



AUSTRALIA'S HONEYBEE NEWS

"The voice of the Beekeeper"

Volume 3 Number 2

March - April 2010



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AUSTRALIA'S HONEYBEE NEWS

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COVER: Regulatory Task Force Exercise at Inverell in February - Photo Paul Anderson

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*The Association Membership year runs
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- Annual State Conference & Field Days
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- Opportunity to meet other beekeepers and DPI representatives at meetings, workshops and field days.
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- Legal Aid representation in all Native Title Claims over bee site licence areas: William Love & Nicol, Phone: 02 6263 9900

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT



SEASON

The season has improved for many beekeepers over the past couple of months, with some reasonable falls of rain over most areas.

Southern beekeepers have hives being prepared for winter, after getting some honey from coastal and highland flowerings. Red Stringybark, Peppermint and Gums have promoted autumn conditions and some extracted honey.

Northern beekeepers have endured limited honey during autumn and many hives have chewed out stores, however most have managed to hold reasonable hive strength.

The channel country of South West Queensland and Western New South Wales is reported to have good bud after good flooding rain and beekeepers are beginning to shift bees in where they can gain access as the country dries up.

There is still little honey held by beekeepers and packing stocks will be very much hand to mouth during the next 2-3 months. World prices are firming.

WESTERN PINE-IRONBARK

There is an Assessment beginning of the areas of State Forest not included in the Brigalow-Nandewar and the River Red Gum Assessments. These are generally small forest areas of the South Western quarter of the State. The Assessment is being called the Western Pine-Ironbark Assessment.

Beekeepers that use any sites within these forests or consider that in future they may need to use these areas should ensure that they have formal permits paid up with State Forests as this will be the only way that the sites can be changed over from Forest to NPWS.

The NSW Apiarists' Association will make a submission to ensure that former sites will be recognised after any change of management.

PEST & DISEASE COURSES

Since the previous report, a number of Pest and Disease Courses have been run by Doug Somerville and Nick Annand of Industry and Investment. The Glen Innes course was well attended (14-15) and all attendees stated it was worth going to and they had got a lot out of it.

I wish to congratulate Doug and Nick on the content and delivery of these courses which were of a very professional standard.

I understand some of the earlier courses were not well attended and it seems that many of the beekeepers who need to learn more about pests and diseases of Honeybees did not attend. We wonder what has to be done to get some people to listen.

SMALL HIVE BEETLE

Due to the higher humidity and large numbers of hives moved to Coastal regions, hive beetles have caused considerable damage to many hives and hive material.

AFB

Included in this issue of Honeybee News is a discussion paper on AFB. It lists a number of policies and points from New Zealand, South Australia and Victoria on AFB control. The Conference agenda also includes a segment (Thursday afternoon) to discuss the issue and present some resolutions.

2010 CONFERENCE

Conference arrangements are in place with a great line-up of speakers including guests from New Zealand & USA.

This year during the two days of Conference we are having a Trade Show. There will a large number of booths enabling exhibitors to display products/information and talk to members. There will also be a B-QUAL training day on Wednesday 19 May for anyone interested – see notice in AHBIC News - Page 36.

Port Macquarie is always a popular venue, there are many attractions and there is plenty of accommodation to suit all budgets. So come along and support the Association – who knows maybe you will decide to join the State Executive!

SYDNEY SHOW

On behalf of the membership of the NSW Apiarists' Association I wish to thank the beekeepers who kindly donated 3 drums of honey to be packed and sold at the Sydney Royal Show. Thank you to Ross Cooper, Ray Goode and Damien Keys. Support such as this helps the Association keep membership reasonably priced, although this is becoming increasingly difficult.

The Show is about half way through at the time of writing this report and crowds are slightly down and this appears to have carried through to our turnover at *Honeyland*.

The live bee demonstration is attracting good crowds and has been very successful in educating the public on the value of Honeybees to our society. The National Honey Competition was launched this year with the support of the RAS. Good entries were received of extremely high standard. A full report will be published next edition.

AHBIC

I take this opportunity to remind members that the amended Constitution of AHBIC now requires Executive Council members to be nominated prior to the AHBIC Annual General Meeting on 18/19 June.

If you are unhappy with the way AHBIC is running then give careful consideration to nominating and supporting someone you consider would be suitable to lead the Industry at a National level in future.

GOOD WISHES

In closing this report, I wish to convey to those members who are experiencing health problems: Barbara Bingley, Keith McIlvride, Neil Peadon & Bob Weir that our thoughts and best wishes are with you always.

Bill Weiss
State President

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MESSAGE OF THANKS TO SHOW VOLUNTEERS

I would like to thank the following volunteers and donors for their time and help at this year's Sydney Royal Easter Show.

Many thanks to Australian Rainforest Honey, Beechworth Honey, Capilano Honey, Leabrook Farms Honey, R Stephens Tasmanian Honey and Superbee Honey for supporting the Association with their donations towards the Honey Promotional Bags.

Also, thank you to the Bingley Family for all their donated time to pack honey. Thank you to Damien Keys, Ross Cooper and Ray Goode for donating honey to be sold on the stand and thanks to Jodie Burey for packing the donated honey from these members.

Thank you to the Northern Tablelands Branch for lending their honey tasters to us to use at the Show. Also to Capilano for lending us another three honey tasters. With five honey tasters going we were able to have all honeys tasting every day throughout the Show.

They once again proved to be a huge success. With beekeepers manning the tasters at all times, it allowed the public to not only taste a great Australian product but to ask questions about how bees make honey. This is a great way to promote and educate the public.

This year there was a live bee display and information talk held 4 times a day. Thank you to the members who got into the cage and put on a display to the public and talked them through what they were doing with the bees. It brought a lot of people around and also lots of extra questions for our beekeepers to answer.

The success of *Honeyland* is owed to all those mentioned in this article. We had a good show this year but it wouldn't happen without all our volunteers and donations.

Andrew Jenkins
Betty Stratton
Bill Weiss
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Bruce White
Casey Cooper
Charles Bingley
David Bingley
Enid Whitby
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James Lockhart
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Once again thank you to all for your time, we couldn't do it without you. Cheers, Julie

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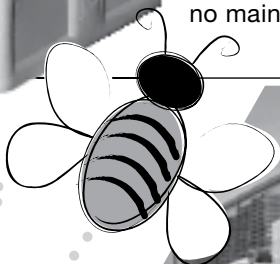
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PEST AND DISEASE COURSES SO FAR

At the time of writing this article, Nick Annand and I have conducted the first four Pest and Disease courses. The first and second were at Camden (EMAI) and Goulburn in February. The third and fourth courses were held at Tamworth and Glen Innes in March.

Up until the end of March a total of 39 beekeepers have participated all of whom stated in their feedback forms that they would recommend this course to other beekeepers. By the time you receive this magazine we will have conducted courses at Dubbo and Bathurst. All participants in the courses so far agreed that the course pace was 'about right' not too fast or slow, and the delivery and course content were of the highest standard.

A profile of the attendees at the courses can be gauged from the following responses to a questionnaire:

How many hives do you own?

1-39 = 12 40-99 = 2
100-199 = 2 200-399 = 3
400 plus = 15

Amateur = 12 Sideline = 7 Commercial = 20

What is your medium to long term plan regarding bee hive numbers?

Reduce numbers = 5 Stay the same = 12
Increase numbers = 18

How long have you been a beekeeper? (Years)

0-5 = 6 6-10 = 4
11-20 = 7 20 plus = 19

What are the regions within which you operate?

Sydney Basin 5
North West NSW 8
Western Plains 1
SE Qld 8
South Coast 2
Northern NSW 6
Southern Tablelands 2
New England 9
Riverina 1
Northern Tablelands 4
Central Coast 1
Mid North Coast 2
Hunter Valley 1

Has the Farm Ready subsidy encouraged you to attend this course?

Yes = 24 No = 14

How far have you travelled to this course? (Km)

0-49 = 15 50-99 = 10
100-199 = 9 200 plus = 3

At the beginning and end of each course we ask participants to list and prioritise the pests and diseases of significance to them. The following are in order of response for the average of the whole group in each location.

