

# AUSTRALIA'S HONEYBEE NEWS

*"The Voice of the Beekeeper"*

**Volume 9 Number 2**  
March - April 2016

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COVER: A busy foraging bee.....

PHOTO : Gina Cranson

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## CROP POLLINATION ASSOCIATION (CPA)

**Secretary:** Mr Stephen Targett, PO Box 325 Narrandera NSW 2700 Ph: 0428 649 321 Email: wally.56@hotmail.com

## HONEY PACKERS & MARKETERS ASSOCIATION (HPMAA)

**Secretary:** Mr Ross Christiansen Email: ross@superbee.com.au



# PRESIDENT'S REPORT



As we enter the 2nd quarter of 2016 the season in most areas remains dry. Production has been mediocre in most regions although some areas have and are producing reasonable crops. Winter prospects remain reasonably good with Spotted Gum on the coast and Mugga Ironbark inland reasonably well budded. Hopefully honey prices will remain firm for the foreseeable future enabling members to remain confident about the future of our industry, despite the Forestry Corporation's concerted efforts to do otherwise.

## RESOURCE ISSUES

### NPWS

The ballot to return 100 apiary sites to the industry was conducted on 22 March under the scrutiny of two NPWS representatives, an Independent representative, NSWAA Sydney branch and the State Executive. Expressions of interest were shown for all the sites and all sites were successfully allocated to participating apiarists. All details of the successful beekeepers have been passed on to NPWS and contact will be made to the relevant apiarists from that office. Please note that on acceptance of acquiring your new sites you will be invoiced accordingly and the fee will be for a full year with expiry on 31 December 2016. It is encouraging that NPWS have released their Draft Beekeeping Policy for public comment. I hope other agencies can also produce policies acceptable to the apiary industry.

### Apiary Site Working Group

The second meeting of the working group was held on 10 March as a teleconference, with Greg Roberts, Doug Somerville and I attending the DPI offices in Orange, where we met with new chair of the group, Dougal Gordon, and Alex Russell, Manager Intensive Livestock Industries. The third meeting of the group was held on 7 April at the MLC Building in Sydney. Progression is slow, but happening, with face to face meetings scheduled each month. Industry is hopeful our goal of all of government approach will eventually be forthcoming.

### Minister

Industry representatives President Neil Bingley, Vice President Casey Cooper and Working Group representative Greg Roberts attended Parliament House Sydney on 8 March and met with Minister Blair addressing concerns over Forestry Corporation's intentions to maximize returns at the expense of our industry. We received a good hearing and hope Minister Blair can allay industry concerns around security of tenure of apiary sites on public lands when he opens this year's Conference on 13 May in Albury.

### Bee Biosecurity Officer (BBO)

NSW now has a BBO. Haley Pragert has taken up the position as of 4 April. The NSWAA welcomes Haley to the team at DPI and looks forward to a long and productive relationship with industry in her role as Bee Biosecurity Officer.

### Conference

This year's Conference is to be held in Albury on 12 & 13 May. It will be crucial for members to attend and voice concerns over the security and allocation of bee sites on public lands. As mentioned previously without secure renewable tenure of apiary sites on public lands, we as beekeepers have an uncertain future.

If you support this statement your attendance at this Conference is essential as I have outlined in the article in this edition "NSWAA and Forestry Corp Dealings", your executive have had numerous meetings but have made little progress in gaining an acceptable policy that will enable future investment in our essential industry.

In addition to our speaker line up our trade show is fully booked thanks to the exceptional organisational skills of Therese Kershaw.

### Honeyland

This year's show started slowly but as Easter approached sales increased to near record levels, and by the last few days we were almost depleted of stock. Thanks must go to Show Coordinator Bruce White for the exceptional job he has done in organizing stock and attending all 14 days at the show. Thanks to all volunteers that helped out at Honeyland, without your support the show could not go on. Special thanks to all our suppliers and sponsors of honey and related products for their generous support. Thanks also to Margaret and Bruce Blunden and Lynn White for their display work as the Honeyland Stand was awarded a silver ribbon, winning second place for a commercial stand in the Dome.

This year's show is over and now we need members to think about producing good quality honey to be purchased for next year's event.

### VALE

It is with sadness to learn of the loss of fellow member John Casey's son in a motorcycle accident. Our condolences to John and his family from the executive and members.

### Farewell

We say goodbye to Karla Hudson as she leaves Superbee. Thank you for your work for the Industry as well as assistance with Show stock donations and a wonderful job organising Honey Week 2015 in Orange. Best wishes to you and your family for the future.

### Neil Bingley

President

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# CONGRATULATIONS

Our best wishes to Brett & Melissa Bingley on the birth of their daughter, Alice Maree on 3 March 2016.

## NEW MEMBERS

A warm welcome to the following new members:

Peter Burns	Albury
Shenen Doyle	Woodburn
Guiseppe Lombardo	Glen Alpine
Neil McMillan	Eugowra
Jonas Mahro	Temora
Miro Honey Pty Ltd	Leppington
Mount Warning Honey	Byrrill Creek
Shayne & Melanie Parker	Eungai Creek
Sue Robinson	Lane Cove West
Andrew Sutcliffe	Terrey Hills

## CONFERENCE ACCOMMODATION

A special accommodation rate has been organised for conference delegates at the Atura Albury.

The hotel is conveniently located opposite the conference venue.

To book a room please call reception 02 6021 5366 and advise that you are attending the NSW Apiarists' function to receive the special rate.  
[www.aturaalbury.com.au](http://www.aturaalbury.com.au)

## CROP POLLINATION ASSOCIATION INC

### 2016 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING & CONFERENCE

(Meeting is open to all beekeepers)

<b>When:</b>	Wednesday 11 May 2016
<b>Where:</b>	Commercial Club, Banksia Room, 618 Dean Street, Albury
<b>Time:</b>	8.00am Registration 9.00am AGM/Conference commences 4.00pm AGM/Conference ends.
<b>Cost:</b>	\$65-00 pre-register (includes lunch) \$70-00 registering on the day

**Pre- Registration:** Please remit to the CPA Secretary no later than 1 May 2016

Many items are listed for discussion including pollination contacts, labelling changes and misuse of chemicals, reporting bee losses for investigation, and the work behind the scenes by the CPA committee to help you the members.

Please visit our website for current updates & Conference registration form: [www.aussiepollination.com.au](http://www.aussiepollination.com.au)

**All enquiries to: Eric Whitby, CPA Secretary**  
**PO BOX 289 Engadine NSW 2233**  
**02 9520 6216 / [ericwhitby2@bigpond.com](mailto:ericwhitby2@bigpond.com)**

## BEE BIOSECURITY OFFICER APPOINTED IN NSW

4 April 2016

Beekeepers in NSW now have an advisor on hand to help them keep their hives free from pests and diseases, as part of Plant Health Australia's Bee Biosecurity Program, it was announced this week.

Hayley Pragert has started work in the new role of Bee Biosecurity Officer as part of a joint industry-government initiative to look after Australia's honey bees.

Alison Saunders, Horticultural Cropping Manager at Plant Health Australia (PHA), said that the new program is a world first initiative that all partners should be proud of.

"PHA's Bee Biosecurity Program, which includes the appointment of Bee Biosecurity Officers nationally, has been well received," Alison said. "The Australian Honey Bee Industry Council (AHBIC) and the NSW Department of Primary Industries (DPI) have both been willing contributors, together funding Hayley to work with NSW beekeepers to help protect our valuable honey bees."

Kathy Gott, Plant Biosecurity Strategy and Planning Manager at NSW DPI, said supporting honey bee biosecurity was vital to ensure a thriving industry.

"As the NSW Bee Biosecurity Officer, Hayley will be responsible for training beekeepers and demonstrating best practice beekeeping at field days and other agricultural events, as well as raising awareness of pests and diseases that can harm honeybees," Dr Gott said.

"Her role will also promote the National Bee Biosecurity Code of Practice, which outlines measures for beekeepers to minimise risks and engage in best-practice biosecurity."

Casey Cooper, Vice-President of NSW Apiarists' Association and AHBIC Executive said that the new officer has plenty of hands-on experience. "Hayley is passionate about bees. She'll be able to give advice to NSW beekeepers on how to recognise and deal with pests and diseases like small hive beetle and the bacterial disease American foulbrood, both of which can damage hives."

"She will also help to protect against serious exotic pests like Varroa mite by setting up a network of beekeepers who survey hives for exotic pests. Early detection and reporting of any new pests would be fundamental to eradicating it," he added.

Since the NSW Bee Biosecurity Officer is being appointed as part of a national program, Hayley will soon have access to similar officers based in every state in Australia to work on protecting Australia's honey bee industry and pollinator-reliant crop industries.

There is more at stake than Australia's honey industry, which is why PHA is managing the efforts to boost bee biosecurity. PHA has been the facilitator of honey bee biosecurity projects because of the importance of honey bees not just to the honey industry but also to crop producers, since honey bees increase yields and quality in many fruits and vegetables."

For more information on honey bee biosecurity visit [www.beeaware.com.au](http://www.beeaware.com.au)

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# VALE

Bruce Robertson

A MAN of few passions as great as his affinity for bees, Bruce Robertson died on the way to doing what he loved. The 88-year-old Wagga man tragically died in a double-fatal head-on collision on Australia Day.

But his family has taken comfort in knowing his last remaining hours could have been spent no better - as Bruce was on his way home from visiting his two remaining beehives in Tumbarumba.

"He was very active with bees right up until the day he died," Bruce's daughter, Chris, said. "The bees really kept him alive, that was his biggest passion in life."

Bruce was born in West Wyalong and grew up on the family farm with one sister and three brothers. While one brother turned to sapphire fossicking, Bruce developed an equally bizarre love for bees. "In his early 20s, he went into beekeeping," Chris said. "And he's been doing that for nearly 70 years."

He devoted his whole life to his love of bees and the bush. He could tell the health and strength of a hive from a distance and by just listening to the hive.

He could read the trees and could tell whether they would produce any honey or not, months before they flowered. His knowledge of flora from way out west to the coast was unbelievable. His favourite honey flow was from River Gum throughout the Riverina.

He has been a member of the NSW Apiarists' Association for most of its existence and has been a very active member. He was treasured by all the other members, who continually asked him questions, which he was happy to answer. He loved passing on his knowledge in a very humble way.

Unfortunately all that knowledge has gone with his passing.

Bruce married his first wife, Nicky, in 1952 and had two children, James (who died in 2003) and Chris. Nicky died in 1973 and Bruce re-married Jean Hegbold in 1975. They were happily married until she passed away at the age of 76.

Bruce was a doting father, grandfather and great-grandfather, who poured much of his time into bees.

"He was still doing his two hives, keeping them in the bush or carting them around in his car right up until he died," Chris said. "He was a very well-known beekeeper right across NSW." "People used to ring all the time asking for advice, the phone just never stopped."

