

## **National Honey Board Meeting Minutes**

**PRESIDING:** Michelle Poulk, Chairperson

**LOCATION:** Virtual Meeting

**DATE:** October 28th, 2021

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**National Honey Board Members Present:** John Olney, Christopher Olney, Michelle Poulk, Tom Sargeantson, Greg Olsen, Joan Gunter, Joseph Sanroma, Maren Martin, Patricia Sundberg

**National Honey Board Alternates Present:** Jeffrey Dong, Kevin Jensen, Alan Turanski, Jeffrey Hull, Eric Wenger, Nancy Seaquist, Andrew Sargeantson, Arlen Penner, Darren Cox, Blake Shook

**National Honey Board Absent:** Lisa Hansel

**National Honey Board Staff Present:** Margaret Lombard, Kelly Werning, Catherine Barry, Jessica Schindler, Jocelyn Martinez, Melissa Boone-Hall, Andrea Brening, Darren Brown

**Others Present:** Katie Cook (USDA/AMS), Vicky Carpenter (USDA/AMS) Jeff Caley (Dutch Gold), Jill Clark (Dutch Gold), Chris Stroh (Dutch Gold), Evan Himes (Dutch Gold), Laura Morin (Sterling Rice Group), Amer Tadmori (Sterling Rice Group), Laura Muir (Sterling Rice Group), Linda Li (Sterling Rice Group), Linda Martin (Westbound Communications), Hailey Thompson (Porter Novelli), Jimmy Szczepanek (Porter Novelli), Keith Seiz (Brightly Creative), Don Ladhoff (Fresh Smart Solutions), Andrea Schepke (Evans Hardy + Young), Barbara Lyle, (B Lyle, Inc.), Danielle Downey (Project Apis m)

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### **CALL TO ORDER**

The Thursday session of the National Honey Board meeting was convened at 9:06 a.m. by Michelle Poulk and Andrea Brening called roll. Then all guests present introduced themselves.

## ACTION ITEM I TO SEAT JEFF HULL

Motion by Patricia Sundberg, seconded by Joan Gunter to seat Jeff Hull as a board member in Lisa Hansel's absence

## ACTION ITEM II TO ACCEPT THE AGENDA

Motion by Joan Gunter, seconded by Joe Sanroma and carried to approve the consent agenda.

## ACTION ITEM III TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES

Motion by Patricia Sundberg, seconded by Tom Sargeantson and carried to approve the minutes.

## **AMS UPDATE**

USDA's Katie Cook, Marketing Specialist, updated on the merging Marketing Orders and Research and Promotion Programs into one operation, Market Development Division. This has no impact on the boards.

The Management Review was conducted in May by Tarun with the USDA. This was done by looking at budget years 2018-2021. They reviewed samplings of checks and credit card charges. At the conclusion of the review, there were no findings, and it was noted that the National Honey Board is compliant with its processes.

The upcoming referendum is mandated to be conducted every 7 years and this will be happening next year in 2022. There will be mail-in voting, as well as electronic voting. All the information can be found in the mailing sent to everyone. The board needed to decide how long of a period they wanted to vote and pick a date to vote. Cook explained that voting is usually open for 2 weeks and the report is done by about 3 days after. Then it has to be signed by the USDA Administrator and will be officially completed about 2 weeks later. Poulk suggested March 15<sup>th</sup>. Cook can run with that date, but also

has to make sure that date works for the USDA. Sundberg asked how many voters approximately and Cook states about 36 Domestic and 60 Importers, for a total of less than 100 and this will be based off 2020 numbers.

#### ACTION ITEM IV TO SELECT MARCH 15<sup>TH</sup>, 2022 AS THE REFERENDUM VOTING DATE

Motion by Michelle Poulk, seconded by Joan Gunter to accept the date of March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2022 for referendum voting due date

Cook also took a moment to mention that while wearing the NHB hat do not try and influence votes. Outside of that you are welcome to share and state your own opinions.