CAMDEN

Start

varroa
AFB
EFB
nosema
SHB

Finish

AFB
varroa
nosema
EFB
sacbrood & chalkbrood

GOULBURN

Start

AFB
EFB
SHB
chalkbrood
nosema

Finish

AFB
nosema
EFB
varroa
sacbrood

TAMWORTH

Start

AFB
SHB
nosema
EFB
varroa

Finish

AFB
nosema
varroa
SHB
EFB

GLEN INNES

Start

AFB
varroa
nosema
EFB
SHB

Finish

AFB
varroa
Asian mite
nosema
EFB

Although the Camden and Goulburn course were small groups of beekeepers, it is still interesting to note that SHB was on the short list in the Camden group at no.5 then dropped to no.9 by the finish of the course. Similarly SHB dropped to no.6 on the Goulburn group list at the end of that course.

AFB, EFB and nosema were common to all groups at the beginning and end of the courses. Varroa was no.6 at the start of the Goulburn course otherwise it also scores in all the top 5 most significant pests and diseases lists.

Comments from participants attending the courses:

- * very comprehensive and presented very professionally, excellent delivery of course.
- * good coverage and explanation of pests and diseases.
- * new and up to date info, plus practical involvement.
- * emphasis on 'managing' pests and diseases, e.g. good practices for prevention before it happens.
- * easy to converse with instructor.
- * easy to understand.
- * valuable information on all pests and diseases.
- * plenty of information and plenty of talk between segments.
- * open class discussions, good presentations and easy to understand.
- * useful information, easy to understand.

I guess if you haven't already been to one of the courses or not sure if you need to go then have a go at answering the following questions.

1. How many AFB spores does it take to infect a day old larvae?
2. How many AFB spores are produced as a result of an infection in a larva?

3. How long can AFB spores remain viable?
4. What's the latest info on *Nosema ceranae* coming out of Europe?
5. Do you know the 'most' ideal conditions for SHB to thrive and breed?
6. A new pest of honey bees (not varroa) is causing major problems in France since it was introduced from Asia. Do you know what it is?
7. A mite more devastating than varroa and it's at our back door. Can you name it?

Having trouble answering any of the questions? Then maybe you just might gain something from attending a course. They are free to primary producers, but only up until May 2011. Under the FarmReady Reimbursement Grants you are able to claim up to \$1,500 to cover course fees, excess travel, accommodation and childcare costs. For more information on the FarmReady program, visit www.farmready.gov.au or phone 1800 087 670.

The "Pests & Diseases of Honey Bees" course, at this stage, is the only course specifically for the management of honey bees eligible for the FarmReady grants. Still not sure? Then contact Simone Fuller on Freecall 1800 628 422 or email simone.fuller@industry.nsw.gov.au for more details on FarmReady courses, and information on obtaining your grant within NSW.

Courses still to run include:

Grafton	17-18 August
Lismore	19-20 August
Griffith	14-15 September
Wagga	16-17 September
Kempsey	19-20 October
Tocal	21-22 October

To book for one of these courses, contact Kim Griffiths, Short Course Secretary, Tocal College – Ph: 1800 025 520, or email kim.griffiths@industry.nsw.gov.au

There will be restrictions on numbers at each course. We will not accept more than 20 participants at each course, so if you are interested I suggest you book early for your chosen location and date, to avoid disappointment. Also we won't conduct a course with less than 10 people. So don't leave it to the last minute to register your interest as one more person may mean the difference of a course running or being cancelled.

The course aim is for each participant to be able to monitor for, identify and manage the major domestic pests and diseases of honey bees to minimise their impact. To promote awareness and surveillance for the exotic pests and diseases threatening the Australian beekeeping industry.

This is a limited opportunity to attend a formal course specifically on pests and diseases of honey bees. Availability of this course in future years is not a certainty.



Small Hive Beetle causing great concern at present - shown here are the grubs and adult beetles



Camden



Goulburn



Tamworth



Glen Innes



HONEY MARKET REPORT

Ron Phipps, President, CPNA International Limited - 1/3/2010

North America

In the USA official numbers on the 2009 crop have come out, showing that it was only 144,000,000 pounds, the lowest ever recorded. The yield per colony was 58.5 lbs., which represented a decline of 16%. How much of this decline was due to weather or condition of bees is not clear. The number of colonies increased to 2.4 million, an increase of 5%. Despite that increase, total honey production decreased. At the end of December 2009, stocks were 37,200,000 pounds, which represents a very substantial decline of 27% from December 2008. North Dakota was the biggest producer with 34,000,000 pounds. South Dakota was second with 17,800,000 and California fell to 11,700,000, probably as a consequence of the protracted droughts. Older inventories were sold and the recent crop is largely sold and delivered. 2010 crop prospects are more promising due to the abundant winter rains and snows.

Beekeepers remain concerned about the health and vitality of their bees. This is not due merely to mites and Colony Collapse Disorder, but to a general decline in beekeepers, stress on bees, reduction of land for honey production and the impact of increased use of pesticides on corn, soybeans, citrus groves, etc. Modern migratory beekeeping practices are increasingly suspected to put high levels of stress upon bees. Moving bees in mid winter when bees are weakest over vast distances and subjecting worker bees to mono-diets may contribute to stress levels that are too burdensome for maintaining vigorous and large bee populations. Studies at Sao Palo University in Brazil have shown how even the very vigorous Africanized bees respond poorly to darkness and noise, both encountered during late winter migrations. Because of such concerns, many beekeepers did not move their bees from east to west to pollinate the almonds recently.

Pollinating fees remained strong as supply of bees was below demand, despite reduction of the planting of almond trees due to concerns about the adequacy of water supplies for California farmers competing with California's large urban and suburban populations. So the rains of 2010 have been doubly welcomed thus far.

Argentina and South America

Given the short USA and Canadian 2009 crops, coupled with complete depletion of older inventories from previous crops, attention has focused upon Argentina's 2009/2010 honey crop. This is especially significant for white honey since it is white honey that is experiencing the most significant international shortage. Due to the poor Argentine 2008/2009 honey crop, no meaningful carry-overs existed by late 4th Quarter 2009.

Through December, the northern Argentine Provinces, where the honey crop begins due to greater proximity to the Equator, suffered extensive drought which delayed and reduced the overall crop. But by January, ample rains came to Las Pampas and Buenos Aires Province. These rains were mingled with regular sunshine and optimism resumed. Crop estimates grew to 70,000-80,000 metric tons.

However, rains turned excessive. Buenos Aires had in mid-February unprecedented rains. This was largely due to the El Nino phenomena which in turn led to torrential rains in both Argentina and Brazil. The same fundamental weather patterns affected the USA. I was spending a week at Claremont University in mid-January during which time we witnessed incessant rainfall. In 1 week, 20" of

rain was predicted, when 14" annual rainfall is the norm. By February, many American beekeepers pollinating the almond groves had considerable difficulties moving bees in and out of the muddy groves. In Peru, tourists were evacuated due to mudslides. The high evaporation rates from the warm Pacific caused tremendous snowstorms that affected the Midwest and the entire east coast of the USA. Both China and Europe have also experienced unusual snow through the first two months of 2010. As a consequence of deteriorating weather conditions in Argentina, the estimate for the current crop has been reduced to 50,000-60,000 metric tons.

Given the unprecedented rainfall in mid-February, the lower estimate of 50,000 metric tons is regarded as more realistic. If so, that will make the current Argentine crop turn out even smaller than the small USA 2009 crop! In general Argentina's crops from the north were very bad, central and western areas had poor crops and the central and south eastern crops are more or less normal. The significance of the rains in Argentina is manifest in an AP article of February 22, titled "Grain prices rise as rain hits Brazil, Argentina."

The distribution of colours in Argentina is now estimated to be 10% white 25MM, 20% white 34MM, 30% 50MM, 30% 65MM and 10% darker than 65MM. This modest white honey crop has accelerated demand for white honey and provoked steady, and in some cases dramatic, increases in prices.

