



State of Utah

GARY R. HERBERT  
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*Lieutenant Governor*

## Department of Agriculture and Food

LUANN ADAMS  
*Commissioner*

SCOTT ERICSON  
*Deputy Commissioner*

September 15, 2015

Utah agriculture plays an important role in our state's economy. Fourteen percent of our economic activity, or \$17.5 billion, is tied to the production and processing of the foods we grow. Our consumers recognize the value of our locally grown foods and contribute more than \$16 million a year in direct sales to our farmers and ranchers. The beekeeping and pollinating industry is vital to keeping agriculture strong. As much as 30 percent of America's crops depend on honeybee pollination. Utah's honey industry generates more than \$2 million in annual sales and is a popular hobby for many.

Relations between our farmers and beekeepers have traditionally been cordial, even friendly, but in recent years some tensions have arisen over unexplained increases in honey bee mortality, a phenomenon some have blamed on agriculture.

The Utah Managed Pollinator Protection Plan (MP3) was developed in response to a growing need for a balanced public policy that mitigates risk to honey bees, while minimizing the impact of that mitigation on production agriculture. We intend to achieve the goals of the MP3 using a multipronged strategy, which includes facilitating cooperation between all parties, conducting improved training of pesticide applicators and education about the importance of pollinators.

Reducing honey bee exposure to pesticides is ideal. Our hope is to achieve this while continuing to provide access to habitat that supports bee health and derived benefits to agriculture. Utah's managed pollinator protection plan is not a static document, but a work in progress. We intend to revisit this document annually and update as needed.

Far too little is known about the factors that may affect honey bee health. Research focusing on nutrition, bee repellants and the effects of pesticides is important. Other research into honey bee health, disease and parasite resistance and genetic diversity is also urgently needed so that more effective and comprehensive strategies can be put in place. We believe research can provide new answers and better solutions to the current dilemma.

Finally, effective communication among all parties is essential to the success of this plan. Unless we communicate freely and openly with one another, the rest of our goals cannot be reached. Working together (farmers, beekeepers, pesticide applicators, scientists) Utah can protect its honey bees, while maintaining its position as a leading supplier of food, feed, fiber, and fuel for our nation and the world.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "LuAnn Adams".

LuAnn Adams,  
Commissioner,  
Utah Department of Agriculture and Food