

# **WESTERN CAPE BEE FORAGE WORKING GROUP**

**A working group of the Western Cape Bee  
Industry Association in partnership with  
Western Cape Agri**

## **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**January 2019**

## 1. Background

- 1.1. After various consultations with the beekeeping industry and a formal request submitted by the Western Cape Bee Industry Association (WCBA) for assistance with a strategic plan, the Western Cape Department of Agriculture (hereinafter referred to as WCDoA) commissioned an engagement to support the development of a strategy to sustain the honey bee and apiculture in the Western Cape. Agrifusion, a service provider, was subsequently appointed and the bee industry strategy development study was commenced with in collaboration with the bee industry in the Western Cape, particularly the Western Cape Bee Association (hereinafter referred to as the WCBA). The establishment of a Forage Working Group was one of the support recommendations identified for the Bee Industry Strategy (hereinafter referred to as the BIS).
- 1.2. It is widely accepted that the sustainability of the honey bee will contribute to securing food sources for the future. We are dependent upon honey bees as an insect pollinator to ensure the successful growth of many agricultural commodities. The number of managed colonies in a certain area needs to be sufficient in contributing towards satisfying the demand for pollination in that area. If we need a certain number of bee colonies, then we need to ensure that there is enough forage for those colonies – it is estimated that pollination demand of the agricultural industry will double over the next 10 years.
- 1.3. The single largest concern expressed by the Industry is that there is not sufficient bee forage in the Western Cape. South Africa's honey bees rely on both indigenous and exotic species (but mostly exotic species like the Eucalyptus), flowering crops, and suburban plants to provide important forage sources all-year round. Honey bees are also the most important generalist pollinators in our natural landscapes, and the most important pollinator for approximately 50 insect pollinated commercial crops in South Africa. It is of the utmost importance that we ensure that honey bee populations have good quality food supplies throughout the year. Therefore, it is essential to understand which forage resources will best build and sustain our bee colonies and support honey production and that the necessary actions be taken to ensure sustainability of forage resources.

- 1.4. The Forage Working Group will be presided over by the WCBA as an affiliated member of Western Cape Agri. The latter will act as facilitator and strategic partner to the WCBA.

## 2. Purpose

- 2.1. The purpose of Forage Working Group will be to seek “to ensure, develop and sustain the availability of quality bee forage in the Western Cape that would sufficiently sustain a viable and vital honey bee population - both wild and managed colonies - in order to service the commercial pollination requirements of the Province, and to develop and adopt all possible measures and strategies to meet this purpose.
- 2.2. These measures might include but will not be limited to promoting the better use of bee plants as rotation crops, as fodder crops, as inter-crops, as windbreaks; promoting forestry in the Province; promoting bee plants in home gardens and in parks and as street trees; advocating to growers that commercial crops and cultivars with the highest possible forage value be planted; facilitating responsible access to environmentally sensitive land and to defence force land; promoting bee friendly pest control; promoting the rehabilitation of denuded land with bee fodder; and providing bee plants and seeds, or directly planting for bees.
- 2.3. The Forage Working Group will act as a commissioning agent for projects, raising and consolidating funding, as well as collecting and collating information, and advising government, in accordance with the fiduciary function of [Agri Western Cape as] governing body. It is noted that there have been previous proposal submissions on various forage projects (initiatives) by respective bodies and individuals. These would be considered by the Working Group.
- 2.4. The Forage Working Group will promote awareness across all sectors of the economy, from local government to commercial farmers and the general public with similar interest and the potential to assist (engage).
- 2.5. Furthermore, all options should be considered and explored, as sustainable bee forage will not depend on a single big action, but rather a collective of many actions adding up to one bigger whole. The Working Group will identify all the individual choices that can be made, where options exists that would yield an increase in bee forage, at no cost or limited cost to the proponent / owner. In this regard, a study may be

commissioned to amongst others identify gaps in existing research on forage and to establish a benchmark.

- 2.6. The Forage Working Group will encourage open discussion around relevant issues with the aim of bringing forward new ideas and ways to strengthen the foundations of the Industry and especially the bee forage landscape.

### **3. Deliverables**

- 3.1. The Forage Working Group will raise funds to commission a project to more accurately plot its purpose and direction.

The Forage Working Group will solicit written submissions, and where possible interactive engagements, from all interested stakeholders as to its proposed activities.

- 3.2. The Forage Working Group, under the auspices of the WCBA, will devise a 5-year plan, based on the results of its initial commissioned study and on submissions made to it. The Forage Working Group will establish a supply/demand framework within commercial agriculture in the Western Cape to determine the current usage (substantive data) of honey bee colonies for commercial pollination, and the projected demand in the next twenty years.

### **4. Governance**

- 4.1. The WCBA will act as Chair of the Working Group. Agri Western Cape will provide secretariat services and administer funds in accordance with its fiduciary role as agreed upon between the parties.
- 4.2. Membership shall be by consensus and drawn from the Industry as deemed necessary by the Forage Working Group.
- 4.3. The Working Group shall consist of duly appointed representatives and secundi from each institution/body as deemed appropriate.
- 4.4. Decisions, when applicable, will be taken by consensus, or sufficient consensus where deemed appropriate by the Chairperson; each Member, irrespective of representatives present, will have one vote only.

### **5. Members**

- 5.1. A representative each of the following entities :

- 5.1.1 Agri Western Cape (Secretariat)
  - 5.1.2 Western Cape Department of Agriculture
  - 5.1.3 Western Cape Department of Environmental Affairs
  - 5.1.4 Western Cape Bee Industry (combined associations) (Chair)
  - 5.1.6 SALGA, Western Cape
  - 5.1.7 Department of Agriculture Forestry and Fisheries
- 5.2. The Forage Working Group, under the auspices of the WBCA, may decide to extend Membership at any time to other entities/organisations/individuals, such as the ARC / Universities (researchers).
- 5.3. The Working Group may at any time decide to invite experts to give guidance in respect of specific and/or related fields.

## **6. Accountability**

- 6.1. Individual Working Group members shall be duly mandated and appointed in writing by the heads of their institutions and shall be responsible for reporting back on activities of the Working Group to their principals.
- 6.2. The Working Group as an entity will report on their progress and activities to the WCBA, who in turn will report back to its Members and funders and / or sponsors.
- 6.3. The Secretariat will timeously supply meeting notifications, agendas and minutes directly to Working Group members.

## **7. Meetings of the Working Group**

- 7.1. Agri Western Cape will organise, facilitate and administer the meetings, which will include the provision of Secretariat Services.
- 7.2. The Secretariat will circulate an agenda and relevant documentation not later than days prior to the scheduled meeting.
- 7.3. The Working Group will have quarterly meetings unless otherwise agreed.

## **8. Resources and budget**

- 8.1. All documents will be circulated in electronic format, wherever possible. Members will be responsible for the printing of their own documents, at their own discretion.

- 8.2. Agri Western Cape will render the services referred to above at a prior agreed upon cost recovery fee

## **9. Announcements**

No member/attendee of the Working Group will make or issue any formal or informal announcement or statement to the media or shall cause to be publicised any statement relating to information shared at, or received through the Working Group unless such statement, publication or announcement has been approved at a formal meeting of the Working Group and with the consent of the WCBA.

## **10. Review of the TOR**

The Working Group will delineate the scope of their tasks and set targets and milestones for the deliverables according to a time schedule, by the end of which this TOR will be reviewed.