

# Government Relations Update

by Gene Brandi, ABF Director

The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) implemented new hours of service regulations (HOS) for drivers of commercial motor vehicles that require compliance as of July 1, 2013. A portion of the new rule pertains to a mandatory 30-minute rest at some point during an 8-hour driving period. Given loads of honey bees are susceptible to damage from heat build-up during stops, especially in warm weather, this new rule is of great concern to migratory beekeepers.

Long-haul drivers who transport bees on a regular basis plan their scheduled driving time so they are able to avoid stops during the day, in order to keep the bees as cool and ventilated as possible. Beekeepers know that an overheated load of bees can be severely damaged to the extent that the colonies may not survive.

The ABF has been working with the California and American Farm Bureau Federations in an attempt to obtain an exemption from this new rule for drivers who haul loads of honey bees. The Farm Bureau was instrumental in helping the livestock industry obtain an exemption from the new HOS rule, and we are hopeful that, with their help, the bee industry can be exempted as well.

When we first heard of the rule and the livestock exemption, we wondered why bees were not classified as livestock for purposes of this rule. After inquiring with the Chief Driver and Carrier Operations Division of the FMCSA, we were assured that the agency did not include bees in its definition of livestock.

The livestock exemption to this new HOS rule was granted as a result of efforts by the National Pork Producers, as well as the Farm Bureau, and supported by a dozen allied industry organizations. These groups submitted a great deal of information about the damage that can be inflicted upon a load of livestock that is delayed due to stopping in warm weather. They stressed the fact that the health and welfare of the livestock would be at risk and would force the livestock industry and their drivers to choose between the humane handling of their livestock or compliance with the rule. Obviously the beekeeping industry is in a similar situation and needs to be exempted from this new regulation as well.

It is the intent of the ABF that a similar exemption be granted for the drivers of trucks who haul bees. At this time, we are in the process of obtaining as much data as possible so as to ascertain the damage that can be inflicted upon bee hives that are overheated, and we will continue to work with Farm Bureau and others in order to obtain this exemption for the bee industry.

You may view the entire HOS rule at <http://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/> in order to more fully appreciate these complex regulations.

The advertisement is a vertical rectangular graphic with a yellow and white honeycomb background. At the top left, the 'nozevit plus' logo is displayed in red and yellow. Below it, the text reads 'All Natural Whole Plant Polyphenol Food Supplement'. A quote from a customer, M Yoder, OH, is included: 'As Apiary inspectors we recommend Nozevit all of the time, and many of "our" beekeepers now use it regularly. Thank You for a fantastic product!'. The product is described as 'Your Partner In Helping Maintain The Intestinal Integrity And Health Of Your Honeybee Colonies.' and 'Innovation, not Imitation'. The volume '1000 ml - 33,8 fl. oz.' is noted. At the bottom, contact information for Dadant and Sons is provided. On the right side, the 'OPTIMA' logo features a bee icon. Below it, the text reads 'HEALTHIER BEES FOR MAXIMUM PRODUCTION'. The product is described as 'ALL NATURAL HONEY BEE FOOD SUPPLEMENT CONTAINING WHOLE PLANT POLYPHENOLS AND PREMIUM ESSENTIAL OILS'. It is noted as 'Excellent For Achieving and Maintaining Optimum Honey Bee Health' and '1000 ml - 33,8 fl. oz.'. At the bottom, the website 'www.Nozevit.com - www.NozevitPlus.com - www.OptimaBee.com' is listed, along with a copyright notice for Nozevit International.