#### **FINANCIAL**

NHB VP of Finance Kelly Werning started out by noting that any of the forms she refers to have also been saved out on the Google Drive and can be accessed at any time. She began talking through the September 2021 financial statements and the highlights of them. We have about 3.6 million in cash and other current assets of \$97,000 which are our prepaid insurances that we carry. We also have property & equipment of \$10,000 and other Assets of \$13,489 with a Total Assets of \$3,642,641. Total Liabilities of \$9,000 which leaves us with total liabilities and net assets of \$3,642,641.

Net assessment revenue is at \$5.9 million at the end of the quarter and is made up of a couple of things. Our total assessment revenue collected during the year net of any refunds issued during the years. Our total assessments revenue collected so far this year is \$6.7 million trending ahead by about \$900,000. This number is a mix of the following 82% from imports and 18% domestic. Offsetting this number are the assessments refunds so far amounting to \$767,000 of this \$757,000 (99%) are for organic honey refunds. We are running slightly ahead of projected refunds at about \$20,000 with an overall continual increase. We have taken this into consideration for 2022 budgeting. She did mention the anti-dumping suit and its impact on the budget and a possible steep dive in revenue expected due to that. Total Expenditure of \$4,933,155 and excess Revenue of \$1,009,913.

Werning explained the process of coming up with a budget proposal and what determines how she calculates that. The added variable for 2022 is the anti-dumping with many unknowns as to how much and when it might impact and how long it might impact the budget. Werning did a quick review of the amended 2021 budget that we are currently working from and the proposed 2022 budget. The most important number to look at here is the assessment number. Usually for this she looks at the past year and gets a feel from the industry as to where they think the assessments will be. For 2022 she took the first 4 months of expected import revenue and reduced that number by 15%. To counter that they followed the same process to determine expected refunds. With all of that information combined we came up with \$5.7 million. Overall this leaves us with a significantly lower amount to work with for 2022 then the previous year this reduction is about \$1.7 million.

The main decrease for 2022 will be done in the Marketing budget. Catherine Barry has already taken this into consideration as she forecasted the marketing budgets for the 2022 marketing programs.

Werning talked to the process of assessment audits. Then reviewed the general and administrative expenses and what they are.

Werning noted that at the end of this meeting there will be a vote to accept the 2022 budget.

## **COMPLIANCE**

Normally Werning and the senior accountant Missy Boone-Hall do the compliance audits in person, but with 2020 they switched to virtual audits this continued in 2021.

Compliance highlights out of the eight businesses left to audit, 3 said that a virtual audit was not possible. They have completed 3 of other 5 and are still working on the others to see if they can be completed or will need to be done in person next year. Total review assessments collected in 2021 are \$1,395.

Chris Olney asked about the 5% research amount is that a minimum or can we do more. Werning stated that it is a minimum and more can be spent. Olney thinks that more money should be put towards production research as he is concerned there will be supply issues. Werning said that we could increase that amount, but would need direction from the Board on this as to how much. Poulk said she thought it would be

wise to wait until the next meeting, because there is so much uncertainty as to our revenue due to the anti-dumping. Board overall seemed to agree that these are legit concerns but waiting would be wise considering the financial situation.

Poulk thanked the staff for all their hard work on the budget especially with all the unknowns at this point.

## **MARKETING OVERVIEW**

NHB Marketing Director Catherine Barry gave a brief overview of which programs would be presented during the meeting considering the condensed agenda. Mentioning that the presentations that will covered included the following:

- Attitude & Usage Study
- National Honey Month – Honey Saves Lives
- Retail & Shopper Marketing
- In-house Marketing & Social Media
- Ingredient Marketing
- Production Research
- Sustainability Initiatives

Barry also referred to the fact that there were several other programs the NHB did not have time to share with the Board during the meeting, but the PowerPoints for the other programs were sent out to Board prior to the meeting. She offered to happily answer any questions the Board might have in regards to these other programs. Adding that following the meeting, the NHB will be sending out all the videos for these additional programs as well.

