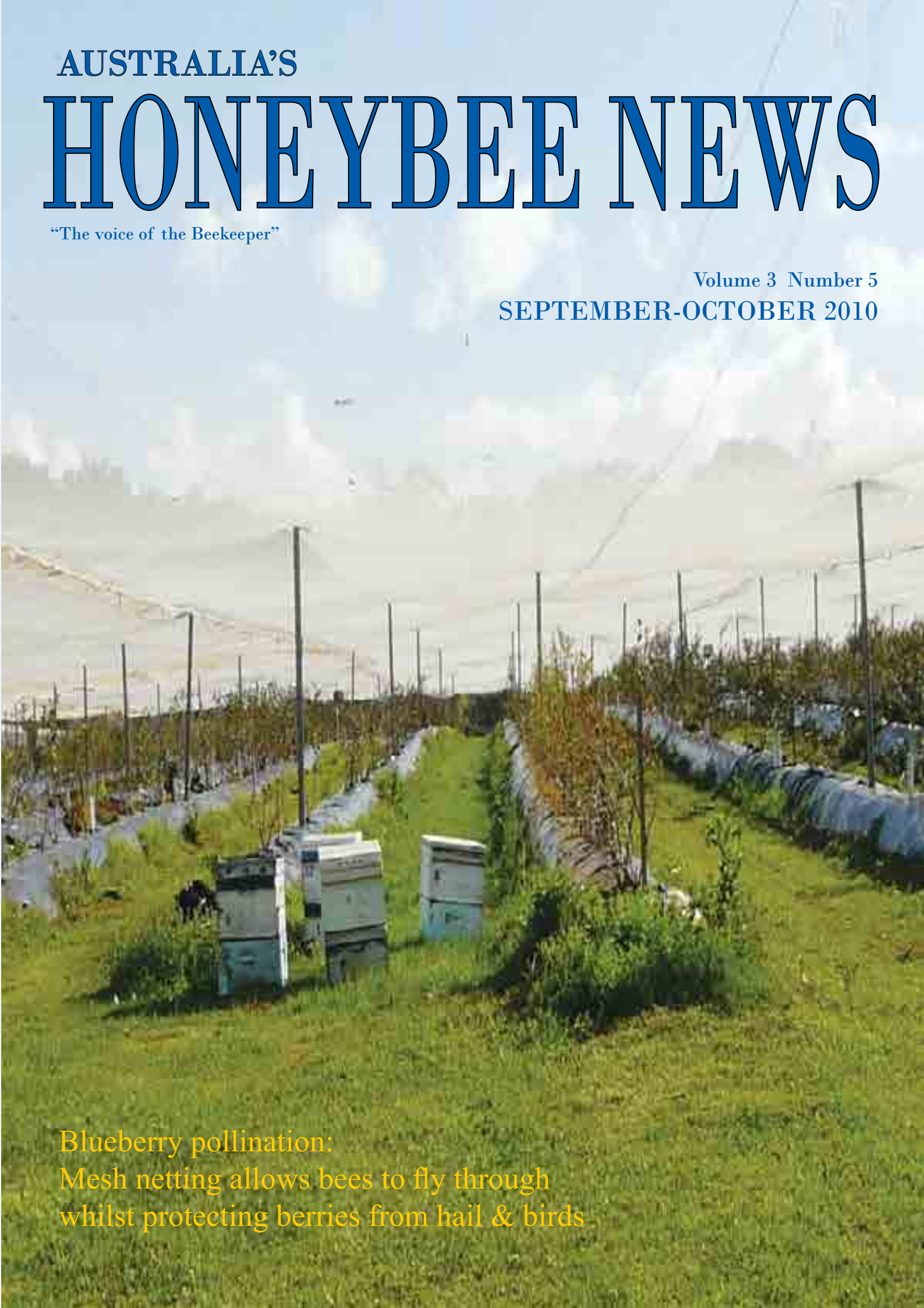


AUSTRALIA'S HONEYBEE NEWS

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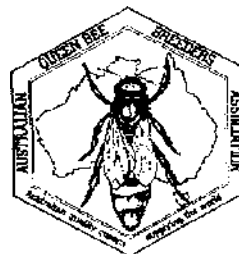
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The Journal of the NSW Apiarists' Association Inc. (NSWAA)

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COVER: Bees pollinating blueberries at Mountain View Orchards Wollongbar NSW

Photo: Geoff Manning

Copy Deadline for Next Issue of *Australia's Honeybee News* - 1 December 2010

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Editor & Production: Margaret Blunden PO Box 352 Leichhardt NSW 2040 - Phone: 02 9798 6240
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President

Bill Weiss
206 Lambeth Street
Glen Innes NSW 2370
Ph/Fax 02 6732 1263
Email: beeweiss@gmail.com



Vice-President

Craig Klingner
PO Box 564
Glen Innes NSW 2370
Ph/Fax 02 6734 4125
Email: klingnershoneyco@bigpond.com



Secretary/Treasurer

Julie Lockhart
PO Box 3018
Toongabbie East NSW 2146
Ph/Fax: 02 9863 4338
Email: nswaa@optusnet.com.au



Councillor

Mal Porter
135 Eusdale Road
Yetholme NSW 2795
Ph: 02 6337 5383
Email: malP380@optusnet.com.au



Councillor

John Benfield
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Ph/Fax 02 6722 4788
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Federal President: Bill Weiss
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Phone/Fax: 02 6732 1263
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Secretary: Julie Lockhart
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Phone/Fax: 02 9863 4338
Email: nswaa@optusnet.com.au

AUSTRALIAN HONEY BEE INDUSTRY COUNCIL (AHBIC)

National Chairman: Lindsay Bourke
11/11 High Street, Launceston TAS 7250
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Executive Director: Stephen Ware
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Email: ahbic@honeybee.org.au Website: www.honeybee.org.au

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT



Season

Good rainfall has produced some exceptional breeding conditions for getting hives up to strength.

Some beekeepers have had a noticeable increase in EFB and Nosema, possibly due to the wetter than normal spring. The wet weather has presented beekeepers with difficulty in servicing hives.

There is still not very much honey being produced despite the good rain and many good strong hives require a heavy honey flow to utilize the bee power.

Hive beetles are quite prolific in a lot of apiaries throughout the State and given increasing temperatures over the next few months, along with high humidity, beetles will cause many hives to break down.

The Industry desperately needs a control measure.

Honey Supply/Prices

Packers are loath to increase prices, in part due to pressure from supermarket chain competition; however the low to moderate production of honey could lead to a shortage of honey.

Imports are increasingly difficult to procure as World production is down and prices up.

Acacia honey in China is reported to be \$4,000/ton and exports from Argentina quite limited.

Apis cerana

Over the past few months large numbers of *cerana* nests have been found in North Queensland.

This is testament to the improved surveillance and increased man power devoted to the incursion. We must support the ongoing eradication program to ensure that our managed honeybees are not displaced by this unproductive species and to ensure continued export opportunities.

Membership Deal with Schutz

By now most beekeepers would have already begun or would be looking to change over from the old gal 44s to the newer poly 44s or 1,000 litre IBCs. Apart from the aesthetic appearance differences between the old and the new there are some major efficiency gains by changing to the 1,000 litre IBCs

Negotiations have taken place between NSWAA and Schutz DSL and the company is now pleased to announce a new supply and pricing structure giving substantial savings on the purchase of both poly drums and 1,000 litre IBCs.

To take advantage of this deal you must be a current member of the NSWAA. For pricing and supply information please ring Tim Belz on 0407 661 697 for further details. This is just another major benefit of being a member of the NSWAA.

Plague Locust Spray Program

The cool wet weather has delayed some hatchings in the North West and Central West of the State, however, from mid October spraying is expected to get into full swing and beekeepers are urged to keep informed of local spray programs as the chemicals used to control locusts is deadly to honeybees.

Livestock Health and Pest Authority (LHPA) rangers and the landholder where your hives are situated are your best contacts. Be sure you have your load signs posted with your contact numbers.

State Executive

The State executive is to meet late October in Orange. On the agenda for this meeting are the proposed AFB program, 2011 Conference arrangements (please note also that the Conference date has been changed to 19 & 20 May 2011), new BICC representatives from NPWS and State Forests, River Red Gum arrangements for changeover of bee sites to NPWS, Plague locust spray program, and Sydney Show arrangements.

Bill Weiss

State President

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SYMPATHY

We were saddened to hear of the recent death of Graham Porritt from Sydney Branch.

