

California's Africanized bee threat ends

WASHINGTON - Officials of the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the California Department of Food and Agriculture have closed the Africanized Bee Project headquartered in Bakersfield, Calif., saying the introduction of Africanized honeybees in California has been neutralized by elimination of Africanized bee colonies in the area and by genetic mixing with native European bees.

"Since late July project officials have detected and destroyed twelve honeybee colonies that were suspected to be Africanized," said Bert W. Hawkins, administrator of USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. "Project officials also have sampled and tested all commercial bee colonies in the area."

Hawkins said procedures underway to lift the federal quarantine should be complete in January 1986. In the interim, he said, federal restrictions still

require beekeepers to obtain a federal certificate before moving bees from the quarantined area to other states. The restrictions do not affect the intrastate movement of bees.

California officials have lifted the state quarantine from the affected area in Kern county.

"The Africanized Bee Project was successful because of the outstanding cooperation among many organizations," said Hawkins. "Scientists from the University of California, USDA's Agricultural Research Service, officials of Kern and other affected counties, representatives of the bee industry and individuals from many other organizations worked closely with USDA and CDFA to tackle this threat to agriculture."

Africanized bees first were discovered in California in late June in an oil field in Kern County. Officials believe the bees entered the United States on oil drilling equipment or pipe, which is often

imported from infested countries in South America and Central America.

Since July 30, when the Africanized Bee Project began, more than 22,000 samples of commercial and wild bees have been tested at the project laboratory in Bakersfield.

In early September, officials cleared commercially managed bee colonies for honey comb release if no Africanized bees or mites had been found. By early October, apiaries were allowed to move from the quarantine zone if they met certain additional conditions.

Africanized bees are the result of matings between a subspecies of African honeybee and several European species. In 1956, African honeybee queens were brought from Africa to Brazil for experimental purposes. Some of these bees were accidentally released from research hives and began to interbreed with European

bees in the area, establishing the Africanized strain. Since their establishment in Brazil, Africanized bees have moved steadily northward, and are expected to enter Mexico by the end of 1985 and to cross the Rio Grande into the United States by 1989.

Africanized bees are an economic threat to the \$130 million

U.S. honey industry. They tend to take over hives of domesticated European bees, and because they are less efficient honey producers, can greatly reduce a hive's honey production. Also, Africanized bees are harder to manage and therefore make commercial pollenization more difficult for beekeepers.

Penn pays fine on animal welfare charges

WASHINGTON - The University of Pennsylvania has agreed to pay a \$4,000 fine to settle U.S. Department of Agriculture charges that it violated the federal Animal Welfare Act in its research activities involving animals. The university also agreed to take several actions to ensure compliance with the Act.

"This settlement resolves several problems found involving veterinary care of primates used in the university's Head Injury Clinic," said Bert W. Hawkins, administrator of the USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. "Some animals apparently were operated on without adequate anesthesia, some were operated on under unsanitary conditions, and some were not given adequate care after they had been injured during experiments."

Besides accepting the fine, the university has agreed that the director of any research project will consult with the campus veterinarian on proper use of pain-relieving drugs and on the care of injured animals, said Hawkins.

"These provisions are meant to ensure that the university maintains an adequate program of veterinary care," said Hawkins. "They are not intended to interfere with the actual conduct of research."

The university will also establish an advisory committee for laboratory animal care and set up training programs for employees who handle laboratory animals, said Hawkins. The committee—whose oversight will include review of the use of anesthetics, the sanitation in operating rooms, and post-operative care of research animals—will report quarterly to the vice provost for research and will furnish a copy of its reports to the USDA, he said.

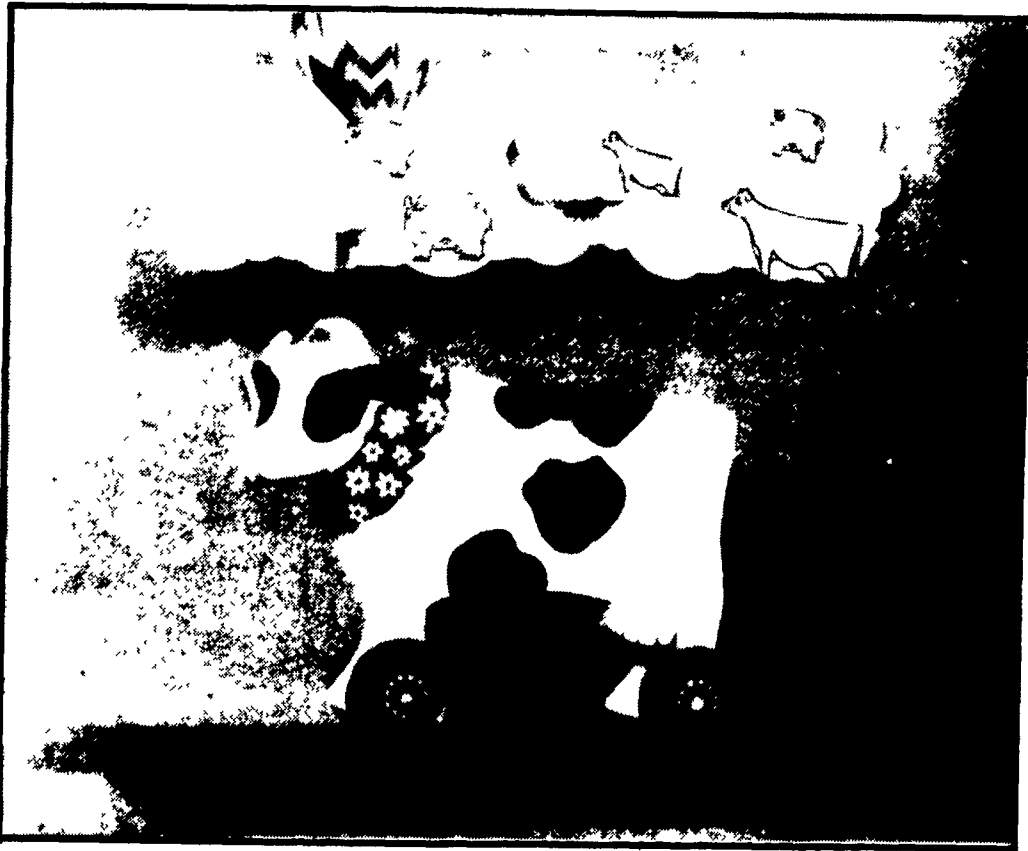
"The series of actions agreed to by the university should help avoid the possibility of future violations," Hawkins said.

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