



# Honey Bee Health Coalition: Charter

Revised and approved by the Steering Committee on February 2, 2017

## Introduction

Honey bees are a key component of sustainable agriculture due to their role as pollinators and their widespread presence in and interaction with agricultural landscapes. Recent declines in honey bee health have been widely documented but not fully understood, and have created a sense of urgency around the need to understand the causes and implement solutions. These declines are commonly considered to be impacted by a variety of factors, including those influenced by the activities associated with beekeeping and crop production. A diversity of stakeholders in public, private, and non-profit sectors are currently working to better understand and improve honey bee health through research, communication, education, project implementation, policy, and other mechanisms. Such efforts are increasingly employing multi-stakeholder approaches, and there is a continued need for cross-sector cooperation to develop workable solutions to improve honey bee health.

This Charter outlines the mission, scope and goals of the Honey Bee Health Coalition along with its governance structure, participation ground rules and foundational principles. Appendices to this document include a current listing of Coalition Steering Committee members, a current overview of Working Groups, and Working Group Charters.

## Mission

The mission of the Honey Bee Health Coalition is to collaboratively implement solutions that will help to achieve a healthy population of honey bees while also supporting healthy populations of native and managed pollinators in the context of productive agricultural systems and thriving ecosystems.

## Scope

The Honey Bee Health Coalition's primary scope is defined as follows:

- *Species:* Honey bees, recognizing that solutions for honey bee populations should have co-benefits for other native and managed pollinators
- *Geography:* North America (with initial focus on United States and Canada)
- *Stakeholders:* Beekeeping, crop production (specialty and commodity), agribusiness and agriculture supply chain, NGO and conservation community, university, agency, and other interests as appropriate
- *Actions:* Primary focus on incubating and fostering collaborative efforts for on-the-ground solution implementation, including engaging member networks to mobilize resources and amplify impact. The Coalition will foster alignment on strategic priorities and goals that are implemented by its members through their own initiatives and partnerships.
- *Focal Areas:* Focal areas may evolve over time; initial focal areas include habitat, forage and nutrition; crop pest management; hive management (tech transfer and pest and management); and outreach and education.

## Goals

Recognizing the urgency and significance of honey bee health decline, the Honey Bee Health Coalition will work to achieve measurable and rapid progress on the following goals:

- Improve and sustain honey bee health at all levels of beekeeping
- Identify and implement novel and proven solutions to major honey bee health challenges
- Enhance effective communications and collaboration among diverse private sector, public sector, academic, and NGO stakeholders with interests related to beekeeping, pollination, and agriculture production
- Institute sound science and evidence for decision making

## Foundational Principles

The Coalition is founded upon the following principles for membership and collaborative engagement on issues related to healthy honey bee populations:

1. Members of the Coalition recognize that honey bee health is a multi-factorial issue and that all stakeholders have a role to play in positively contributing toward honey bee health.
2. Members of the Coalition commit to understanding factors related to honey bee health with the intent to find shared solutions and to creating opportunities for their own improvement, rather than simply assigning blame to other actors.
3. Members of the Coalition commit to promoting implementation of honey bee health solutions.
4. Members of the Coalition commit to being science- and outcomes-based and technology-inclusive with respect to an understanding of factors and solutions that influence honey bee health.
5. Members of the Coalition commit to understanding each other's interests, respecting that interests can be divergent, and working toward solutions that value these various interests,

including interests related to environmental, social, and economic viability and sustainability of beekeeping and crop production.

6. Members of the Coalition commit to working toward common-ground solutions where shared interests and agreement on current science exists, and recognize that full agreement on all issues is not necessary to pursue specific opportunities for collaboration on certain issues.
7. Members of the Coalition recognize that opportunities and solutions for promoting honey bee health can vary by stakeholder and region.
8. Members of the Coalition agree to work together toward voluntary solutions for improving honey bee health.
9. Members of the Coalition recognize the value of building upon and collaborating with existing efforts addressing honey bee health.

