

A NEW BEEKEEPING THREAT

SMALL HIVE BEETLE

Aethina tumida

This beetle is indigenous to Africa and has only recently been found in Italy. It could reach Northern Ireland and survive in our conditions. If it becomes established it could rapidly spread throughout the honey bee population making it difficult to eradicate. Small hive beetle larvae do the most damage in the colony, burrowing through the brood combs, consuming the brood and stores. Once present in large numbers, the survival of the colony is at great risk.



How could it reach Northern Ireland?

- Importation of honey bees (queens and package bees) and bumble bees
- Trade in raw beeswax and honey in drums
- On fruit imports, where eggs have been laid
- In soil or compost associated with plant trade
- On used beekeeping clothing and equipment
- Movement of freight and transport vehicles

What actions should beekeepers be taking now?

- Learn to recognise the beetles and larvae
- Be vigilant and check your bees routinely
- Report any suspect findings to DARD
- Only import if necessary, with valid health certificates
- Watch out for news about the spread of the beetle

For more information please go to:
www.dardni.gov.uk

To report a suspect finding please email:
beehealth@dardni.gov.uk