Barry outlined the many factors the NHB looks at when prioritizing and determining the marketing programs, including the financial position of the NHB, research findings and the NHB Strategic Plan. Barry then went on to highlight the key elements of the NHB Strategic Plan, including the Mission, Vision, and Purpose. The Marketing Strategic Priorities were also reviewed as it is a guiding factor in all marketing activities and programs. These priorities were the basis of the strategic platform of Good For Me and Good For The Planet. Barry discussed the importance of this marketing approach in order to reach their target audience, the Goodness Seekers. Barry then shared that this

strategic platform of Good For Me and Good For The Planet would be reinforced throughout all of the NHB marketing programs presented during the meeting.

## **RESEARCH PROGRAMS**

Following the marketing programs overview, Barry then discussed the research priorities of the NHB. She highlighted the importance of the foundational research that helps to provide the latest market insights and trends, evaluate program effectiveness, and develop a body of evidence to support health and nutrition claims regarding honey.

The NHB Research Priority Areas were reviewed by Barry, including:

- Consumer Highlights & Industry Trends
- Production Research – Project Apis m.
- Ingredient Technical Research
- Nutrition Research

## **NEW HONEY ATTITUDE & USAGE STUDY**

Laura Morin with Sterling Rice Group shared the key findings of the A&U Study. This study is geared to tracking over time consumer usage, awareness, and perceptions.

The key findings are as follows:

- Strong increases in positive story recall of all sweeteners among goodness seekers, with honey leading by far
- Health and appeal perceptions have increased with lots of positive momentum
- Honey is the favorite sweetener for Goodness Seekers, but granulated sugar now leads with general population, stealing 1st place from honey.
- Honey is beating out maple syrup on nearly every key attribute. Significant gains since 2020

Positive perceptions of honey have translated to an increase in usage with an overall plan to increase honey usage in the future. Honey usage has experienced significant increases with Goodness Seekers, with heavy users increasing by +6 points for Gen Pop and +13 points for Goodness Seekers

One of the other amazing statistics show that consumers are more likely to buy a product with honey regardless of the price. But still the main barrier for honey is the desire to eat less sugars overall.

The most motivating message is the desire for good health and a healthy planet, focusing on antioxidants and eating honey to keep bees alive. Awareness of the declining honeybee population has dropped a little so there is still a good opportunity to educate the general population on honey's positive impact on bees.

The last key finding is concern about adulteration especially with Goodness Seekers. So, we need to identify strategies to build consumer confidence in using honey.

Poulk asked about did consumers see a difference between domestic or imported honey as far as adulteration. Morin said no they didn't ask that specifically, it was just a general perception.

Chris Stroh asked about any more studies about the added sugar labels and the confusion associated with that. Morin stated that no we have not continued to study that, because we did a lot of research around that initially. She noted that we do have a lot of data in regard to this issue.

## **HONEY SAVES LIVES CAMPAIGN**

Keith Seiz with Brightly Creative talked about the work that has been done with the Honey Saves Hives Campaigns, which was designed to promote the importance of the honey bees by promoting honey made products. This includes partnering with food and beverage manufacturers, as well as aligning with Project Apis m. as the recipient of any bee health research donation as a result of the program. Seiz showcased the five partners for the 2021 program:

- Purely Elizabeth
- Justin's
- Lost Cause
- Melle Water
- Companion Baking

Hailey Thompson from Porter Novelli began by stating that most consumers value that honey consumption promotes a healthy planet. The NHB has worked towards sharing

this messaging through articles, podcasts, Facebook & Instagram, working with influencers and so much more. The NHB also promote the Honey Saves Hive program utilizing our existing relationships with Registered Dietitians who have thousands of followers. Food Influencers are an important key to sharing information with their followers as well.

The Honey Saves Hive program was promoted through the NHB's social media programs.