## Ground Rules

The following ground rules encourage productive and collaborative deliberation. All Coalition members will agree to follow them and give facilitators authority to enforce them:

- **GOOD FAITH:** Act in good faith in all aspects of group deliberations with the intent to promote joint problem solving, collaboration, and collective, common-ground solutions; honor prior agreements including but not limited to the contents of this Charter.
- **OWNERSHIP:** Take ownership in the outcomes and the success of the Coalition.
- **OPENNESS:** Be honest and open in sharing your perspectives; be open to other points of view and to the outcome of discussions.
- **FOCUS:** Maintain focus on the mission and goals of the Coalition as well meeting objectives; honor agendas.
- **LISTENING:** Listen to each speaker rather than preparing your response; no interruptions; refrain from use of smart phones and other technologies.
- **PARTICIPATION:** Participate actively, speak briefly, and agree succinctly. Be mindful and respectful of the presence of multiple backgrounds and areas of expertise and avoid the use of acronyms and technical language from your field.
- **RESPECT:** Disagree judiciously and without being disagreeable; do not engage in personal attacks; in all contexts, refrain from behavior that denigrates other participants or is disruptive to the work of the group.
- **PREPAREDNESS AND COMMITMENT:** Prepare for and attend each session; get up to speed if you missed a meeting.
- **REPRESENTATION AT THE DISCUSSION TABLE:** Representation in discussions and distribution of seats at the discussion table will be governed by the Coalition structure described in this Charter.
- **CONFIDENTIALITY, COMMUNICATION AND ATTRIBUTION:** Meeting discussions are off the record and not for attribution. Do not make personal attributions outside of meetings, use discretion when characterizing the Coalition to others, and stick to agreed-upon messages and protocols when discussing the Coalition with outside organizations and media.
- **FACILITATION AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION:** Let the facilitators facilitate; allow them to enforce the ground rules and engage them with any concerns.

## Coalition Structure and Decision-Making

### ➤ **Coalition**

**Overview:** The Coalition includes organizations and individuals interested in working collaboratively to advance the mission and goals of the Coalition. The Coalition as a whole will promote the mission and goals defined in this Charter and honor the foundational principles, ground rules and media protocols.

**Roles and responsibilities; decision-making:** Decision-making roles of Coalition members include the selection of Steering Committee members and alternates and participation in development of Working Group recommendations regarding priority initiatives and strategies. Coalition members participate in sector breakout conversations and Plenary conversations that inform Steering Committee decisions; Plenary conversations shall be limited to one individual per member organization; each member organization has an equal voice in deliberations.

**Conditions of membership:** Coalition members must comply with the conditions of membership, including but not limited to participation in initiatives and/or the provision of resources in the form of in-kind, fundraised, or direct dues payments as determined by the Steering Committee. Resource requests are not intended as a barrier to membership, and may be waived or adjusted to ensure inclusivity of membership. An individual member's level of financial support does not influence its role in the Coalition's decision-making processes. Regardless of level of financial or in-kind support, each member organization has an equal voice in the Coalition's consensus-based decision-making process. Coalition members are required to complete and provide to the Coalition a commitment form specifying information including but not limited to the date of membership, organization name, and contact information.

**Adding new members:** New members will be added upon review and approval of the Steering Committee. New members must comply with the conditions of membership and must also agree to honor Coalition agreements made prior to their membership; requests for membership must be submitted in writing.

**Meetings:** Coalition meetings will be scheduled with guidance from the Steering Committee; it is anticipated that the Coalition will meet two times in person per calendar year.

### ➤ **Steering Committee**

**Overview:** The Steering Committee is the primary decision-making body of the Coalition. It is a representative body of the Coalition that steers the priorities and function of the Coalition with the input of Coalition members and Working Groups.