Graham was a regular volunteer at the Sydney Show and served on the branch executive.

We extend our condolences to his wife Carma and his family and friends.

!!! IMPORTANT NOTICE !!!

CORRECTION - PLEASE NOTE

**THE CORRECT PHONE NUMBER
FOR JULIE LOCKHART
NSWAA & FCAA Secretary is:**

Phone/Fax: 02 9863 4338

**Email:
nswaa@optusnet.com.au**

CHANGE OF DATE

The Executive has changed the date of the 2011 NSW Annual Conference as it clashed with the Dubbo Show which would make finding accommodation in the area at that time very difficult.

**THE NSW 2011 STATE CONFERENCE
WILL NOW BE HELD ON
THURSDAY 19 & FRIDAY 20 MAY 2011
AT THE DUBBO RSL CLUB**



Please note the new date and pass this information on to all interested beekeepers.



Important Announcement

Please note that from 1st June 2010 we have made some important changes to our NSW service.

- The cost of treatment has been reduced to
\$8.00 per box plus GST
- Only single boxes will be accepted
(no double or triple stacks)
- Each single box needs to be wrapped with
plastic bags or stretch/cling wrap
- Tape will be sufficient to secure the wrapping.
Emlocks and straps are no longer required.
- Tightly wrap and tape each box to ensure
the contents do not fall out
- All boxes must be clean and free of honey and insects
- All boxes must be less than 25kg

These changes are a result of your feedback regarding our service.
We thank you for your continued support and hope the improvements we have made makes your experience with our service even better.

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Varroa – Post Arrival

There have been a number of workshops and reviews in recent years on the subject of keeping Varroa mites out of Australia. A recent report published by the pollination program of the Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation, titled *Future Surveillance Needs for Honey Bee Biosecurity*, and again highlighted the point that the eventual arrival of Varroa mites in Australia was inevitable.

What the report had to say and I quote:

- Varroa destructor has spread rapidly throughout the world except Australia.
- New Zealand in 2000, 2006, Hawaii 2007.
- Mode of entry into New Zealand and Hawaii likely to be a shipping container or large vessel.
- The current prohibition of the import of queen bees through a properly regulated quarantine facility is likely to increase the risk of illegal smuggling.

The conclusion to the section on the probability of the introduction of Varroa mites was stated as HIGH! The probability of establishment and spread of Varroa was stated as HIGH and the overall probability of entry establishment and spread as HIGH!

Reading the report one can only draw one conclusion that the Australian beekeeping industry will have to deal with Varroa mites sooner or later.

What do we know about Varroa?

In some perverse way it was convenient that New Zealand got Varroa before Australia. They have learnt a lot of lessons and gained a lot of experience which will know doubt be extremely valuable to Australia's beekeeping industry.

Varroa – the essentials

1. Without treatment a colony of honey bees will die (in the vast majority of cases).
2. The death of a colony from initial invasion of mites may take 2 or 3 years.
3. The mite will live off bees for 5 to 7 days
4. Adult mites will piggy back on bees for weeks or months
5. Adult mites are very difficult to observe when they are on bees.
6. There are no obvious symptoms with a Varroa mite, infestation until the mite population reaches very high levels.
7. The costs associated with the chemical treatments and labour are 'financially significant'.
8. There are increasing numbers of cases of mite resistance to a range of treatments internationally.

Some beekeepers reading this article may not be overly surprised by what I have written so far. Much of this information can be gleaned from a range of sources, so what!

My concern is that all the authorities and reports don't get it. Sure Varroa mites are extremely serious and are know doubt the number ONE major pathogen affecting honey bees around the world. Yes Australia is the last major beekeeping region not to have Varroa mites. Yes Australia will most likely sooner or later have to deal with Varroa mites. Don't we have a range of management strategies and chemicals that deal with the mite? Yes we do on the international stage. My concerns rose significantly when I was invited to a workshop to review a draft paper titled *A Honey Bee Industry and Pollination Continuity Strategy for Australia 2010*. The report highlights the impact on the loss of 'free' pollination currently being provided by honey bees and the impact of the lost service.

What it failed to identify was that the biggest risk is that the 'extra' costs associated with Varroa mite management may well make beekeeping in Australia economically unviable.

The *Future Surveillance Needs for Honey Bee Biosecurity* report devotes an entire chapter to the predicted economic impact of the arrival of Varroa mites and the subsequent flow-on impact on the pollination of 25 horticultural and broad acre crops. What it doesn't analyse is the added production costs to the Australian Beekeeping Industry.

Most commercial beekeepers in Australia are aware that periodically honey is imported into Australia from various countries. Blind Freddy should be aware that the competition between honey packers for supermarket sales can be rather aggressive and largely driven by price. This is the nature of the free market.

An article in the August 28-29, 2010 *Weekend Financial Review* discussed local versus imported food products and the consumers preference for 'cheap' items. The article provided some interesting figures, for instance did you know that 85% of the garlic consumed in Australia is imported.

The Executive Officer of the Australian Garlic Industry Association, Henry Bell indicated that cheap Chinese garlic was being 'dumped' on the Australian market for 'ridiculously low' prices. Which he goes onto to say has led to the demise of the local garlic industry. The article goes onto suggest that the same story seems to be unfolding with pork and apple imports.

My point at the Varroa continuity strategy workshop was not whether the Australian Beekeeping Industry will be able to manage Varroa mites. I have no doubts that many Australian beekeepers will take Varroa in their stride and survive. The income from pollination service fees may well increase for most beekeeping businesses; even so post Varroa the main income source for beekeepers will remain honey production.

The bottom line to commercial beekeeping in Australia 'post' Varroa will not be whether the mites can be managed; it will be whether the Australian beekeeping industry can afford to!!!

NEW RURAL INDUSTRIES AUSTRALIA CONFERENCE AND EXPOSITION

28-30 November 2010 - Jupiters, Gold Coast

New Rural Industries Australia (NRIA) will be hosting its inaugural conference and expo to highlight the products and diversity of new and emerging rural industries across Australia. This event aims to bring about more collaboration between the new rural industries and will provide an excellent opportunity for industry interaction and exchange of information. It will be a chance to hear from "hands on" producers as well as recognised authorities from leading research organisations both in Australia and overseas.

The expo will feature industry displays and booths, a chance to meet participants from a huge range of new and emerging industries, sample their produce and discuss what makes them so passionate about their industry.

The exposition, being held in conjunction with the conference, will be open to all allied industries, government and research agencies, and also to any new rural industries to showcase their products.

A field trip to nearby rural industries will be held on Wednesday 1 December.

Conference program

Topics to be covered include:

- new crop and livestock opportunities
- new rural industries for future climates
- marketing and trade access
- carbon and biodiversity farming
- financing new and emerging industries

Call for papers

Abstracts for both oral and posters are invited from management professionals, researchers and academics, industry and government bodies. Please follow the website link below for more information.

Sponsorship opportunities

There are a number of options to be associated with the conference. These include a range of sponsorships, with varying degrees of exposure to delegates and an expo/trade show with face to face interaction with all the delegates. Please see the attached sponsorship document for more information.

Registration

Early bird registration is \$350 (plus GST) and closes at the end of September. Registration for the conference includes 6 months membership of NRIA.

To register please visit the website www.nria2010.com.au or call ASN Events on (03) 5983 2400

Conference website: For the full conference program and other information on the conference and expo please visit www.nria2010.com.au

NRIA website: If you would like to know more about New Rural Industries Australia please visit our website at www.nria.org.au

Darro Stinson and Paul Miller
NRIA Manager Chair NRIA
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A NEW SUSPECT IN THE INVESTIGATION OF COLONY COLLAPSE DISORDER (CCD)

US Researchers Discover Unusual Virus

A team from the University of Montana has identified a new insect iridescent virus (IIV) in CCD colonies with the help of a technique developed by the military called proteomics. This discovery is unique in that this is a DNA virus unlike other bee viruses that are RNA based. This research team claims to have found a "significant statistical link between CCD, the iridescent virus and a fungal parasite of the genus Nosema."

Currently, this discovery is listed as a "new suspect in the investigation of colony collapse disorder." Media reports claiming that CCD has been solved may be a bit premature. Although the research team is very excited about this new discovery, they cautiously acknowledge that, "We don't know if (1) these two pathogens cause CCD or (2) whether CCD colonies are more likely to succumb to these two pathogens." More information on this study should be available soon.