Argentine beekeepers with poor or bad crops are thinking the only path for their survival is with an irrationally high surge in prices. The beekeepers with normal crops are cognizant of the overall situation and are selling honey in only small quantities to cover immediate costs while "waiting for higher prices." Of course, they may miscalculate and wait too long, given the fact that the abundant rains and snows covering California and the Midwest could portend a bigger North American honey crop in 2010. The wild card variable of circumvented and cheap Chinese honey still looms large over the American honey market. In any case, Argentine honey prices are likely to remain firm. In January, about 2,500MT were exported with an additional 3,500-5,000MT are expected to be exported in February. From March through June it is expected that Argentina will be able to export about 5,000MT monthly. The overall global economic difficulties may, in the final analysis, restrain the Argentine beekeepers' ambition to achieve the historically high prices that they seek.

Demand from Europe remains robust. Indeed, the delay in exports of honey due to the short early crop has only made pent up European demand increase. Though the Euro has weakened a little relative to the US dollar, European buyers still enjoy a currency advantage of about 35% over North American buyers. The basic prevailing parity between the US and Canadian dollars has made Canadian honey much more expensive in US dollars for American packers in 2010 than was the case in 2009. Thus, more Canadian honey is staying home and will continue to do so unless prices for Argentine white honey get out of sight.

The political and economic situation in Argentina is very tense and fragile. Inflation is returning and some Argentines fear, as they put it, that "Argentina, despite its vast resources, is becoming a non-competitive country."

To illustrate the strength of the market south of the border, Mexican light amber honey is being sold at \$1.55 C&F

European ports, and Brazilian organic white honey is now over \$1.75/lb. Ex-dock USA. Prices, like fish, are jumping.

It remains too early to estimate the Brazilian honey crop, but some indicate that the quantity of export to the US is anticipated to be similar to 2009. There was no rain, however, for 20 days in February, and there is concern about the lack of honey in the hives.

For Chile and Uruguay, the preferred and traditional market is Europe, whose currency sustains high US Dollar prices. The tragic earthquake in Chile will undoubtedly result in delays for exports from that region.

Currency relations will undoubtedly influence honey's absolute prices and the relative advantages of Europe vs. the US in procurement of South American honey. The national debt problems in Greece, Portugal and Spain have put downward pressure on the Euro relative to the US dollar. This makes the US marginally more attractive than it was several months ago for South American exporters. However, the cumulative national debt in the US still portends, in the view of many economists, to a further weakening of the US dollar and increasing commodity prices.

Vietnam and Asia

As this market report is being prepared, the Vietnamese honey crop is barely beginning. Vietnamese beekeepers are transitioning from wintering their bees, feeding their bees and protecting them from disease.

At the end of January, an important meeting was held in Hanoi between the Vietnamese Beekeeping Association, various ministries of the Vietnamese Government and agents of ICE. As reported previously, the Vietnamese have taken very proactive and strict steps to prevent circumvention. It is important that both Governments work together to prevent circumvention.

Several years ago, Vietnam established Special Economic Zones where Chinese and Taiwanese companies established offices. Some of these companies have left Vietnam and one is reported to be under investigation by Interpol. As Vietnam has established a strict monitoring program for authorized beekeepers, honey factories and honey exporters, several companies which had "front or shell offices" in "Special Economic Zones" to facilitate circumvention via fraudulent documents are out of business.

Officials from scientific laboratories in Europe have visited Vietnam this year and cooperative relations among Vietnamese and American universities with strong agricultural departments have been established.

The phenomenon of circumvention is troubling not only to our US industries and our Congress, but also to China. Chinese officials in The World Trade Organization must try to negotiate issues and agreements that both open and integrate international markets and follow the rule of law. The widespread phenomenon of circumvention is a major hindrance and obstacle to implementing the rule of law in international trade.

Circumvention

During the recent conventions of the American Honey Producers Association and the American Beekeeping Federation, much discussion occurred regarding the global shortages of honey and the continuing concern about circumvention. Officials from US Homeland Security spoke in Orlando to both the National Honey Packers and Dealers Association and the American Beekeepers Federation (ABF) about their efforts to stop the widespread

practice of circumvention in its various forms. Many American packers, beekeepers and importers spoke with the officials, informing them of the details they encounter in the competition between "legal" versus "illegal" honey. In Sacramento, Jill Clark, from Dutch Gold and President of the National Honey Board Association; Bruce Boynton., Executive Director of the National Honey Board (NHB); Richard Adey of the American Honey Packers Association (AHPA) and this author all gave speeches which discussed this phenomena and its serious impact upon the NHB, members of the NHPDA, AHPA and ABF.

Evidence was presented in formal and informal meetings from scientific laboratories specializing in honey about analysis of honey that was ultra-filtered to remove tell-tale pollen, adulterated with rice syrups, revealed the presence of Chinese pollens in honey ostensibly produced outside of China and contaminated with improper residues. The ultra-filtration of honey removes both pollen and veterinary drug residues, providing a "disguise" of the phenomena of circumvention of Chinese honey through third countries. It is, however, relevant to note that the FDA prohibits sales of ultra-filtered honey as honey.

The buzz among beekeepers was that the situation is comparable to the Madoff Ponzi Scheme, wherein for a decade, the evidence that something was wrong in the "State of Denmark" accumulated in the SEC. Only the financial crisis caused decisive action and conviction against Madoff. What will it take for a decisive, timely and comprehensive solution to be effected to prevent circumvention of Chinese honey in order to avoid paying prevailing antidumping fees on Chinese honey? American beekeepers and American packers are increasingly asking this question.

The situation has been compounded by the fact that as of this writing, Congress has failed to: 1) renew suspension of the bonding privilege allowing importers to post bonds rather than pay cash deposit for antidumping liabilities and 2) impose duties on the honey portion in the so-called "packers blend." The termination of the suspension of "bonding privileges" ended in summer, 2009.

The deeply partisan paralysis in Congress has thus far stymied all efforts to re-impose the requirement of cash-deposits. This failure has re-opened the door to direct imports of Chinese honey mediated by "front companies" that evaporate if, and when, US Customs comes to collect retroactively antidumping duties. It, therefore, remains an urgent goal of the AHPA to persuade Congress to promptly re-close this loophole.

All, however, is not quiet on the front to stop circumvention of honey. There is a report that about 200 containers of honey exported to the USA in 2009 were denied entry. A small number of these containers were returned but the overwhelming majority are in a state of limbo. According to the reports, this honey was accompanied by fraudulent country of origin and quality certificates. The ostensible exporters quite naturally did not accept responsibility for the shipments and would not accept return. The parties in the country that actually produced the honey would not accept return of the honey since such would entail admission of creating and submitting forged documents. We note that there has been increased scrutiny of agricultural products shipped from Asia to the USA. For example, hundreds of containers of various products were rejected by US authorities and returned to India, Indonesia and Malaysia in 2009.

There are also reports of some honey exporters being put on automatic detention by the US FDA. That means the honey must arrive in the USA, be sampled and tested and proved free of actionable contaminants as a condition for

release. Because of this type of action, various companies have ceased exporting to the USA. It is predicted that 2010 will witness various exporters going out of business as their illegal actions catch up with them.

Of course, the dilemma and tragedy is that honest exporters, importers, packers and beekeepers may also go out of business if they are forced to compete with circumvented honey much longer.

In respect to the efforts to stop circumvention, there are several positive developments. Firstly, commercial laboratories and independent academic scientists have greatly increased their ability to detect and expose the various “disguises,” such as ultra-filtration, pollen addition, and adulteration with a multitude of sweeteners, which are being employed to hide the reality of circumvention. Secondly, more statistical academic and governmental data is at hand to reveal that certain alleged countries of origin do not produce the quantity or quality of honey that show up as surges of honey from new honey exporting nations. Thirdly, through the efforts of packers all over America, more retailers and manufacturers realize that large price differentials for processed honey and aberrational chemical profiles for honey are not signs of business acumen but illegal circumvention; retailers and manufacturers increasingly realize through the concerted efforts of American packers throughout the country that collusion to circumvent to avoid antidumping duties impose upon them criminal liabilities. Fourthly, more American packers and American beekeepers are reaching out to their Congressional Representatives and Senators to persuade US Customs to devote more resources so that a thorough and timely end of the phenomena of circumvention is achieved.