**Composition:** Collectively, the Steering Committee shall include diverse expertise and stakeholder perspectives on issues related to honey bee health. The Steering Committee will be established by selection of representatives from each of the following sectors; members in each sector will choose their representatives. There shall be only one Steering Committee representative per member organization.

- Bee keeping and honey production (all scales) (2)

- Agriculture crop production (at least one representative from a crop that requires honey bee pollination and one crop that does not require honey bee pollination) (2)
- Agribusiness (2)
- Food, brands and retail (2)
- Conservation and non-governmental organizations (2)
- Universities (2)
- Government Agencies (2) (*ex officio*)
- Representative of the Canada Bee Health Roundtable (1) (*ex officio*)
- At large (may include additional from the sectors listed above or other sectors) (3)

A designated number of seats are defined per sector. The total size of the Steering Committee is limited to 18 to enable nimble decision making; at the discretion of a sector and/or in the event of lack of Coalition membership within a given sector, seats may remain vacant until appropriate candidates are identified to fill them.

Individual members must contribute individual and organizational expertise in issues related to honey bee health in North America, have an interest in developing collaborative solutions to honey bee health, have capacity to contribute to and advance the mission of the Coalition, agree to the ground rules contained within the Charter, and have the ability to attend Steering Committee meetings and conference calls. Further, in order to ensure the successful implementation of solutions identified by the Coalition, individual Steering Committee members should occupy an executive or management level position within their organizations and/or be authorized to make decisions on behalf of their organizations as related to the Coalition.

A current listing of Steering Committee members will be maintained by the Facilitator as an appendix to this Charter.

**Roles and Responsibilities:** The Steering Committee is the primary decision-making body of the Coalition; it approves its Charter, membership requirements, and funding model; sets strategy and action plans; establishes Working Groups; and, where applicable, reviews and decides on Working Group recommendations. The Committee shall work with the facilitators to identify and address emerging issues and opportunities, provide direction and feedback to Working Groups, review proposed agendas for Coalition meetings, and review and determine appropriate action on new membership requests. Committee members are expected to attend all Steering Committee meetings and honor all aspects of this Charter.

**Meetings:** It is anticipated that the Steering Committee will meet two times in person per calendar year and that meetings will be scheduled in conjunction with Coalition meetings to streamline travel. Individuals that are participating in the Coalition but are not members of the Steering Committee may attend Steering Committee sessions as observers and participate, as appropriate, in Plenary and sector conversations. Conference calls of the Steering Committee will be conducted on a regular basis as determined by the Committee. Subcommittees may also meet in between Steering Committee meetings.

**Decision-Making:** The Steering Committee will strive for consensus in all decisions. Consensus is defined as an agreement that participants can support or abide by and to which they do not formally object. In the absence of consensus, and unless otherwise specified, all decisions require approval of a

two-thirds majority of the Steering Committee and inclusive of at least one representative of each sector. Non-voting or *ex officio* members may be included as members of the Steering Committee.

**Attendance and Inactivity:** Steering Committee members that miss two consecutive meetings will be contacted by the facilitator and/or another designated Steering Committee member to discuss their interest in continued participation at the Steering Committee level, barriers to participation and how they could be addressed, and willingness to retire their seat to another representative. This information will be communicated back to the Steering Committee so that the Committee can, at its discretion, identify the appropriate action or request regarding continued membership for the inactive representative.

**Removal of Members:** Removal of Steering Committee members may occur due to inactivity or due to failure of the member to adhere to the Foundational Principles and/or Participation Ground Rules contained in this Charter. The member in question may choose to remove themselves voluntarily from the Committee or may request a dispute resolution process. Prior to an action to remove a member, the Facilitator will consult the Steering Committee and other representatives of the member's sector regarding potential alternatives. Removal of a member requires approval of a two-thirds majority of the Steering Committee inclusive of at least one representative of each sector.

