

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Nova Scotia Beekeepers Association

STRATEGIC PLAN FY 2009-2014



February 24, 2009

**Morton Horticultural Associates
Kelco Consulting Ltd.**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This strategic plan is the result of the collaborative efforts of many individuals and stakeholders interested in the future success of the Nova Scotia Honey Bee Industry. These people have provided valuable input and comments during the course of this strategic planning engagement exercise and in the development of this strategic plan. Their contributions are gratefully acknowledged.

Special thanks are due to the executive and the membership of the Nova Scotia Beekeepers Association (NSBA) for their willing participation, enthusiasm and support. Thanks are also due to all of the other organizations (provincial and national) and agencies, government representatives and stakeholder partners that provided a wealth of information on all aspects of the industry and support for this project.

The strategic planning report was prepared through a collaborative initiative by consultants R. Gary Morton of Morton Horticultural Associates and Matthew Reeves and Terri Roberts of Kelco Consulting Ltd.

February 23, 2009

Fellow Beekeepers,

Over the past several years the Nova Scotia Beekeepers Association has been interested in developing a Strategic Plan to provide a clear direction and clearly defined goals for the membership to help guide the honey bee industry forward in a proactive manner within the province.

I am pleased to announce that this process is now complete and present this plan to the Membership. The plan contains four clearly defined goals, each with its own set of objectives and actions to ensure the achievement of these goals over the next five years. The goals and objectives have been prioritized to ensure the most urgent needs of the industry are addressed in a timely manner. This plan is a living document which will be subject to revision to reflect changing priorities within the industry and the association.

The development of this plan included consultation with a representative sample of association members and other industry stakeholders to garnish information and ideas from the whole spectrum of beekeepers and those who depend on the services provided by beekeepers such as the fruit, berry and vegetable sectors. It also included consultation with equipment and medication suppliers. A steering committee was formed comprised of the NSBA Executive, other beekeepers and a Department of Agriculture representative. The process was very rewarding and although there were differing opinions at times, the process was conducted with the commitment to achieving a common goal for the betterment of the industry and the Nova Scotia Beekeepers Association.

I would like to acknowledge the following for their dedication of time, effort and funding towards the completion of this plan:

- 1) The steering committee whose contribution of in-depth knowledge of beekeeping and industry concerns has made this all encompassing plan a reality
- 2) Lori Kittilsen, NSDA, for helping us initiate the strategic planning process and facilitating that process from start to end
- 3) Agri-Food Industry Development Fund for supplying funding for the project
- 4) Morton Horticultural Associates and Kelco Consulting for their professional guidance and preparation of this plan.

I am very pleased to have been part of this project and I am confident that it will guide the art of beekeeping and the industry forward as we work together over the next five years to achieve the common goals and actions contained herein. May your bees remain healthy, prosperous and profitable.

Sincerely,

Roger Morash,
President, Nova Scotia Beekeepers Association

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0 Executive Summary	4
2.0 Introduction	6
3.0 Nova Scotia Honey Bee Industry Profile	7
4.0 The Industry Strengths and Weaknesses.....	8
5.0 Organization Philosophy.....	12
6.0 Strategic Plan Framework.....	13
7.0 Conclusions.....	22

1.0 Executive Summary

The beekeeping industry in Nova Scotia consists of both honey bees for the production of honey products and for pollinations services. The honey bee industry makes a real contribution to the Nova Scotia agricultural economy, which far exceeds the value added through the production of honey and related products. The economic value of the honey bee pollination service has an enormous impact on the success of many agricultural crops, in particular the blueberry, apple and cranberry industries. Currently, there are approximately 225 beekeepers operating in the region of 19,000 honey bee hives in Nova Scotia. Strong historical industry/government partnerships and cooperation have allowed Nova Scotia to remain one of the few beekeeping areas in North America to successfully delay the incursion of pests and diseases that have devastated the industry in other regions. The Nova Scotia Beekeepers Association (NSBA) sees bee health as the number one and most critical issue facing the industry, and is committed to an aggressive proactive approach in the management of the pests and diseases affecting bee health in this province. The NSBA has undertaken this strategic planning initiative to help the industry better plan and prepare for the future and to ensure that the honey bee industry in Nova Scotia is a healthy, strong, and viable industry that can successfully grow into the future.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Nova Scotia Beekeepers Association is to support and assist Nova Scotia beekeepers in maintaining healthy, profitable and sustainable apiaries through education, communication and the supply of services.

