

## 307.24 Honey Bee Pollinator Initiative

### **Name and Acronym: Honey Bee Pollinator Initiative (HBP)**

#### **Description/Summary**

The honey bee pollinator effort will provide floral forage habitats on private and Tribal lands through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), to benefit hive nutritional health as part of an overall effort to increase the health of honey bee. Feral honey bees and other pollinators will also benefit from the establishment of plant forage habitats high in nectar and pollen. A large percentage of the nation's commercial honey bee hives are brought to the upper Midwest for the bees to rest and feed upon quality forage in preparation for overwintering. The targeted five States are home to 65 percent of the Nation's 2.5 million commercial colonies. Increased availability of forages that have low or no pesticide exposure should improve the condition and eventual survival of honey bees. This effort will leverage existing capabilities and resources, target assistance where it is most needed, cooperatively engage State and local partners, and facilitate collaboration with agricultural producers, Tribes, and others.

#### **Target Species and Participating States**

##### **Species**

Honey Bee Pollinators (*Apis mellifera*)

##### **Priority Locations**

Michigan, Minnesota, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wisconsin.

Note: No other States may participate at this time.

#### **Program Contact Information**

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#### **ProTracts Requirements**

1. Subaccount Guidance  
Approved States must establish HBP subaccounts in ProTracts. States must select the "Honey Bee Pollinator" account type in ProTracts. Only contracts with this account type will be considered as supporting the HBP effort.
2. Application, Evaluation, and Ranking Tool (AERT) Guidance – Choice Lists and Matrix Data
  - a. Approved Land Use Types

Crop
Farmsteads
Forest
Pasture
Range
Associated Agriculture Lands

- b. Approved Resource Concerns

<b>Livestock Production Limitation</b>
Inadequate Feed and Forage
<b>Fish and Wildlife – Inadequate Habitat</b>

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	Inadequate Habitat – Food
	Inadequate Habitat – Cover/Shelter
	Inadequate Habitat – Water
	Inadequate Habitat – Habitat Continuity (Space)
	<b>Degraded Plant Condition</b>
	Undesirable Plant Productivity and Health

Note: No additional resource concerns may be added or used in ProTracts AERT to support this effort.

#### c. Core Practices

<b>Core Practices</b>
327 – Conservation Cover
340 – Cover Crops
386 – Field Border
390 – Riparian Herbaceous Cover
511 – Forage Harvest Management
512 – Forage and Biomass Plantings
528 – Prescribed Grazing
550 – Range Planting
612 – Tree/Shrub Establishment
645 – Upland Wildlife Habitat Management
647 – Early Successional Habitat Development

#### d. Supporting Practices

<b>Supporting Practices</b>
315 – Herbaceous Weed Control
328 – Conservation Crop Rotation
380 – Windbreak/Shelterbelt Establishment
382 – Fence
391 – Riparian Forest Buffer
484 – Mulching
490 – Tree/Shrub Site Preparation
516 – Livestock Pipeline
533 – Pumping Plant
595 – Integrated Pest Management
614 – Watering Facility
642 – Water Well
655 – Forest Trails and Landings
666 – Forest Stand Improvement

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<b>NRCS Approved Resource Concerns</b>	Conservation Cover	Conservation Crop Rotation	Cover Crops	Early Successional Habitat Development	Fence
<b>Practice Code =</b>	327	328	340	647	382
Livestock Production Limitation – Inadequate Feed and Forage	0	X	X	X	X
Fish and Wildlife – Inadequate Habitat – Food	X	X	X	X	0
Fish and Wildlife – Inadequate Habitat – Cover/Shelter	X	X	X	X	0
Fish and Wildlife – Inadequate Habitat – Water	0	0	0	0	0
Fish and Wildlife – Inadequate Habitat – Habitat Continuity (Space)	X	X	X	X	0
Degraded Plant Condition – Undesirable Plant Productivity and Health	X	X	X	X	X

<b>NRCS Approved Resource Concerns</b>	Field Border	Forage Harvest Management	Forage & Biomass Plantings	Forest Stand Improvement	Forest Trails and Landings	Herbaceous Weed Control
<b>Practice Code =</b>	386	511	512	666	655	315
Livestock Production Limitation – Inadequate Feed and Forage	0	X	X	X	X	X
Fish and Wildlife – Inadequate Habitat – Food	X	X	X	X	X	X
Fish and Wildlife – Inadequate Habitat – Cover/Shelter	X	X	X	X	X	X
Fish and Wildlife – Inadequate Habitat – Water	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fish and Wildlife – Inadequate Habitat – Habitat Continuity (Space)	X	0	0	X	0	X
Degraded Plant Condition – Undesirable Plant Productivity and Health	X	X	X	X	X	X

<b>NRCS Approved Resource Concerns</b>	Integrated Pest Management	Livestock Pipeline	Mulching	Prescribed Grazing	Pumping Plant	Range Planting	Riparian Forest Buffer
<b>Practice Code =</b>	595	516	484	528	533	550	391
Livestock Production Limitation – Inadequate Feed and Forage	0	0	0	X	0	X	X
Fish and Wildlife – Inadequate Habitat – Food	X	0	X	X	0	X	X
Fish and Wildlife – Inadequate Habitat – Cover/Shelter	0	0	X	X	0	X	X
Fish and Wildlife – Inadequate Habitat – Water	0	0	0	0	0	0	X
Fish and Wildlife – Inadequate Habitat – Habitat Continuity (Space)	0	0	0	X	0	X	X