Bruce was also heavily involved in the Wagga Men's Shed, where he was still teaching beekeeping. "He absolutely loved it," Chris said. "He also loved bowling. He was the longest living member of the South Wagga Bowls Club."

Bruce will be remembered as a man of few words, who had a great love for the bush and fishing. "We could never get much information out of him about the past," Brisbane-based Chris said. "He loved the bush; he was just a real bushie. He also loved coming up to Queensland (to visit family and) to go fishing. But his best catch was in Batemans Bay years ago."

Bruce has spent the last six years in Riverina Gums, Retirement Village in Wagga Wagga. His funeral was held at Alan Harris McDonald, Copland Street, Wagga Wagga on Friday 5 February 2016 at 10.30am.

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# DOUG'S COLUMN

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## POLLINATION OF ALMONDS!

The relationship between the almond industry and the beekeeping industry has grown experientially in the last decade and a half in Australia. In 2000 there were approximately 34,500 beehives utilised for almond pollination. Various estimates suggest that possibly 200,000 beehives will be required for this coming season (2016). The demand for beehives for almond pollination will continue to rise for the foreseeable future.

The Australian almond industry started in the Adelaide Hills in South Australia. Almond plantings now extend into other areas of South Australia, including the River Land and along the Murray River into Victoria. Robinvale is now one of the biggest almond growing regions in Australia. More recently almond plantings have expanded into the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area, around Griffith.

The expansion of the almond industry will require a similar involvement from the beekeeping industry. There are various estimates for the number of hives required per hectare for almond pollination, but 6.5 hives per hectare is generally the accepted stocking rate for mature almond trees.

An almond tree will take three years before it begins bearing and maximises yields after eight years. The future supply of bees for pollination has become a critical factor for the almond industry. The almond industry appears to be taking the beekeeping industries issues and the supply of bees more serious in relation to short/medium/long term supply for pollination.

The interesting relationship between the almond and beekeeping industries is that the almond industry needs the beekeeping industry. BUT, the beekeeping industry does not need the almond industry.

Beekeepers, for decades, have been obtaining a living from the harvesting of honey, mainly from our native species of eucalypts. Most commercial beekeeping activity is centered on the east coast, with Vic, NSW and Qld being the largest industries.

Figures in 2010 suggest that NSW has approximately 236,000 bee hives; Vic has just under 100,000 hives and SA 67,500 hives. Queensland is quite a considerable player at 127,000 hives. A combination of the NSW, Vic and SA hives add up to over 400,000 beehives.

The almond industry is limited to where they can grow almond trees which require cold winters and dry summers. This precludes expansion into northern NSW and Qld. It is my understanding that a trial planting in WA failed primarily because of poor quality water available to the orchard. If this can ever be sorted we may see an expansion of the almond industry into WA.

This coming season the almond industry in Australia will possibly require over 200,000 beehives. Given the current number of hives in the eastern states, this could be met, but it does account for a very large portion of the beehives

available. As the price of pollination increases, it will no doubt be more attractive for northern NSW and Qld beekeepers to consider pollinating almonds as distance from the almond orchards will be a major impediment for beekeepers offering a pollination service based further afield.

In the last 12 months there has been significant discussion about the number of beehives available to meet the ever growing demand from the almond industry. My take on all of this is very simple. It is very much about supply and demand. If the almond industry offer a pollination service fee that is financially attractive to beekeepers, then beekeepers will travel to almonds. Beekeepers will factor in almond pollination as part of their business at the end of July and through August each year.

If the price paid by almond growers is not attractive and honey production or other beekeeping products or services are more financially attractive then beekeepers will not go to almonds. It is that simple.

There are several key points that almond growers need to keep in mind. The service fee paid to beekeepers needs to be attractive enough for beekeepers to want to pollinate almonds and ignore potential honey crops, not just at and around almond pollination time.

In autumn bees need to be nurtured and built up in strength prior to entering winter so they are in the best possible condition at the beginning of August. If the attraction to chase honey flows after Christmas and into autumn is financially attractive, then there will be fewer bees available for pollinating almonds.

There is a concern that honey bees are at risk to spray damage in orchards. The almond industry need to manage this better. There has certainly been a historical use of fungicides and fertiliser being pumped through the irrigation lines. Whilst the evidence is not there that these spray events cause mass die-off of bees, the issue of concern is the sub-lethal affect that these substances may have on developing bees. Thus, beekeepers will very much put the almond orchards in focus if their bees perform poorly after they have left almonds. There will always be a doubt – was there something that the bees collected or foraged for on almond orchards that caused the poor performance of their bees?

The issue is the perception and the almond industry would be foolish to ignore this concern regarding bee supply in future years.

Orchardists should give serious consideration to bee truck access for the delivery of beehives. Access needs to be free of obstructions, have well-formed tracks and particularly if new beekeepers are coming onto orchards during the night (which is the normal period when bees are moved in and out of sites) that the beekeeper is given clear instructions of where to go and where to place the bees.

There has been discussion recently about breaking up truck-loads of beehives into smaller apiaries. I challenge this thinking in as much as bees have evolved with wings! Their wings allow them to fly three or four kilometres in any given direction, based on prevailing environmental and climatic conditions.

I have proven many times, in early pollination situations that placing bees in shade compared to sun can make a difference of 5 to 10°C based on the local and micro-environment of where the hives are located. A frost at the end of winter can hang around all day in areas in constant shade. Any area exposed to sunlight quickly warms up and the frost disappears. Thus, it is vitally important that orchardists plan where they are going to place apiaries if their crop requires bee pollination.

In relation to bee flight, bees don't get out of bed much before 11-12 °C. Flight is maximised around 18°C or above. A micro-climate adding an extra 3 to 5°C can make a big difference to the amount of flight from those hives at that site.

Likewise, a site that is perpetually buffeted by wind will reduce the distance the bees fly. It is impossible to have control over cloudy or rainy days, but both these factors will reduce or restrict the amount of bee flight. These things need to be taken into account when analysing an average or poor performing crop. Think back to when the bees were on the crop and consider the type of weather the bees were experiencing at the time that the pollination event was occurring.

However, bees only need a few days to do a very good job of pollinating any crop if the population of the colonies are healthy and strong.

The last factor that the almond and beekeeping industries need to keep is open, honest and regular communication. As I have stated, there is concern by the beekeeping industry about the use of fungicide on flowering almonds. That may, or may not be justified but it is a concern all the same.

Beekeeping itself is a very detailed and complex business to partake in. I have no doubt that growing almonds has its own complexities. It is interesting to note, from my experience over the years, that various growers and grower groups that have been frustrated with beekeepers or beekeeper groups and have decided that there is nothing in beekeeping and they will 'go it alone' and enter into the beekeeping industry and purchase their own beehives.

My understanding is that none of these efforts have ever succeeded, possibly because the complexity of managing bees in the Australian scene makes it extremely difficult for anyone to apply management strategies based on a calendar event basis within mainland Australia.

This is primarily because eucalypts add up to being 70% to 80% of the Australian honey crop. Eucalypts only flower on a three to five year basis, depending on rainfall events and this can vary from location to location. There becomes a lot of local knowledge entrenched in various beekeeping enterprises.

With this knowledge the beekeeper either succeeds or fails at commercial beekeeping. It is not unrealistic for someone to learn how to keep bees within a year or two, and manage bees efficiently and effectively. The trick becomes, in the Australian setting anyway, how to manage

those bees nutritionally by moving the bees strategically to different flowering events in any given year – and each year will vary from one to the next. This information in many cases is inherited or purchased from the previous owner of the business when the beekeeper takes over that business.

Recent information from California that 'Paramount Farms', which are probably the biggest almond growers in USA, have purchased a beekeeping enterprise comprising of 20,000 beehives. 'Paramount Farms', according to their press release, regard themselves as the largest grower of almonds in the world. My understanding is that this is incorrect and in actual fact 'Olam', an Australian company, is now the largest almond grower in the world.

Whether this has occurred in the last 12 months, I'm not sure. 'Paramount Farms' are reported to be creating a beekeeper management program that lays out a career path for young people to join the beekeeping profession. They also intend to contribute significantly in the research and development area for bees as now they are very much a stakeholder in the beekeeping industry.

I believe that this strategy by 'Paramount Farms' is probably sustainable given the USA beekeeping industry is very much a calendar orientated business. By this I mean that beehives are moved from one location to another roughly the same time every year. This, as I have mentioned, is not the case for beekeeping in Australia.

It will be very interesting to see if any of the almond industry companies in Australia decide to go down the 'Paramount Farms' route and buy into a beekeeping operation.

So, the 'nitty gritty' for beekeepers – do they go to almonds to receive the pollination service fee, or do they instead chose to pursue various honey flows after Christmas that may, or may not, diminish the strength of the colony going into winter which would make their bees unsuitable for pollinating almonds. Many of our eucalypt honey flows are deficient in pollen, either quality or quantity. This also heightens the impact of nosema disease (an adult bee disease) which reduces the life span of bees.

The standard strength for a beehive is expected to be a minimum of 8 frames of bees. Beyond stating the numbers of frames of bees it is very difficult to stipulate age of queen, frames of brood or disease status as it is inadvisable to dismantle a hive to inspect it in the middle of winter to ensure all those factors are met. The colonies should be strong enough to defend themselves. In these circumstances if the colony was diseased it should not pose a problem to other beekeepers or hives.

What is a beekeeper to do? Do they choose to chase honey-flows in the autumn, even throughout winter and early spring or do they choose to manage their populations to ensure they meet the standard required for almond pollination?

To me this is a fairly straightforward question. It is purely about supply and demand and the financial return beekeepers will gain from one strategy or the other. This is the unique thing about the beekeeping industry, we have choice whether we involve ourselves in almond pollination or not. It should be based on the economics of the business involved and the medium and long-term returns that you are aiming to achieve for your business.



Likewise, the further away you are located from the almond orchards the greater the cost, both in fuel, time and wear and tear on yourself and truck getting your beehives to the almonds and returning them back to their operational areas.

One of the factors that I think is very important in almonds is the role of brokers and auditors.

During my time with the Department I have seen many very poor performing bees and some absolute disasters on pollination jobs. One case in western NSW, not on almonds, where out of 50 colonies, 35 were either dead or close enough to it. Clearly, the orchardist was not getting value for money out of that particular contract. Brokers and or auditors can ensure that any hive standard is met. Almond growers cannot be expected to be experts in bees; likewise beekeepers are not all made the same.

What beekeepers need is a reassurance that their bees will be looked after whilst in the almond orchards, the risk of contracting disease from other beekeepers is minimal and that they will be paid a reasonable return for their efforts, investment and time.

*So what prices are being achieved?*

While beekeepers would always like more money for their honey and likewise more for the supply of pollination services, there is a limit that can be paid according to the market.

There is also another factor – supply. If there are two people supplying beehives when only one is required, clearly the receiver of those bees is in the best position to get a lower price. If there are only two suppliers and there is a need for three, then clearly the suppliers are in the box seat to get a better price.

All are fairly simple principles.