This strategic plan emphasizes results based on cooperation and teamwork with our strategic partners and stakeholders. The strategic planning initiative identified four key

strategic goals on which the NSBA must focus over the next five-year period to manage bee health and grow the industry. These four goals mirror the industry's commitment to the success and sustainability of a strong, healthy and profitable honey bee industry in Nova Scotia.

The four identified goals are:

- **Goal #1 Bee Health:** To ensure the health of the Nova Scotia Honey Bee Industry. Bee health is the number one and most critical issue facing the Nova Scotia Beekeeping Industry.
- **Goal #2 Extension:** To facilitate the transfer of information to the Nova Scotia Honey Bee Industry. Extension programs facilitate the transfer of information and services to beekeepers on bee health.
- **Goal #3 New Entrants:** To encourage new entrants. New entrants are the lifeblood of a sustainable honey bee industry in Nova Scotia.
- **Goal #4 The Association:** To create a strong association that supports the future growth of the Nova Scotia Honey Bee Industry and the needs of the membership.

The NSBA has undertaken this strategic planning initiative to help direct and focus resources and efforts on actions which are very important, if not critical, to the future success of the industry. Through the achievement of these goals and objectives, the NSBA will improve the industry's ability to manage bee health, minimize the impact of a bee industry disaster, enhance education programs, and expand the honey bee extension program available to the industry. A strong association leads to a strong and proactive honey bee industry in Nova Scotia. Success in the future lies in the industry's ability to organize and direct the available resources to take action and move the industry to new levels of competitiveness, industry health and profitability.

2.0 Introduction

The honey bee industry makes a real contribution to the Nova Scotia agricultural economy, which far exceeds the value added through the production of honey and related products. In recent years, pollination services have become a significant business focus of the Nova Scotia Honey Bee Industry. The economic value of the honey bee pollination service has an enormous impact on the success of many agricultural crops in the province, in particular the blueberry, apple and cranberry industries.

While the production of honey has captured public profile and media attention, the importance and complexity of the industry is not well understood by many people outside the honey bee industry. Honey products are known for their natural sweetening properties and historically have been a staple food on the supermarket and grocery store shelves. Value-added honey products that offer health, lifestyle and medicinal benefits have recently gained new popularity with consumers.

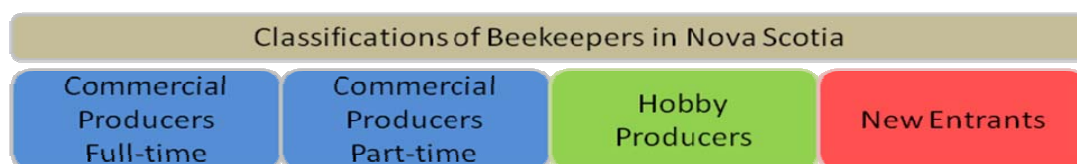
Due to strong industry and government partnerships and cooperation, the Nova Scotia Honey Bee Industry has remained one of the few areas in North America to delay the introduction of honey bee pests and diseases that have devastated the industry in other regions of the world. The NSBA is committed to an aggressive proactive approach to the management of the pests and diseases affecting bee health in Nova Scotia. The NSBA has undertaken this strategic planning initiative to help the industry better prepare for the future and to ensure that the honey bee industry in Nova Scotia is a strong and viable industry capable of supporting the future growth of agriculture for years to come.

3.0 Nova Scotia Honey Bee Industry Profile

The beekeeping industry in Nova Scotia consists of both the production of honey and pollination services. Bee hives can be managed for the production of honey, bees, beeswax, and other specialty honey bee products. However, another essential role of honey bee hives in Nova Scotia is for the timely and successful pollination of many crops, in particular the blueberry industry.

Currently, there are approximately 225 beekeepers in Nova Scotia operating in the range of 19,000 honey bee hives. In recent years, the demand for honey bee hives for pollination has grown beyond the available supply as the blueberry, cranberry and other specialty fruit industries continue to develop and expand in Nova Scotia. The tree fruit and berry crop industry in Nova Scotia is valued annually at over \$40 million dollars. The success of these agricultural sectors is dependent on the annual support of the beekeeping industry in Nova Scotia for annual pollination of their crops.

The Nova Scotia honey bee industry consists of four main sectors: commercial producers (full-time), commercial producers (part-time), hobby producers and new entrants. New entrants are very important to the future growth of the industry, as some will eventually scale up operations to become commercial business enterprises in the future.