American Beekeeping Federation - 12 October 2010
Website: www.abfnet.org

CHARGES REVEALED IN INTERNATIONAL 'HONEY LAUNDERING' CONSPIRACY

NewsCore - 2 September 2010

The United States Federal Government announced charges today against a ring of foreign corporations and executives who conspired to bring antibiotic-laden Chinese honey illegally into the USA, in an attempt to avoid paying millions in fees.

A federal grand jury in Chicago indicted top executives of German food conglomerate Alfred L Wolff GmbH, and several of its affiliated companies for allegedly importing more than \$US40 million in Chinese honey, but saying it originated elsewhere in order to avoid paying duties of nearly \$US80 million that were levied on Chinese honey.

The indictment further alleges the honey contained antibiotics not approved for use in honey production and that several people involved in the conspiracy knew it was tainted.

The Government named 15 individual and six corporations as defendants in the 44-count indictment. They are all accused of bringing more than 600 shipments of mislabelled Chinese honey, which contained broad-spectrum antibiotics, into the US between 2002 and 2008. For much of that time, the US Department of Commerce had imposed antidumping duties on Chinese honey of up to 221 percent and prohibited the import of honey that was produced using the antibiotic chloramphenicol.

The defendants face charges of conspiracy, smuggling, falsifying federal documents and violating federal food safety laws. The Government hopes to collect the alleged unpaid duties, which total more than \$US78 million, as well as the declared value of the alleged illicit honey.

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Our recent involvement in the NSW 2010 State Conference in Port Macquarie and the follow up QLD 2010 State Conference in Ipswich has highlighted the need to make available nationally IBC's and Drums to the changing challenges within the Honey Industry regarding bulk shipments domestically and exports internationally.

I believe there have been changes and movement to standardise the bulk packaging containers across the industry, this process will take some month's even years, but we have seen increased sales of our products to your members and we would like to propose that in the meantime we pass on cost savings that we have identified within the current supply arrangements to your industry sector nationally.

SCHUTZ DSL proposes significant savings to members off all standard IBC's and Drums.

We would also consider applying a sticker, authorised and supplied by the Association, to be applied at the point of manufacture identifying the packaging as "Honey Industry Approved" packaging. This suggestion we would seriously consider, based on the use of second hand units within the industry. This would guarantee the packaging used by members is of food grade standard approved to comply with FDA standards.

With the SCHUTZ DSL investment in Melbourne of a new multi-million dollar extruder, to be commissioned in late September our capability to produce the new 6 layer technology will also assist in price reductions. Our capacity will increase to manufacture Natural 220ltr PE Drums.

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NICK'S NEWS

from I&I NSW

Nick Annand

Livestock Officer (Bees), Industry and Investment NSW, Bathurst
Ph: 02 6330 1210 Email: nicholas.annand@industry.nsw.gov.au



MORE PEST & DISEASE COURSES IF WANTED

Throughout 2010 Doug Somerville and myself scheduled and ran 12 'Pests and Diseases of Honey Bees' courses across New South Wales with the last couple completed at Kempsey (19-20/10) and Tocal (21-22/10).

If you missed these courses but still wish to attend, all is not yet lost as there is still the opportunity to get Doug and myself to deliver a few more of these courses anywhere in New South Wales prior to the 30 April, 2011.

For this to happen we need to get a group of 10 + participants to make running the course feasible.

So if you missed out earlier but are still keen to attend one of these courses please **contact Kim Griffiths at Tocal on (02) 4939 8881** and register your interest with her. Better still get nine or more of your beekeeper mates to come and do the course with you.

Judging by the feedback sheets and the numbers attending the course through word of mouth, I advocate it is an excellent course well worth doing

by all beekeepers (my view may be slightly biased).

The attendance levels at these courses has been greatly bolstered by the **Federal Governments FarmReady Reimbursement** program that allows primary producers to be fully reimbursed for the costs incurred attending the course, including course fees, travel and accommodation.

This federal government subsidy for the course runs out at the end of April 2011. For more details on the FarmReady ready subsidy call 1800 087 670 or look at the FarmReady web page at <http://www.farmready.gov.au/>

We will continue to run 1 or 2 of these courses a year after 2011 but those courses will not have the benefit of the FarmReady reimbursement.

So if you are a commercial beekeeper, take advantage of the federal government offer to pay for your attendance at the 'Pests and Diseases of Honey Bees' course before that offer finishes.

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MYRTLE RUST CONFIRMED ON 32 NSW SITES

Myrtle rust (*Uredo rangelii*) has now been confirmed on 32 sites in New South Wales. The sites are primarily located in the Gosford / Wyong area and the Sydney basin, with some trace forwards along the mid-north coast and south towards Nowra.

The disease is currently affecting ten Myrtaceae species including willow myrtle, turpentine, tea tree, lilly pilli, water gum, bottle brush and Austromyrtus. With the exception of one tree in a backyard and others at a TAFE college, the infected sites are retail garden centres, wholesale nurseries and cut flower facilities.

Plant Health Australia representatives attended the Myrtle Rust National Management Group (NMG) meeting held on 13 September 2010, to discuss the management actions underway for Myrtle rust.

During this meeting, the NMG noted the increased number of detections. It was agreed that response actions should continue as Myrtle rust remains largely contained within commercial properties and to date has not been found in any native forest or bushland.

Activities to manage Myrtle rust are being implemented under the Emergency Plant Pest Response Deed (EPPRD) - a legally binding agreement between the Australian Government, all state and territory governments, national plant industry Deed signatories and Plant Health Australia.

LOCUSTS FOR DINNER ANYONE?

The Epoch Times - 6 August 2010

The UN Food & Agriculture Organisation is considering a recommendation that eating locusts and other insects could reduce global warming.

Belgian researcher Arnold Van Hulle recently concluded that eating invertebrates, such as locusts and meal worms, instead of meat would significantly reduce greenhouse emissions from livestock production.

Mr. Van Hulle said most of the world already eats insects and only westerners do not. He questioned westerners' psychological aversion about this as many people already eat shrimp which he said are comparable to insects.

The organisers of a recent kosher eating marathon in Israel included locust on the menu, along with elk and pheasant meat.

One of the participants said the stir-fried locusts were delicious and tasted "like barbecue crisps!"

HONEY PACKERS & MARKETERS ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA (HPMAA)

AUGUST REPORT

Trading news – generally sales are tough for all in the grocery business and heavy price cutting is occurring.

Overall the grocery industry is not selling any more volume and it can even be argued that consumers are holding back as a result of higher interest rates, the economic situation and the pending Federal elections. Pressure therefore from supermarket groups here, and overseas, for promotions, discounts or product deletions due to down ranging gives great concern to all.

Honey news – there is a mixed situation of supply of honey on hand with packers at present. Some have good stocks, others adequate and a further group living a bit more hand to mouth.

From a production perspective on forward crops overall things seem optimistic for the new season although some states need more rain to get a good crop from Christmas onwards.

World market – world bulk honey prices remain under pressure but the shorter supply availability due to unusual weather patterns is assisting in limiting any major price drop. All the same we still see some silly prices coming out of China, India and Vietnam which lowers the market average price.

World market – retail packed honey prices for general Australian honey shows we are getting uncompetitive in the main stream of things in the Middle East or many Asian markets.

Specialty niche markets are being pursued by many packers who all look at ways of finding better returns. Specialty honeys like Leatherwood, Jarrah, organic or Australian Manuka/Jelly bush all find their own markets at higher values.

Exports – for the period ending June 2010 the official ABS data showed:

BULK	2009 Ton's	2010 Ton's	Change
Kg	4284	4601	7.4%
\$\$\$	17,036,489	19,554,668	
Repacked			
Kg	3802	2724	-20%
\$\$\$	20,641,268	14,681,112	

The change in volume for value added repackaged honey being exported from Australia is mostly as a result of a 20% rise in the exchange rate which has seen product been withdrawn from markets.

Eduard Planken
President
HPMAA

AUSTRALIAN PLAGUE LOCUST UPDATE

NEW SOUTH WALES SITUATION AND FORECAST TO NOVEMBER 2010

Central West

Locusts and conditions

Bands of early instar nymphs developed in the Nyngan–Hermidale area in mid-September and report numbers in other areas of the Central West LHPA and Lachlan LHPA increased during the month.

Hatchings will continue in early October in the Central West LHPA and western Lachlan, with the majority of hatchings in eastern areas expected in mid-October. Many Bands are expected to develop throughout the region during October.

Early hatchings were reported from west of Nyngan on 2 September, but the first Bands of early instar nymphs developed in mid-September. In the second half of September Sub-band density areas of early instar nymphs and a number of Bands were recorded by LHPA staff in the Nyngan–Hermidale area.