In the Californian State Beekeeping Association 2014 survey the actual figure that beekeepers were getting for almond pollination in 2012 was \$153 USD. This amount rose to \$157 the following year and \$177 in 2014. The top price in 2014 was \$194 USD. This is approximately twice the price that the Australian beekeeping industry is receiving at present. My understanding is the pollination fee for almonds in Australia will be around \$100 plus per hive this coming season. Some beekeepers may see this as unfair, but in reality almond growers only need to pay as much as they need to in relation to the supply of bees.

If you believe you can make more money than the \$100 pollination fee per hive by working honey, then that is the choice to make. Canola which can produce worthwhile honey crops is frequently in flower from mid-August onwards. This will vary according to the cultivar of the canola and the strength of the colony and weather prevailing.

As already stated, beekeepers have choice; they need to make the decision based on their individual business models whether they pursue almond pollination or not. I know for a fact that some of the brokers that are involved in almond pollination have had beekeepers withdraw at the last minute claiming their bees are not in the best condition. In some of these cases, this is not true and beekeepers have found a better option in the form of a honey flow. This, I believe, is an unhealthy and unprofessional approach to the business of beekeeping.

On the subject of contracts, it is pleasing after many years

of harping on about contracts to see them now being readily utilised in almond pollination. Unfortunately this is still not the case with many other crops, which makes both parties vulnerable to poor or non-supply of bees and/or being sprayed or not being paid. Contracts give you the peace of mind that they should be legally binding. They also, if nothing else, outline any 'grey' areas that the grower or beekeeper is not quite certain about. If it is in black and white there can be no doubt about the intent of the arrangement.

I believe we live in exciting times with the horticultural industry in Australia gaining momentum. It is certainly becoming more professional, not just almonds, but in many other crops. The demand for bees and pollination is growing. There will be an equal requirement for beekeepers to be more professional in the way they handle and approach pollination service delivery.

This hasn't always been the case, but there will always be a small proportion of an industry that wishes to circumvent any standards or rules. My advice to almond growers and the beekeeping industry is to continue to communicate with each other. I believe, particularly the almond growers, if they are at all in doubt about what's involved in beekeeping then it's not hard to become more knowledgeable on the subject as there is a very significant range of information available.

The bottom line is to talk to your beekeepers and even go out and experience management of beehives first hand to get a feel for what's involved. I believe there is a lot of ignorance out there, not intended, but with education and information this can be overcome.

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# NEW SOUTH WALES APIARISTS' ASSOCIATION AND FORESTRY CORPORATION

*Neil Bingley - President*

**It is timely for the chronological history of our association's dealings with NSW Forestry Corporation to be recorded.**

As you are aware, the association compiled a "New South Wales Apiarists' Association Position Paper – Apiary sites on public lands", with the assistance of Dr. Doug Somerville (NSW Department of Primary Industries (DPI)), published February 2015. In this paper we made six requests to the NSW government, including:

1. *Provide an 'all of government' approach to dealing with apiary sites on government land tenure.*
2. *Provide a policy on beekeeping from each government agency managing lands traditionally utilised by beekeepers for apiary sites.*
3. *Provide a consistent set of apiary site use permit conditions across all government land tenures.*
4. *Grant access to any government lands for apiary sites where this does not cause public risk or undue damage to the area in the process of gaining access.*
5. *Recognise the "National Best Management Practice Guidelines for Beekeeping in the Australian Environment".*
6. *Provide long term permits of 5 years or greater.*

Since our Penrith Conference in July 2015 where the Hon Member for Parliament, Andrew Constance, Minister for Transport and Infrastructure, announced that an 'all of government approach' to apiary sites on public land was a sensible and worthwhile aim of the present government. The progress has been snail pace.

The 'all of government' committee with representatives from NSW DPI, Forestry Corporation, National Parks, Local Land Service (LLS) and Crown Lands did not occur until 13 November 2015

As with any new group, there was an amount of 'working the issue out' by the members of the group. Sub groups in the committee were allocated certain tasks to report back on at a phone hook-up, which was to be held in mid-December 2015.

This meeting failed to eventuate, but three members from New South Wales Apiarists' Association (NSWAA) – Casey Cooper, Greg Roberts and I met directly with Andrew O'Brien from the Forestry Corporation at Dubbo on 8 December 2015

The content of this meeting was disappointing, to say the least, as it was made clear to us that the NSW Forestry Corporation have as their primary goal to put up for auction all bee sites under their control to maximise the financial return to their organisation from our industry.

No more was heard of the all of government committee working on apiary sites on public lands until a phone conference was convened for the 10 March 2016. Greg Roberts and myself travelled to Orange and meet the new Chair of the working group – Dougal Gordon.

This has been part of the problem up to this point. NSW DPI staff was given the task of coordinating this committee after our July 2015 conference. The secretariat, Mr Tim Burfitt retired in October 2015 and the Chair of the committee, Ms Delia Dray was replaced in January 2016.

An outcome of the meeting on 10 March at Orange was that the activities of the committee were to be ramped up and a regular monthly meeting is now proposed. The next meeting is to be a face-to-face meeting in Sydney, with the whole committee on the 7 April with Greg Roberts and myself representing the NSW Apiarists Association.

While this is an all of government committee the main reason for its creation has been the failure of various discussions between NSW AA and the NSW Forestry Corporation. This has been unfolding for many years and the following time lines sum up our dealings with this organisation.

## **August 2012**

Letter to the Hon. Andrew Constance re: assured access to forested lands and national parks – from the President Craig Klingner.

In this letter the association highlighted the problems with the Forestry Corporations approach to apiary site issues and concluded that "if Forests NSW believes their cost of administration of Occupational Permits outweigh benefits, then consideration should be given to having all public land apiary sites managed by one entity, e.g. NSW DPI".

## **September 2012**

A letter sent to the Hon. Katrina Hodgkinson, MP the (then) Minister for Primary Industries, asking her that the Association has long desired a "comprehensive and equitable policy to deal with bee sites in State Forests". The letter goes on to say that "we have had several meetings with Forestry staff in an unsuccessful attempt to resolve the matter". We also made the prediction that "the conversion of NSW State Forests into a state owned corporation is also a huge concern for our industry. Increased corporate pressure to generate money from the forests will hasten the decline of honey and pollen resources due to excessive logging".

## **November 2012**

The NSW Apiarists' Association executive met with Mr. Daniel Tuan, Regional Manager Southern, Forestry Corporation NSW, who was stated to be representing Morgan Roche. Mr. Tuan noted that as the state-wide guidelines were not yet set, he would like to hear the concerns of the apiary industry, address these within the proposed guidelines and then come back to the Association for comment and feedback.

The two main points of discussion were the elements of;

- a) a draft policy put forward by Warwick Bratby (State Forests) and Craig Klingner (NSWAA). The revised policy was to be finalised by January 2013 and the final document to be tabled at the 2013 May conference.

- b) Mr. Daniel Tuan acknowledged that Forests NSW did not communicate well with industry the reasons why an audit was conducted on a beekeeper on the South Coast

#### November 2012

Letter sent to the Hon Katrina Hodgkinson MP from the (then) president Craig Klingner. Amongst other matters the letter states that “for years our Association and Forests NSW have been discussing the benefits of a web based facility for booking forestry sites throughout the state. The benefits to both parties in time and money saved could be enormous....”

#### August 2013

A meeting occurred between the NSW AA Executive, Casey Cooper (President), Shona Blair, myself and Minister Hodgkinson’s staff, the Hon. Andrew Constance, MP and the Hon. Robyn Parker MP.

Discussions were about the fragmented approach to issuing of Apiary sites between agencies.

#### September 2013

A letter was sent to the Hon. Katrina Hodgkinson, MP following on from the above meeting. NSWAA emphasized the importance to our industry of the development and finalisation of the Beekeeping Policy on State Forest Lands.

Letter from Casey Cooper, President.

#### December 2013

A letter was received from Bruce Christie, Executive Director Biosecurity, NSW DPI, stating that he was aware of the concerns of the NSW Apiarists’ Association with regard to access to resources, commercial uncertainty and biosecurity threats and the need for a comprehensive approach to beekeeping policy across the various ministerial portfolios.

#### February 2013

NSW AA executive committee meeting, Craig Klingner had spoken with Daniel Tuan of Forests NSW and was assured that the state based policy document was being worked on.

#### February 2013

A response was received from the Hon Katrina Hodgkinson MP where she stated amongst other points that “A single statewide database for site access permits on TSRs would appear to be a priority”. She goes on to say that “In relation to the web facility for forestry sites I have referred the matter to the Forestry Corporation of NSW for their consideration and direct reply. I will ask both agencies to consider developing a multi-agency system, though discussions will have to occur as to how this may be funded”.

#### November 2013

The President, Casey Cooper updated the NSW AA executive committee meeting on the progress of the Forestry policy. Internal revisions were currently occurring and it would not be long until a draft copy would be available to industry.

#### February 2014

At the NSW AA executive committee meeting, Warwick Bratby, Regional Manager, Forestry Corporation of NSW Western Region stated that the Forestry Corporation was reviewing how it operated and whilst he had been pushing for an on-line booking system for bee sites, the policy side of things had not progressed due to the review and restructure.

#### March 2014

The NSW AA makes a 23 page submission to the Australian Government Senate Inquiry into “The future of the beekeeping and pollination service industries in Australia”. One of our recommendations was suggesting that “State and Federal Governments to develop an overarching policy for beekeeping on public lands ....”.

#### May 2014

At the NSW AA executive meeting Warwick Bratby (Forestry Corporation) provided information on where the detail of the draft beekeeping policy had come from. The executive discussed the implications of the new proposed approach and its substantial departure from the current situation.

#### June 2014

The Minister, Hon Katrina Hodgkinson MP was written to about the Forestry Corporation review of how that organization deals with apiary sites. We stated that “the proposed changes as outlined in the review paper would be unworkable for the apiary industry”.

The association provided a response to the Forestry Corporation outlining the negative impact of the proposed policy on the beekeeping industry.

#### August 2014

A letter was received from Nick Roberts, CEO of the Forestry Corporation informing us that Richard Rienstra from his organization would be soon meeting with the NSW AA executive to consider our “feedback”. He goes on to say that “FCNSW’s desire (is) to seek to balance equity for beekeepers, stability of the apiary industry, reasonable market value pricing and efficient process”.

#### August 2014

A four-page response to the “Forestry Corporation Discussion Paper – Review of bee permit administration” was prepared by the NSW AA and submitted by the president, Casey Cooper. In part this submission reads:

*Forests NSW commenced discussions with the NSWAA on bee permit issues in Nov 2012. However, the approach outlined in the discussion paper has significant and major deviations from the beekeeping industry needs and expectations, which have been expressed throughout discussions to date. We thought that Forestry Corporation understood the essential nature of continued access to State Forest sites to beekeeping business.*

*We note that Forestry Corporation (FCNSW) states they are seeking:*

- *To balance equity for beekeepers*
- *Stability for the apiary industry*
- *Reasonable pricing for FCNSW*
- *Efficient process*

However, as the suggested approach stands it would have the opposite effect for the beekeeping industry. The proposed system would:

- *Be inequitable for beekeepers*
- *Put undue pressure on the stability of beekeeping businesses and the NSW industry*
- *Potentially increase overheads for FCNSW*



- *Have minimal efficiency impacts at best, and at worst increase admin for both beekeepers and FCNSW*

In the context of the response, the NSW AA asks that “No competitive allocation process to be introduced”.