4.0 The Industry Strengths and Weaknesses

All agriculture-based industries have particular strengths and weaknesses that impact the potential growth and development opportunities available to that industry. The future success and performance of the Nova Scotia Honey Bee Industry is based on factors such as profitability, sustainability, partnerships and alliances, competitiveness, future visioning, resilience, flexibility and self-reliance. By understanding its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats, and trends, the industry can develop new strategies to capitalize upon its strengths and available opportunities, and overcome its threats and weaknesses, to better manage the risks it faces in the future.

The Nova Scotia Honey Bee Industry Has Many Strengths

As identified from the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats and trends assessment survey (SWOT-T), Nova Scotia beekeepers and the other industry stakeholders have a good appreciation of the strengths of their industry.

The key strengths identified are listed below.

- *There is a growing demand for honey bee pollination services in Nova Scotia, mostly from the blueberry sector.*
- *The industry has a good working relationship with its primary pollination customers.*
- *Nova Scotia beekeepers are skilled, experienced, and enthusiastic and many are queen producers/breeders.*
- *There have been some new entrants to the industry in recent years.*
- *Generally good communication and cooperation exists across the industry.*
- *Nova Scotia honey has a recognized reputation for quality with buyers and consumers.*

- *There is increased interest in honey and honey bee products by consumers due in part to “buy local initiatives.”*
- *Bees are vital to the pollination of many Nova Scotia agricultural crops.*
- *Nova Scotia’s isolation has assisted with the management of the risk of disease and new pest incursion.*
- *Local retail businesses support the sale of Nova Scotia honey products.*

The Nova Scotia Honey Bee Industry Also Has Some Weaknesses

The main identified weaknesses within the Nova Scotia Honey Bee Industry are listed below.

- *No contingency strategy has been developed to address a bee health industry disaster.*
- *Limited extension support to address and manage bee health issues.*
- *The aging demographic of Nova Scotia beekeepers and the lack of new commercial entrants.*
- *The association is overly dependent on volunteers limiting its ability to represent and support the industry.*
- *The lack of coordinated effort to manage important industry research.*
- *Limited formal educational and training opportunity for Nova Scotia beekeepers.*
- *There is a shortfall of local queen producers and queens available in Nova Scotia.*
- *Access to skilled labour for the industry.*

Immediate and Primary Threats to the Nova Scotia Honey Bee Industry

The following are eminent threats to the future viability, success and growth of the Nova Scotia honey bee industry.

- *Failure to maintain adequate control of the varroa mite and other serious honey bee pests will devastate the Nova Scotia Honey Bee Industry.*

- *The resistance to existing available medications for bee health management.*
- *The increase in the annual honey bee hive losses across the province.*
- *Weather conditions contributing bee loss, poor pollination and honey production.*
- *Increasing hive damage due to vandalism and pests such as black bears.*
- *The limited local capacity to produce and supply the necessary queens.*

Opportunities for the Industry to Build Upon

The following are the identified current or future opportunities for the Nova Scotia honey bee industry to capitalize upon.

- *Supply more hives for pollination.*
- *Adopt best management practices to increase the productivity of hives and minimize bee pest and disease incursions.*
- *Satisfy the consumer demand for local honey and other honey bee products.*
- *Increase the supply of local queens by developing local breeding strategies.*
- *Develop a capacity export of queens and hives to other provinces.*
- *Encourage new entrants to revitalize the sector.*
- *Coordinate and better direct local honey bee research and technology transfer.*
- *Develop new value-added honey bee products. (Health, nutraceutical, beauty)*

Major Trends Influencing the Industry

The following are the identified major trends influencing the Nova Scotia Honey Bee Industry within the next five years.

- *Management of honey bee health will continue to be the most important focus and critical issue the industry faces in the future.*
- *The reduction in the numbers of commercial honey bee producers available for pollination services.*
- *Continued demand for pollination services, especially in the blueberry sector.*
- *Pharmaceutical and beauty industry use of bee products is increasing.*
- *The natural food movement and increased consumer demand for “local” Nova Scotia quality honey will continue.*
- *The average age of beekeepers is increasing.*
- *Input and transportation costs will continue to increase.*

5.0 Organization Philosophy

To achieve the NSBA's strategic goals and to implement its key industry initiatives, this plan emphasizes results based on teamwork with the Association's strategic partners. The NSBA will work to improve both its long-term and short-term leadership in the areas necessary to make the industry strong for the future.