Nonetheless, 2009 saw continuation of aberrational export patterns to the USA. For example, in 11 months, imports from Malaysia were over 17,000,000 pounds at values averaging \$0.72/lb. for ELA, and 835,000 pounds of ELA came in from Mongolia at values in the range of \$.62/lb. Documents exist that show that Malaysia produces only a tiny fraction of that volume and Mongolia has no ability to produce honey for export. In contrast, many newspaper articles reveal the convoluted paths by which Chinese honey has been circumvented through third countries.

While some packers believe that they are faced with the dilemma of either participating in buying circumvented honey or going out of business, most honey packers are actively cooperating to fight the corruption and fraud to which others feel compelled to submit.

Conclusion

In conclusion there has been renewed talk in the American honey industry, especially among American honey packers, of the need to make adjustments to assure continuity and adequacy of supply. Given several factors including 1) the international shortage of honey, 2) the increased vicissitudes of global weather patterns, 3) the prevalence of circumvention to avoid antidumping duties, 4) the vulnerability of bee populations and 5) the likely end in this decade of China's treatment in antidumping cases with surrogate country analysis, many packers are concluding that there should be a renewal in one form or another of some agreement that could impose both quantitative restrictions and minimum prices on Chinese honey and other products subject to anti-dumping orders. The prevailing political climate, including the intense and widespread opposition to the fraud which is at the heart of circumvention of Chinese honey, makes establishing a new agreement extremely difficult.

The growing sentiment among packers, however, is that they cannot have confidence in adequate supply to serve a

market that consumes 400,000,000 to 500,000,000 pounds of honey annually, if the world's biggest producer of honey has no legal access to the American market. China's absence is creating stress and has helped divide the market into 2 tiers – a legal and an illegal market. Suppression of the illegal market has proved to be very incomplete and tenuous. If domestic production remains stagnant and far below consumption, pressure will continue to build to eliminate circumvention by finding a legal mechanism that will allow access to Chinese honey but which will concurrently suppress both dumping and flooding of honey.

In addition to the impact of tariff trade barriers, non-tariff trade barriers are also exerting influence upon and danger to the honey market. At every beekeeper's convention anywhere in the world discussion are dominated by the effort to develop methods to protect bees. In 95% of the world's bee yards, beekeepers engage in methods to protect their bees. The reason is that bees, like other forms of life, are vulnerable to disease and stress. If bees existed in a mythical realm of invulnerability, and if the plants bees pollinate existed in a sister realm of invulnerable botanical life forms, then there would be no need to devise methods of preserving the health and vigour of bees. However, due to the universal vulnerability of animal life, food products, including honey, do not dwell in a realm of ultra-purity. It is this fact that makes it essential to find reasonable testing limits and reasonable tolerance levels for residues. The macro-environment of rain, atmosphere, soil and pesticides also are expressed as residues in food products. The key question is how to balance and integrate effectively protecting bees and ensuring the safety of honey and other bee by-products. Other food industries have long recognized similar needs and been able to effectively and realistically address the dual concerns of protecting agricultural production and human safety.

It will not do to adopt a sectarian attitude that says in effect “I can have my residues, but you can't have yours.” Given the inexorable move toward global economic integration, establishing global science-based standards, testing limits and tolerance levels will become imperative if consuming nations are to ensure adequacy of supply and continuity of quality. Testing methodologies have become hypersensitive promising to detect and measure parts per ten billion or per trillion. But the issue is not “testing the test” but ensuring 1) protection of the ability to produce the food supply and 2) safety for food consumption. The world's bees, it is realistic to estimate, are crucial to global annual production of over \$100 billion dollars of food. It is this context that impels global science to create global standards. Realism must prevail over mythology, sound science over harmful illusions.

There must be cooperation in this effort to establish standards. The global integration we witness entails greater integration of economies, science and law. If issues of both tariff and non-tariff trade barriers are not addressed, the honey market will become increasingly unpredictable and efforts to guarantee adequacy and continuity of supply and quality will become ineffective. The current global shortage of honey compels us to think about all these issues from a more strategic and long term perspective.

Given the current global economic recession and high rates of unemployment and underemployment, there are obvious and real restraints on how high honey prices can rise. Reducing or removing tariff and non-tariff trade barriers will become a strategic requirement to ensure both adequacy of supply and reasonableness of price. If, as we hope, the creative use of good science as a marketing tool to promote the health benefits of honey matures, then ensuring adequate supply to meet growing demand will become even more challenging.

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NICK'S NEWS

from I&I NSW

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Sugar shake results

It is the time of year again to please send in your results for the past years efforts at sugar shaking your bees. If you have not done any please get out and do a few sugar shakes. This program provides useful evidence of our countries freedom from external bee parasites (varroa and tropilaelaps) which aids in export market access.

It might also detect an incursion at an early stage that may then improve the possibility of eradication of an exotic mite such as varroa. So please get out and do some sugar shakes and get those results back to me prior to 15 May 2010. I will be sending out self addressed envelopes to those who listed there name down when collecting a sugar shake jar. Others can post, fax or email results back to me:

Nick Annand
PO Box 1386, Bathurst NSW 2795
Fax: 6332 1458
Email: nicholas.annand@industry.nsw.gov.au

Locusts

Widespread good rain falls over the December –January period have lead to a substantial increase in locust populations. As a result the Australian Plague Locust Commission (APLC) is conducting surveillance and control operations in the **far north west** of NSW. Other locust control and surveillance work is also being conducted in the **central northern** region by I&I NSW- Livestock Health and Pest Authority (LPHA) and landowners.

Apiarists with bee hives located in areas affected by plague locust control activities should contact the LPHA and the landowner to ensure that control officers are notified of the location and number of hives.

For more information regarding locust activity see the web address below or call the appropriate LPHA for the region or APLC on 1800 635 962.

<http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/agriculture/pests-weeds/insects/general/locusts>

Replace colonies with packaged bees

Package bees have long been used by overseas countries to rebuild colonies number particularly to replenish winter hive losses. Australia has exported packaged bees to many countries over the years including the Middle East, South Korea and Japan and more recently the Canada and the USA. These bees have filled a demand in those countries. Up until 2009 packaged bees had not been considered by beekeepers in Australia to replace colonies. However this view is changing perhaps because of a few factors including, difficult seasonal conditions contributing to increases in hive losses, loss of export markets due to recent incursions into Australia, strong Australian dollar and splitting colonies becoming harder since the introduction and widespread distribution of small hive beetle. This led to a few beekeepers purchasing packaged bees to rebuild or expand colony numbers in 2009.

I was in this group (small scale) who had lost colonies to starvation over winter and others to AFB. Little to

no swarming occurred last spring around Bathurst and conditions and hive strengths were such that splitting colonies was not suitable. So I acquired some packages from one of the local package bee producers to trial. The following is a brief history of my experience.

Picked up a ten 4 lb (just under 2kg for the younger readers) packages on the morning of 5/11/09 direct from the supplier. **See photo 1 (5/11)**

The supplier also provide a sheet that provided instructions how to convert the packaged bees to a thriving colony. The packages come with 4lbs of bees, a caged queen that is attached within the top of the package and a can of sugar syrup providing food for the bees. For the remainder of the day the bees were placed in the cool shade of a tree. That evening on dusk the bees were put into hives using two methods, shaking bees into the box or allowing bees to make there own way into the hive.

For both methods the caged queen needs to be removed from the package and placed into the centre of the brood box as per requeening.

Walk out method.

Used a double hive with only frames in the bottom box. The top box was used to place the package and a container to hold sugar syrup (food). The sugar syrup can is removed from the package to allow the bees to exit the package. It still contained a lot of syrup so was also placed into the super. The package was placed either on its side or upside down within the empty top box. The 10 frame gear was easier to place the package and feed containers into as the package just fit in sideways. **See photo 2 (5/11)**

Shake out method.