There were several reports of hatchings from the Narromine–Peak Hill and Yeoval–Cumnock areas. By the end of September more than 80 reports had been received from landholders in the Central West LHPA area, and 50 from Lachlan LHPA area.

In Lachlan LHPA area, early instar nymphs were reported from several of locations in the Condobolin–Tottenham after mid-September. Densities were mostly Numerous–Sub-band. A number of Band density hatchings were reported from the Naradhan area, south of Condobolin, in late September and there were several hatching reports from the Forbes–Grenfell and Bogan Gate areas and near Grenfell, Gooloogong and Eugowra in the east.

APLC survey in late September identified Present–Numerous density early instar nymphs in many locations in the Tullamore–Condobolin–Lake Cargelligo area of Lachlan LHPA.

There was a hatching report from near Mullaley in Central North LHPA area and one Band density hatching near Muswellbrook in the Mid-Coast LHPA area in late September.

There were moderate falls of rain (20–40 mm) during each of the first two weeks of September. Pastures remain green throughout the region.

Forecast

Some Bands developed in the Nyngan area after mid-September, but the majority of reports recorded first and second instar nymphs at Sub-band density.

Further development of Bands is likely in the Nyngan–Hermidale area during early October and fledging will follow from late October.

The number of reports from the eastern areas of Central West LHPA is likely to increase in early October and Bands are expected to develop in many locations. The intensity of hatchings and Band development is likely to reflect the occurrence of swarm activity during autumn. This would indicate the western parts of the Central West LHPA, including the Nyngan–Hermidale–Tottenham area, are likely to have a high intensity of hatchings, but localised

Bands are also expected to develop in the Coonamble–Armatree, Warren–Gilgandra, Dubbo–Wellington, Peak Hill and Yeoval–Cumnock areas.

Localised swarm formation is likely to occur after fledging of the majority of nymphs on mid-November.

In Lachlan LHPA, widespread Band development is likely to continue in early October in the western areas of Condobolin–Lake Cargelligo, Ungarie–West Wyalong and Tullamore–Tottenham. Hatchings should continue in eastern areas during October, occurring progressively later further east. The majority of nymphs are expected to emerge in mid-October in the Forbes, Parkes and Cowra districts. Swarm formation is likely in the western Lachlan LHPA after fledging from early November, and in eastern areas in late November.

Further sporadic hatchings are likely in the Mendooran–Gilgandra, Mullaley, Tambar Springs and Dunedoo–Mudgee areas of Central North LHPA during October.

Egg hatching is likely to be extended over several weeks as a result of the high proportion of non-diapause eggs laid in late autumn and local variations in soils type, aspect and vegetation density, but most of nymphs should have emerged in the western parts of Central West and Lachlan LHPA by mid-October and by late October in eastern areas. Bands are likely to persist into November in many locations and fledging will extend from late October to late November.

Continued rainfall in most parts of the region during September has maintained soil moisture levels, so that egg quiescence as a result of dry soils is unlikely to cause delayed hatchings. Dense vegetation and moist conditions could result in cooler local soil temperatures and later hatchings in some locations.

Risk(s)

There is a high probability of a significant nymphal generation with widespread Band development in Central West and Lachlan LHPA areas during October.

There is a risk of localised damage to cereal and other crops in this region during October and November. There is a high probability of some swarm formation during November, following the fledging of nymphs.

Riverina

Locusts and conditions

First hatching reports came from the Narrandera and Balranald areas in the second half of September. Hatchings and Band development will continue during October and a widespread infestation is expected during Oct/Nov.

Surveys of the southern Riverina in late September identified Present density first instar nymphs in a number of locations in the Moulamein–Deniliquin area and near Lockhart–Boree Creek.

Several LHPA reports were received from the Balranald–Kyalite area, near Leeton, Colleambally and near Rankins Springs during the second half of September. Small Band density hatchings were reported in some locations.

Most of the Riverina received moderate rainfall (20–40 mm) during the first week of September. Pasture vegetation remains green in most areas, but ephemeral grasses will dry off in October.

Forecast

A widespread major infestation of nymphs, forming many Bands is expected during October and November. Areas of expected intense hatching and Band development include Hillston–Griffith, Hay–Colleambally, Narrandera–Rankins Springs and Balranald–Moulamein. Many of the hatching reports in September were low density, representing an early emerged proportion of the population, and hatchings are expected to increase during the first half of October.

Many Bands are likely to develop in the Narrandera and Wagga districts as the cumulative result of continuous egg laying during March–May. The bulk of hatchings are likely to occur in mid-October in the Narrandera–Griffith area and early October in the Rankins Springs area. Eggs sampled during winter from sites laid during March–May in the Narrandera and Wagga districts showed that the majority of eggs laid after mid-April did not enter diapause. Samples showed a relatively high (15–70%) proportion of pods was affected by the parasitic wasp *Scelio fulgidis* and that *Scelio* was still active in May. But given the high number of egg beds in the region, it is unclear if parasitism will have a significant effect on the number of Bands forming in spring.

In the Hay–Hillston area hatchings will have commenced in late September, but the bulk of nymphs should emerge in early October. In the Balranald–Moulamein area, the hatching reports in September were mostly from sandy sites or north facing contour banks, but the bulk of hatching is likely to occur in early October.

In the Jerilderie–Deniliquin area the majority of the spring population is expected to emerge in mid-October. Based on autumn reports many Bands are expected in the Colleambally–Jerilderie and Deniliquin–Mathoura areas, and more localised Band development is likely in the Berrigan–Finley, Lockhart–Urana and Rand–Tocumwal areas.

The bulk of hatchings in Hume LHPA are expected from mid-October. Based on swarm reports in autumn, localised Band development is likely in the Junee, Bethunga, Stockinbingal, Wallendbeen, Temora, Wagga and The Rock areas.

Hatching is likely to be protracted as a result of the high proportion of non-diapause eggs laid in late autumn and local variations in soil type, aspect and vegetation density, but the majority of nymphs should have emerged in the Hay, Narrandera, Murray and Riverina districts LHPA by late-October and by early November in the Hume LHPA. Bands are likely to persist into November in many locations and fledging will extend throughout November.

Fledging of nymphs will commence from early November in the northern and western districts, through to late November in the eastern and southern parts of the regions. Swarm formation is likely to follow in the weeks after fledging. A significant swarm population could develop in December and persist during January. Migration of swarms could extend the areas affected by infestations, particularly to the south and east. Long distance night migration could also occur from late November.

The probability of immigration of adults from the Central West and Far Southwest regions will increase in late November.

Risk(s)

There is a high probability that a serious pest infestation of nymphs forming many Bands will develop during October and November.

There is a high probability of some swarm formation during December by locusts remaining after fledging in November.

There is a risk of localised damage to cereal and other crops in the region during October and November.

Northwest Slopes and Plains

Locusts and conditions

High density hatchings occurred during the second week of September and by mid-September many nymph Bands had developed in the Carinda area, west of Walgett.

The majority of Bands in this region are in the area west of Carinda and Boorooma, adjacent to Darling LHPA, where the infestation extends to Brewarrina and Bourke.

NSW LHPA and Industry and Investment (I & I NSW) commenced aerial control of Bands in the Carinda area on 28 September.

There was one report of low density hatching near Gravesend in the Northern Slopes district in late September.

Most of the region received moderate (20–40 mm) rainfall in each of the first two weeks of September.

Forecast

Swarm activity was recorded in mid-April in the area west of Carinda as swarms moved from the Brewarrina area, but reports did not suggest swarms or egg laying in the Walgett district. However the intensity of Band development in that area in late September indicates the level of swarm egg laying at that time. Other districts in the region remain relatively free of nymph infestation, but an increase in adult population to medium densities is likely during October.

Fledging of nymphs in the area west of Carinda area will occur after mid-October and some swarms could form after that time. The probability of local immigration of swarms from the adjacent Brewarrina area will increase from late October. Local and immigrant swarms could extend the area of infestation eastwards. Some immigration from the infested areas of the Central West LHPA could also increase adult population density in this region during November.

Risk(s)

There is a moderate probability of swarm movement extending the area of infestation in the Walgett district in late October and November.

There is a risk of some localised crop damage in the western part of the Walgett district during October.

Far West

Locusts and conditions

High density hatchings occurred in the southern Bourke and Brewarrina districts of Darling LHPA during the first two weeks of September and by late September many mid-instar Bands were identified by aerial surveillance. A very large number of mid-instar Bands, representing a serious nymphal infestation, was identified in the Brewarrina–Bourke–Louth–Tilpa area in late September.