Vision Statement

The Nova Scotia Beekeepers Association will assist in the creation of a sustainable Nova Scotia Honey Bee Industry for the betterment of the province's agriculture sectors and the environment.

Mission

The mission of the Nova Scotia Beekeepers Association is to support and assist Nova Scotia beekeepers in maintaining healthy, profitable and sustainable apiaries through education, communication and the supply of services.

Mandate

The mandate of the Nova Scotia Beekeepers Association is to respond to the needs of the membership in context with its vision and mission.

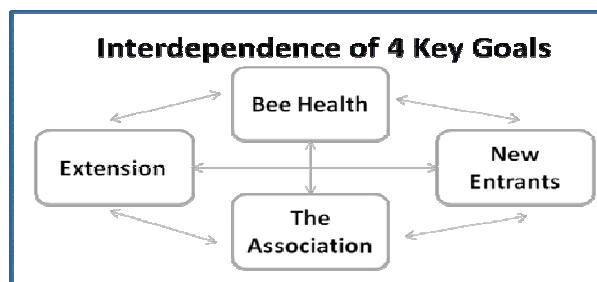
6.0 Strategic Plan Framework

The four key strategic goals and associated objectives contained in this plan are the key initiatives on which NSBA must focus over the next five-year period. The actionable strategies delineate the Association's future activities required to achieve NSBA's strategic vision. These four goals mirror the Association's commitment to the success and sustainability of a strong, healthy and profitable honey bee industry in Nova Scotia.

The following key result goals were identified as specific areas where action must be taken for the organization to remain true to its vision and mission, and to ensure the industry is able to successfully grow forward in the future.

The four identified key result areas are:

1. Bee Health
2. Extension
3. New Entrants
4. The Association



While the identified key result areas are specific in nature, they are all interrelated and interdependent upon each other for overall success as illustrated in the diagram. High levels of bee health cannot be achieved without extension education. The sustainability of the industry is dependent upon new entrants and the transfer of knowledge from one generation to the next. The Association is the voice of the industry that helps other stakeholders to understand the complexity of bee health issues and the significance that the industry has in relation to other agriculture production sectors.

Bee Health - Strategic Goal 1

ENSURE THE HEALTH OF THE NOVA SCOTIA HONEY BEE INDUSTRY

The industry's ability to maintain honey bee health is the number one determining factor in whether the honey bee industry in Nova Scotia can remain viable, and if producers can successfully grow the industry in the future. The worldwide decline in effective controls to manage honey bee health is mandating the use of best management practices and the need for more education and innovative thinking to meet this challenge head on. Bee health is not only an individual beekeeper's responsibility, but is the responsibility of the entire agricultural industry. The state of health of the honey bee industry has a significant impact on many other agricultural industries within the province that depend on honey bees for pollination. Without healthy honey bees, the viability of many agricultural crops in the Atlantic Canada Region would be in question.

Future Strategy

In the future, all agricultural stakeholders must work together to maintain and manage the honey bee health of the Nova Scotia Honey Bee Industry. The industry needs to build upon the management opportunities associated with its isolation from honey bee pests and diseases devastating hives in other regions of North America. This effort will require a strong bee health commitment by all industry stakeholders in the areas of extension and education over the next five years.

Key Outcome: To maintain a healthy Nova Scotia Beekeeping Industry that can effectively manage bee health to successfully grow the industry into the future.

Prime Bee Health Objectives

(Priority A+) 2009 – 2014 Ongoing

1.0 To minimize the impact of bee health diseases and pest incursion in Nova Scotia.

Actionable Bee Health Strategies

- Develop a long-term bee health strategy for the Nova Scotia Honey Bee Industry.
- Create a proactive risk management strategy to minimize the impact of a future incursion of bee health pests and diseases.
- Develop an industry disaster recovery strategy to manage and minimize the incursion of a bee health pest or disease in Nova Scotia.

2.0 To ensure that bee health extension support is available to beekeepers in Nova Scotia

Actionable Bee Health Strategies

- Develop a strategic partnership between NSBA and the government to ensure that extension services (specifically bee health) and support are available to the industry.

3.0 To increase awareness on critical industry bee health issues.

Actionable Bee Health Strategies

- Increase the awareness of government and other agricultural industries on bee health issues and the impact on the future of agriculture in Nova Scotia.
- Annually, or as required, present the beekeepers' position on bee health issues to the Minister of Agriculture.
- Assist beekeepers to effectively manage the health of their honey bees so the industry can continue to provide pollination services, produce honey and grow their businesses.
- Work to create an industry environment that fosters mentorship, communication and networking opportunities for the sharing of bee health information.
- Develop a strategy and system to keep the industry current on the latest bee health information.
- Make recommendations to other agricultural sectors regarding the development of an on-farm healthy bee environment.