#### September 2014

The NSW AA provides an additional 12 page discussion paper as requested by Richard Rienstra, Senior Land Administrator, Forest Stewardship. In this paper the market value of apiary sites is discussed and a comparison between other government agencies and private property site costs is discussed. Suggested measures by the Forestry Corporation to increase income from bee sites and improve business are provided.

#### November 2014

The NSW AA executive meeting was held at Kogarah on 6&7 November and Richard Rienstra and Jude Parr were invited to attend. They declined, stating that they had been given nothing further to discuss with the Association.

#### March 2015

The NSW AA is made aware of Forestry Corporation's intention to auction vacant bee sites on the south coast. Notification was not via Forestry Corporation representatives, but via Auction Plus contacting the Association directly regarding advertising for the auction.

#### April 2015

A letter was sent to Nick Roberts, CEO Forestry Corporation. Part of this read:

*As a key stakeholder listed in the Integrated Forestry Operation Approvals (IFOA) the NSW Apiarists' Association is extremely disappointed and frustrated and seeks to understand why it was not consulted prior to the Forestry Corporation of NSW's recent decision to auction apiary sites on the South Coast.*

**This history is provided in order since 2012 provides much of the background for what relates to the current situation.**

**Whilst it is frustrating for the NSWAA to be continually involved in perpetual meetings with no desirable or long-term outcome, the current process of the Apiary Sites Working Group chaired by NSW DPI holds some promise.**

**It is clear that a single 'desk' for all apiary sites is a highly desirable goal for the NSW beekeeping industry and for the State Government.**

**The Premier, Michael Baird, has stated that he wishes to see NSW as “the leading Australian State in business confidence” and that he would like to see “150,000 new jobs by 2019”.**

**If this is the case and restore confidence in the NSW beekeeping industry a 'one-stop-shop' for all bee sites on public lands is the only truly sensible way forward. Without this stability it will be impossible for the commercial beekeeping sector to invest and expand their businesses, or consider taking on trainees or apprentices. The horticultural industries are very much dependent on the future stability and growth of the beekeeping industry.**

# BEE SITE LICENCE AMENDMENTS - VIC

*PRESS RELEASE, 29 March 2016*

Crown Land Legislation (Canadian Regional Park and other matters) Bill 2015 - Victorian Legislative Council

Mr Kevin MacGibbon, President of the Victorian Apiarists' Association Inc. said today that passage of the amending Bill through the Legislative Council to provide uniform statutes within several Acts that authorise licensed access to much of Victoria's public land native forest estate has been received with much acclaim by the Victorian apiculture (beekeeping) industry.

Addressing Association executive personnel, the wider membership and others, he said that passage of the Bill will now enable public land managers to uniformly interpret relevant Act provisions and policy settings to regulate licensed beekeeping in various public land jurisdictions, which were developed during an intensive consultative process involving a range of stakeholders that included apiculture industry representation.

Mr MacGibbon said that the State Government announcement in August 2013 of revised policy for apiculture in Victorian public lands broke new ground in Australia, whereas a State Government, adopting policy for improved access and the continuing usage of publicly owned state forests for the purpose of apiculture, based new policy fairly and squarely on recognition that enormous public benefit derives through the delivery of honey bee induced fertilisation services (pollination) to the growers of many horticultural and agricultural crops including pasture legumes, and that improved access to public land native forests is important for the maintenance of numerically strong and healthy managed honey bee populations for that purpose.

Mr MacGibbon said that independent research conducted in 2008 under R.I.R.D.C. auspices identified 41 food and pasture crops that benefit from honey bee foraging activity (pollination), of which many are 100% dependent on foraging honey bees for crop yields. Further research in 2010 identifies 46 crops, nearly half of them 100% dependent, underscoring that till the end of time, honey bee foraging on flowering crops will remain an essential driver in the maintenance of food security for Victorians and others beyond our borders.

Mr MacGibbon paid tribute to the bipartisan support and goodwill of successive governments and Ministries over the long journey of policy development, and the subsequent review of several Acts provisions, culminating in passage of the Bill in the Legislative Council today.

He also placed on record industry appreciation for the patience, forbearance at times, but above all, the capacity of respective senior departmental personnel engaged in consultation with the industry over the journey since 2011, to carefully listen and hear clearly the industry's petitions. The exercise became a triumph through the engendering of mutual respect and collaboration, producing outcomes with capacity to stand the test of time.

#### Enquiries:

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Kerrin Williams, Secretary, Victorian Apiarists' Association Inc. Tel: 03 5446 1455

Ian Cane, VAA Inc. member, consultative industry/departmental working party member. Tel: 0428 516 326

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# NICK'S NEWSfrom DPI NSW

Nick Annand, Development Officer - Bees  
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## WELCOME

### BEE BIOSECURITY OFFICER – BEES

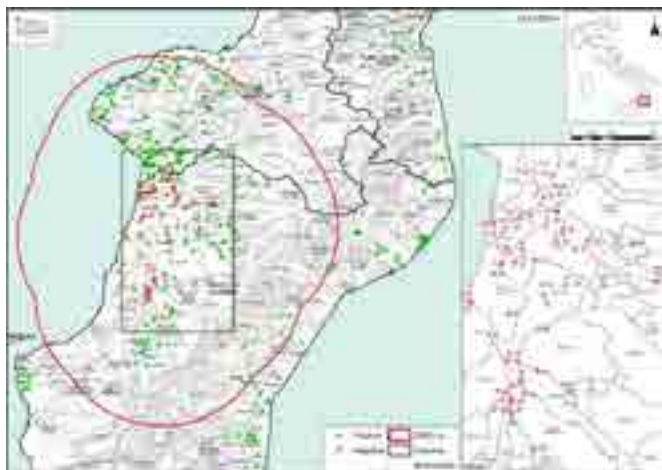
*A warm welcome to the new Bee Biosecurity Officer– Bees for NSW, Haley Pragert from New Zealand who commenced employment with NSW DPI on the 4 April. Haley is based in Orange and is under the Plant Biosecurity section of the department. Hopefully many of you can meet Haley at the up-coming NSW Apiary Association Conference in Albury. No doubt a hectic few months ahead for Haley while getting settled into the new job. All the best Haley.*

## SHB IN ITALY – WHAT IS HAPPENING

I was recently fortunate enough to be asked to go over to Italy to speak on small hive beetle (SHB) at the Italian Professional Beekeeping Congress which was held at Amantea in the region of Calabria (yes mafia country) in the South East of Italy.

As some of you may have heard, Italy has become the second European country to have an incursion of SHB. The first was Portugal back in 2004 via a consignment of queen bees from the USA which fortunately never made it to beehives. These SHB were destroyed by authorities. No more were found in Europe until September 2014 when both SHB adult and larvae were found in some hives being monitored for other reasons in Italy. Upon further investigation more SHB were found in apiaries nearby. Within 3 months a further 59 apiaries were found to be infested with SHB within a small area in the Calabria region. A single infestation was also found on the island of Sicily which could be related to hive movements from the infested area of Calabria.

No more SHB were found over the following winter/spring with some hope that the program may have eradicated the beetle. From Dec 2014 to 24 June 2015 6284 inspections were performed in 2179 apiaries in Calabria and Sicily with no SHB found. This hope of freedom of SHB however was short lived with SHB being found again on 16 September 2015 with further findings following. This scenario that occurred adds further support to my suspicion that developing SHB can over winter in the soil and hatch the following spring when conditions warm.



Map of SHB infested area of Italy. Red crosses – SHB found. Green dots - inspected but no SHB found.

The area where SHB has been found in Italy is not large with a maximum distance of 28km between infested apiaries. This infested area is also geographically “contained” in that the area is surrounded by sea to the west and mountains to the east, south and partially to the north. The area is a major citrus and kiwi fruit growing area with historically many hives moving in and out for nectar and pollination purposes. So many beekeepers had previously moved bees from across Italy into this region. The outbreak of SHB saw the implementation of movement restrictions with a 20km radius protection zone and a 100km surveillance zone around infested apiaries to assist in preventing the spread.

The SHB were discovered fairly quickly in Italy and as a result have had limited chance to spread very far. The initial approach of the Italian authorities was to attempt to eradicate the SHB. An ideal situation for all involved however implementation to achieve this ideal has been difficult. As is often the case the actual on ground approach to achieve eradication has been contentious with different beekeeping organisations having conflicting ideas on the methods being used. This combined with three levels of government (European Union, Italian and Calabria – local) with no one authority appearing to have sole control of coordinating the program gave the impression of a not very well orchestrated eradication attempt.

I travelled to Italy with Terry Brown and we arrived a few days prior to the start of the congress. This was very beneficial in understanding the situation. Local beekeepers looked after us and showed us some apiaries in the infested area and we were told how the eradication program was being run. We visited to apiaries which both had low levels of SHB. So we got an understanding of the situation on the ground in Italy. As outsiders with some SHB knowledge and experience some major issues could be identified immediately. These issues I believe have greatly hindered the chances of eradicating SHB, a task that was always going to be extremely difficult.



Italian beekeepers examining hives in the infested area. Much excitement when one live SHB was found. First experience for most.

The first concern I had with the eradication program was the burning of hives. If one or more SHB were detected in a hive all hives in the apiary were subsequently burnt. The soil in the area was also treated which I think is necessary. I have three

issues with this approach; firstly in the process of burning hives the SHB can escape the hives and fly off. I got mixed messages on whether hives were being fumigated/frozen prior to destruction by burning. But if not this is especially problematic if needing to move hives even short distances by vehicle to burn them as the vibrations tend to stimulate SHB to leave the hive. My understanding is hives were being sealed to prevent SHB escaping but this can be difficult to achieve with SHB masters at evasion. Even when hives are burning there is opportunity for SHB to fly off and escape the flames. Secondly the hive is still the most attractive lure of SHB currently available. Therefore we should be using managed hives to attract SHB and then manage them in the hive. By removing hives this then forces SHB into other places such as feral colonies, bumble bee colonies or other apiaries. This makes eradication of the SHB in an area far more difficult. Lastly the destruction of hives is very costly and wasteful with loss of equipment, bees and income and in my view unnecessary and actually making SHB eradication only more difficult due to the second point. Initially no compensation was being provided to beekeepers for the destruction of their hives. An issue that had to be address otherwise beekeepers would consider moving hives (and possibly did) illegally out of the infested area. This was rectified.