Used a single box with frames and a frame feeder. Removed 3 or 4 of the centre frames from the box and shook the packaged bees into the gap then returned the frames and put the caged queen into the centre of the box. A sharp jolt to dislodge the bees grip and tipping side to side I found best to remove the bees. The can of sugar syrup and the package with some bees still remaining inside were left either side of the hive entrance as close as possible without blocking the entrance. **See photo 3 (5/11)**

Fortunately returned to inspect the following morning and found a fist size cluster of bees on the grass near the entrance of the last hive shaken. Closer inspect revealed that I had left the queen in her cage on the grass. She was alive so was returned to the colony only to become the only queen that failed out of the ten packages (probably my fault).

Feeding

Fed all of the colonies while placing them into the hives with 1.5 litres of 50:50 sugar/water (sugar syrup) by weight in addition to what was still available in the can.

All the colonies were fed 1.5 litres sugar syrup again on the 10/11, 16/11 and 23/11 which totals about 6 plus litres per hive. There was never any syrup left over.

On the 10/11 the sugar syrup cans the packages in the doubles and the queen cages were removed and a quick inspection was done to see if the queen was laying. As mentioned, one queen needed replacing which was done immediately so not to impede the colony establishment.

All packages established easily but unfortunately due to poor conditions they did not expand much throughout the summer. They have also suffered from chalkbrood disease throughout the season however have recently picked up having access to a good red stringy bark nectar flow. This has allowed them to expand with most colonies now having close to 1.5 - 2 full boxes of bees and .5 to 1.5 supers of honey. Ready for winter and some honey for me.

Of the two methods used I found the two box method easier and less stressful on me and I suspect on the bees with less bees flying when being put into the hives. Because of this less drifting of bees occurred with the walk out method keeping bee numbers more even between colonies. The main bee losses experienced were in the cans of sugar syrup possibly because of slurping during travel.

See photo 4

Considerations with packaged bees

The key to establishing colonies from packaged bees is to feed sugar syrup (50:50) regularly while establishing the colony which stimulates colony growth and expansion.

See photo 5 and 6 (16/11)

Do not feed so much that the bees can not take it up within a day or two or else it will ferment and be harmful to the bees. Because of frequent feeding for the first few weeks I suggest you have the colonies close to home for ease. Obviously a good nectar flow reduces the requirement on feeding.

Make sure the hive material the bees are going into is clean i.e. free of AFB. Packaged bees are unlikely to transfer AFB because of the break from contaminated food reserves, hive material and no brood to feed until onto a new clean food source. If packages break down with AFB it is more likely a result of going onto AFB infected material or having access to contaminated honey nearby (robbing).

Any of the exporters of packaged bees are probably willing to sell packaged bees domestically and packages come in a few variations in design. Packaged bees currently cost between \$50-\$70 dollars a package depending on the package weight, demand etc.. So next time you want to increase hive numbers consider the merits of buying in packaged bees. It is easy (I could do it) and if the season prospects look favourable they can easily pay for themselves and some.



Photo 1

5/11



Photo 2

5/11



Photo 3

5/11



Photo 4



Photo 5

16/11



Photo 6

16/11

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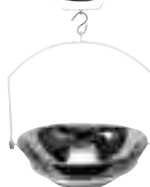
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Preliminary
Conference program
Thursday, 20 May 2010

8.00am	Registration
9.00am	Call to order - Bill Weiss Welcome, apologies and remembrance pause Confirmation of 2009 conference minutes Business arising from the minutes Financial statements/show report Branch reports – as published President's report – as published Resource report – as published <i>Australia's Honeybee News</i> - Margaret Blunden
9.30am	FCAAA report - Bill Weiss
10.00am	AHBIC report
10.30am	Morning tea
11.00am	RIRDC Report
11.30am	NSW Department of Primary Industries Report <i>Research and advisory</i> - Dr Doug Somerville <i>Regulation</i> - Mick Rankmore
12.00pm	Mini Honey Money - Greg Mills, DPI
12.30pm	Nominations for Executive Council
12.45pm	Lunch
2.00pm	AFB – the essential facts - Dr. Michael Hornitzky
2.30pm	AFB in the USA – <i>the trends</i> - Dr Jerry Bromenshenk
3.00pm	New Zealand model for AFB - Frans Laas
3.30pm	Beekeepers view on the SA system (levy paying etc)
4.00pm	The State Government's Role Dr Stephen Dunn
4.30pm	Where to now? - Craig Klingner
5.00pm	General business
5.30pm	Close

Preliminary
Conference program
Friday, 21 May 2010

8.30am	Registration
9.00am	Small Hive Beetle biology - Nick Annand, DPI
9.30am	Small Hive Beetle impact in QLD <i>survey</i> - Hamish Lamb, QLD DPI
10.00am	Official opening
10.30am	Morning tea
11.00am	Fungus to attack Small Hive Beetles - Dr Dianna Leamon
11.30am	Small Hive Beetle traps - Hamish Lamb, QLD DPI
12.00pm	Legalising fipronil to kill Small Hive Beetle - Dr Garry Levot, DPI
12.30pm	Lunch
	Close of poll for executive
1.30pm	Bee sniffing ability - Dr Jerry Bromenshenk
2.00pm	Experiments with brood and queen pheromone - Dr Andrew Barron & Marianne Pesco
2.30pm	Authentic honey – <i>Identifying imitation honey</i> - Dr Helen Darling
3.00pm	Australian Pesticides & Veterinary Medicines Authority - Karl Adamson
3.30pm	Building a business brain - Greg Mills, DPI
4.00pm	General business
4.30pm	Close

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HONEY LINKED TO MEMORY RETENTION

AMERICANS are losing their minds at an accelerating rate, according to Mike McInnes of Isoactive in Edinburgh, UK. (*Isoactive distributes specialized honey products to European athletes.*)

Likewise, more Americans are living to very old ages; centenarians are the fastest-growing demographic.

Dementia and cognitive decline are conditions usually associated with old age. However, McInnes said neural loss actually may begin in childhood from the time the human brain is fully formed. Of course, new brain cells may be formed throughout life, but this neurogenesis is increasingly compromised in modern life.

Why? It is due to poor-quality and foreshortened sleep combined with a lack of quality darkness and lack of energy provision for the brain, according to McInnes. The consumption of honey just prior to bed can help, he noted.

The dark phase of the light/dark cycle is as critical for optimal health in people now as it was for the early hunter-gatherers. They would hunt and gather during the daylight hours, return to camp to consume the food and sleep when the sun set. They slept not so much with their bellies full but with their livers replenished, having a stable reserve of energy supply for the brain over the hours of the nocturnal fast.

It has been recognized for some decades that sleep is essential to learning and memory consolidation, and without quality sleep, these are compromised. What has been missing in most research on neurology and sleep physiology is the role of cerebral energy provision during the nocturnal fast. From an early evening meal, this fast is 12 hours - 18 hours if breakfast is missed. Thus, McInnes said, no provision is made for restocking the liver glycogen store, the only fuel supply reserve the brain may call on during these hours of fasting.

Failure to provision cerebral energy over the hours of the nocturnal fast results in chronic activation of adrenal stress, which interferes with the only method for partitioning fuel from the body to the brain. This results in increased risk of metabolic syndrome (diabetes/heart disease/obesity) and other metabolic conditions, in particular neurological conditions. Chronic overproduction of adrenal hormones prevents consolidation of short-term to long-term memory during rapid eye movement sleep, said McInnes.

The modern notion that it is unhealthy not to eat late -- put about by diet gurus who have no knowledge of the critical role of cerebral energy provision during the nocturnal fast -- has not been challenged by the health profession.

For example, McInnes said, the last meal of the day in hospitals is 6pm. This results in compromised recovery physiology in every hospital bed in the land. Sleep is a very high-energy physiological excursion, and that energy for provision of cerebral energy must be sourced from the liver (the brain carries only 30 seconds of energy reserve in astroglial cells) during the overnight fast.

Thus, most of the western population goes to bed with a depleted liver, resulting in chronic nocturnal metabolic stress. McInnes said the effect of this on neural processing, memory and learning is devastating, which

may be observed in the accelerating increase of all types of dementias, including Alzheimer's disease.