**Proxies and Alternates:** Each sector shall identify an alternate(s) from its sector to attend meetings in the event that the Steering Committee member is unable to attend; the alternate may come from within the member's organization or from within the sector more broadly, at the discretion of the sector.

**Quorum:** The presence of at least 50% of current Steering Committee members or their alternates constitutes a quorum.

**Officers and Executive Committee:** Initially, the Steering Committee will not have officers or an Executive Committee; in the future, the Steering Committee may agree to the establishment of an Executive Committee and/or officer positions, including Co-Chairs, as well as processes for their appointment; such a decision must be made according to the decision-making processes outlined in this Charter.

**Terms and rotation of members:** Steering Committee members shall be selected annually by their sectors to serve one-year terms, with the option of renewal at the discretion of the sector. Selection shall occur at the first Coalition meeting of a calendar year, or at any meeting when a vacancy exists that must be filled.

## ➤ **Working Groups**

**Overview:** Working Groups will be formed and disbanded as directed by the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee will identify the purpose and objectives of the Working Groups and will direct the Working Groups on requested deliverables; an overview of current Working Groups including a brief description of each group will be maintained by the Facilitator as an appendix to this Charter.

**Composition:** Working Group participation is comprised of individuals from Coalition member organizations, and, where approved by the Working Group Lead, representatives from non-member organizations. Working group members should be knowledgeable of the subject area of the Working Group and/or committed to participating in the working group in order to build knowledge of and

contribution to solution-building for the issue. Subject to the interest of members, reasonable effort will be made to ensure that Working Groups include representation from all sectors participating in the Coalition. The overall size of a Working Group shall not be limited.

**Roles and Responsibilities:** Working Groups develop information and recommendations to according to the duties defined by the Steering Committee and documented in their Charters. Working Groups serve as “think and do tanks” to develop solutions to satisfy the goals and mission of the Coalition in general and the specific issue areas as defined by their Charters. Working Groups may result in new partnerships that emerge to implement the specific solutions that they have.

**Adding new members:** New members will be added on an ongoing basis subject to the composition guidelines noted above.

**Meetings:** The Working Group Lead and the Facilitator will work with Working Group members to identify the appropriate number of remote and in-person meetings for the specific group. It is anticipated that, on average, each Working Group will meet at least bi-monthly by conference call and at least twice annually in-person, in conjunction with the semi-annual meetings of the Steering Committee in order to reduce travel. Breakout meetings may also be used to in between full Working Group meetings.

**Decision-Making:** Each Working Group will strive for consensus on recommended projects and initiatives, with consensus defined as an agreement that participants can support or abide by and to which they do not formally object. Where applicable, where consensus is not possible and a decision or choice is required, the various options or recommendations and the level of support and dissent will be noted and presented to the Steering Committee.

**Attendance and Inactivity:** Working Group members that miss three consecutive meetings will be contacted by the Working Group Lead to discuss their interest in continued participation, barriers to participation and how they could be addressed, and willingness to retire their seat to another representative from their organization. The Working Group Lead will, at his/her discretion, identify the appropriate action or request regarding continued membership for the inactive representative.

**Proxies and Alternates:** There are no proxies or alternates for Working Groups.

**Quorum:** There are no quorum requirements for Working Groups.

**Officers:** Each Working Group will be led by a Working Group Lead responsible for working with the Facilitator in planning the activities of the group and leading discussions. The Working Group Lead is also responsible for determining participation approval for recommended participants that are not a member organization of the Coalition. To ensure continuity and feedback into the Steering Committee, the Working Group Lead will be a Steering Committee member volunteer.

