



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

CINDY HYDE-SMITH
COMMISSIONER

PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Commissioner Hyde-Smith Takes Step to Help Protect Mississippi's Bee Industry

Mississippi Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce, Cindy Hyde-Smith, announced that the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has given approval of an emergency exemption that will allow Mississippi beekeepers access to a miticide to help control varroa mite infestations in honeybee colonies.

The product receiving emergency exemption under Section 18 of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) is manufactured by BetaTec Hop Products. **HopGuard® II** uses cardboard strips treated with potassium salt of hop beta acids to control varroa mite infestations. The strips are inserted into honeybee colonies or packages of adult worker bees prior to installation in a honey bee colony.

The destructive varroa mite is a honeybee parasite that feeds on adult bees and developing brood. If left untreated, varroa mites can lead to deformation of bees and potential loss of the entire colony affected.

The Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce's Bureau of Plant Industry has authority under Section 18 of FIFRA to obtain an exemption from EPA for a non-labeled use of a pesticide if significant losses of an agricultural commodity are likely or if labeled products are not available or effective. This exemption for **HopGuard® II** expires December 31, 2014.

For additional information, beekeepers may contact the Bureau of Plant Industry at (662) 325-3390 or toll-free at 1-888-257-1285.

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