To assist in locating SHB within hives beekeepers were supplied with long strips of corflute to be used as a monitoring tool. They were to be slipped in through the hive entrance along the bottom board with some of the strip remaining outside the entrance to facilitate easy removal and inspection. SHB enter these strips of corflute to escape bee harassment. On removal the beekeeper/monitor could check the strips for SHB. This was a good initiative to aid in monitoring for SHB but unfortunately the hole diameter of the corflute used was so small SHB could not enter it making it useless. A simply mistake but something that made the program look amateurish and gave the beekeepers little confidence in the authorities handling of the eradication program.

The beekeeping practices in Italy differ to that in Australia with most beekeepers feeding bees, either sugar syrup, stiff sugar candy or some type of protein supplement. A variety of feeding techniques are used and some of the methods provide SHB with locations for breeding. This was experienced at the first apiary we visited in the infested zone where sugar syrup feeding had allowed for SHB to breed and SHB larvae to grow protected away from bees. This was happening in February, their end of winter when no SHB breeding should be seen in hives. These types of practices were greatly hindering the eradication program and if SHB becomes endemic this may be one of the practices Italian beekeepers may need to change to minimize the SHB damage.



*SHB larvae growing on sugar syrup feed trays in Italy Feb 2016*

The limited availability/permission to use chemicals in beehives to help control SHB has also hindered the Italians eradication efforts. The most effective legal tool we have for SHB management in Australia I believe has been Apithor®.

This creates a conundrum for the European/Italian beekeepers as they have been strongly advocating the banning of the use of Fipronil in the EU because of the toxic impact it has on bees. The chemical used in Apithor® is Fiprinol so for the beekeepers to then do an about face and say they want to use this product in there hives would be quite hypocritical.

So this ruled Apithor® out for them. They also have strong restrictions on the use of other chemicals in hives and there are a lot of “organic” beekeepers in Italy. But if you are burning hives anyway when SHB are found why not use those hives as lures and kill the SHB in them by any means and tools available and then hopefully if the program is successful in beetle eradication destroy and compensate beekeepers for their hives at a later date. As in Australia I saw homemade SHB control devices (corflute with cockroach bait) made and used (illegally) in Italy. These appeared to be the most effective tools being used against the SHB in Italy.



*Dead SHB adults in corflute traps*

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I suggest the Italians authorities thought they could possibly beat the SHB just by destroying all hives in apiaries where it was found. The veterinary authorities were the people doing the SHB inspections which is fine if they know about bees.

This is not really the case for the majority of vets in Australia. It seemed silly to use only these vets for hive examinations when there were many beekeepers suffering as a result of this incursion who could provide knowledge and expertise in working bees who could assist the eradication campaign. A very intensive saturation of monitoring and eradication management approaches was required if they were to be successful with eradicating SHB. However I suspect the SHB is too well entrenched now due to inappropriate actions initially for eradication to be successful.

One positive, if there is any, is if SHB has become established in Italy is it going to be a major pest to the Italian beekeepers or is the climate going to hinder its impact. This maybe one small saving grace regards SHB in Italy and other parts of Europe. The area where they have established has a climate very similar to Adelaide so SHB may not become a major pest as per the Adelaide experience. This may not be the case in other areas of Italy where temperatures and humidity's over summer can be very high providing SHB with favourable breeding conditions. But I suspect the cooler longer winters of Europe will make SHB a minor pest for much of Europe if it establishes and spreads out of Italy.



*Symptoms of varroa – deformed wing virus for bee on the right*

I believe the major mistakes with this eradication attempt can be likened with the issues raised in my previous article in the last Honeybee news with the varroa incursion exercise held down in Victoria. Both tasks were looking and treating the incursion (don't panic – only mock incursion in Vic), in one case varroa mite and the other SHB, as contagious infections such as a bacteria, fungus or a virus instead of looking at the problem pest and targeting an approach that best suits that particular individual species. There is so sense or logic to burning hives for SHB eradication, a historic approach that has been effective for contagious microbial incursions. By not totally recognizing the characteristics of the individual pest a lot of time, money and resources can be wasted.

This then raises the issue of preparedness and how important it is. To have a well thought out approach to the emergency response to incursions which specifically targets each individual pest or disease and that has been developed and reviewed regularly by the affected industry and experts in that field. This is crucial to improving success and cost effectiveness of emergency pest and disease responses.

*PS. Thanks to all the Italian beekeepers who looked after us so well while over in Italy. The hospitality and food were great.*

*PPS. Lunches during the congress lasted 2 hours plus with numerous courses being served and wine drunk.*



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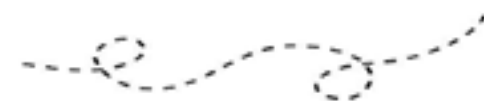
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## **WHEN**

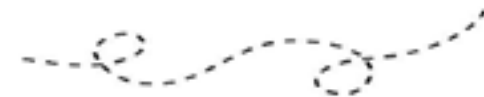
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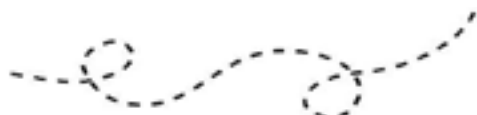


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PRE-PURCHASE REQUIRED**



# THE FROST REPORT

Elizabeth Frost  
Honey Bee Education Officer  
Total Agricultural College, NSW Dept. of Primary Industries  
T: 02 4939 8821 M: 0437 731 273 E: elizabeth.frost@dpi.nsw.gov.au



## NATIONALLY ACCREDITED BEEKEEPER TRAINING

If you're seeking nationally accredited training in beekeeping skills, look no further than Total College (NSW DPI), Registered Training Organisation #91166. Total College currently offers the Certificate III in Beekeeping, a qualification providing a vocational outcome in beekeeping.

Additionally, a Beekeeping Traineeship is available for paid employees of beekeepers. This traineeship also leads to the nationally accredited Certificate III in Beekeeping. Information specific to the Beekeeping Traineeship is located here: [www.total.nsw.edu.au/courses/beekeeping-traineeship](http://www.total.nsw.edu.au/courses/beekeeping-traineeship) Total College accepts enrolments throughout the year for the Certificate III in Beekeeping. Please contact me directly for the relevant enrolment forms.



*Beekeeper trainee James Hannah of Grafton demonstrates how to stock a Swathmore swarm box for starting queen cells at the Rear Queen Bees Course at UNE in Armidale.*

## CERTIFICATE III IN BEEKEEPING REQUIREMENTS

The Certificate III in Beekeeping completion requirements are a total of ten units of competency made up of five core units and five elective units, at time of writing. The following five core units are mandatory:

### CORE UNITS

#### Work, health, & safety

AHCOHS301A - Contribute to OHS processes

#### Beekeeping

AHCBK301A - Manage honey bee swarms

AHCBK304A - Remove a honey crop from a hive

AHCBK305A - Extract honey

#### Work

AHCWRK306A - Comply with industry quality assurance requirements

Currently, five elective units must be completed out of the list below, in addition to the five core units, to obtain the full qualification. Units of competency are offered through a mix of

face to face and online delivery. Both delivery methods include practical components with hands on exercises involving bee hives and a range of beekeeping equipment. Alternatively, many units which I'm still developing coursework for, can be completed through workplace assessment, where myself and another trainer travel to your workplace to assess your skills corresponding to specific units.

## ELECTIVE UNITS

### Beekeeping

AHCBK201A - Support beekeeping work

AHCBK202A - Use a bee smoker

AHCBK203A - Open and reassemble a bee hive

AHCBK204A - Construct and repair bee hives

AHCBK302A - Manipulate honey bee brood

AHCBK303A - Re-queen a honey bee colony

AHCBK306A - Manage pests and disease within a honey bee colony

AHCBK401A - Collect and store propolis

AHCBK402A - Perform queen bee artificial insemination

AHCBK403A - Produce and harvest royal jelly

AHCBK404A - Provide bee pollination services

AHCBK405A - Select and establish an apiary site

AHCBK406A - Trap and store pollen

AHCBK407A - Rear queen bees

### Food safety

FDFFS2001A - Implement the food safety program and procedures

FDFFS3001A - Monitor the implementation of quality and food safety programs

FDFGPS2011A - Operate a creamed honey manufacture process

FDFOP2013A - Apply sampling procedures

FDFOP2003A - Clean equipment in place

FDFOP2004A - Clean and sanitise equipment

FDFOP2023A - Operate a packaging process

FDFTEC3001A - Participate in a HACCP team

### Work

AHCWRK303A - Respond to emergencies

AHCWRK305A - Coordinate work site activities

AHCWRK308A - Handle bulk materials in storage area

## Machinery operation and maintenance

TLILIC2001A - Licence to operate a forklift truck

Each unit of competency can be examined in more detail at the website: [training.gov.au/Training/Details/AHC32010#](http://training.gov.au/Training/Details/AHC32010#)

## WHAT DOES IT COST?

The Certificate III in Beekeeping is considered a student contribution to the full cost of training, the difference being subsidised by the NSW State Government for NSW residents. The fee payable depends upon eligibility and access to concessions or exemptions. At time of writing only NSW residents are eligible for concessions or exemptions.

Currently trainees can expect to pay:

- \$1,000 for NSW Smart and Skilled supported Traineeship
- \$1,390 for NSW Smart and Skilled supported first qualification (non-traineeship)

- \$1,670 for NSW Smart and Skilled supported second or further qualification
- \$3,750 full commercial fee for all students not eligible for NSW Smart and Skilled support\*

\*More information is available on the Smart & Skilled website: [smartandskilled.nsw.gov.au](http://smartandskilled.nsw.gov.au)

Past completion of accredited training will offset the cost of a Certificate III in Beekeeping. For example, if you've completed the face to face Pests & Diseases of Honey Bees PROfarm accredited course, you will have already obtained one unit of competency: AHCBEK306A - Manage pests and disease within a honey bee colony. If the Certificate III in Beekeeping is your first qualification, you may be eligible for the exemption "NSW Smart and Skilled supported first qualification (non-traineeship)" at a cost of \$1,390. Any past completed accredited units (such as AHCBEK306A - Manage pests and diseases within a honey bee colony) will be deducted from the full cost on a pro rata basis. For example, at the subsidised \$1,390 fee for a first qualification (non-traineeship) the fee per unit, on a pro rata basis out of ten units total, will be \$139. Thus, having received one unit of competency prior to enrolment in the Certificate III in Beekeeping, a further \$139 will be deducted from the full cost.

### THE FUTURE CERTIFICATE III IN BEEKEEPING

An updated Certificate III in Beekeeping has been endorsed by the federal government as of March 2016, however, the date it will be implemented is still to be determined. The future Certificate III in Beekeeping will require 12 core units and 4 elective units. Contact me today if you wish to enrol in the current 10 unit Certificate III in Beekeeping before the 16 unit certificate is implemented.



