



# WASHINGTON STATE BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION KEEPING THE BEE IN BUSINESS

## Legislative Agenda - 2016

The Washington State Beekeepers Association (WSBA) appreciates the direction and support of the State Department of Agriculture in convening the Statewide Honey Bee Work Group, with findings presented to the Legislature in December 2014. Notable to the process were Agriculture staff members Steve Fuller, Brad White and Blanche Sobottke. Beekeepers also recognize the work of Alison Halpern to address the issues of beekeepers. This paper outlines 2016 WSBA policy and funding priorities, based on the findings of the Honey Bee Work Group. (The full report can be found at: [agr.wa.gov/FP/Pubs/docs/103-435HoneyBeeWorkGroupReports121214.pdf](http://agr.wa.gov/FP/Pubs/docs/103-435HoneyBeeWorkGroupReports121214.pdf))

Already, there has been action in these priority areas:

- Registered WA beekeepers are now designated as farmers for tax purposes.
- Improved working with the State Noxious Weed Board.
- Beekeeper named to the State Noxious Weed Board.
- Heightened awareness of beekeeper issues among state agencies and in the Legislature.

## POLICY REQUESTS

The Washington State Beekeepers Association requests that the WA Department of Agriculture support and actively advocate for the needs of honey bees and other pollinators in all departments and with other agencies by:

- Updating its ***Integrated Pest Management*** requirements found in RCW 17.15 to better protect pollinators.
- Drafting an ***Integrated Vegetation Management*** RCW that shifts resources by preventing weed problems, and by preserving or planting valuable forage plants as much as possible.
- Increasing ***pollinator protection from pesticides*** by ensuring that the state MP3 process protects honey bees, and by strengthening pollinator protection training for applicators and growers.

## FUNDING REQUESTS

The Washington State Beekeepers Association requests the WA Department of Agriculture:

- Allocate funds or help beekeepers find funding sources to support local ***forage replacement projects***.
- Support funding of two positions outlined in the Honey Bee Work Group Report:
  - ***WSU Extension researcher/educator*** to focus on needs of honey bees and beekeepers.
  - ***WSU Extension pollinator ecologist***.

## WSBA Honey Bee Work Group Members and Legislative Committee Contacts:

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