

Bee Breeding Apiarist

A honey bee breeding project focused on Varroa resistance in commercially desirable bees has started in Hilo, Hawaii. This location makes use of the favorable climate conditions for selection and breeding year-round.

Hawaii Island Honey Company (David Thomas), the USDA in Baton Rouge (Bob Danka) and the Arista Bee Research Foundation (BartJan Fernhout) are working together in creating new lines of Varroa-resistant honey bees. The project is supported by Project Apis mellifera (PAm, Danielle Downey) for the acquisition of project funding and staffing.

In this project, honey bee lines are screened, selected and tested for high levels of Varroa resistance, using bee breeding techniques, instrumental insemination and Varroa-resistance selection methodologies. In addition, colonies are tested for their ability to perform in the pollination and honey producing part of the US honey bee industry.

Anticipating funding approvals, we are currently looking for two motivated apiarists to staff the project. Job level will be based on education and experience of the candidate.

Position, candidate background

Full-Time position, located in the Hilo area, Hawaii. Continuation of employment is dependent upon program/operational needs, satisfactory work performance, availability of funds, and compliance with applicable Federal/State laws.

Candidates are experienced beekeepers familiar with methods of queen rearing, honey bee health inspections, colony assessment techniques and, ideally, instrumental insemination.

The candidate would be highly motivated, have a good understanding of honey bee biology and management, bee breeding, and Varroa mites. The candidate has understanding of the needs of the US honey bee industry.

The candidate has excellent communication skills while executing project tasks with a variety of co-workers, beekeepers and scientists. While being able to work in a team, the candidate can also function with limited supervision.

Education level of the candidate is, as a minimum, a Bachelor's Degree from an accredited college or university in Entomology, Zoology, Ecology, Biology or related field in the Natural Sciences. Candidate has experience with detailed data collection, both in field and lab conditions. The candidate has the ability to organize, analyze and present complex information and pays attention to details.

For the execution of the field work, the candidate must be in good physical condition, has to be able and willing to work in remote locations under adverse conditions for prolonged periods and must be capable of lifting and carrying fifty pounds of equipment unassisted. Must not be allergic to insect venom. Candidate possesses a valid driver's license throughout the duration of employment.

Candidate has to be willing to travel to US mainland locations for extended field trials (up to 3 weeks).

Duties

- Maintain and evaluate, as part of the team, more than 500 colonies using a variety of selection criteria: Varroa reproduction, Varroa levels, brood pattern, temperament, honey production, colony growth.
- Coordinate and execute queen rearing activities, including stock selection, nuc maintenance, grafting, drone production, semen collection, instrumental insemination, strategic single-drone and multi-drone crossings, and isolated mating yard use.
- Collect and maintain scientific data (Varroa infestation levels, Varroa brood counting, field logs, assessment metrics), analyze and report to local and remote group partners.
- Familiarity and skill to review scientific and industry literature. Write or co-author progress and budget reports, in consultation with the breeding team.
- Plan, schedule and execute work in close cooperation with team members and project partners (commercial beekeepers, for example)
- Travel to a variety of sites (foreseeably Louisiana, California) for colony evaluations and project meetings.

Financial Compensation

Compensation commensurate with qualifications, experience and level of education.

Inquiries

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Application Requirements

Please submit the following documents online to be considered for the position: 1)Cover Letter, 2)Resume, 3)Salary History, 4)Supervisory References, 5)Copy of Degree(s)/Transcript(s)/Certificate(s).

Recruitment open until filled.