➤ **Facilitator**

The Facilitator (or team of facilitators) is a third party responsible for facilitation, mediation, project management and management of funding as related to the activities of the Steering Committee, Working Groups, and Coalition at large. The Facilitator is responsible for helping to design the process and ensuring that it runs smoothly, maintaining contact lists and communications with participants, designing agendas, facilitating meetings, producing meeting summaries and following up with members on action items, promoting full participation of all Coalition members, and –where possible- helping the parties resolve their differences and work toward consensus on issues. The Facilitator will also be available to consult confidentially with participants during and between meetings. As appropriate, the Facilitator may serve as the fiscal agent for the Coalition, managing fundraised dollars and any subcontracts. The Facilitator serves at the pleasure of the Coalition and subject to available funding to support its activities. The Facilitator will operate according to a Statement of Independence, will work for the full group regardless of its source of funding, and will remain neutral regarding substantive discussions and outcomes of the Coalition.



## Coalition Projects

The Coalition seeks to develop, incubate, and endorse projects that support the Coalition's vision, mission, and goals. Projects may be developed and implemented by the Coalition as a whole, incubated through Coalition-wide conversations and subsequently developed and implemented by Coalition members, or developed and implemented wholly outside of the Coalition by partners that desire Coalition support or endorsement for their efforts.

The following project tiers describe categories of projects and their requirements.

- 1. Official Coalition Project: *A project that is managed by and belongs to the Coalition:*** What this designation entails-
  - To obtain this designation the project underwent scrutiny by the appropriate Working Group and if approved by the Working Group was submitted and approved by the Coalition Steering Committee
  - The proposal may be submitted by anyone but must include at least one member
  - The Steering Committee approved this project and it falls under the governance, reporting, and oversight of the Coalition
  - Participating organizations must abide by the Coalition's media protocols and communications about the project fall under the governance of the Coalition
  - The project and participating organizations may use this designation when referring to the project and their involvement in it
  - Accountability resides with the Coalition
  
- 2. Incubated Project: *A multi-stakeholder project that is started and managed by Coalition members with the opportunity to scale to an official Coalition project over time.*** What this designation entails-
  - The project must include at least three coalition members from at least two sectors
  - The proposal may be submitted by anyone but must include at least one member of the Coalition and the proposal is for something that the member/submitter wants to fund/jumpstart
  - To obtain this designation the project was approved by the appropriate Working Group to determine if it aligns with the Coalition's Roadmap, mission, and goals and if approved by the Working Group was submitted and approved by the Coalition Steering Committee
  - If requested by the submitter the Coalition will assist with recruiting partners as appropriate, and may provide letter(s) of support and quote for a press release
  - The project may use the Coalition's logo and agrees to be listed on the Coalition's website
  - The project agrees to periodically report its findings, via webinar or live presentation, to the appropriate working group on a periodicity agreed to by the submitter and the working group and those updates will be made available to the public as appropriate (e.g., on the Coalition's website)
  - Participating organizations must abide by the Coalition's media protocols when referring to the Coalition or other members in communications with the media but are otherwise free to discuss the project as they see fit. Participating organizations may use this designation when referring to the project and their involvement in it

- The Coalition has the “right of first refusal” [gets a “first look” at] to leverage or scale up the project to become an Official HBHC Project by inviting other sectors or fields to support
- Accountability resides primarily with the project but is shared with the Coalition
- The project is reviewed on an agreed upon periodicity but at least bi-annually (unless otherwise recommended by the Working Group)

**3. Endorsed Project: *A project that may be started by members or external stakeholders, is managed outside of the Coalition, and has the Coalition’s formal support as being consistent with Coalition vision, mission and goals.*** What this designation entails-

