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BBKA Statement on Research Funding Announcement

The British Beekeepers' Association (BBKA) today, 21 April, 2009, welcomes the announcement that additional money is to be found to fund bee health research. This is in addition to the £2 million already promised by Defra and will take the total funds available to some £10 million. The new money comes from the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC), Natural Environment Research Council (NERC), the Scottish Government, and the Wellcome Trust.

The BBKA has recently published its document "Honey Bee Health – Research Concepts" which identifies key research projects to be pursued, covering a range of work from Varroa to viruses, queen bee quality to bee breeding and husbandry to habitat loss.

This new funding will enable Research Institutes to make bids to fund the urgent research work needed to combat the threats facing honey bee health. The BBKA looks forward to playing a full part in identifying and prioritising the research projects to be initiated.

Tim Lovett, President of the BBKA, said: "This news is most welcome and represents a victory for the campaign that the British Beekeepers have undertaken during the last 12 months. It is vital that these funds are committed to the work that can make a real difference and meet the challenges facing honey bees.

"Our sincere hope is that the majority of these funds will be directed towards practical research into the problems and threats that honey bees face in this country. We very much look forward to working closely with the funding bodies to ensure the correct projects and priorities are identified and supported based closely on our document 'Honey Bee Health – Research Concepts'.

Martin Smith - President, BBKA

21st April 2009



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