## **RETAIL PROGRAM**

Don Ladhoff with FreshSmartSolutions recapped the 2021 Retail Programs starting with an overview of the program strategy.

Retail activity drove awareness and importance that the honey bee plays on the world's food supply.

Digital advertising and e-commerce is key to reaching the target audience, Goodness Seekers. In-store communications and store merchandising are essential to sharing our messaging as well.

Ladhoff shared that the NHB continued our partnership with Thomas's English Muffin and Celestial Seasonings again reinforcing our messaging with more consumers.

Ladhoff maintains retail relationships with key retail operations. Many retailers also work with dietitians effectively creating further allies promoting the sale and consumption of honey.

Poulk asked Ladhoff how the honey industry can take full advantage of working together on assisting with these retail partners on promotions. Ladhoff said timing can be very tight in finalizing retail programs. However, he is aware this is something the Board would like to see longer lead times to take advantage of the promotions.

Jeff Hull asked Ladhoff if he saw many difficulties with the larger grocery stores doing their own promotions and is there a way to get in to advertise in their tools and in-store promotions. Hull mentioned that some stores want to increase their own private label, which still increases honey usage across the board. Ladhoff said that certainly there are lot of opportunities, but budgets are the greatest challenge with this.

## **IN-HOUSE**

NHB Marketing Specialist Jessica Schindler reviewed the programs and activations managed internally by NHB staff in 2021 focusing on the strategic platform of Good For Me and Good For The Planet. Falling in line with the Good For Me pillar, the first of these is the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics annual Food & Nutrition Conference & Expo (FNCE) program which is attended by nutrition professionals and students. This allows the NHB to educate and bring awareness to nutrition professionals about the benefits of honey. In 2021, this remained a virtual event and the NHB sponsorship package included a customized booth background, Product Spotlight, Focus Featured Booth Promo, Food & Nutrition Digital Edition, Digital Event Bag Honey Placement.

As part of the NHB's participation with FNCE, the NHB sponsored an exclusive FNCE Friday charcuterie event that was hosted for media-facing nutrition influencers. This sponsorship included honey and honeycomb being featured on the charcuterie board of the event host where she talked about the advantages of using honey to complement a variety of meats and cheeses, while providing a sweet balance to salty pairings.

## **EPCOT® INTERNATIONAL FLOWER & GARDEN FESTIVAL**

To reinforce the Good For The Planet strategic pillar, the NHB continues to build on the partnership with Disney during the EPCOT® International Flower & Garden Festival. Schindler shared how this partnership continues to be a very positive event that focuses on educating consumers on the importance of honey bees and their impact on the food chain. Schindler reviewed the Disney's social media reach and a highlighted some of the social media posts showcasing the NHB-sponsored Honey Bee-stro that festival-goers shared.

## **CONSUMER ADVERTISING**

Schindler then went on to discuss the NHB's consumer advertising strategy, which includes aligning with media partners that index high with Goodness Seekers based on the latest MRI data. The NHB prioritized advertising with the following publications: Health, Eating Well & AllRecipes for a total of more than 73 million impressions throughout the entire advertising campaign. The full-page advertisements focused on the importance of honey bees to the global food supply, showcasing recipes featuring honey and foods pollinated by honey bees. The highlight of the program was a four-page spread in the Eating Well March issue which included a flip-cover feature and opening content about Planet Earth's Essential Workers: Honey Bees.

## **SOCIAL MEDIA**

NHB Social Media Coordinator Jocelyn Martinez shared the success of the NHB's social media platforms and the opportunities to promote the Good For Me and the Good For The Planet messaging. She highlighted some of the top performing posts throughout the year and the type of content that seems to resonate most with NHB followers, including seasonal recipes and honey bee-related info and facts.