Furthermore, he said, it is now widely recognised that poor-quality sleep drives up the orexigenic (appetite-increasing) hormones the following day, and after missing breakfast, this level increases such that people make poor food choices, leading to increased calorie ingestion.

Increased consumption of high-calorie foods results in elevated blood glucose (hyperglycemia), which, in turn, results in raised insulin (hyperinsulinemia). The problem is that hyperinsulinemia prevents glucose uptake into the brain, resulting in chronic cerebral hunger - the driving force behind obesity.

The signal for this hunger is the amino acid glutamate. This signal activates the adrenal hormones, further increasing the orexigenic hormones, and the cycle repeats. This toxic metabolic cycle is indifferent to the quantity of food consumed; the chronic insulin simply adds to ongoing cerebral hunger and drives us to make poor food choices. Glutamate is recognized as the most toxic transmitter in the human brain. One of the most important Alzheimer's drugs is a glutamate antagonist.

The ubiquitous morning coffee/sugar energy fix represents the "caffeination" of modern urban culture; it's a failed strategy to relieve nocturnal metabolic stress and the cerebral energy deficit. It simply results in increased adrenal stress (coffee) and higher insulin (sugar) levels, said McInnes.

Furthermore, excess glucose is converted to fat, and fats may not provision cerebral energy. McInnes noted that people may carry several-hundred pounds of fat while not one ounce may be used in the brain.

"Thus, it becomes a 24-hour fast/feed cycle that results in increased weight gain and causes chronic cerebral hunger - essentially a form of cerebral diabetes. This applies equally to children as to adults, with major negative impacts on memory, learning and cognition," he said.

According to McInnes, the relationship between the energy or fuel status of the liver and the quality and duration of restorative sleep is one of the most neglected areas of study in human physiology. He said chronic nocturnal metabolic stress can be easily prevented by simply providing adequate fuel for the liver and, therefore, the brain during the nocturnal fast.

After an early evening meal, the liver may be selectively replenished by consuming an ounce or two of quality honey. This is, of course, counterintuitive, but science is not intuitive, McInnes said. An ounce or two of honey prior to sleep will activate the honey/insulin/melatonin cycle, promote quality sleep and recovery physiology and reduce the production and release of the adrenal (stress) hormones, McInnes noted.

"Modern metropolitan humans are losing their minds simply because we are failing to provision cerebral energy, in particular during the hours of the nocturnal fast. One of the most important of the multiple functions of sleep is to recalibrate energy pathways and return the body to a state of energy homeostasis, a feat impossible without provision of cerebral energy via the liver every night in life," said McInnes.

That such a simple solution may be found for such a major problem may seem surprising, but energy is the basis of all life, and the human brain, cell for cell, is the most energy-consuming organ in any species known to date, he said.

Here's the point

THE history of honey use and production is long and varied. In many cultures, honey has had uses beyond as a food. In fact, for years, some cultures believed honey had many practical health uses. It was used as an ointment for rashes and burns and to help soothe sore throats when no other medicinal treatments were available.

Current research out of the UK indicates honey may also play a role in preserving human memory by serving as a fuel source for the brain during times of rest, or nocturnal fasting, when other food sources are unavailable.

The relationship between the energy or fuel status of the liver and the quality and duration of restorative sleep is thought to be one of the most neglected areas of study in human physiology. Chronic nocturnal metabolic stress is now thought to be easily prevented by simply providing adequate fuel for the liver and, hence, the brain during the nocturnal fast. After an early evening meal, the liver may be selectively replenished prior to sleep by taking an ounce or two of quality honey.

RECIPES

Spicy Pork Spare Ribs

Serves 8

3 garlic cloves, crushed
1 tablespoon grated ginger
2 teaspoons vegetable oil
3 teaspoons five spice
1/2 marmalade
1/3 cup honey
1/4 cup sweet soy sauce
3 kg pork spare ribs

Combine garlic, ginger, oil, five spice, marmalade, honey and sweet soy sauce in a shallow dish. Add ribs and turn to coat. Cover and refrigerate overnight to marinate.

Preheat barbecue on medium heat. Drain pork ribs, reserving marinade. Cook pork ribs, turning and brushing occasionally with marinade, until cooked through. Serve with green salad.



Figs with Honey-nut crumble

Serves 4

6 figs
2 tablespoons hazelnuts
2 tablespoons almonds
2 tablespoons pistachios
8 macadamias
1/4 cup oats
1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon grated orange rind
40g soft butter
3 tablespoons honey
Vanilla ice-cream

Preheat oven to 180°C. Cut figs in half. Scrunch some foil and place in a roasting tray. Place figs on foil, cut side up. Roughly chop nuts and mix with oats, cinnamon, orange rind and butter. Spoon on to figs and drizzle with honey. Bake for 10 minutes. Serve three fig halves per person with vanilla ice-cream.

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THE REPORT BELOW IS A DRAFT SUMMARY OF THE MINUTES OF THE NSWAA EXECUTIVE MEETING

4 March 2010 - (These are yet to be ratified)

In attendance at the March meeting were: Bill Weiss, Craig Klingner, Neil Bingley, John Benfield, Laurie Kershaw, DPI representative Dr Doug Somerville & NSW Secretary Julie Lockhart.

Two branch newsletters were received and 2 motions were received from the Southern Tablelands Branch:

Motion Received from ST Branch. *That the State Executive considers asking all industry bodies to avoid using the term 'Feral Bees' in press releases and other papers as it has a connotation that 'Unmanaged Bees' are a declared pest.*

An email reply to be sent to the branch: *The State Executive has discussed this at length. The terminology Feral Bees is consistent with other terminology for other animals such as feral goats, feral pigs etc. We believe that the other suggested names ie; exotic and unmanaged would only cause confusion and highlight further negatives and the status quo should remain.*

A feral bee is the term used in the legislation. The public make a distinction between feral and managed animals already. This is a true distinction. Unmanaged bees are actually those not managed properly by the owners.

Motion received from ST Branch: *The Southern Tablelands Branch Executive believes that the Small Hive Beetle poses a threat to our industry. We request that our State Executive do everything in their power to promote research into the control and eradication of this pest. A biological control into their genes to change their breeding patterns. Also, we seek support from other State bodies for setting this action as a National priority.*

An Email to be sent to the Branch: *The Association is dedicating half a day of conference to the Small Hive Beetle.*

The Executive will also send this email to AHBIC: *Members of the NSWAA are continuing to have major problems with small hive beetle increasing in all areas of the State. NSWAA urge AHBIC to Support any future projects on Small Hive Beetle as a high priority within the Industry. We ask AHBIC to seek researchers interested in researching genetic or biological control of the small hive beetle. AHBIC support researchers funding requests from Australian Research Council.*

A letter was received from Margaret Blunden outlining the expenses/income of the AHN. The results on the report were very pleasing showing the AHN is doing well. Margaret asked the executive if they were happy with the new weight of paper used in the current edition of the magazine. The executive felt it was a little thin and asked that it be made a few grams thicker. It was decided that an abridged version of the minutes be published in the AHN. It is to be a report draft version as the full minutes are not ratified until next meeting which is 3 months away.

Due to rising costs for hire of room, morning teas, data projectors etc for conference the cost of registration for conference will change. The cost has not changed basically in the past 7 years and the small changes will be in line with the cost of conference.

It was decided that this year a Trade Show would be held. Laurie and Therese Kershaw and John and Noelene Benfield will organise the Trade show and get as a donation from Forests NSW. Conference agenda was discussed and finalised. All invites to be sent out ASAP.

Sydney RAS Easter Show discussions were held. All stock in the final stages of being organised. Deliveries set up etc. A range of different products will be tried this year like powdered honey and a higher activity manuka honey. Cookbooks to be ordered to sell.

Bill Weiss presented a AFB Discussion paper he had put together:

DRAFT AFB DISCUSSION PAPER

American Brood Disease (AFB) has plagued the Australian Honeybee Industry since 1914 when second hand hive material was imported from America. The disease is considered variously by beekeepers, some not overly concerned by the disease, while others consider it to be of extreme cost and importance.

