

BeeFirst

Acquiring data needed for minimizing winter losses in managed honey bee colonies across Luxembourg



Inspiration

Honey bees are besides pigs and cattle the most important livestock. Together with wild bees they contribute to pollination, an ecosystem service with a global estimated value of 153×10^9 US \$. High winter colony losses were recently reported for managed honey bees from Canada, China, Europe, Israel, Turkey and the United States of America, raising concerns that a global pollinator decline could be going on.

Many high-value crops depend on pollination for producing fruit. A decline of pollinators would have consequences that are very difficult to anticipate. Particularly in developed countries, a consensus among decision takers, scientists and beekeepers emerges, that is it too risky not to take action against declining pollinator populations. Accordingly, several countries including the United States of America, the United Kingdom and France are developing national strategies for preserving pollinators.

Innovation

The project will result in enhanced management practices for minimising winter losses in managed honey bee colonies across Luxembourg in collaboration with the relevant administrations and beekeeper associations.

The project will furthermore allow enhancing the recommendations of the [Sentinelle](#) project on how to minimise the risks for honey bees when protecting crops from insects that must be considered as pests.

Impact

The BeeFirst project will result in enhanced management practices for reducing honey bee colony losses over winter with means that are available to beekeepers and landscape architects. BeeFirst will also result in building blocks for the implementation of European and [national programs focused on reducing the risks of pesticide use](#). Sets of new management practices that help safeguarding or improving the quality of apicultural products will be developed.

Publications on locally interesting findings and techniques in applied journals and publications on generally interesting findings and techniques in international journals will contribute to share the BeeFirst experience.

Partners

Administration des Services Vétérinaires , Fédération des Unions d'Apiculteurs du Grand-Duché de Luxembourg (FUAL) , Beekeepers , Beekeeper Joé Molitor , Administration des Services Techniques de l'Agriculture - ASTA (LU)

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