*Beekeepers from the North Coast, Hunter, Central West, Illawarra regions and SE QLD at the Rear Queen Bees Course delivered at Tocal College.*

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### CURRENT TRAINING

From January to May 2016, instructors Nicholas Annand (Development Officer – Bees), Danielle Lloyd-Prichard (Education Officer Tocal College), Doug Somerville (Technical Specialist, Honey Bees), Bruce White (retired NSW DPI), and myself have delivered accredited training and partial qualifications in the Certificate III in Beekeeping across the state of New South Wales.



*New England region beekeepers at the Rear Queen Bees Course delivered at the UNE SMART Farm Innovation Centre in Armidale.*

### Attendees & trainees by the numbers from January – April 2016:

- REAR QUEEN BEES: 75
- BEGINNING IN BEES: 60+
- PESTS & DISEASES OF HONEY BEES ONLINE COURSE: 122
- BEEKEEPER TRAINEES: 2 (By region: 1 North Coast, 1 New England)



*Riverina region beekeepers at the Rear Queen Bees Course delivered at the Yanco Campus of Tocal College (previously the Murrumbidgee Rural Studies Centre).*

### Course attendees by state, territory and NSW region:

- REAR QUEEN BEES: Central West, Hunter, Illawarra, New England, North Coast, Riverina, SE QLD
- BEGINNING IN BEES: Central West, Hunter, North Coast, SW Sydney
- PESTS & DISEASES OF HONEY BEES ONLINE COURSE: NSW, NT, QLD, VIC





*Bunsom Chhorn of Ruge Honey, QLD wins the competition for highest grafted cell percentage 24 hours after cell starting at the Rear Queen Bees Course at Tocal College.*

### NEW COURSE RESOURCE

The Queen Bee Breeding AgGuide, a practical handbook, is at the printers and will be available for purchase starting in May from Tocal College, NSW DPI. This book will guide you in rearing thousands of quality queens or just a few for sale or use in your own hives.

This AgGuide is a resource provided to beekeepers enrolled in the accredited NSW DPI PROfarm course Rear Queen Bees or can be purchased online at [www.tocal.nsw.edu.au/publications](http://www.tocal.nsw.edu.au/publications) or over the phone at (02) 4939 8867 from May 2016 onward.

Please visit me at the NSWAA Conference Trade Show, in Albury 12-13 May, at the Tocal College, NSW DPI table if you'd like to have a look at the book or purchase a copy in person.



# HONEYLAND VOLUNTEERS

A special thanks goes to all the wonderful hard working volunteers who promoted the industry at the Royal Easter Show this year.

Beekeepers who were members of the New South Wales Apiarists' Association, North Shore Beekeepers Association, Amateur Beekeeping Association, Victorian Apiarists' Association and friends of the volunteers. A special thanks to Doyle Egelhoff for supplying bees for the live bee demonstrations and all the beekeepers who gave the live bee demonstrations. David Lord (3), Mal Porter (8), Wayne Hammond (2), Doyle Egelhoff (6), Bruce White (15), Doug Purdie (2), Edward Pennay (2), Mark Page (4), Lamorna Osborne (1), Brian Woolfe (3), Reg Marsh (2), Geoff Manning (10), Anthony Beattie (1) Michael Fogarty (1).

A more detailed article will appear in the next Edition.

*Bruce White*  
Honeyland Co-ordinator

### Volunteers

Dylan Ball, Garrick Ball, Anthony Beattie, Leslie Beattie, Liam Beattie, Tim Beattie, Neil Bingley Shona Blair, Bruce Blunden, Margaret Blunden, Paul Blunden, Daniel Bouze, Kevin Dolan Brown, Mary Ellen Burke, Cate Burton, Alejandro Cassano, Karla Cassano, Judy Ciocciorrelli, Liane Colwell, David Cowling, Robyn Crosland, Lyle Clinton, Nural Cokcetin, Seda Cokcetin, Ruth Collett, Casey Cooper, Dayn Cooper, Janice Conlan, Mick Conlan, John Davis, Juanita Di Angelo, Bill Dick, Paul Drew, Christine Dorrell, Nathan Dunne, Doyle Egelhoff, Emmanuel Farrugia, Poppy Fitzgerald, Sally Fitzgerald, Jarrod Friend, Gavin Gibson, Tony Gorge, Wayne Hammond, Jane Hayes, Michele Hillig, Ken Jackson, Lyndon Jones, Linda Kay, Rod Kay, David Kelly, Josh Kelly, John Kemp, David Lord, Adrienne Lyon, Geoff Manning, Tamara Mantchakidi, Meredith Martin, Reg Marsh, Raelene Michie, Rob Michie, Moss MacGibbon, Cecilia McDonald, Glen McConnell, Lamorna Osborne, Mark Page, Edward Pennay, Malcolm Porter, Doug Purdie, Martin Radcliff, Emily Remnant, Ted Sission, Vera Sistenich, Keith Steel, Shelia Stokes, Brendon Smith, Debbie Smith, Jeff Smith, Nicky Smith, John Smith, Warwick Smith, Barbara Sweeney, David Thompson, Lurline Turner, Christine Underhill, Sigrid Vesser, Georgina Walton, Michael Walton, Bruce White, Lynn White, Linda Willemsen, Andrew Wight, Brian Woolfe, (Hound), Emma Woolfe, Heidi Worsley.



*Honeyland was awarded second place for a commercial stand in the Dome - Bruce White is presented with the Silver ribbon by RAS Councillor Gary Reid*

# BIOSECURITY COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE NSW APIARY INDUSTRY

January 2016, Primefact 1442 (first) edition

Mick Rankmore, Regulatory Specialist, Apiaries Biosecurity Compliance, Department of Primary Industries, Gunnedah

NSW Department of Primary Industries acts in partnership with industry and other public sector organisations to foster profitable and sustainable development of primary industries in New South Wales. The department delivers a wide range of services to primary industries and rural communities. Services to the beekeeping industry include research, development, education, training, biosecurity, compliance and diagnostic.

## BIOSECURITY COMPLIANCE

The Biosecurity Compliance Services to beekeepers are provided through the Biosecurity Compliance Branch, overseen by the Director, Biosecurity and Food safety.

The Regulatory Specialist, Apiaries is responsible for coordinating compliance advice and information to beekeepers. Regulatory service delivery is undertaken via Regulatory Inspectors who monitor industry compliance in their respective regions.

## BIOSECURITY COMPLIANCE OFFICERS

Biosecurity Regulatory Officers are multi-skilled inspectors and have a variety of regulatory duties to perform, including animal health investigations, plant health investigations and market access services, bee duties (including bee health investigations, nuisance bee investigations, export certification) and emergency management activities.

If your concern is of a biosecurity or compliance nature, then the beekeeping regulators should be able to assist.

## NOTIFICATION OF A PEST OR DISEASE

There are a number of serious pests and diseases of honey bees that have the potential to decimate the Australian apiary industry.

The most serious of endemic diseases is American Foulbrood (AFB). See the Factsheet: American foulbrood

Beekeepers are required to notify the presences or suspected presences of endemic pests or diseases.

It is important to notify AFB to ensure that the necessary actions are taken to control or eradicate the outbreak, trace the source if possible, and take measures to prevent further spread of the disease. The collection of data on the suspected AFB hot spots allows government resources to be used more efficiently. Every new suspect or confirmed case is to be reported.

## INTERSTATE MOVEMENT OF BEES OR BEE PRODUCTS

Each state and territory (except the Australian Capital Territory) requires health certification for the movement of bees, beehives, apiary products and used appliance. More details see the Factsheet:

Moving honey bees and beehives into and within NSW - Full version

Before an inspector issues a certificate the inspector must make due inquiry that they have no reason to doubt the accuracy of the beekeeper's declaration on the certificate. If it is necessary to confirm any information, the source apiary maybe inspected at the beekeeper's request and expense. Inspectors will not sign blank certificates. Requests for certificates should be made well in advance, as an inspector may not be available at short notice.

## NUISANCE BEE COMPLAINTS

Written complaints about bees creating a public nuisance, a threat to public health or safety or bees interfering with the drying of fruit can be investigated by compliance officers. Note

that there are specific criteria around what constitutes a 'public nuisance' and therefore not all complaints will fall within this remit.

Feral colonies in trees or bees in wall cavities do not constitute a nuisance bee complaint under the *NSW Apiaries Act 1985*. In relation to the Act, bees have to be hived and under some form of management.

If you have a complaint about bee hives or bee activity, you should first investigate all other possible solutions, i.e. contact the owner of the bee hives. If this does not produce a satisfactory result, then contact the NSW DPI Regulatory Specialist, Apiaries who is available to discuss your concerns. For more details see Factsheet: Nuisance bee complaint guidelines

## NEGLECTED AND OR ABANDONED HIVES

Abandoned or neglected hives of bees or hive material often become matters of concern and complaint within the beekeeping industry.

Complaints or information from beekeepers or other persons, of alleged abandoned or neglected hives must be in writing. An 'Advice form' is available for persons to submit the information.

Reporting of neglected hives is encouraged and will be investigated see: Advice of abandoned, neglected and/or diseased apiary

## Export for live honey bee certification field inspections

Market access: Some markets require a system in place to ensure that the authorities can declare that products sent for export meet export requirements.

Compliance Officers conduct inspections of live bees on behalf of the Commonwealth Department of Agriculture & Water Resources (formally known as Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, DAFF).

The Exporter is charged a fee for this service.

## SUSPECTED EXOTIC PESTS OR DISEASES OF HONEY BEES

Exotic pests or diseases are by definition present in other countries but to date have not been identified present in Australia.

Such cases are investigated urgently, with the subsequent response directed by the NSW Chief Veterinary Officer. Compliance officers are available to assist in the detection, control and eradication of exotic diseases and pests such as varroa mite.

Suspected exotic pests or diseases can be reported by phoning the **Exotic Disease Hotline which is 1800 675 888**

## APPLICATION TO REGISTER AS A BEEKEEPER

It is a legal requirement to be registered as a beekeeper with NSW Department of Primary Industries if you keep bees in NSW. The only exemption relates exemption relates to registered interstate beekeepers that do not have their bees in NSW for no longer than 12 weeks in any 12 month period. The registration requirement applies for both recreational and commercial beekeepers.

## STATE COORDINATOR

Mick Rankmore Regulatory Specialist (Apiaries)  
NSW Department of Primary Industries  
PO Box 546 Gunnedah NSW 2380  
Ph: (02) 6741 8374 Mob: 0402 078 963 Fax: (02) 6742 4018  
Email: michael.rankmore@dpi.nsw.gov.au

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Doug Somerville, NSW DPI Technical Specialist Honey Bees, Goulburn

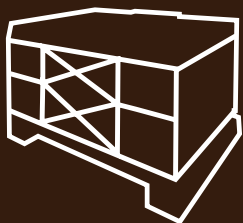
For updates go to [www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/factsheets](http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/factsheets)



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# HONEE vs HONEY

*Courtesy Catch the Buzz*

A couple of weeks ago we received here at *Bee Culture* a press release telling us there was a new product on the market called **Bee Free Honee**. It was a sweetener made from apples to taste like honey and to be used in place of honey. This, said the inventors, would relieve honey bees of having to work so hard, and they could rest and return to their normal numbers. That honeybees are required to make those apples in the first place seemed to escape these two inventors, but the irony did not escape us. We chose to ignore this profoundly ignorant assumption and let it die a natural death. However, our friend Gary Shilling, a financial consultant and beekeeper from New Jersey couldn't let it pass, and published the comments below in his newsletter INSIGHT. His response was more restrained, with far more insight than ours would have been, so we share it with you here. Enjoy.