Countries which have had incursions of Varroa (USA, New Zealand) state that the combined problems make management of both problems very difficult and if you can reduce (eliminate) AFB, managing Varroa is much easier.

Here in Australia it is noticed that the Small Hive Beetle (SHB) spread and damage seems to follow the stresses created by diseases such as AFB and EFB (European Foul Brood).

Contact with American beekeepers in recent times indicates that, although they used antibiotics to control AFB for many years, the disease has attained resistance to more and more varied antibiotics and they now have decided to destroy hives showing AFB symptoms, finding that they cannot manage so many pests and diseases together.

Many beekeepers in Australia are finding the disease is becoming very expensive to control when neglected and abandoned apiaries create new infections periodically.

The New South Wales Apiarists' Association executive has spent a lot of time over the years in attempts to put in place a management strategy to control and reduce the incidence of AFB. It is perhaps naïve to think that AFB can be eliminated (although it is possible to clean up individual apiaries); however the incidence must be reduced from the present high level for the Industry to survive commercially.

The Honeybee industry is becoming more important for modern day society as extreme events (agricultural sprays, drought, and monoculture) reduce the number of feral and native pollinators. Managed honeybees are becoming more sought after for pollination of food crops as the free and incidental pollinators become less. For the Honeybee Industry to be able to provide this service it must be able to manage diseases such as AFB.

If AFB is to be reduced there must be a different approach taken. *If you keep doing what you're doing, you will keep getting what you're getting.*

The control of AFB in New South Wales apiaries will require more effort by beekeepers and more involvement in the management of the disease.

The New South Wales executive has looked at some of the management policies (of New Zealand, South Australia, Victoria etc) in an effort to bring the most suitable policies to the New South Wales Industry, and has put forward a number of points it considers necessary to reduce this costly disease:

1. Beekeeper Management group
2. Certification Courses (Pests and Diseases)
3. Lodging of Annual certificate of inspection
4. Dedicated Apiary Inspector
5. Honorary Apiary Inspector
6. Honey Tests
7. Trace back – Trace forward
8. Consider a levy for disease control if thought necessary
9. Two tiered registration

Point 1 Beekeeper Management Group

To bring a New Zealand point forward, a beekeeper management group is proposed to work with Industry and Investment. To liaise with the department and arrange assistance.

Point 2 Certificate of Competency

Courses are being run at present by Industry and Investment. These courses are designed to bring beekeepers up to speed with identifying pests and diseases of the beehive and treatment of same. A certificate will be issued at the completion of the course, provided competency is attained.

Point 3 Annual Certificate of Inspection

It is proposed that beekeepers who are certified, may lodge a certificate of inspection for their apiaries. This would be on an annual basis and lodged with Apiary Management Group.

Registered beekeepers that are not certified must get a certified person to inspect his apiaries and furnish a report. This part of the program is designed to prevent apiaries from being neglected for long periods, posing a risk to neighboring apiaries as occurs at present.

Point 4 Dedicated Apiary Inspector

Government requires all hives to be registered and must maintain the registry. Industry and Investment requires information from the registry and must maintain disease and pest information for export certification and trade negotiations with overseas countries.

It is considered by the honeybee industry that there still must be some involvement by government (Industry and Investment) in disease control, with Industry stepping forward to take a more active role in both the management and on ground control. There is an obligation for the Department to have some input into AFB control, for the public good and for trade to continue.

Point 5 Honorary Apiary Inspector

Many years ago DPI had Honorary Apiary Inspectors appointed. They assisted DPI Inspectors at times when many hives were involved or when DPI Inspectors could not travel within a time frame to inspect a suspected outbreak. They were always under the authority of a DPI Inspector. The appointment again of Honorary Apiary inspectors would allow more involvement by Industry and also may mean extra funds (levy) would not be necessary.

Point 6 Honey tests

Honey tests are a good tool for identifying apiaries with disease. However honey tests should be one of many tools to be used and not be the main method of control. Honey tests should be useful for identifying districts that need to be addressed.

Point 7 Trace back- Trace forward

In all outbreaks there needs to be trace- back to establish where the disease spread from and also trace-forward to establish apiaries which may have contracted the disease. This is a practice not often utilized by inspectors in this present time.

Point 8 Levy

New Zealand and South Australia have a disease levy to help fund a disease program. This may or not be necessary for New South Wales depending on cost of program adopted.

Point 9 Two Tiered Registration

Victoria has a two tiered registration system which gives a discount for registration application if accompanied with a honey sample from each apiary.

A vote was taken in reference to the points in Bill's paper. The results are below:

Issue	Agree	Disagree
Point 1	4	1
Points 2 & 3	5	
Point 4	5	
Point 5	5	
Point 6	4	1
Point 7	5	
Point 8	4	1
Point 9		

Dr Doug Somerville gave NSW Department of Primary Industries Report

The items covered comprehensively in the report were:

Profarm – Pest and disease course, Asian bees, Total beekeeping field day, NZ visitors and EFB, SHB, North American beekeeping conference, Insemination course and Wheen Foundation, Alberta Beekeepers Convention, Phosphine fumigation, Chinese business interest in Australian beekeeping, Info on AFB and OTC as requested.

In general business the Executive decided to write to Bruce Christie (cc Bronwyn Henry) inquiring about the possibility of honorary inspectors being reintroduced.

Letter from APVMA to Peter King. Executive to forward copy of the letters onto AHBIC. Ask AHBIC to look into it as it has been a request from APVMA to register Copper Napthanate for use to preserve bee box timber. Attach letter to email.

Bill wrote to Minister Sartor seeking a meeting to discuss the Red Gum Assessment and other issues facing the Apiary industry.

NEXT MEETING - 19 May 2010 – Port Macquarie



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INTERNATIONAL SNIPPETS

MEXICO

HONEY EXPORTS ARE ON ALERT 'ORANGE' - 24/3/2010

The export of honey from Mexico to the European Union and the United States is on "orange alert", after having detected the contaminated product, warned the president of the Beekeepers Society Champoton Pedro Ehuán Coyocan, so that local producers, regional and national agreed with the National Health, Safety and Agricultural Health and Quality (SINASID), greater regulation in the mobilization of the product.

USA

UNKNOWNLY, HISPANICS ARE BUYING IMITATIONS OF HONEY MOST FREQUENTLY - 23/3/2010

In recent years, there has been an increase in imitation of honey in discount stores frequented by Hispanic pure honey when in fact they could be buying another product which is not natural sweet substance produced by bees. To help Latinos understand that there are imitations on the market that contain ic consumers. These products cause confusion since the containers are similar to honey, but the product may not be 100% pure honey. Consumers may believe they are buying a bottle of 100 ingredients of honey added, National Honey Board has developed the educational program "Pure Honey Bee" to identify the 100% pure honey reading labels carefully in order to sure to indicate 100% pure honey as the sole ingredient.

USA

COLLAPSING HONEYBEE POPULATION WORRIES CALIFORNIA ALMOND GROWERS - 17/3/2010

California almond growers have reason to be worried, very worried. Honeybee populations across the country have declined sharply since last Fall. The California almond industry, supplying 80% of the world market of almonds, requires roughly half of the nation's commercial hives to pollinate its groves. This ratio might see a dramatic change when new tallies on hives are available this Spring.

Many beekeepers have seen Winter hive losses as high as 50%. One Pennsylvania beekeeper told the Washington Post, "This was probably the worst year ever."

After a year of slowing down, "colony-collapse disorder," or CCD, has reemerged in an ominous way. The phenomenon is characterized by a sudden drop in beehive populations as foraging bees fail to return to their hives.

With one third of the nation's crops pollinated by insects (the majority being honeybees), the newest reports from apiarists are not just troubling for Californians.

The current rate of bee disappearance is actually an uptick in an almost four year established trend. A new study claims that hive losses have stabilized at 30% per year. But that report doesn't include this Winter's data. One bee industry official has claimed that from 30 to 80% of California's hives have succumbed to CCD.