- Proposals will be accepted from anyone (not just members)
- Priority will be given to endorsing projects that are co-developed with the Coalition and/or that involve the Coalition in some aspect of project implementation.
- To obtain this designation the project must undergo scrutiny by the Coalition’s Endorsement Committee to determine alignment with vision, mission, goals and strategic priorities of the Coalition set forth in this Charter and the Bee Healthy Roadmap. (see Endorsement Committee, below)
- The project may use the Coalition’s logo and agrees to be listed on the Coalition’s website
- Participating organizations must abide by the Coalition’s media protocols when referring to the Coalition or other members in public communications to the media but are free to discuss the project as they see fit in internal discussions and/or with other organizations
- The project and participating organizations may use this designation when referring to the project and their involvement in it
- Accountability for the project’s results remains with the project
- An update of the project is shared with the Working Group at least annually (unless otherwise recommended by the Working Group) to ensure continued consistency with Coalition goals and continued relevance of the endorsement
- Endorsement may be withdrawn at any time if recommended by the Working Group

**Endorsement Committee**

The Endorsement Committee is comprised of three members of the Steering Committee. The Endorsement Committee determines whether a project submitted for Coalition endorsement meets the criteria listed above and whether the Coalition is willing to issue a letter of endorsement describing this alignment. Due to the often tight turn-around-times of grant proposals, the Endorsement Committee will be asked to render its decision within five business days. If there is consensus among Committee members, a letter will be issued and the Steering Committee will be notified. If there is not consensus among the three Committee members, the request for endorsement will be put before the Steering Committee at its next monthly call. Membership on the Endorsement Committee will be comprised of three self-selected members of the Coalition Steering Committee representing at least two Coalition sectors. Committee composition will rotate with the annual appointment of the Steering Committee.

## Media Protocols

Media protocols are provided to ensure that Coalition members utilize approved messages and processes when communicating on behalf of the Coalition and that individual member's interests are protected through the accurate characterization of their association with the Coalition.

- Only use pre-approved messaging that has been agreed upon by the Coalition when characterizing the Coalition on behalf of its members, and when characterizing the roles and commitments of members.
- Be clear to delineate your own opinion or interest from the agreed-upon messaging of the Coalition.
- Do not characterize or attribute the opinions or positions of other members.
- Press releases of/on behalf of the Coalition will be agreed to by the Coalition and reviewed by Coalition members prior to their release. The Facilitator will coordinate the development, review, and submission of media releases under a timely process. Releases will be submitted by the Facilitator or other designated communications specialist on behalf of the Coalition.
- Individual members should not make announcements on behalf of the Coalition. Members planning their own media releases and/or other formal communications that reference or characterize the Coalition – including but not limited to web copy and presentations – should submit the draft materials to the Facilitator for review at least one week prior to the intended public release date. The Facilitator will review the materials for consistency with agreed-upon messaging and, where necessary, coordinate with Coalition members for further review.
- If you receive a media inquiry, you are encouraged to coordinate with the Facilitator prior to providing answers to interview questions; you may also feel free to refer the inquiry directly to the Facilitator.

## Funding

Funding for the Coalition will be identified from participating organizations as well as other interested funding sources. To promote shared ownership of the Coalition's efforts and to ensure viability, members will be asked to provide reasonable resources to help support the Coalition. Resource requirements may include financial contributions (cash or raise) or in-kind support. Resource requests are not intended as a barrier to membership, and may be waived or adjusted to ensure inclusivity of membership. An individual member's level of financial support does not influence its role in the Coalition's decision-making processes. Regardless of level of financial or in-kind support, each member organization has an equal voice in the Coalition's consensus-based decision-making process.

Funding will support services provided by the Facilitator; meeting, operational and communications expenses for the Coalition, and other activities and expenses as agreed upon by the Coalition and consistent with its mission and goals. Coalition members may also elect to provide resources toward specific partner activities initiated under the Coalition that fall outside of the general expenses of the Coalition. Funding and additional resource requirements may change annually based on the approval of the Steering Committee.

The funding strategy will be kept by the facilitator as an appendix to this Charter.

## Amendments to Charter

The Steering Committee will strive for consensus in all amendments to this Charter. Consensus is defined as an agreement that participants can support or abide by and to which they do not formally object. In the absence of consensus, amendments require approval by a two-thirds majority of the Steering Committee inclusive of at least one representative of each sector.