- Ensure that Nova Scotia is part of a regional and national honey bee health management strategy.
- Establish a list of industry research priorities pertaining to bee health issues and communicate annually with universities and colleges, to better inform them of the industry research priorities.
- To improve and expand upon the existing bee hive health monitoring initiatives.

4.0 To advance the industry's knowledge and education on the management of bee health.

Actionable Bee Health Strategies

- Ensure the Nova Scotia Beekeepers Association newsletter addresses bee health issues in a timely manner.
- Facilitate the development of bee health training programs for both established beekeepers and new entrants.
- Host semi-annual field days to share new information and industry updates on bee health management.
- Introduce best management practices and integrated pest management (IPM) programs to assist the industry in the monitoring, management and treatment of bee health problems.
- Coordinate and disseminate timely bee health information to the membership.

Extension - Strategic Goal 2

FACILITATE THE TRANSFER OF INFORMATION TO THE NOVA SCOTIA HONEY BEE INDUSTRY

An extension program is a partnership between beekeepers, government and stakeholders to facilitate the transfer of the information necessary to create and maintain a viable and growing honey bee industry in Nova Scotia. A successful extension program offers on-farm service, leading edge information, education and training opportunities combined with applied research and new technology transfer. An extension program plays a critical role in the ability of the industry to manage bee health and address other important bee industry issues.

Future Strategy

The honey bee industry in Nova Scotia needs a helping hand to assist the industry in managing the issues that are putting the future viability of the industry at risk. Foremost among these issues is bee health. The industry needs an extension team that goes on farm, focuses on research, knows and understands bee pest management, with an ability to relay the pertinent information to the beekeepers in a timely manner. A bee industry extension program requires a partnership among the beekeepers, government, Nova Scotia Agricultural College, other universities and the agriculture industry.

Key Outcome: To develop a leading edge extension program to facilitate the transfer of important and timely bee health production and information to Nova Scotia's beekeepers.

Prime Extension Objective

(Priority A+) 2009 - 2014 Ongoing

1.0 To expand the scope of the extension services available to beekeepers in Nova Scotia with a primary focus on bee health.

Actionable Extension Strategies

- To ensure that enhanced extension support is available to beekeepers in Nova Scotia.
- Assist the industry in the development and implementation of a bee industry disaster management strategy.
- Coordinate the dissemination of bee health information within the industry as a proactive step to assist in the early identification and management of diseases and pests.
- Keep the industry aware of new developments, treatments, technologies and innovations in regard to bee health and other topical industry production issues.
- Work with the industry to improve and enhance the bee hive monitoring program.

- Benchmark the current beekeeper skills levels within the industry; identify the skills gaps and new strategies to minimize the education gaps.
- Facilitate the development of applied skills training programs to improve and upgrade the overall skills of provincial beekeepers.
- Assist in the identification of industry research topics and the presentation to the appropriate researcher groups.
- Be a liaison between beekeepers, government agencies, other agriculture industries and the general public.
- Assist in the development of strategies to attract new entrants to the industry.
- Partner in the development of industry field days to share new technology.
- Contribute to the development of content for the Nova Scotia Beekeepers Association newsletter.
- Assist producers in exploring and developing new value-added opportunities and ideas.

New Entrants - Strategic Goal 3

ENCOURAGE NEW ENTRANTS

The age of beekeepers in Nova Scotia continues to increase, and more new entrants are required to maintain the industry's current production levels and grow the industry to meet the increasing future demands of pollination. Nova Scotia has had new entrants to the industry in recent years.

New entrants require extension support and education in efficient methods of beekeeping, bee health, quality assurance, marketing and business management to succeed. Beekeeping skills are typically learned through extension programs and industry mentorship. New entrants typically start small and scale up their businesses over time, as their confidence grows and their beekeeping skills develop. The capital entry barriers to beekeeping are low compared to other areas of agriculture.

Future Strategy

The Nova Scotia Honey Bee Industry needs to undertake new initiatives to attract more new

entrants to the industry to sustain its current bee population and grow the industry to support the increasing demand for pollination services in the blueberry industry.

