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Changes in the National Beekeeping Program

Автор(и): Растителна защита
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Last week, the published amendments to the National Beekeeping Program for the period 2014-2016 were announced in the State Gazette.

The theft of beehives and the death of bee colonies will be included within the scope of the definition of force majeure circumstances. The text concerning the eligibility of beneficiaries who received funding for the purchase of new hives and swarms in previous years has also been corrected and supplemented.

The newest aspect of the Ordinance is the transition to paperless processing of applications for support, which necessitates a change in the application form (Appendix No. 5a of the ordinance). The changes to the ordinance are related to reducing the number of documents required for application, as declared circumstances will be verifiable through official channels. It is sufficient as

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a requirement to apply under the beekeeping program to be a registered agricultural producer according to the ordinance.

What does the National Beekeeping Program envisage for the period 2014 – 2016?

Beekeepers will be able to receive funds for promoting honey and bee products, for medicines against varroosis, for performing physicochemical analysis of honey in accredited laboratories, for purchasing beehives, bee colonies and queen bees, as well as for implementing scientific projects in the field of beekeeping. These are measures A, B, C, D and E, which were also applied during previous periods. Only the funding for expenses related to veterinary control and receiving assistance from beekeeper-inspectors is discontinued.

The new aspect for the period 2014-2016 is the method of acceptance and ranking. For the measures to combat varroosis and to perform physicochemical analysis of bee honey (measures B and C), the State Fund "Agriculture" (SFA) will conclude contracts with all beekeepers who meet the funding requirements described in the National Beekeeping Program (NBP) and Ordinance No. 9/19.11.2013. If the budget is insufficient, the aid will be reduced by an equal percentage for all applicants. Another novelty is that for the most attractive measure – purchasing beehives, colonies and queen bees (measure D) – applications will now be ranked according to evaluation criteria. These are also described in the ordinance. The program's budget for the next three years is a total of BGN 13,304,650. The funds for 2014 are BGN 4,436,149, for 2015 - BGN 4,436,975, and for 2016 - BGN 4,431,526. Half of them come from the European Union and the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund (EAGF), and the other half - from the national budget.