**Commentary:** The world is desperately short of true kooks, but a pair of Minnesota ladies not only reached the top of the nut tree, but used extension ladders to go over it. They're pushing their product, "Bee Free Honee" made from apples as a substitute for honey. It's cheaper and with reduced honey demand, beekeepers won't work their bees to death. So the bee population will rise.

Well, when I learned this, I rushed right out to the 15 of my 100 bee hives that are located at our residence in Short Hills, N.J. to have a chat with my bees. On Sunday, Feb. 28, the temperature was about 60°F so the worker bees had broken their winter clusters inside the hives and great numbers were flying around vigorously, looking for nectar and pollen.

"Now girls," I told them, and only females work, "please return to your hives. You're laboring too hard, and besides, there won't be any nectar to make honey for another month. By flying, you're consuming energy and the honey in your hives needed to get through the winter. Sure, I left each hive with 60 pounds of honey when I took off the rest last August, but if you eat it up now, I'll have to feed you to keep you from starving before nectar from spring flowers arrives. "And remember that without me caring for you, treating you for maladies and providing nice cozy bee hive homes, you wouldn't exist. So go back in your hives and act like drones.

Yes, I know they don't work, can't sting to protect the hive, are only interested in sex and that you threw them all out of the hive last fall to die. But if you and your successors don't change your ways, they'll work themselves to death next spring after living only one month.

"I'm sure that if you and honey bees elsewhere throttle back, those lovely ladies from Minnesota will figure out another way to produce the apples for their honee, maybe with camel hair brushes to pollinate the blossoms, one by one.

"I know that you and your ancestors have been, well, busy as bees for three million years, but it's never too late to change. I'm also aware that if you cut back, your historic reputation will be ruined and you'll lose a lot of extant fans. Starting nearly 5,000 years ago, bees and honey were considered divine in Egypt and were part of the Pharaoh's symbols. Before mass produced beet and cane sugar, honey was a delicacy, reserved for the royalty.

In Hinduism, Vishnu incarnated as Krishna is often depicted with a blue bee over his head to represent the heavens.

"Aristotle, a beekeeper himself, saw the honey bee colony as a representation of the ideal community with perfect organization. Virgil, the master beekeeper of his era, praised the bee as a symbol of loyalty and perfect respect for the ruler, which the ancients believed to be a king bee since kings, not queens, ruled the world. Without the beeswax in their ears, Odysseus' sailors in the *Odyssey* would have heard the Sirens song, which was as 'sweet as the honeycomb,' and crashed their boat on the rocks.

*Australia's Honeybee News March/April 2016*

"Shakespeare in *Henry V* said, 'Obedience: for so work the honey bees, creatures that by a rule in nature teach the act of order to a peopled kingdom.' And you girls should know that the honey bee became an emblem for Napoleon's sovereign empire in 1804. Long before him, the honey bee was the most frequently used insect in heraldry and considered a great virtue by providing mankind with honey to eat and wax for candles as well as symbols of industry. Three bees adorn the logo of the Episcopal Preaching Foundation, which I founded 29 years ago.

"In the US, 16 states have bees as part of their state emblems including Utah, 'The Beehive State.' And you girls should be aware that your ancestors were all from the Old World. They arrived here with European settlers, were important for pollination and honey production and were called 'the White man's fly' by Indians.

"The Rev. Lorenzo Langstroth—the Congregational preacher from Philadelphia and father of modern beekeeping who in 1851 invented the bee hive that you girls inhabit—advised, 'Place yourself before a hive, and see the indefatigable energy of these industrious veterans, toiling along with their heavy burdens... and then judge if, while qualified for useful labor, you ought ever to surrender yourself to slothful indulgence.'

"Girls," I continued, "don't forget that without the honey your ancestors made, the Anglo Saxons would have had no mead to drink. And if you slack off, the 30% of all U.S. food that requires insect pollination will be in jeopardy. That includes almonds in California, the state's biggest agricultural export that uses 1.8 million of the 2.2 million commercial American bee hives each year for pollination. Without honey bees, almond orchards yield 30 lbs. per acre and up to 3,000 with bee pollination."

After I concluded my monologue, my bees continued to fly energetically, still looking for nectar. Maybe the buzzing from beating their wings was so loud that they couldn't hear me. If so, I'm glad they couldn't...

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## ANNUAL CONFERENCE - 2016 PROGRAM

Commercial Club, Albury NSW

### WEDNESDAY 11 MAY 2016 - Wattle Room, Commercial Club Albury

#### 5.00 - 6.00pm MEMBERS HAVE YOUR SAY - Q & A

Association members are invited to come along and talk with your Executive Council.

### THURSDAY 12 MAY 2016 - Waratah Room, Commercial Club Albury Registration from 8am

9.00am	NSW Apiarists' Association AGM <b>Neil Bingley</b> , <i>President</i> NSW Apiarists' Association
9.15am	AHBIC Report - Activities for the year <b>Ian Zadow</b> , <i>Chairman</i> Australian Honey Bee Industry Council
9.45am	NSW Department of Primary Industries Reports <b>Dr Doug Somerville</b> , <i>Technical Specialist</i> Honey Bees <b>Mick Rankmore</b> , <i>Regulatory Specialist</i> , <i>Apiaries</i>
10.15am	Nosema disease: a common but cryptic killer <b>John Roberts</b> , <i>Postdoctoral Fellow</i> CSIRO Biosecurity Flagship
<b>10.45am</b>	<b>MORNING TEA</b>
11.30am	What is the Bee Biosecurity Officer role all about? <b>Haley Prager</b> , <i>NSW Bee Biosecurity Officer</i> NSW Department of Primary Industries
12.00pm	Addressing a shortage of bees for the 2016 almond crop <b>Ben Brown</b> , <i>Project and Technical Manager</i> Select Harvests - Almond Division
<b>12.30pm</b>	<b>Nominations for Executive Council followed by LUNCH BREAK</b>
2.00pm	Dissecting bees without touching them <b>Dr Mark Greco</b> , <i>Senior Lecturer in Medical Imaging</i> Faculty of Science Charles Sturt University
2.40pm	Drought relief packages <b>John Newcombe</b> , <i>Director</i> NSW Rural Assistance Authority
3.10pm	Vocational education and training - resources and courses including native bees <b>Danielle Lloyd-Prichard</b> , <i>Education Officer Professional Development</i> and <b>Elizabeth Frost</b> , <i>Education Officer Honey Bees</i> , Tocal College NSW DPI
3.40pm	Changes to biosecurity legislation in NSW <b>Dr Bernie Dominiak</b> , <i>Leader Regional Pest Management</i> , <i>Biosecurity</i> Industry & Investment
4.10pm	Bioactivity of Australian leptospermum honey - project update <b>Dr Nural Cokcetin</b> , <i>Postgraduate Research Associate</i> and <i>Oz Honey Project Coordinator</i> , <i>ithree</i> institute, University of Technology Sydney and <b>Simon Williams</b> , <i>PhD Candidate</i> , School of Science and Engineering University of the Sunshine Coast
4.40pm	General Business
<b>5.30pm</b>	<b>WINE &amp; CHEESE NIGHT IN THE TRADE SHOW - sponsored by Capilano</b>

CONFERENCE GOLD PARTNER



## ANNUAL CONFERENCE - 2016 PROGRAM

Commercial Club, Albury NSW

FRIDAY 13 MAY 2016 - Waratah Room, Commercial Club Albury Registration from 8.30am	
9.00am	Honeybee nutrition <b>Dr Doug Somerville</b> , <i>Technical Specialist Honey Bees</i> NSW Department of Primary Industries
9.30am	BeeAware, surveillance program, online training module and other honey bee projects <b>Alison Saunders</b> , <i>National Manager, Horticultural Cropping</i> Plant Health Australia
10.00am	Social barriers to achieving <b>Pip Job</b> , <i>Project Manager Resilience, 2014 National &amp; NSW/ACT RIRDC Rural Woman of the Year</i> NSW Department of Primary Industries
<b>10.30am</b>	<b>Close of nominations for Executive Council</b> <b>MORNING TEA</b>
11.15am	Victorian Public Land Management <b>Ian Cane</b> , <i>Victorian Beekeeper</i>
11.45am	<b>The Hon. Niall Blair, MLC</b> , Minister for Primary Industries
<b>12.15pm</b>	<b>Close of voting for Executive Council</b> <b>LUNCH BREAK</b>
2.00pm	The ins and outs of apprenticeships and traineeships <b>Garry Whittaker</b> , <i>Regional Manager Riverina</i> , State Training Services NSW DPI
2.30pm	Flying doctors <b>Dr Katja Hogendoorn</b> , <i>School of Agriculture, Food and Wine</i> , The University of Adelaide
3.00pm	Honey bee and pollination report from the Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation <b>James Kershaw</b> , <i>RIRDC Honey Bee and Pollination Advisory Committee</i>
3.30pm	Importation risk assessment of imported bee semen <b>Elizabeth Frost</b> , <i>Education Officer Honey Bees</i> Tocal Agricultural Centre NSW DPI
4.00pm	General Business
4.30pm	Close
<b>7.00pm</b>	<b>ANNUAL CONFERENCE DINNER - sponsored by Olam Orchards</b>

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# BEE POSTERS & PRINTS



Journalist and illustrator Gina Cranson admits that her fascination with bees was, in the beginning, more about the honey than the makers.

She kept a hive in the backyard, appreciated her bees' industriousness, productivity and unflinching commitment to teamwork, but she was perhaps happiest and most engaged at harvest time. Back then, she thought that bees were bees, that bees made honey, and that was that.

Spotting a blue bee in her garden, however, and then embarking on a Natural History Illustration degree at the University of Newcastle, compelled her to look a little closer.

She found the variety of native bees in Australia to be staggering – there are 10 species of social stingless bees and more than 1500 different solitary species. And now that she knows they are out there, she spends considerable time identifying them, admiring their exquisite colour and composition, studying them under the microscope and drawing them.

Over the past 18 months, Gina has contributed illustrations for *The Australian Native Bee Book* by Dr Tim Heard; created two full-colour A2 identification posters (Native Bees of the Hunter Region and Native Bees of New South Wales); produced limited-edition miniature prints of eight different species; and painted six introduced species for a Department of Primary Industries book on native bees that is in production. She is now working on a Native Bees of Queensland poster, with other states to follow.