## **INFLUENCER PARTNERSHIP**

Martinez recapped the NHB's partnership with nutrition and fitness expert, Mitzi Dulan. This partnership included the creation of 9 new recipes that focused on whole food nutrition and highlighted honey bee-pollinated ingredients. These recipes were shared not only on the NHB's, but also on Mitzi's social media channels. This content also went live on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and several other formats reaching over 170,000 users with over 650,000 impressions. The NHB is very happy with how this partnership has blossomed.

Spotlight on Honey Saves Hives promoted during National Honey Month. The In-House promotion of this program is also widely done through our on social media channels, partners and weekly Honey Saves Hives posts. This reached over 2.4 million users and generated over 2.6 impressions and 13,000 engagements.

## **DIGITAL PROJECTS**

The NHB partnered with AMS and various agencies to create a new streamlined social media content submission process. The NHB also worked with AMS and our

Foodservice & Ingredient teams to really lay the groundwork for the launch of the Honey4Pros social media accounts geared towards members of the food and beverage industry. Both of these projects have been integrated into the NHB marketing programs seamlessly and have already improved the daily management of these initiatives.

Some of the other digital projects that the NHB staff has been working on include the following:

- Pollination Infographic, available at Honey.com
- Refreshed consumer e-newsletter design and layout
- Honey.com website ongoing work to make sure it fresh and updated

## **INGREDIENT MARKETING**

Keith Seiz with Brightly Creative began with the continued impact that the global pandemic 19 is still having on the food and beverage industry.

Product development has picked up, but it is still stagnant compared to pre-pandemic.

Breakfast lines have seen an uptick, along with the sauce category and specialty categories. New product development is being impacted by the shortages seen throughout the industry not only with packaging, but also with ingredients and labor.

Consumers want foods that are healthy, but they are also selecting foods that are more indulgent. Manufacturers are still trying to figure out what consumers truly want: health or indulgence?

In the alcohol category, that industry is seeing similar issues. On-premises alcohol consumption at breweries and distilleries is back, but not at the level it once was.

Seltzers saw tremendous growth early in the pandemic, so even through their growth is slowing, they are still a force in the alcohol aisle. Non-alcoholic beverages continue to intrigue consumers and brewers/distillers.

The sweetener market has seen a lot of movement, specifically with all-natural sweeteners. Allulose has become the “latest and greatest” in the category, whose flavor is very similar to sugar. Monk fruit extract has a stronghold in beverages. Also, of concern is the growing number of “Honey” mimics, such as MeliBio. These are hitting the marketplace but have yet to see a breakthrough in the manufacturing industry. Seiz said it is something their team is watching very closely.

Seiz then went on to detail some of the ongoing programs such as public relations, direct outreach, newsletters and competitions. He explained that the lack of in-person events has allowed them to put an emphasis on three emerging categories: sauces and dressings, processed meats, and confections. The NHB has continued hosting virtual summits and even attended a few in-person conferences.

Direct outreach and advertising continue to be a strong and effective way for the NHB to share the Good For Me and Good For The Planet messaging with our target audiences. Seiz shared that the NHB has been able to distinguish honey from other sweeteners by showcasing the source of it – the honey bee. In addition, the pollination messaging about honey bee's contributions to the entire food ecosystem has been something that stands out.

Then Seiz noted that this messaging is also being brought to life on the NHB's brand-new social media channels with the launch of @Honey4Pros. These new channels provide the NHB with a great tool to reach both the ingredient marketing and foodservice industry contacts.

Seiz went on to give an overview of the NHB's virtual summits in 2021, including:

- Research & Development Summit (new this year)
- Confectionary Honey Summit (new this year)
- Sauces, Dressing & Condiments Summits
- Alcohol Summits

Targeting large food manufactures, the ingredient team reaches out to some of the top industry players, such as General Mills, Frito Lay, Cliff Bar and Naturipe Farms, with individualized presentations to their product line and opportunities for honey inclusion in current products or new honey product additions.

The ingredient team attended the couple of in-person events in 2021. The first being for the American Distillers Institute where the NHB was invited to host a mini honey summit to conference attendees. The second conference the team exhibited at was the Craft Brewers Conference and were able to talk to attendees about brewing with honey and the research we have available. .