Key Outcome: To have enough new entrants to the Nova Scotia Beekeeping Industry to allow the industry to grow to meet the market demand for pollination and Nova Scotia honey products.

Prime New Entrant Objective

(Priority B) 2014

1.0 To undertake initiatives to encourage new entrants in both the commercial and hobby categories of honey bee production in Nova Scotia.

Actionable New Entrant Strategies

- Ensure that beekeeping education and mentoring is available for new beekeepers.
- Stay current and aware of government new entrant programs and initiatives.
- As an industry, keep new entrant issues in front of government decision makers.
- Promote the Honey Bee Industry as a career opportunity and encourage more and younger entrants to the industry.
- Foster the development of a mentoring relationship between existing and new entrant beekeepers. (full-time, part-time, hobby)
- Develop cost of production and business plan models to show feasibility breakeven points and economies of scale for beekeeping operations.
- Help educate lending institutions on the bee industry.

The Association - Strategic Goal 4

A STRONG ASSOCIATION SUPPORTS THE FUTURE GROWTH OF THE HONEY BEE INDUSTRY

The Association is the necessary voice of the industry when speaking to government and the general public. As one voice the industry is strong and presents a unified position on important industry issues such as regulations, industry policy, bee health, education, information and promotion of the Nova Scotia Beekeeping Industry. The Association holds annual events where members and new entrants can learn skills, network with other beekeepers and like-minded people, and build new business and mentor relationships.

One of the challenges of the Association is that it represents all sizes of beekeepers from small hobbyists to large commercial producers. Of the 225 beekeepers in the province, approximately 25 commercial beekeepers operate 18,000 of the approximate 19,000 hives in the province. This creates an imbalance and challenges for the Association to look after all of the membership needs in an equitable manner. The industry needs all sizes of producers as some smaller producers will eventually grow larger to become commercial producers.

Future Strategy

Future changes to the Association board and new ways to finance the operations of the Association may be required to allow the Association to better serve the membership.

Key Outcome: To have a financially viable beekeeping association that supports the growth of the honey bee industry in Nova Scotia.

Prime Association Objectives

(Priority A+) 2009-2014 Ongoing

1.0 To look after the evolving needs of the Association and support the viable growth of the membership.

Actionable Association Strategies

- Survey all beekeepers (members and non-members) for input and prioritization of membership needs, wants and issues.
- Explore new ways to manage the sales of queens and bees.
- Review and make recommendations on the structure of the board.
- Identify new methods/events for members to network, socialize and develop new mentor relationships.

2.0 To develop new financial strategies to support the ongoing operations and staffing requirements of the Association.

Actionable Association Strategies

- Explore and identify new methods and strategies to fund the operations of the Association and develop a new financial plan.
- Establish a committee to revisit the fee structure of the Association.

7.0 Conclusions

This strategic plan outlines the current situation within the Nova Scotia honey bee industry, identifies areas where the industry believes there must be change, and outlines strategies on how to make that change happen. There are many industry attributes that create an environment which enables an industry to successfully move forward and grow into the future. These attributes are based on Association culture, membership needs, education programs, and relationships with stakeholders. The NSBA has undertaken this strategic planning initiative to focus resources and efforts on four key strategic goals which are very important, if not critical, to the future success of the industry.

- **Goal #1 Bee Health:** To ensure the health of the Nova Scotia Honey Bee Industry. Bee health is the number one and most critical issue facing the Nova Scotia Beekeeping Industry.
- **Goal #2 Extension:** To facilitate the transfer of information to the Nova Scotia Honey Bee Industry. Facilitate the transfer of information and services to beekeepers on bee health.
- **Goal #3 New Entrants:** To encourage new entrants. New entrants are the lifeblood of a sustainable honey bee industry in Nova Scotia.
- **Goal #4 The Association:** To create a strong association that supports the future growth of the Nova Scotia Honey Bee Industry and the needs of the membership.

Through the achievement of these goals, the NSBA will improve the industry's ability to manage bee health, minimize the impact of a bee industry disaster, enhance the education available to the industry, and expand the honey bee extension program available to the industry. A strong association leads to a strong and proactive honey bee industry in Nova Scotia. Success in the future lies in the industry's ability to organize and direct its resources to take action and move the industry to new levels of competitiveness, industry health and profitability.

