



CONBA

COUNCIL OF NATIONAL BEEKEEPING ASSOCIATIONS IN THE UNITED KINGDOM and IRELAND

WHAT IS CONBA?

The history of beekeeping within the United Kingdom is largely based around the activities of non-professional beekeepers and as a result there are many 'associations' of beekeepers.

The largest of these is the **British Beekeepers Association (BBKA)**, which has just over 20,000 members at time of writing. These members belong to about 70 locally-based Associations which are themselves affiliated to the BBKA. Despite its name, which goes back to its founding in 1874, the BBKA represents **English beekeepers**.

For the other countries in the UK (Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland), there are other **equivalent bodies** which operate in the same way as the BBKA within their geographic area.

In the UK there are also a number of professional beekeepers, operating larger numbers of hives on a commercial basis. These are represented by **the Bee Farmers Association** in all of the UK countries.

Beekeepers in Eire are locally represented by the **Federation of Irish Beekeepers' Associations**.

CONBA membership comprises two representatives from each of the bodies mentioned above.

CONBA was established in 1978 to promote the aims and objectives of the national beekeeping associations of England, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales. Its purpose is to represent the interests of beekeepers with local, national and particularly EU and international authorities.

A representative delegate from each of the member country associations occupies the chair for a period of two years, on a rotational basis. The council members and observers communicate frequently by email and meet twice yearly. These meetings are usually held at the Stoneleigh Spring Convention and the National Honey Show in London. Council business consists of any matters of common interest to all its members.

CONBA is funded by a levy on each member association on a per-capita basis.

CONBA also provides representation of its membership at the European Union (EU) through the ****COPA-COGECA Working Party on Honey (COPA - Comité des**

organisations professionnelles agricoles); (COGECA Confédération générale de la coopération agricole) COPA-COGECA are the recognised EU farming lobby supported by the National Farmers' Union (UK) .

The Working Party on Honey meetings are held at Brussels at which CONBA is represented. The meetings are held once or twice per year. The Working Party on Honey consists of beekeepers from all member states of the EU. This group meets with the European Commission in relation to apicultural matters concerning the member states of the European Union (EU). These matters are subsequently presented to the European Parliament for its consideration, implementation or revision or rejection. The subsequent approval of such matters results in establishing legislation, government support and possible EU funding relating to the practice of apicultural production in the UK through its membership of the EU.

CONBA is a member of the European Professional Beekeepers' Association who also lobby on behalf of the interests of beekeepers within the EU.

Member Associations receive a minute from the representative attending meetings with the EU.

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