



**STATE OF MISSISSIPPI  
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COMMERCE**

LESTER SPELL, JR., D.V.M.  
COMMISSIONER

## **PRESS RELEASE – March 7, 2008**

**For Immediate Release**

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### **MS Department of Agriculture Investigates Local Bee Swarming Incident**

Lester Spell, Commissioner of Agriculture, announced today that the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce's (MDAC) Bureau of Plant Industry is investigating a bee swarming incident in Pascagoula to determine if Africanized Honey Bees (AHB) were involved.

On Thursday, March 6, a colony of bees located in the wall of a homeowner's garage was agitated and swarmed, attacking a nearby kenneled dog, as well as its owner. The colony was eradicated by a local pest control operator and samples were retrieved by MDAC to be verified at the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Laboratory for DNA testing to determine if the bees were possibly Africanized. Results of the identification test should be available early next week, according to USDA. As a precaution, the MDAC is conducting bee screening and trapping in the immediate area to hopefully catch other swarms in order to better assess any potential threat to the public should AHB be established in the area.

Residents are urged not to disturb or attempt to dispose of bee colonies. If a swarming bee attack occurs, individuals should seek safety in an enclosed vehicle or building. The Bureau of Plant Industry should be contacted immediately to assess the situation.

For more information or to report a possibly aggressive colony, please call Harry Fulton, State Entomologist, with the Bureau of Plant Industry at 662-738-4611 or 662-418-5030.

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