LHPAs received more than 50 hatching reports in Darling LHPA and 40 in the Western LHPA area by the end of September.

Aerial surveillance by APLC and Industry and Investment NSW (I & I) in late September identified hundreds of Bands

in the area south of Brewarrina and between Brewarrina and Bourke. Aerial control of Bands by LHPA and I & I south of Brewarrina commenced on 30 September. Further large numbers of Bands were identified between Bourke and Tilpa on 30 September.

Nymphs in Bands in the Brewarrina area ranged from first to fourth instar, with a majority in mid-instar stages in late September.

Surveys in the Darling LHPA area in mid-September identified low density early instar nymphs at a number of locations in the Bourke–Louth–Cobar area, and some small areas of Sub-band and Band density nymphs in cleared areas north of Cobar. Several early instar Bands were identified in the Bourke–Brewarrina–Gongolgon area.

Survey during 22–24 September in the northern parts of Western LHPA area identified several small areas of Sub-band density early instar nymphs along the Paroo River near Wanaaring and northeast of Broken Hill at Langawirra. No nymphs were detected in the rest of the Wanaaring, Tibooburra or White Cliffs districts and there were only occasional isolated density adults in most areas.

APLC aerial survey during 21–24 September in the northern part of Western LHPA, covering the Tibooburra, Wanaaring and White Cliffs districts, did not detect any large nymphal Bands.

At the end of September a number of Bands had developed at the known egg bed sites at Langawirra. There was moderate rainfall (20–40 mm) throughout the region during the first week of September, and some patchy light falls during 8–15 September.

Forecast

The level of autumn egg laying in the Bourke–Brewarrina area was under-estimated. Access limitations due to flooding during autumn resulted in few reports and limited surveys. Fledging of nymphs in these areas is expected from mid-October and swarms are likely to form in late October.

Even with cooler than average temperatures and frequent rainfall in winter, nymph stages should be similar in the Tibooburra–White Cliffs area to those in the Bourke area. Air surveillance suggests no large Band infestation in the Tibooburra area, but ground vegetation remains very dense in areas west of the Darling River, making aerial detection difficult. Detection of Bands as far west as Tilpa at the end of September could indicate more extensive Bands in the western areas.

Many nymphal Bands are likely to have developed in the Broken Hill–Wilcannia area and reports are likely to increase during October.

Swarm formation is expected in the Bourke and Brewarrina districts in late October and November. Breeding and egg laying is possible in the second half of November and December in that region. Long distance migration of adults from the Bourke and Brewarrina districts is likely to commence in November. Rainfall in November or December will influence the possible location and timing of any major breeding event.

Risk(s)

There is a moderate probability that a significant Band infestation of nymphs will develop in the Broken Hill, White Cliffs and Wilcannia districts during October.

Swarms will form in the Brewarrina–Bourke–Louth area in late October and November and there is a moderate

probability of long distance migration to adjacent regions in NSW and Queensland.

Far South West

Locusts and conditions

Hatching reports commenced in mid-September, where a number of early reports came from the Euston–Wentworth area. Reports numbers increased in the second half September, with hatchings in the Broken Hill–Menindee and Pooncarie–Wentworth areas. A widespread pest infestation of nymphs is expected to develop during October.

Surveys in late September identified consistent areas of Present–Numerous density early instar nymphs in the Mossgiel–Clare, Willandra Lakes and Pooncarie–Wentworth areas. Several small areas of Band and Sub-band density first instar nymphs were detected north of Euston.

Most reports investigated by LHPA were early instar nymphs at Numerous and Sub-band density. Most of this region received light–moderate rainfall (<20–40 mm) during the first two weeks of September.

Forecast

Bands are expected to develop in localised areas of the Lake Victoria–Coombah, Wentworth–Pooncarie, Broken Hill–Menindee, Ivanhoe–Hillston, Clare–Balranald and Willandra Lakes–Euston areas during October.

Hatching will continue during early October and Band development is expected to increase to a peak in mid-October. Fledging will follow from early November and some swarm formation is possible from mid-November.

At this stage there have been few reports from the Ivanhoe–Hillston area and surveys detected only low density nymphs, but Bands are likely to develop in this area and the Booligal–Mossgiel area as hatchings continue and nymphs approach mid-instar stage in October. Some localised Band development is also possible in the Clare–Balranald area.

Migration from swarm populations is possible from mid-November, which could contribute to summer breeding populations in adjacent regions. Rainfall during November and December could initiate breeding and egg laying within this region and a possible second generation during summer.

Risk(s)

There is a high probability of a pest infestation of nymphs occurring in October, with Bands developing in many locations.

There is a risk of localised damage to cereal and other crops in the southern part of the region during October and November.

There is a moderate probability of swarm formation in several parts of this region during November.

**All locust activity should be reported to your
Livestock Health and Pest Authority or Primary
Industries, Industry & Investment NSW.
A toll-free call to the APLC can be made on 1800
635 962. An answering machine is attached for
after-hours calls.**

Beekeeping in the Pilliga looks very relaxing!



Carl Cooper, Bill Weiss & Casey Cooper

Photo: Geoff Manning



Bill Weiss & Michael Hornitzky

Photo: Doug Somerville

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CROP REPORT

NORTHERN NSW

At the time of writing this report the warm weather has hit us in the north and hopefully we will now see the end of frosts and cool weather.

Honey production has been average for most beekeepers. Canola has produced a box or two of honey, however with cool and wet conditions bees have swarmed extremely well, leaving behind a lot of queenless hives.

Bees in the channel country have picked up on the tail end of the Yapunya and bumble box, with rain bringing wild flowers and good breeding conditions for the moment.

Bees went into the almond orchards for pollination in good condition and came out in good condition despite very ordinary weather.

It is certainly great to see paddocks of green feed, rivers flowing and dams filling. I believe most of New South Wales and Queensland has had excellent rainfall and let's hope it can jolt the seasons back into line.

There are no immediate honey flows on our horizon.

There are patches of clover slowly coming on the tablelands all are hoping for no late frosts. Patchy budding of grey iron bark on the North coast is producing some honey. No doubt all eyes are on silver leaf iron bark, coolibah, and brush box for growth and bud, but nothing yet.

The Pilliga scrub has had exceptional rain and everyone is hoping for the bloodwood to bud but it has been very disappointing for several years.

Craig Klingner

SOUTHERN NSW

Spring honey production has been reasonable in the southern areas of NSW.

Most bees came off almonds strong, surprisingly from the wet and cold conditions they had during the pollination period. Some bees went from almonds on to seed canola with pollination prices reaching \$65.00.

With a wet winter in the Riverina, canola crops came out early the cold weather held honey production back but it didn't control the strong bees from swarming.

Grey Ironbark on the South Coast is producing good honey and bees are doing well.

Paterson Curse looks good and yielding honey but plague locust spraying could be a concern.

Laurie Kershaw

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POLLINATION SERVICES IN AUSTRALIA

RIRDC NEWS

A new report, *Pollination Aware: The Real Value of Pollination in Australia*, (August 2010), quantifies our pollination services for the first time. It calculates and maps where and when bees are needed.

About 28% of honeybee businesses provide pollination services. Of these, three quarters (about 20% of all registered beekeepers) were paid for providing pollination services in 2006-07.

Pollination services to Australian horticulture and agriculture were valued at \$1.7 billion per annum in 1999-2000 for the 35 most important honeybee dependent crops.

Australia has almost 10,000 registered beekeepers, operating around 500,000 hives. About one third of these are in New South Wales or Queensland.

For a copy of the Pollination Report visit the Pollination page of the RIRDC website at www.rirc.gov.au

The Pollination Program is a jointly funded partnership with the Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation (RIRDC), Horticulture Australia Limited (HAL) and the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry. The Pollination Program is managed by RIRDC and aims to secure the pollination of Australia's horticultural and agricultural crops into the future on a sustainable and profitable basis. Research and development in this program is conducted to raise awareness that will help protect pollination in Australia.

RIRDC funds for the program are provided by the Honeybee Research and Development Program, with industry levies matched by funds provided by the Australian Government. Funding from HAL for the program is from the apple and pear, almond, avocado, cherry, vegetable and summerfruit levies and voluntary contributions from the dried prune and melon industries, with matched funds from the Australian Government.

