

Introduction to the BEEBOOK, a manual of honeybee research methods

Piotr Medrzycki¹, Jamie Ellis², Vincent Dietemann³, Peter Neumann³

¹Agricultural Research Council, Research Unit for Apiculture and Sericulture; Via di Saliceto 80, 40128 Bologna, Italy

²Department of Entomology and Nematology, University of Florida, Bldg 970 Natural Area Dr., P.O. Box 110620, Gainesville, FL, USA, 32643-3620

³Swiss Bee Research Centre, Agroscope Liebefeld-Posieux Research Station ALP, CH-3003 Bern, Switzerland

DOI: 10.5073/jka.2012.437.028

COLOSS (Prevention of Colony LOSSES, www.coloss.org) is a large international effort with a goal of investigating the potential causes of honey bee colony losses globally. The group is composed of more than 250 scientists from over 40 member countries and is financed by the EU Cost Action.

The BEEBOOK is an effort of COLOSS members who seek to produce a manual that outlines standard honey bee research methodologies. Recognition of and adherence to these methodologies will make data more uniform and comparable across laboratories globally. The BEEBOOK concept is similar to that developed by the *Drosophila* community (*'Drosophila, a Practical Approach'* edited by D.B. Roberts).

Broadly, the BEEBOOK will include methods for rearing queens, equalizing colonies, measuring colony health parameters, conducting toxicological and molecular investigations on honey bees, etc. The BEEBOOK will exist online so that the chapters can evolve as new methods are developed. However, in 2012 a three member editorial team will collect all chapters into a single volume that will be published as a hardcopy book.

The current contribution presents the history of the BEEBOOK idea, its structure and a brief description of contents, with particular attention given to the section on toxicological protocols.