

So, we have a few minutes for questions. Any questions. I'll be happy to take any.

Myron?

*Myron Ebell:* Paul, you talked about bumblebees, which are native to North America. You didn't mention honeybees. We have the decline and destruction of our honeybees but I can't figure that out because they are an invasive species. They're not native to America. Have you thought about that.

*Mr. Driessen:* Actually, the same things I said about wild bees are applicable to the honeybees. The domesticated, imported from Europe honeybees that are the foundation of most of our agriculture including almonds and many other crops. Again, there was a decline that led to all this catastrophic talk about the elimination of our food crops and our bees and so forth and they're blaming it on pesticides. What they found when they started digging into this was that the honeybees were being wiped out, in many instances, by Varroa destructor mites. Even the newly-hatched larvae were hatched with these mites attached to them. They were carrying all kinds of diseases including the fungal gut parasite and about fifteen or twenty other diseases that would wipe out an entire hive, caused deformed wing syndrome, and problems like that.

But over a period of years the beekeepers figured out how to control those mites. These things are so miniscule. You saw the pictures on the little tiny bee. They're so tiny. For a while the beekeepers were applying too much miticide and then their miticide was killing the hives. They learned all of that. The non-hobbyist beekeepers especially, learned how to do this and now we're seeing a rebound in the number of hives and the number of honeybees in all the countries that were having those problems. Some of those problems actually went back and were recorded in Ireland 500 years ago like colony collapse disorders. So, it's not a new problem but it was relatively new and we have to figure out what to do about it. Blaming pesticides was a knee-jerk reaction for some but the real scientists got to work and largely have fixed the problem.

Other questions?

*Carol LaGrasse:* I wanted to ask you about something that I ran into in my reading of the news about high tension transmission directly at houses. Extremely high voltage caused field fires and also house fires.

*Mr. Driessen:* We're going to see more and more of that. The California public utilities folks have been cutting off random, rolling blackouts to hundreds of thousands of homes because of fire risk, which is really due to a failure to properly manage their forests out there and cut out the dead and diseased and dying trees. Thin them out. Acreage that should have a couple hundred trees ends up having a couple thousand trees. None of them can grow. They're all like matchsticks ready to erupt in a conflagration. But the fallback knee-jerk response by so many is to blame climate change or blame PG&E [Pacific Gas and Electric Company] out there in California. It's time for some real thoughtful discourse on all of those things. One more question?

*Audience member:* Just one other thing. I had back in 1985 when we still had subsidies, we paid people to put up windmills. So, I let them pay me put up a windmill, I paid half, to generate electricity but then the subsidies go away and then the support for those windmills or whatever goes away because government is no longer supporting those industries and I don't know what we do to start to say that we develop things better without the government putting money in which then causes corruption to start up with all that money and then fails in the long run. People are not really aware of that. How do we get people aware of things that are really going on.

*Mr. Driessen:* Subsidies today are a lot more subtle than that. Now, what you get is a subsidy in the form of a feed-in tariff or a requirement that the utilities purchase your solar/wind generated electricity whenever it's generated instead of when it's needed. There are some incredible stories about this. My favorite was the German company that had invented an astonishing solar energy technology. It was discovered by a comptroller working the books one day. He realized that this company was generating electricity and getting paid tremendous amounts of money at 2AM. They were solar panels. How would he do that? Well, they had diesel systems, diesel generators hooked up to their solar lines and they were even paying for a very high cost of diesel fuel in Germany. They were still making money off of this arrangement. So, the corruption is everywhere.