

GOVERNMENT OF BERMUDA Ministry of Environment & Planning

Department of Environmental Protection

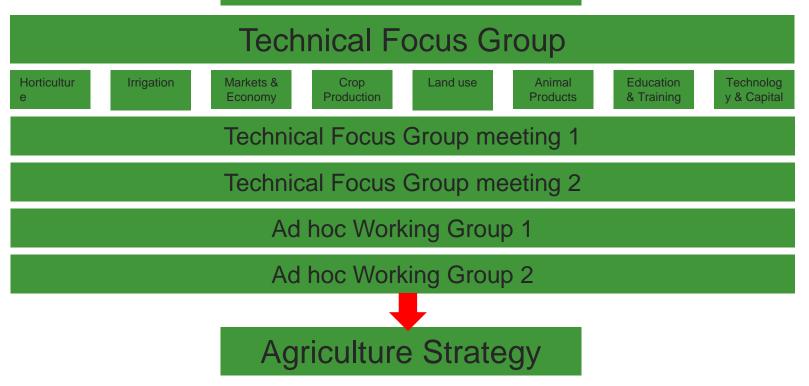
Development of a strategy for the future of agriculture in Bermuda Dr F Ming

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Bermuda Agriculture Strategy Process 2012-2013

Stakeholder reception



Varroa Mite Infestation – Update 2013



Varroa Mite – Time line

Leading up to 2009, Bermuda had a managed bee population of approximately 350 to 400 hives on the island, two main beekeepers and a handful of small hobby beekeepers (one to three hives each)

2009

In November 2009 a beekeeper found varroa mites in a sample of wax removed from a feral colony that was established in the roof of a house

The mite was sent away to the USDA Bee Lab in Maryland for confirmation

A survey of the island was carried out and mites were found to be present in all the hives

Honey bee situation

2010 - 2013

- 2012 Colonies rebounded from the crash of 2011
- 2013 Colonies have not rebounded as in previous years
- Far fewer swarms have been collected
- Currently less than 80 100 surviving hives on the island

Honey bee situation

The role of other environmental stressors are currently being examined including the effects of agrochemicals (neo-nicotinoids) on the colonies

Viruses transmitted by mites have been implicated

The next steps

- to consider importing Varroa Sensitive Hygenic queen bees to introduce the hygenic trait into Bermuda

- to allow the remaining population to 'survive' and requeen colonies with the fittest queens