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Degraded Plant Condition – Undesirable Plant Productivity and Health	0	X	X	X	X	X	X
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<b>NRCS Approved Resource Concerns</b>	Riparian Herbaceous Cover	Tree/Shrub Establishment	Tree/Shrub Site Preparation	Water Well	Watering Facility	Windbreak/Shelterbelt Establishment
<b>Practice Code =</b>	390	612	490	642	614	380
Livestock Production Limitation – Inadequate Feed and Forage	X	0	0	X	X	X
Fish and Wildlife – Inadequate Habitat – Food	X	X	0	0	0	X
Fish and Wildlife – Inadequate Habitat – Cover/Shelter	X	X	0	0	0	X
Fish and Wildlife – Inadequate Habitat – Water	X	0	0	X	X	0
Fish and Wildlife – Inadequate Habitat – Habitat Continuity (Space)	X	X	0	0	X	X
Degraded Plant Condition – Undesirable Plant Productivity and Health	X	X	X	X	X	X

Legend:

X = Check the corresponding box in the AERT matrix.

0 = Leave the corresponding box blank in the AERT matrix.

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**Honey Bee Pollinator Screening Criteria Worksheet  
NRCS Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)**

***A screening worksheet must be completed for each eligible EQIP application.***

**Instructions:**

This screening worksheet must be completed for each eligible producer applying for EQIP Honey Bee Pollinator assistance. Applications will be accepted on a continuous basis; however, application periods are established for purposes of evaluation, ranking, and funding decisions. The goal of this screening tool is to ensure that conservation technical assistance and EQIP program benefits are managed efficiently to address priority conservation needs related to this national initiative.

Completion of this worksheet and documentation does not constitute agreement to provide EQIP program benefits nor approval of a program contract. The original screening worksheet should be filed with the applicant case file or EQIP program file and unless the application is determined to be ineligible, the screening priority (high and low) must be recorded in ProTracts. Upon request, a copy of any completed screening worksheet may be provided to the applicant.

**Detailed Screening Criteria Worksheet – Complete for Each Eligible EQIP Applicant**

Applicant Name:		County:	
Application No:		Field Office:	
Evaluator Name:		Date:	

**Priority Determination for ProTracts:**

<p><b><u>Ineligible Category:</u> The application is located in the focal area or within 1 mile of an apiary? Yes (eligible) No (not eligible)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An apiary is defined as five or more hives or as being identified on a State apiary register.</li> <li>• If not on a State register, the producer provides documentation of location of apiary.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Has the producer had a financial assistance contract terminated in the past 3 years?</b> Yes (low) No (High)</p>	
<p><b>Are any of the planned plantings located adjacent to a (i) cropland field, * or (ii) a pasture or hayland treated with insecticides? If so,</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If cropland or treated pasture/hayland is located on only one side of the planting, is the planting width less than 125 feet? <i>Yes (low) No (high)</i></li> <li>• If cropland treated pastureland/hayland is located immediately adjacent to both sides of the planting is the planting width less than 250 feet? <i>Yes (low) No (high)</i></li> </ul> <p>* it is assumed that all cropland is treated with insecticides or has the potential to be treated.</p>	
<p><b>Any rating of “low” will not be ranked.</b></p>	

The priority determination of high or low must be recorded in ProTracts application priority for this applicant.

D.C. Approval:		Date Approved:	
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## 307.24 Honey Bee Pollinator Initiative

### AERT Guidance – Ranking Criteria Questions

The total ranking points associated with this project are to be distributed in AERT and approved ranking questions as follows:

AERT Level	Maximum Points	Point Percentages
National Ranking Questions	250	25%
State Ranking Questions	400	40%
Local Ranking Questions	250	25%
Efficiency Score	100	10%
<b>Total points for this project:</b>	<b>1000</b>	<b>100%</b>

The following are detailed instructions for populating ranking questions and points in ProTracts AERT.

#### **National Ranking Criteria Requirements: (250 Points)**

National ranking questions are established in ProTracts by National Headquarters.

#### **State Ranking Criteria Requirements: (400 Points)**

State ranking questions are established by National Headquarters and will be entered into ProTracts by the States for this initiative. No Wildlife Habitat Evaluation Guide will be required or applied.

<b>EQIP HBP State-Level Ranking Questions</b>	<b>Points</b>
1. Proximity to registered or known honey bee apiary (select only one):	
1a. Less than 1 mile	100
1b. 1 – 2 miles	50
1c. Greater than 2 miles	25
2. Honey bee forage being provided by the contract will be available for (select only one):	
2a. 1 year	30
2b. 2 years	60
2c. 3 years or more	100
3. The planted honey bee forage will be available (select all that apply):	
3a. During early bloom period	30
3b. During mid-bloom period	40
3c. During late-bloom period	30
Note: Bloom period is defined by State technical guidance	
4. The seeding will include (select only one):	
4a. One honey bee forage species only	25
4b. Two to four honey bee forage species	50
4c. More than four of such species	100
Total Points:	

#### **Local Ranking Criteria Requirements (250 Points)**

Local ranking criteria are approved and entered into ProTracts at the State level according to the requirements below.

**Local questions** to be developed by each State, using the following guidance:

- NRCS State offices will work with partners and subcommittees to develop local criteria to determine potential honey bee forage opportunities.
- Examples of local questions States must follow to stay within intention of effort:
  - Will the plantings target critical times of nectar dearth? (seek input from local bee keepers)
  - Will grazing management be implemented to significantly favor (target) honey bee forage plants?
  - Will forest management be implemented to significantly favor (target) honey bee forage plants?