Seiz shared the success of the three alcohol category competitions. The Honey Beer Competition had nearly 250 entries and the winner was a past NHB honey summit attendee. The second competition held was for the spirits industry with nearly 75 entries for the Honey Spirits Competition. Seiz explained that with the growth of the number of meaderies in the US, we are starting to see the amount of honey being used by this

industry increase and the popularity of these products rise. The Honey Mead Competition was still to be completed, but Seiz anticipated it will max out at 375 entries.

Looking ahead at 2022, Seiz noted that honey has good momentum going into the new year with the Good For Me, Good For The Planet messaging that is really resonating with the audiences. The messaging around pollination and beehives is really starting to make an impact, and we need to continue to tell that story.

Tom Sargeantson, asked a general marketing question as he thinks that these programs are going to face some serious issue with post dumping concerns. Seiz stated that they haven't heard too much yet, but they are prepared to deal with these issues by reinforcing what makes honey unique. Missy Ashurst stated that she believes pricing and availability will be an issue. Is there something we can do in advance or have to share now with our customers, in regard to these issues? Seiz stated that the Honey Summit in a couple of weeks will cover information relative to these concerns. Using third party sources is a valuable tool. Lombard noted a Sustainability Report and how that impacts the story telling that tells why honey is essential to this. The board would like to see all this information in a format that they can distribute to customers. Pricing and supply is definitely a concern to manufacturers that they are preparing for to accommodate and deal with that concern.

## **PRODUCTION RESEARCH**

Danielle Downey from Project Apis m. (PAm) reviewed the NHB's Production Research program that PAm administers on our behalf. Downey began by sharing who works for PAm, as well as the PAm board members and scientific advisors that help advise the research that is funded through their organization.

Downey explained that research and data are essential to helping us understand the problems associated with beekeeping, so that we can create tools to address issues. Some of the main concerns are as follows:

- Cost of Beekeeping

- Annual Colony Loss (30-40%)
- Pollinator Forage & Habitat Declining
- Pollination Services Needed
- Honey Production Per Colony & Prices Declining
- Agrochemical Exposure

PAm funds research projects that are both practical to both honeybee forage and projects that support beekeepers both long term and short term. Projects that focus on some of the following to list a few:

- Beekeeper Tools
- Honey Bee Health
- Long Term Stock Improvement
- Nosema
- Nutrition & Forage
- Pathology & Virus

PAm receives funds from numerous groups Bayer Healthy Hives, Beekeepers, Blue Diamond Almonds, and National Honey Board amongst several others.

Downey then reviewed the current research projects that are being funded and what they hope to achieve from these projects and their status. Some projects from 2020 have been delayed and she touched on the status of those studies.

## **BEE HEALTH COLLECTIVE-BHC**

This program is a collaboration with the National Honey Board with a one-stop shop for everything honey and bees to share and gather credible information about honey bee health. It is also an excellent way to source information and translate into a more understandable format. Downey briefly reviewed the website, and it's features and what is being done to source more traffic to the website.

Gunter asked about the fight between native bees and honeybees and is it possible that native bees are spreading virus to the honey bee or could it be the other way around. Downey stated that they have ongoing projects to study these issues, but stated it is hard to know and there are a lot of dynamics that play into it. The overall message to help with these issues is to plant healthy forage for the pollinators.

Greg Olsen asked about the algae protein-based study. How would that be used and in what capacity? Downey discussed the issues that beekeepers have had over the years trying to determine what the best protein source for bees and is it nutritional for them. This study is exciting because it looks at the metabolites and proteins that are stimulated by the metabolism and how it compares to pollen, and it looks the same.

Patty Sundberg asked if this is the same study that indicates that the protein helps to stimulate the production of royal jelly. Downey said she thought that one was the “Vitellogenin”, which they would absolutely be looking at also as another measure of bee health and if bees get fat on that.