Significant threats

As demand for pollination services increases, the beekeeping industry faces more threats from the entry of exotic pests and diseases such as the highly destructive Varroa mite – which weakens bees and makes them susceptible to infections. Scientists believe a Varroa mite incursion is inevitable, as it has already reached three of our nearest neighbours, Papua New Guinea, Indonesia and New Zealand.

The destruction of European honeybee populations (both managed and wild colonies) would decimate producers who rely on wild honeybee colonies and would reduce to insignificance incidental pollination by honeybees within 5-10 years. The cost of paid pollination services would also increase dramatically and there would be a significant impact on urban food production through backyard fruit trees and vegetable gardens.

What's being done?

The apiary and related industries have joined forces to reduce the likelihood and consequences of exotic pests and diseases. Since 2007, Pollination Australia has been

working to promote pollination research and development - and ultimately protect the honeybee from extinction.

The group is seeking to address the supply and availability of bees for pollination services and to optimise the effectiveness of paid pollination services, to generate high yield and high quality crops. They are also striving to improve the recognition and value of paid pollination services.

Existing capability: supply vs demand

- There are around 500,000 commercial beehives in Australia.
- Of these, some 102,000 hives are used for paid pollination and between 80,000 and 100,000 hives provide pollination services for honey production.
- Demand is forecast to increase to 222,000 hives by 2010, with increased demand from the almond industry. However, current capability falls well short to meet predicted demand if an outbreak of a serious pest or disease occurs.
- If pollination by wild European honeybees was eliminated by Varroa mite, almost 480,000 colonies of honeybees would be needed to provide pollination services every September.
- Peak demand could lift this to 750,000 – far exceeding current apiary capability.

The future

- Cost-effective use of commercial honeybee pollination services will become increasingly important.
- Many crops may not reach their full potential because they rely on wild European honeybees for pollination.
- A shift towards paid pollination will increase yields, quality and profits - although competition for paid services is of serious concern.
- The outlook is bleak for both wild and commercial honeybees if Varroa mite reaches Australia.
- Action is needed to mitigate the consequences on the apiary industry and preserve our agricultural production.

A NATIONAL COOPERATIVE RESEARCH CENTRE FOR HONEYBEES AND POLLINATION SECURITY?

As many of you will know, a bid for a Cooperative Research Centre, focused on Honeybees and Pollination Security is under discussion nationally. RIRDC has commissioned Pestat Pty Ltd to assess interest in a CRC as a vehicle for national R&D and education. While the bid team members have contacted many stakeholders, it has not reached all interested parties and is anxious to get the maximum possible input.

A scoping paper and newsletter can be found on Pestat's website, along with a brief questionnaire in which we seek views on research priorities. The web site is: <http://www.pestat.com.au>

We are interested in all views and the bid team leader, Chris Buller, can be contacted directly at: chris.buller@pestat.com.au.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Rome - 28 September 2010

Dear Members and beekeeping friends

We are happy to announce the launching of the TECA Exchange Group on Beekeeping, a new joint initiative between the International Federation of Beekeepers' Associations (APIMONDIA) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) to share knowledge and facilitate networking on beekeeping.

WHY A TECA EXCHANGE GROUP ON BEEKEEPING?

Beekeeping is widely practiced in the world as an income-generating activity and for the benefits that bees and their products offer to mankind: pollination, biodiversity, food, medicines, etc.

Research institutions, farmers, projects and other bodies generate technologies to improve beekeeping practices, processing of beekeeping products and its marketing, but this information often remains scattered and does not reach the wide public that could benefit from these improved technologies and best practices.

In order to address this problem and increase the benefits of research and years of improving practices, FAO in collaboration with APIMONDIA has decided to set up a Beekeeping Exchange Group on the TECA Platform, where information and knowledge can be shared, and beekeepers and stakeholders from all over the world can meet to discuss topics related to beekeeping.

WHAT IS TECA?

TECA stands for Technologies for Agriculture and can be accessed via www.fao.org/teca. It is an online database of technologies that have been tested by farmers in rural areas. It responds to the specific information needs of small producers and those providing advisory services to them.

TECA also provides web-based communication tools (also linked to YouTube and other comparable media) to better document, share technologies and customize its use to each user's characteristics. It is interactive, and has a great potential to improve linkages among extension staff, researchers, farmer organizations and other stakeholders involved in agricultural innovation.

TECA also gives visibility to small producers for their achievements and technological developments and at the same time allows them to tap this resource to their own benefit and gain further information and knowledge.

TECA EXCHANGE GROUP ON BEEKEEPING

The aim of the TECA Exchange Group on Beekeeping is to provide a forum to share and discuss beekeeping technologies and best practices, focusing particularly on smallholders. The Group also offers the opportunity to explore areas of common interest that could potentially serve as the basis for the establishment of partnerships.

We invite you to visit the TECA website and join this initiative for enhancing the sharing of knowledge and technology on beekeeping for smallholders. Check out the information on beekeeping already available in the database and/or share your knowledge by uploading training manuals, technologies that have been tested and validated in the field or videos and pictures demonstrating techniques. In order to ensure the quality of the information available on TECA, technologies submitted for uploading

will be validated by APIMONDIA's Standing Scientific Commissions before making them available to the Exchange Group.

A brief Exchange Group User Guide and a Guide on how to use TECA can be downloaded from the TECA Website by clicking here www.fao.org/teca/node/4730. Guides can also be requested by email from the Beekeeping Exchange Group facilitators TECA-beekeeping@fao.org.

Yours sincerely,
Riccardo Jannoni-Sebastianini
Apimondia Secretary-General

16 September 2010

Dear Beekeeper

RIRDC has engaged me to write a manual titled "Planting for Pollen and Nectar Supply" that is to assist bee-friendly planting decisions across the landscape.

I am seeking beekeepers involvement in the project by way of a survey of appropriate plants.

The project will provide design and description of artificial plantings as a resource for use by honey bees and other nectivorous and pollenivorous species in various Australian settings. The project will consider:

- Five physical settings, namely, domestic gardens, streetscapes, urban open spaces, on-farm plantings and "bee-farm" plantings
- Each physical setting will be considered in relation to four climatic settings, warm humid, hot arid, temperate and cold climate regions.
- Four species each of useful trees, shrubs and herbaceous plants will be described for each combination of physical x climatic setting.
- It is anticipated that in total some 150 plant species will be described in a standard format that will include text and pictorial details such as physical characteristics and requirements, flowering times and durations, productivity with respect to pollen and nectar and other useful attributes.

The project output will be in the form of a high quality spiral bound volume of 150-200 pages. The book will have broad appeal to beekeepers, gardeners, landscape designers, urban planners, local government, farm and land managers.

There has been a recent global increase in interest and practice of urban beekeeping. Much of the focus of the book is urban areas, this opens the plant list up to pollen and nectar producing non-natives.

Farm planting, revegetation, carbon planting and other natural resource management with a bee-focus will likely advocate planting native species.

The "bee-farm" concept, perhaps a revisit of pre-migratory beekeeping will likely have a full complement of native and non-native plants to provide a continual flowering, foraging, pollen and nectar variety and drought tolerance. Any comments on this concept will be greatly appreciated and any known examples will be visited where possible.

Thank you for your help.
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Thinking beyond the package



NEWS FROM THE AUSTRALIAN QUEEN BEE BREEDING GROUP (AQBBG)

There are a few overwintered breeder queens, AI'd April/May 2010, available for sale at our normal price of \$500 with a 5% discount for members. Please contact me and I can let you know what lines are available.

We will be preparing some more AI queens this spring so if you want to order a particular line, please let me know. These will be at the usual price of \$500 with the 5% discount for members. I have been slack and not posted the latest evaluation data on the AHBIC website but hope to rectify that soon.

We had an AGM in Queensland this past July. Apologies to those who could not make it. We had the AGM in New South Wales in 2009, Queensland in 2010 so maybe we need to have 2011 in Victoria. Thoughts anyone?

Professor Ben Oldroyd has a project to send queen bees to the USA in late autumn in 2011. These will be put into an apiary and tested for their "resistance" to varroa mites. There are some being supplied by the AQBBG, Better Bees in Western Australia, John Covey and Joe Horner.

This, of course, is dependent on what happens in the USA. There are stories, from reliable sources, coming out of the USA that they are going to put a ban on live bees from Australia. The reasons are very flimsy. The Executive for 2010/11 is:

President	Bruce White
Secretary	Trevor Weatherhead
Committee	Laurie Dewar
	Elwyne Papworth

Professor Ben Oldroyd and Peter Oxley are still advisors.

