Argentina: alert for presence in Brazil of the hive beetle

Argentina has declared a state of health alert throughout the country by the presence in apiaries of Sao Paulo (Brazil) of the small hive beetle (PEC). It is a plague of high impact for beekeeping, which has never been detected in this country, so the purpose of this measure is to avoid serious productive and commercial damage that would result from its entrance.

The Ministry of Agro Industry of the Nation through the National Health Service and Food Quality (Senasa) declared this state of national health alert with the publication on June 10, in the Official Gazette of Resolution 302/2016.

This beetle, scientifically called Aethina tumida, has a great capacity for dispersal and survival because it can fly more than 10 km. attracted by the smell of hives and, in the absence of them, it can feed and reproduce in certain fruits.

The PEC, originally from Africa, can cause serious damage to apiaries during the development of their larval stage and cause the destruction of the combs, the fermentation of honey and the consequent abandonment of hives affected by bee colonies . Furthermore, the presence of the pest in the country could affect the international marketing of apiculture products.

As a preventive measure and early detection, to prevent the spread of this harmful pest, are established as areas of greatest risk to the provinces which have geographical proximity to Brazil, as well as the positions of land, sea and airport border where this beetle can enter in goods transport.

Since the PEC is notifiable to the Senasa, it urges to whom detects or suspects of beetle presence to collect samples and place them in a jar with alcohol, before immediately inform the office nearest Senasa. It also recommends not mobilize their hives until a definitive diagnosis. Immediate notification of any suspicion will allow rapid and efficient performance of the health service to prevent the possible entry and spread of the pest.

Anyone wishing more information may contact the National Beekeeping Program Health (DNSA) at (011) 4121-5408 or send an email to apicultura@senasa.gob.ar

Source: Ministry of Agro Industry of Argentina