APPENDIX

Strategic Plan Methodology

This strategic planning project was started in late summer in response to the Nova Scotia Beekeepers Association's Request for Proposal. The facilitation of the strategic plan development is a joint effort between Morton Horticultural Associates and Kelco Consulting Ltd. The consulting team first met with the membership on the summer tour in the Annapolis Valley. The NSBA executive supplied our team with a list of 27 people; the interviews were undertaken by a telephone survey. Each interview lasted between 30-45 minutes. We interviewed 16 NSBA industry members, including major commercial producers and all sizes of industry producers. Also, two honey bee researchers, two government contacts, and two industry suppliers were interviewed. We also conducted stakeholder interviews with the wild blueberry industry, cranberry industry and apple industry association representatives. In addition, the New Brunswick Beekeepers Association and the Canadian Honey Council were interviewed.

The team undertook a basic literature scan of the beekeeping industry in North America and the world to identify any new or emerging trends. The main industry issues were identified in categories as strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats and trends. This information was presented at a meeting to the executive and other industry representatives on October 30th, 2008. The day was spent reviewing the information and identifying the key industry strategic issues. A follow-up meeting was held on November 27th which resulted in the draft report. A draft report was circulated to the industry for input and then edited by the steering committee on January 26, 2009. A final strategic plan draft was prepared from this information and feedback.

STRATEGIC PLAN SUMMARY FY 2009-2014

GOAL 1 - BEE HEALTH - ENSURE THE HEALTH OF THE NOVA SCOTIA HONEY BEE INDUSTRY

#	Priority	KEY OBJECTIVES	Time line	Accountability
1	A+	To minimize the impact of bee health diseases and pest incursion in Nova Scotia.	2009 Ongoing	Association/Gov't
		<u>Actionable Bee Health Strategies</u>		
		○ Develop a long-term bee health strategy for the Nova Scotia Honey Bee Industry.	2009	Association
		○ Create a proactive risk management strategy to minimize the impact of a future incursion of bee health pests and diseases.	2009	Association/Gov't
		○ Develop an industry disaster recovery strategy to manage and minimize the incursion of a bee health pest or disease in Nova Scotia.	2009	Association/Gov't
2	A+	To ensure that bee health extension support is available to beekeepers in Nova Scotia.	2009 Ongoing	Association/Gov't
		<u>Actionable Bee Health Strategies</u>		
		○ Develop a strategic partnership between NSBA and the government to ensure that extension services (specifically bee health) and support are available to the industry.	2009	Association/Gov't
3	A+	To increase awareness on critical industry bee health issues.	2014	Association/Extension
		<u>Actionable Bee Health Strategies</u>		
		○ Increase the awareness of government and other agricultural industries on bee health issues and the impact on the future of agriculture in Nova Scotia.	2009 Annual	President/Board
		○ Annually, or as required, present the beekeepers' position on bee health issues to the Minister of Agriculture.		
		○ Assist beekeepers to effectively manage the health of their honey bees so the industry can continue to provide pollination services, produce honey and grow their businesses.	2014 Ongoing	Association/Extension
		○ Work to create an industry environment that fosters mentorship, communication and networking opportunities for the sharing of bee health information.	2014 Ongoing	Association/Extension

Nova Scotia Beekeepers Association 2009

		○ Develop a strategy and system to keep the industry current on the latest bee health information.	2009 Ongoing	Association/Extension
		○ Make recommendations to other agricultural sectors regarding the development of an on-farm healthy bee environment.	2014 Ongoing	Association/Extension
		○ Ensure that Nova Scotia is part of a regional and national honey bee health management strategy.	2009 Ongoing	Association/ Extension/Gov't
		○ Establish a list of industry research priorities pertaining to bee health issues and communicate annually with universities and colleges, to better inform them of the industry research priorities.	2014 Ongoing	Association/Extension
		○ To improve and expand upon the existing bee hive health monitoring initiatives.	2009 Ongoing	Association/Extension
4	A+	To advance the industry's knowledge and education on the management of bee health.	2014	Association/ Extension
		<u>Actionable Bee Health Strategies</u>		
		○ Ensure the Nova Scotia Beekeepers Association newsletter addresses bee health issues in a timely manner.	2009 Ongoing	Association/Extension
		○ Facilitate the development of bee health training programs for both established beekeepers and new entrants.	2011 Ongoing	Association/Extension
		○ Host semi-annual field days to share new information and industry updates on bee health management.	2009 Ongoing	Association/Extension
		○ Introduce best management practices and integrated pest management programs to assist the industry in the monitoring, management and treatment of bee health problems.	2012 Ongoing	Association/Extension
		○ Coordinate and disseminate timely bee health information to the membership.	2009 Ongoing	Association/Extension