Trevor Weatherhead
SECRETARY
25 September 2010



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4 pork chops
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Salt
Freshly ground black pepper
2 teaspoons olive oil
1/2 cup white wine
1/4 cup chicken broth
2 Tablespoons mustard
1 tablespoon honey
1/4 cup heavy cream



Season pork chops on both sides with garlic powder, salt, and pepper.

Heat a heavy, deep skillet over medium high heat. Add olive oil and swirl to coat the bottom of the pan. Sear pork chops on both sides until browned, turning only once. Remove to a platter.

Carefully add white wine to the pan drippings and stir, scraping up any browned bits, for 2 minutes until reduced by half. Add chicken broth, mustard and honey. Whisk to combine and continue cooking over medium heat for 2 minutes. Whisk in cream and cook until thickened, about another 2 minutes.

Return pork chops to the skillet, along with any drippings. Turn to coat both sides and reheat about 1 minute. Serve chops with the honey mustard pan sauce.

MINI BLUEBERRY & HONEY CHEESECAKES

2 cups sweet biscuits crumbs
100g butter, melted
375 g Philadelphia Block Cream Cheese
1/2 cup caster sugar
3 eggs
1/2 cup sour cream
1/4 cup honey
150g blueberries, fresh or frozen

Icing sugar, for dusting
Extra blueberries, to serve

Combine biscuit crumbs and butter. Press into the base of 12 x 1/3 cup capacity greased and base lined muffin pans. Chill.

Beat the cream cheese and sugar using an electric mixer until smooth. Add the eggs, sour cream and honey and beat until well combined.

Pour the mixture into prepared pans and sprinkle over blueberries. Bake in a moderately slow oven 160°C for 35 minutes. Allow to cool in pans before removing. Place onto serving plates, dust with icing sugar and serve with extra berries. Serve immediately. *Makes 12*



AUSTRALIAN HONEY BEE INDUSTRY COUNCIL

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Email: ahbic@honeybee.org.au Website: www.honeybee.org.au
Executive Director: Mr Stephen Ware

Excerpts from August & September Newsletters

UPDATE - AHBIC ACTIVITIES

The following provides a brief outline of activities undertaken in the past month by your Association.

- i. The Chairman and Executive Director attended discussions with Animal Health Australia on 7 September 2010. This meeting re-affirmed industries commitment to biosecurity and border protection. It also provided an opportunity for AHBIC to seek wider support for the Apiary Industry.
- ii. Industry continues to be concerned of the outcomes of the *Apis cerana* incursion. The first AHB nest was detected in the mast of a fishing boat in Portsmith, Cairns in May 2007. Since that time, 204 swarms or nests have been found and destroyed with the latest being confirmed on 8 September 2010. 9 detections occurred this week being 6 nests and 3 swarms. All detections were within the restricted area. 11 foraging *Apis cerana* were recorded. AHBIC has been negotiating with the State and Federal Government ways in which this any future incursions can be funded.
- iii. PAs - As we are coming around to spring production it is timely to remind honey producers and packers to ensure they do not sell Salvation Jane honey as a single floral honey. Industry has established a code of practice, which recommends that honeys for retail sale should not be blended with more than 19% Salvation Jane to minimise the content of plant alkaloids. Beekeepers who see Salvation Jane honey for retail sale should contact AHBIC or request the seller contacts AHBIC.
- iv. Industry has responded to the proposed redevelopment of Eastern Creek. A submission has been sent to AQIS and informal discussions held with DAFF to ensure the continuation of a quarantine facility for queen bee imports.
- v. On the subject of bee imports further representations have been made to the Federal Government in respect of lifting the ban on bee imports. It is to be hoped that this long drawn out saga can be finalised.
- vi. Priority areas have been listed for AQIS in respect of negotiating export arrangements in order to facilitate trade. This is in addition to efforts being made to open the New Zealand and Korean markets.
- vii. The next AHBIC Executive Meeting will be held on Wednesday 27 October 2010 in Canberra. Trade, biosecurity, residues and access to public lands will all be considered.
- viii. Pollination Australia Workshop - Pollination industry leaders, researchers and international experts gathered in Canberra to identify the short and long-term research and development projects and opportunities that could tackle the potential industry threat.

- ix. Quarantine and biosecurity measures remain obvious and vital as the first line of defence in keeping Varroa out of Australia. The pest has already wreaked havoc on our closest neighbours after becoming established in New Zealand and Papua New Guinea.
- x. Review of Varroa Destructor response. – AHBIC representatives are attending a series of workshops organised by DAFF to prepare industry and our response to Varroa should it arrive in Australia. This planning exercise is extremely important and will assist in raising awareness as well as making preparations for responding to any potential incursion.
- xi. Congratulations to Trevor Weatherhead for reaching the semi-finals of the Australia's Biosecurity Farmer of the Year Award.

NEW REPORT INTO THE MARKETING OF AUSTRALIAN HONEY

14 September 2010

With less of us eating breakfast in our kitchens but instead eating it on the go in our cars or on the way to work, what are the implications for traditional breakfast foods like honey?

This is one of the issues addressed in a new report released today by the Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation (RIRDC) which analyses Australia's honey industry from the perspective of identifying potential improvements to its marketing.

RIRDC Senior Research Manager, Dr Dave Alden, said the report is designed to help Australia's honey industry understand some of the dynamics driving supply chain pressures in the industry. "This report identifies 26 separate issues and pressures affecting the honey industry, and looks at the implications that they have on honey marketing," Dr Alden said.

"For example, the study finds that honey, a traditional breakfast spread, is now competing with 'mobile breakfast products' which are targeted at people who enjoy breakfast on the go. Additionally, honey competes with breakfast spreads which enjoy stronger marketing support.

"This growing competition raises new challenges for the honey industry, with the report predicting its growth is more likely to come from other honey uses, such as its role as a sweetener in other foods and beverages."

Dr Alden said the report also looks at how honey could potentially capitalise on honey's health benefits, such as its low Glycaemic Index (GI). "The lower a food's GI rating; the slower people absorb and digest it, which means a more gradual and healthier infusion of sugars into their bloodstream. GI is also acknowledged as a natural dietary aid which helps keep 'hunger pains' away for longer," he said.

With 7,800 tonnes of Australian honey being exported in 2009, the report also examines the factors influencing

the global honey market, and potential new export opportunities for Australian producers.

“The study identifies a number of market opportunities the Australian honey industry could potentially capitalise upon,” Dr Alden said.

“At the top of the list is Europe, particularly Ireland and the UK, where there is known demand for honey harvested from native Australian flora.”

A study of existing and prospective markets and marketing activities for Australian honey is available on the RIRDC website: www.rirdc.gov.au

PREPARE, PLAN AND EVALUATE: THE KEY TO VARROA MANAGEMENT

3 September 2010

Prepare, plan and experiment while we have the chance were the messages from a workshop held recently to review both chemical and non-chemical options for the management of Varroa mite, the deadly pest of the honeybee.

Pollination industry leaders, researchers and international experts gathered in Canberra to identify the short and long-term research and development projects and opportunities that could tackle the potential industry threat.

The workshop heard Australia is in a unique position being currently free of Varroa mite, but with a high likelihood that it eventually reaches our shores, we must plan and prepare.

Gerald Martin, Chairman of the Pollination R&D Advisory Committee attended the workshop, which he said looked at a number of options for how industry might prepare for any incursion of Varroa. “It was clear that we are looking at a combination of options to be in place as we plan and prepare for the pest reaching our shores.

“These options include experimenting with breeding for Varroa resistance, further evaluation of both chemical and not chemical options, having an Integrated Pest Management strategy as well as educating beekeepers to be vigilant in detecting and managing Varroa,” Mr Martin said.

Denis Anderson from the CSIRO outlined a number of R & D activities that could be considered in preparation for the management of Varroa, including additional strategies aimed at preventing the mites entering Australia, improved hive management methods, the development of a pathogen to kill Varroa mites, breeding bees for resistance to Varroa and turning off whatever signal from bees triggers Varroa to reproduce.

Quarantine and biosecurity measures remain obvious and vital as the first line of defence in keeping Varroa out of Australia. The pest has already wreaked havoc on our closest neighbours after becoming established in New Zealand and Papua New Guinea.

At the workshop, one international experience of the management of Varroa was provided by Dr Mark Goodwin, Plant and Food Research NZ, who said that in the absence of any chemical controls a beekeeper in NZ could expect to lose 95% of their hives within a year if Varroa took hold in an apiary.

