DECLARING AMERICAN FOUL BROOD (AFB), A SERIOUS DISEASE OF EUROPEAN HONEY BEE, APIS MELLIFERA, AND PROVIDING MEASURES TO REGULATE AND PREVENT ITS SPREAD

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WHEREAS, it has been reported and verified that American Foul Brood caused by Paenibacillus larvae now exists in the Northern part of the country as well as on the Southern Tagalog region, possibly introduced and spread through importation and movement of infected bees and/or infected beekeeping materials/equipment;

WHEREAS, beekeeping in the country has shown to be a promising and growing enterprise with over 400 beekeepers with about 6,000 colonies producing 110.0 metric tons of honey, pollen, bees wax and propolis valued at Php 22,000,000.00;

WHEREAS, its presence in the provinces of Benguet, Mt. Province, Ilocos Sur, Ilocos Norte, Bulacan, Cavite and in Metro Manila (Makati and Muntinlupa) has caused huge amount of losses brought about by destruction of infected colonies/hives, equipment and reduction in honey production and other bee products;

WHEREAS, American Foul Brood is a threat not only to A. Mellifera but to native bees as well.

WHEREAS, if the spread of this dreaded disease is not regulated and controlled, it may virtually wipe out the growing beekeeping industry in the country;

WHEREAS, it is necessary that quarantine measures be put in place in order to arrest and prevent spread of the disease to other non-infected areas;

NOW, THEREFORE, pursuant to the authority vested in the Director of the Bureau of Plant Industry by P.D. 1433, otherwise known as the Plant Quarantine Decree of 1978, this Special Order is hereby promulgated as follows:

SECTION 1. The American Foul Brood, caused by Paenibacillus larvae is hereby declared an injurious and dangerous disease of honeybees.

SECTION 2. The movement/transfer/carrying of bees, bee rearing equipment and materials from Luzon to Visayas and Mindanao and from identified/suspected infected areas is hereby prohibited. Movement of live bees may however be permitted subject to satisfactory laboratory analysis, inspection of apiary and in limited quantity to be used solely for experimental purposes. Permit for such movement shall be secured from the Director of the Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI) or his duly authorized representative.

SECTION 3. Apiaries confirmed free of the disease should be protected within the five (5) km radius. Areas without A. mellifera should be identified and only disease free bees and equipment should be introduced to these sites, if at all.

SECTION 4. All beekeepers are required to register and their apiaries to undergo regular inspection and monitoring by the Plant Quarantine Service, the UPLB Bee Program or designated apiary inspectors for the presence/absence of the disease.

SECTION 5. Designated apiary inspectors are given full authority to inspect and diagnose bee colonies and recommend necessary measures, including, but not limited to, the mandatory destruction (burning) of all colonies with clinical signs (referred as 'ropy' stage). In cases where clinical symptoms are inconclusive, samples will be sent to laboratory for analysis and confirmation as to presence or absence of the pathogen.

SECTION 6. All imported bees, equipment and accessories should come only from clean, reliable and reputable sources. Imported bees, bee products, equipment, etc. are subject to strict quarantine measures. All incoming bees are subject to inspection, diagnosis and pathological tests as to freedom from AFB and other pathogens. Imported bees found to be infected/contaminated with the pathogen shall be subject to destruction.

SECTION 7. To further contain the disease, beekeepers are required to inform Bureau of Plant Industry Quarantine Service or the UPLB Bee Program of any observed symptoms and sign of disease to confirm the presence of the malady.

SECTION 8. In order to carry out effective quarantine and control measures against the spread of American foul brood and other diseases of bees, the Director of Plant Industry, in accordance with Section 16 of P.D. 1433, may request the Department of Agriculture Regional Executive Directors, national, provincial, municipal and barangay officials and members of the Armed Forces to assist in the implementation/enforcement of such promulgated quarantine measures in order to contain, prevent the spread and ultimately eradicate the said pest.

SECTION 9. All companies engaged in land, water, or air transportation shall not ship or convey bees from Luzon to any part of the country except those covered by Section 2 hereof;

SECTION 10. Diagnostic mapping of other provinces of Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao to determine the extent of spread of the disease shall be conducted. This will include identifying infected areas, clean areas and areas where Apis mellifera has not yet been introduced. This will determine appropriate quarantine measures and strategies to eradicate AFB;

SECTION 11. Any person who violates the provision of this order or forges counterfeits, alters, defaces or destroy any document issued by virtue thereof, shall be fined the amount of not more than P20,000.00 or by imprisonment from prison correctional to prison mayor or both, in the discretion of the court as provided for under Section 23 of P.D. 1433.

SECTION 12. This order shall supercede and/or revoke orders inconsistent herewith and shall take effect fifteen (15) days after publication as required by law.

Adopted: 10 June 2005

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