STRATEGIC GOAL 2 - EXTENSION - FACILITATE THE TRANSFER OF INFORMATION TO THE NOVA SCOTIA HONEY BEE INDUSTRY

#	Priority	KEY OBJECTIVES	Time line	Accountability
1	A+	To expand the scope of the extension services available to beekeepers in Nova Scotia with a primary focus on bee health.	2014	Association
		<u><i>Actionable Extension Strategies</i></u>		
	A+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To ensure that enhanced extension support is available to beekeepers in Nova Scotia. 	2009	Association
	A+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Assist the industry in the development and implementation of a bee industry disaster management strategy. 	2009	Extension Program
	A+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Coordinate the dissemination of bee health information within the industry as a proactive step to assist in the early identification and management of diseases and pests. 	2010 Ongoing	Extension Program
	A+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Keep the industry aware of new developments, treatments, technologies and innovations in regard to bee health and other topical industry production issues. 	2009 Ongoing	Extension Program
	A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Work with the industry to improve and enhance the bee hive monitoring program. 	2012	Extension Program
	A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Benchmark the current beekeeper skills levels within the industry; identify the skills gaps and new strategies to minimize the education gaps. 	2011	Extension Program
	A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Facilitate the development of applied skills training programs to improve and upgrade the overall skills of the provincial beekeepers. 	2011	Extension Program
	A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Assist in the identification of industry research topics and the presentation to the appropriate researcher groups. 	Annual	Extension Program
	A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Be a liaison between beekeepers, government agencies, other agriculture industries and the general public. 	Ongoing	Extension Program

	B	o Assist in the development of strategies to attract new entrants to the industry.	2014	Extension Program
	B	o Partner in the development of industry field days to share new technology.	Annual	Extension Program
	B	o Contribute to the development of content for the Nova Scotia Beekeepers Association newsletter.	Semi-Annual	Extension Program
	B	o Assist producers in exploring and developing new value-added opportunities and ideas.	2014	Extension Program

STRATEGIC GOAL 3 –NEW ENTRANTS - ENCOURAGE NEW ENTRANTS

#	Priority	KEY OBJECTIVES	Time line	Accountability
1	B	To undertake initiatives to encourage new entrants in both the commercial and hobby categories of honey bee production in Nova Scotia.	2014	Association
		<u><i>Actionable New Entrant Strategies</i></u>		
	A+	o Ensure that beekeeping education and mentoring is available for new beekeepers.	2011	Association/ Extension
	B	o Stay current and aware of government new entrant programs and initiatives.	2009/Annual	Association/ Extension
	B	o As an industry, keep new entrant issues in front of government decision makers.	2010/Annual	Association
	B	o Promote the Honey Bee Industry as a career opportunity and encourage more and younger entrants to the industry.	2014/Annual	Association
	B	o Foster the development of a mentoring relationship between existing and new entrant beekeepers. (full-time, part-time, hobby)	2014	Association/ Extension
	B	o Develop cost of production and business plan models to show feasibility breakeven points and economies of scale for beekeeping operations.	2013	Association/ Extension
	B	o Help educate lending institutions on the bee industry.	2014	Association/ Extension

STRATEGIC GOAL 4 - ASSOCIATION - A STRONG ASSOCIATION SUPPORTS THE FUTURE GROWTH OF THE NOVA SCOTIA HONEY BEE INDUSTRY

#	Priority	KEY OBJECTIVES	Time line	Accountability
1	A+	To look after the evolving needs of the Association and support the viable growth of the membership.	Ongoing	Association
		<u><i>Actionable Association Strategies</i></u>		
	A+	○ Survey all beekeepers (members and non-members) for input and prioritization of memberships needs, wants and issues.	2009	Association
	B	○ Explore new ways to manage the sales of queens and bees.	2009-2010	Association
	B	○ Review and make recommendations on the structure of the board.	2010	Association
		○ Identify new methods/events for members to network, socialize and develop new mentor relationships.	2011-2014	Association
2	A+	To develop new financial strategies to support the ongoing operations and staffing requirements of the Association.	2010	Association
		<u><i>Actionable Association Strategies</i></u>		
		○ Explore and identify new methods and strategies to fund the operations of the Association and develop a new financial plan.	2009 ASAP	Association
		○ Establish a committee to revisit the fee structure of the Association.	2009 ASAP	Association
		○ Undertake a new membership drive to increase and expand the membership base of the Association.	2011-2013	Association