## **OPEN DISCUSSION**

NHB CEO Margaret Lombard talked about the Tallow Eradication Project noting the comment time ended on June 22, 2021. There were 913 comments and not one of them was in favor of this project. It is still under review and as soon as the NHB hears anything on that project, Lombard indicated we would let the Board know.

Lombard shared that the NHB is also watching the Mellibio issue very closely. This is the synthetic sweetener that calls themselves “The Honey Made Without Bees”. The NHB has drafted letters to the FTC and FDA and we will share those once they are vetted by AMS and we have more information. The NHB has yet to see a sample of Mellibio.

US Pharmacopia is a non-profit organization that is working on a honey standard that has been developed. However, the honey standard is available for purchase, which was not originally indicated when we were working them. It is intended to be purchased on an individual basis and the National Honey Board cannot buy it and share it with anyone. Lombard is working on seeing if she can get a discount for everyone. If anyone is interested in buying it, it is \$150 to purchase your own license.

Lombard reminded everyone at the meeting that the Honey Industry Summit was coming up the following month on November 9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup>. The NHB hopes everyone can join us for this event, we already have a record number of attendees signed up.

In the Spring of 2022, the NHB will have our Strategic plan and be doing a refresh on our strategic plan.

Lombard asked that outgoing board members to please stay in touch and encouraged them to consider serving again.

## ACTION ITEM V

Motion by Joan Gunter, seconded by Joe Sanroma to accept the Proposed 2022 Budget as presented and passed to accept

2022 Spring Meeting, April 21 & 22<sup>nd</sup>, Omni, Hilton Head SC – In Person

2022 Fall Meeting, October 27<sup>th</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup>, Kimpton Born, Denver, CO – In Person

## **SUSTAINABILITY**

Laura Morin reinforced the focus on the dual strategy of Good For Me and Good For The Planet, but highlighting that the sustainability initiative of Celebrating Beekeeping falls under the Good For The Planet pillar. Morin then explained the importance of educating consumers, because they often do not realize the significance of bees and that learning about beekeeping puts a face to the industry.

70% of the population is aware of the declining bee population. But there is still an opportunity to educate on what they can do. Interesting data from this report shows that consumers are more and more concerned with sustainability and related issues and their impact on the environment.

Morin discussed that the point of purchase is gaining an even stronger voice. And that sustainability is aligning more and more with personal habits. They are finding and looking for more options that promote sustainability. Cost and convenience are still the top concerns to be addressed.

Celebrating Beekeeping is how the NHB is telling the story of honey, in addition to demonstrating it's value and difference compared to other sweeteners.

In 2020, the NHB focused on the next generation of beekeepers and in 2021 we focused on shorter versions of the top performing videos. Morin shared that all the videos can be found on YouTube and that they were promoted during Earth Day and National Bee Day. These advertising campaigns performed extremely well and exceeded all benchmarks.

Morin also explained that the NHB is trying to bolster the website content and continuing to tell and even more compelling story in that digital landscape.

### **AMS UPDATE**

Cook gave an update on the referendum that March 2022 may not be feasible. Since there is a requirement to issue a notice to trade in the Federal Registry 30 days before the vote. She suggested May might be a good alternate backup date for the referendum. Cook also suggested increasing the voting period from 2 weeks to 3 weeks. This would give importers adequate time to vote. We still anticipate the report and voting to be done within the one-month period. It was also requested reaching out to the board and staff with accurate addresses to mail referendum information.

Poulk stated that she had no objection to the alternate or extended voting period.

Sanroma gave a Tallow update noting that economics is where most concerns are arising, so that is slowing down the process. Lombard asked about who shared this information with Sanroma and it was Eric Silva. Lombard stated that she would reach out to Silva to see if she could get more information.

### **ACTION ITEM VI TO ADJOURN THE MEETING**

Motion by Joe Sanroma, seconded by Tom Sargeantson to adjourn the meeting at 12:25