be productive. The term productive colony is defined as a colony which could be used for honey production or pollination service. The word productive may be replaced by 'viable' in the relevant questions.
2. In Essential Question 1 the term “Province” can be exchanged with “State”, “Department”, “County” or other area indications of a lower scale than Country.
3. In Optional Question 5 “Postal Code” can be exchanged with “Zip (Code)”.
4. Essential and Optional Questions referring to October 1 or April 1 can be changed to September 1 or May 1.
5. In Essential Question 6 “how many” can be exchanged with “what percentage”.
6. In question O8 a list of bee races is represented. The surveyor is free to add items which are not in the list, and remove items which are not present in the target population.
7. In question O15 a list of possible causes for colony losses is represented. The surveyor is free to add items which are not in the list, and remove items which are not considered of interest for the target population or not list any factors at all.

Sample Size and Survey Mode.

We encourage you to employ a mix of modes to collect questionnaire data, like beekeeper journals, meetings, telephone, email and internet. A coverage of 5% of the beekeepers and 5 % of the colonies in your survey would meet COLOSS standards.