Dr Goodwin said chemical options for control of the pest needed to be constantly reviewed as Varroa developed a degree of resistance to each one. However organic control options, he said, were limited and ‘highly variable’ in their effectiveness and mainly relied on physical intervention, which proved very costly. In NZ, the industry had made a move towards using specialist synthetic chemicals on rotation, which he said could be considered in Australia.

Mr Martin said any possible Varroa mite incursion would be an economic issue for Australia’s honey and pollination industries and would severely impact on our \$30 billion horticulture and agriculture sector.

“We will need more managed bees for pollination services. This is outlined in *Pollination Aware*, a report recently released that quantifies the likely demand for paid pollination services should anything untoward happen to Australia’s European honeybee populations, such as the arrival of Varroa.

“Beekeepers are really the key. The value of paid pollination services cannot be underestimated and if we can improve beekeeper profitability this will go a long way to ensuring they have the resources to effectively control Varroa.

“Growers and beekeepers need to work together now to understand and plan the future pollination requirements of growers so all are prepared should Varroa arrive in Australia,” Mr Martin said.

SALVATION JANE

As we are coming around to spring production it is timely to remind honey producers and packers to ensure they do not sell Salvation Jane honey as a single floral honey. Industry has established a code of practice, which recommends that honeys for retail sale should not be blended with more than 19% Salvation Jane to minimise the content of plant alkaloids. Beekeepers who see Salvation Jane honey for retail sale should contact AHBIC or request the seller contacts AHBIC.

AHBIC FUNDING

Attached is a letter to all beekeepers regarding funding. Please pass this letter on to all your members.

Please note also that to receive a monthly AHBIC Newsletter via email just send your email address to the AHBIC office: ahbic@honeybee.org.au

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24 August 2010

Dear Beekeeper

AHBIC is proud to be industry's peak representative organisation, a role it has played since it was formed in 1998 with many major initiatives achieved. Following the 2010 AHBIC Annual General Meeting it was recognised that AHBIC needs to increase its support and funding base to include all beekeepers and this is the purpose of this letter.

As we progress in the new millennium it is obvious that the beekeeping industry faces enormous challenges including:

- Potential disease and pest incursions (*Varroa*, *Apis cerana* etc.);
- The continuation of an effective quarantine station;
- Resource security;
- Market access for Australian bee products;
- Increased profitability for beekeepers generally;
- National Park access and many more issues.

To undertake the above activities industry needs resources to operate. The last year has seen enormous change both for the Association and for the Australian economy as a whole. As the rate of change increases it will be more important than ever to keep AHBIC's viability growing to ensure that it can represent you at the highest level. Otherwise we will simply have to respond to change as it is imposed on us, instead of our interests as a crucial industry to pollination being taken into consideration.

Industry, in the last 12 months and into the future, continues to deal with a myriad of issues including:

- The *Apis cerana* incursion in Queensland – if spread this bee will reduce honey production and increase pollination costs.
- Trade issues continue to be an ongoing area of concern and are being vigorously pursued.
- Contamination issues continue to be a major concern to our industry (PDBs, GMO's and PAs that are ever present threat).

I can assure you for a small organisation AHBIC is performing well above its weight on a large number of sensitive issues. These above issues have the potential to impact on every beekeeper and AHBIC is seeking to raise \$500,000 to protect your industry. For your own beekeeping interest I would ask you to get behind your national association and fight together for this industry we all hold dear and consider sending a voluntary levy to your national body.



Lindsay Bourke, Chairman
Australian Honey Bee Industry Council

✂

AUSTRALIAN HONEY BEE INDUSTRY COUNCIL

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A New Queen at Superbee

To All Industry Members,

My wife and I are expecting our first child to be born in late December, and as such we will be moving back to south-east Queensland in early October so we can be closer to our families. While we are very excited about this next phase of our lives, I am also saddened that after 7 thrilling years this means I am now moving on from Superbee as well.

I would like to say thank you to my Directors, Ross and Cheryl Christiansen, with and for whom it has been my sincere privilege and pleasure to work for the past 5 years.. During this time we have seen Superbee grow by over 400%, relocate to a fantastic new facility in Forbes, created new international markets for Australian honey, and become firmly established as a leading Australian manufacturer of high quality honey products!

Thank you to everyone in the industry who has provided supply and support during my time at Superbee. We could not have sustained our growth without you and I trust that you will continue your support of Superbee into the future.

Finally, I would like to congratulate Karla Hudson on her appointment to General Manager and Russell Pout for his promotion to Operations Manager. I am extremely confident that Karla and Russell will do a great job of leading the company into the future and continue to increase Superbees' sales and demand for 100% pure Australian honey.

Thank you to all of you for the great memories, and I wish you every success for the future.
Happy beekeeping!

Best Regards,

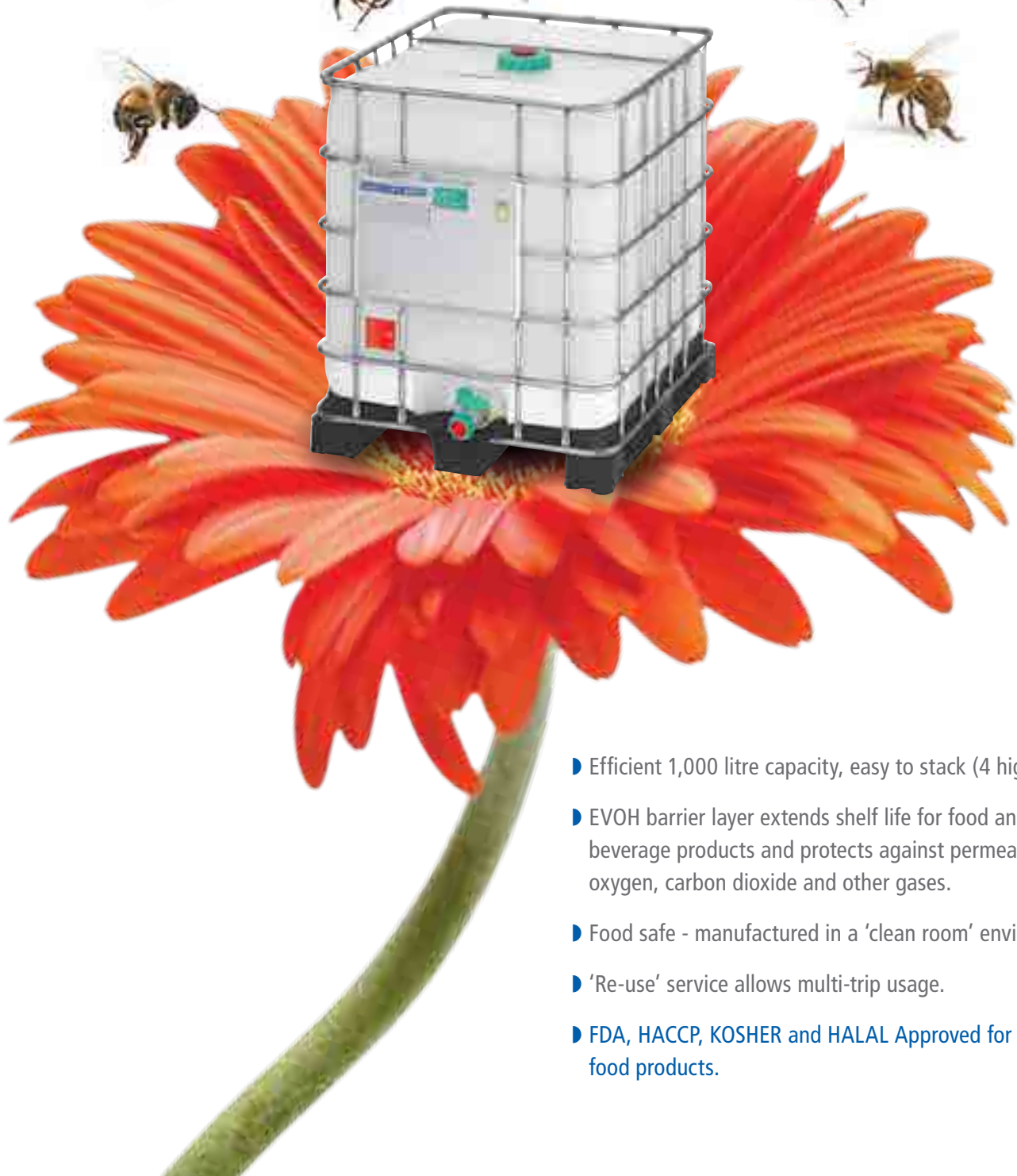
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