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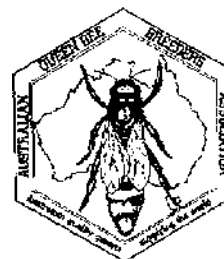
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Email: ahbic@honeybee.org.au Website: www.honeybee.org.au

Executive Director: Mr Stephen Ware

AHBIC NEWS

INDUSTRY UPDATE - 16 MARCH 2010

Dear All

I write to update members of the industry on activities currently being undertaken as a result of the activities of AHBIC. I do so at a time despite the limited resources and uncertainty regarding funding. Your industry association is involved in a large number of issues that are vitally important to the future of the industry and the profitability of the commercial beekeeping sector. These include:

1. Asian Honey Bees (*Apis cerana*) incursion – Cairns Queensland

- Since August 2009 an additional 26 swarms and nests have been found, totalling 57 detections;
- AHB is confirmed as the Java strain. Testing has also confirmed that the latest infections were likely derived from a single incursion and that no exotic bee mites, such as Varroa, have been found;
- The Mareeba detections in August 2009 were likely the result of human-assisted means and no further detections have been made in the area;
- Since the development of Queensland Response Plan, a further infection was found at Lake Eacham on 24 December 2009. The finding was within the Restricted Area (RA) but it represents a 49% increase in the infested area;
- The Consultative Committee on Asian Honey Bees (CCAHB) has endorsed the response plan and continues to consider that AHB eradication is technically possible based on the information available and the response plan;
- Key features of the plan are:
 - increased numbers of staff to undertake surveillance
 - increased surveillance activity within the RA
 - expansion of surveillance activities outside the RA
 - managing the risk of human-assisted spread of AHB
 - public awareness of priority activities;
- The CCAHB considered the trigger points for review and/or termination of the program and agreed to a two-year proof of freedom phase to begin October 2011, after two peak incidence seasons of surveillance and eradication activities.
- Under the Emergency Plant Pest Response Deed (EPPRD), there is no retrospectivity so it must be clearly established this incursion has been eradicated in order to treat further new incursions of this pest;
- Biosecurity Queensland is managing the current AHB incursion and has incurred costs of \$1,208,451 from the initial detection in May 2007 to 31 Dec 2009;
- The cost of the response plan (\$11,051,515) represents approximately 13.8% of the gross value product of the honey bee industry. If the pollination industry was identified as a beneficiary the percentage of the infected industries would be dramatically reduced. Irrespective of the agreed beneficiaries, under the response plan, the potential collective industry contribution could total \$2,201,303 or even more;

- A number of horticultural industries, considered to be dependent on bee pollination, have not offered financial support to the response;
- Categorisation of AHB is being undertaken by Plant Health Australia (PHA) and has been finalised;
- AHB is regarded as a pest species because they weaken European Honey Bee hives by robbing them of honey and they cannot be managed for pollination services. Modelling suggests that AHB are most suited to coastal areas in all states of Australia. The bees are also aggressive and may have a detrimental environmental impact as they can force native insects and mammals out of their natural nesting sites and compete for food resources.

Summary of effects of Asian Honey Bees on the Australian Apiary Industry

As the Chairman of AHBIC I have been involved in countless meetings of both the CCAHB, discussions with PHA and the National Management Group (NMG) and why you may ask? Because the experts tell us that should AHB become established in Australia it would have the following effects on our industry:

- In terms of lost queen and package bee exports, if AHB becomes established in any area within Australia, trade restrictions would be placed on the Australian industry as a whole, regardless of the presence or absence of AHB in the productions area. The queen and package bee industry is estimated to be worth \$7.5m annually (as per industry exporters);
- Lost honey production is linked to the spread of AHB in that honey production is believed to be reduced by 80% once AHB becomes present in a zone. A greater percent of total honey production is lost as AHB spreads to infest an increasingly larger area of a particular zone;
- In respect of pollination, given the deleterious effect of AHB, it has been suggested that twice as many hives will need to be kept for the same pollination performance. Thus the current \$65-per-hive cost of providing assisted pollination to key industries for the average 3-week flowering will double;

2. Australian/Korea Free Trade Agreement (FTA) Negotiations

On 5 March 2009, Prime Minister Kevin Rudd and the President of the Republic of Korea (ROK), Lee Myung-bak, agreed to launch bilateral FTA negotiations. Since the first round of negotiations held from 18-22 May 2009, two more rounds have occurred with the latest one held from 30 November - 4 December 2009. The fourth round of negotiations will be held in Seoul in March 2010.

During the previous rounds, in our market access sessions, we have discussed possible tariff concessions and pressed for positive outcomes for Australian exporters. We will continue to do so during the fourth round in March. We may have discussions on specific agricultural products, including honey. As you may know, Korea has already granted some concessions on honey to the United States and the EU in its free trade agreements with those countries (these FTAs have not yet entered into force).

Korean Market Access Commitments to the US & EU

Tariff Line	Description	2009 MFN Base Rate	KOR US	KOR EU
0106902010	Honey bees	8%	Year 5	Year 5
0409000000	Natural honey	243% or 1,864won/kg, whichever is the greater	CSQ	CSQ
1702901000	Artificial honey	243%	Year 10	Year 10
2106909091	Preparations for royal jelly and honey	8%	Year 10	Year 10

KOR/US FTA

Korea has agreed to remove its 8% tariff for honey bees; its 243% tariff for artificial honey; and its 8% tariff for preparations for royal jelly and honey after 5/10 years. For natural honey, Korea has agreed to grant a duty-free country specific quota (CSQ) with the application of a safeguard. Details below:

Country-Specific Quota under KOR/US:

Natural honey (0409000000)

Year	Quantity (M/T)
1	200
2	206
3	212
4	219
5	225
After year 5, the in-quota quantity increases by 3% per year, compounded annually.	

Australia currently imports less than 25 Metric tons of honey into the Korean market. If Australian beekeepers can gain further access to this market then it could be both extremely profitable to industry and beekeepers as the Korean market is potentially an important outlet for Australian produce. It has therefore been extremely important for your industry association to assist the Australian Government in these discussions.

3. Small Hive Beetle

Following considerable efforts industry has now found a potential manufacturer of Small Hive Beetle (SHB) traps which should come as a relief to those beekeepers that have been experiencing increased infestations as the SHB becomes more established.

At AHBIC's Annual Conference the manufacturer of the new SHB traps will be in attendance to provide further information. Given patent issues and threats of legal action it took considerable effort to arrive at this situation but I am glad that progress is being made.

4. AHBIC Funding

Despite our best efforts we still do not have agreement on long term funding of AHBIC. Following consultation with the Honey Packers, all have agreed to fund AHBIC except Beechworth Honey. Capilano's contribution was and is on the basis that all other Packers contribute. The AHBIC Executive will now meet on the 19 April to try and resolve the current situation.

5. Conclusion

As your Chairman, I can truthfully report to you, that despite extremely limited resources AHBIC continues to work hard for the Australian Apiary Industry.

I continually hear criticism that AHBIC should be doing more, that individual beekeepers do not support AHBIC and that there are other alternatives. Unfortunately when I have asked people to put up these alternatives I have not received any informed comment.

Unless the funding issue is resolved then those who say that AHBIC does nothing may well have their theory tested. Unfortunately from one who has been involved in the above activities and has spent considerable time away from my business I fear the long term consequences if as a small industry we are not at the table putting forward our point of view and protecting the industry that I know we all hold dear.

Should any member of industry wish to discuss with me their perceived failings of our National Industry Body or wish to make a suggestion I would be only too happy to hear from you.

Yours sincerely

LINDSAY BOURKE
CHAIRMAN

Phone: 0418 131 256

Email: queenvic@cradlemountainhoney.com.au

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A load of 70 hives were stolen on Wednesday 6 January from Mudgee/Gulgong area.

They are mostly doubles with some triples.

The hives are ten frame with all WSP supers.

They are painted white and maintained in good condition.

The rego number YY9181 is stamped then painted over on bottom box of all hives.

Any information can be given to Mudgee Police on 02 6372 8599. (quote event no. E41991781)

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