The posters feature Gina's watercolour illustrations of some of the native bees we have in our midst – there are 12 native species plus the introduced European Honeybee on the Hunter poster and 21 native species plus the introduced European Honeybee and African Carder Bee on the NSW poster.

Since first spotting that Blue-Banded Bee in her garden several years ago, she has discovered at least six different kinds of native bees in her humble patch alone, including the Common Teddy Bear Bee, Domino Cuckoo Bee, Gold-Topped Leafcutter, Yellow-Banded Chilalictus, Carbonaria Stingless Bee and Leaf-Faced Bee.

"It has been a huge awakening for me," she says. "Once you know they are there, you can't help but find them. I go out most days with my camera fitted with a macro lens and just wait for them to appear. It's such a joy to see them so busy and so earnest, and to know exactly what they are!"

Throughout the illustration process, Gina has received the help of eminent entomologist Dr Michael Batley, from The Australian Museum. "I will be forever indebted to Michael for the hours he spends, helping me to be as accurate and as faithful to the subject as I can in this fledgling stage of my artistic endeavours," Gina says.

"I would not be able to do what I do without Michael's guidance. I know that my understanding of bees and my perception of them will only improve in the coming years – I have so much to learn – but Michael has been so generous with his time and his expertise and has been patiently drawing my attention to elements that need addressing. It could be a slight curve in a wing venation that needs straightening, or the way the *Tetragonula carbonaria*'s abdomen curls under, or the fact that the bees' tegulae, while bulbous, are not round but elongated.

"I just love the process." Gina says the posters have been embraced by beekeepers, gardeners and nature lovers, who derive the same joy as she does from learning something new and marvelling at the diversity we are blessed with in our own backyards and beyond.

**Gina's posters and prints visit: [www.ginacranson.com](http://www.ginacranson.com)**

## BEEKEEPERS HIVES DESTROYED BY FIRE



A beekeeper's hives were destroyed by fire due to owner's lack of responsibility to comply with the legal requirements to identify all brood boxes.

The devastating loss of a commercial load of bees, estimated to be worth between \$10,000 and \$15,000 may have been diverted if the owner had clearly identified the brood boxes with the owner's registered beekeepers number.

A frantic phone call from a concerned local resident was made to inform the authorities that a load of beehives were

in direct line of a raging bush fire. When asked did he know the owner of the hives or were there any identification on the boxes the reply was a sad, no.

The hives were placed there by the owner without seeking permission of informing the land owner or land manager.

All the hives were destroyed in the fire that passed through the apiary site.

Eventually the owner of the hives came forward. When asked if he knew the requirements to identify all brood boxes he admitted that indeed he knew of that requirement.

A fact sheet entitled Identifying beehives was provided to the beekeeper. He then left to start identifying all of his other brood boxes under his control.

This situation and similar ones have occurred in the past. You could be placed in the same situation if you do not identify all brood boxes under your control.

**For further details on identifying brood boxes and other legal requirement please refer to the following web site <http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/agriculture/livestock/honey-bees> or phone Mick Rankmore on 02 6741 8374.**

# BEEKEEPING IN THE KINGDOM OF TONGA

*Bruce White, Business Advisor OAM*

*Dr Emily Remnant, Molecular Geneticist Behaviour and Genetics  
of Social Insects Laboratory School of Biological Sciences  
University of Sydney*

*Dr Lamorna Osborne President NSW Amateur Beekeeping Association*

During October and November Bruce White, Dr Emily Remnant and Dr Lamorna Osborne, visited three islands in the Tongan group, Vava'u, Eua and Tongatapu.

Bruce was funded by the Tongan Business Enterprise Centre and Emily by the Australian and Pacific Science Foundation to carry out a project on "Why do honeybees survive Varroa infections in Tonga". Lamorna went with the flow, to provide valuable support and assistance and to keep us healthy.

## **Vava'u**

An hour flight from the main island of Tongatapu. Don Francisca Mourelle de la Rue was the first European to visit Vava'u in 1781 the capital is Neiafu.

Vava'u is best known for its harbour. Port of Refuge attracts seafarers from all over the world. The vanilla grown there is considered to be some of the best in the world. It has a warmer climate than most of the other islands and fertile soil ideal for tropical fruits.



*Port of Refuge*

## **Bees**

Since Bruce and Lamorna last visited, Jonathan Treister, the main beekeeper, and his wife Lena had spent most of their time in Tongatapu with other business interests. Despite Varroa being present all his colonies were full of honey and honey-bound, so the plants had provided plenty of nectar and pollen. The queens had little room for brood.



*Jonathan's full hive*

The other beekeeper Ian Jones, who previously lived in Tasmania, and his wife Vanessa are involved with coconuts, vanilla and pigs as well as operating excellent accommodation at Vava'u Villa, where we stayed during our visit with excellent hosts.

Despite Varroa (*Varroa destructor*), his hives were still alive from our previous visit in 2014 without any treatment with miticides.

Samples of Varroa were collected from Vava'u, the only island in the Tongan group with Varroa, for the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service.



*Ian Jones's full hive*

We also meet Nathan who collected feral bees and had built his hive numbers to eighty and reported they did well, some of the time was pre Varroa. He sold his hives to Jonathan and went to New Zealand. Nathan helped us work Jonathan's hives and collect feral hives during our visit; he has a very sound knowledge of beekeeping and intends to start up again in Vava'u.



*Nathan and Lamorna examining flora*

## **Feral Colonies**

During the July 2014 visit we removed several feral colonies. One was impossible to remove as it still had strong flight activity.

In two other locations no feral colonies had returned, however at a school where four feral colonies had been removed in July 2014, two of the cavities were reoccupied by feral colonies and these were removed.



*A feral colony that swarmed into a cavity previously occupied in 2014*



So feral colonies are surviving with Varroa present.

Two feral colonies were removed from a new location, a school at Ha'Alaufuli.

With proper management of colonies Vava'u seems to be a place where honey production could be worthwhile and providing a pollination service to the crop farmers coupled with regular requeening of colonies.

### Research

On the previous trip in 2014 we were surprised to see colonies thriving with Varroa (*Varroa destructor*) present and no miticides treatments eight years after Varroa was detected.

An invitation to speak to the beekeeping research team at the University of Sydney lead to Dr Emily Remnant and Prof Madeleine Beekman applying for research funds to the Australian and Pacific Science Foundation to carry out a project in Tonga.

### "Why do honeybees survive Varroa infection in Tonga"

Emily and Madeleine are investigating why some honeybee populations around the world can survive in the presence of Varroa and how Varroa affects the level of viruses in bees.

Emily accompanied us to Tonga for 10 days to perform mite counts and collect samples from Varroa-infested colonies in Vava'u and Varroa-free bees from the main island Tongatapu and neighbouring Eua. The purpose of the research is to examine the viruses present on Vava'u and compare these to the Varroa-free islands to see how Varroa has changed the viruses in Tonga, and to investigate why Vava'u bees are able to survive without chemical Varroa treatments.

In Vava'u we collected samples from the hives of Ian and Jonathan, and feral hives from two schools and a house, for a total of 12 sampled colonies. Mite counts showed that there were between 3-11 mites per 100 bees. In one colony we examined drone brood and saw 50 mites per 100 drones. In Tongatapu we sampled three feral colonies from tree trunks, homes and caves. In Eua, we sampled seven colonies, three from a beekeeper and the others from feral hives.

Samples were frozen and preserved in RNA - later brought to the University of Sydney under Quarantine import permits, where the laboratory is a Quarantine research facility.

Currently the samples are being processed using a technique called next-generation sequencing. Emily will determine the virus sequences present and compare the virus levels between Varroa-infected and uninfected colonies. She will also look for bacterial-diseases such as AFB, previously known to be present on Eua and Tongatapu.

Finally Emily will examine the honeybee genes to see if there is something unique about Tongan bees, that helps them to survive Varroa.



*Lamorna, Lena and Emily examining brood comb*



*Emily examining bees in a Pooter*



*Emily preserving samples with RNA for her virus research*



*Emily processing samples with Bob Buster in the background*

### Eua

Eua is a small island only 19km long, it is a popular tourist island in the Kingdom of Tonga.

A flight of seven minutes links Eua Island with Tongatapu Island, the main island in the Tongan group of islands. Reputedly the world's shortest commercial flight that Emily undertook on her return. We all caught the 2 ½ hour ferry trip to Eua from Tongatapu.

Geographically Eua is the oldest island being 40 million years old with some different flora to the other two islands visited.

Hilly, covered in parts with lush rain forest, volcanic soil, breathtakingly beautiful and rugged, the perfect destination for travellers looking for an eco-experience.



Spectacular cliffs, caves and sink holes with sea birds soaring atop thermal currents. Eua rare red-breasted musk parrot, the Koki and the Pacific's largest underwater caverns.

Off the coast is the 10.8 km deep Tongan trench the second deepest ocean in the world.

The island of Eua is the first island in the world to see the sun rise every day. Eua is the only island in the group with naturally flowing spring water. One of the main industries is forestry including pines, so providing excellent smoker fuel.



*Flora in the Forest Eua*



*Bruce collecting smoker fuel with Bob Buster*



*Eua on the Tongan Trench side*

We stayed at the Hideaway, where our excellent host Naite Hausia, took an interest in the work we were doing.

One of the buildings had a feral colony of bees we were able to remove. Prior to its removal we visited Hango College, the only Agricultural College in Tonga, where we met the Principal and his wife.

The day of the removal the Principal, his wife and a number of students visited to assist in the removal of the feral colony.



*Lamorna with Sione and Sootino Taungakava Hango College*

Lamorna is a Rotarian and a Victorian Rotary club has a project at the college and will be sending a container over in September 2016. Lamorna is hoping it will also include beekeeping equipment so the college can start an apiary to teach the students beekeeping. We considered this very important with honeybees being key to maximum crop production.



*Hango College Student learning how to remove a feral colony*

The Principal was also provided with educational information on Beekeeping Best Practices, Pollination and Biosecurity. The College in the past did have an apiary but we were not able to find out what happened to it. Naite was able to provide the King of Tonga, who was staying on Eua, with some honey Lamorna extracted from the feral colony as well as some honey comb.



*Bottle of honey from Eua*

The Tongan Business Development Centre arranged for us to visit the only beekeeper on Eua, Bob Buster and his family. Prior to arriving email correspondence had taken place, so I was aware American Foul Brood had been detected on the island and hives destroyed. One of the first tasks was to inspect all Bob's managed colonies and it was very pleasing to see no American

Foul Brood detected, so he had followed all instructions he was given, equally as pleasing no AFB was observed in any feral colonies we removed.

Managed and feral colonies were sugar shaken and no Varroa detected and they have never been recorded on Eua.

Bob learnt most of his beekeeping from books and had never seen a queen bee. A pleasing aspect was that he had purchased his equipment from Australia and used beeswax comb foundation whereas the beekeepers on Vava'u used plastic.

The hives were in good condition with plenty of bees, pollen and honey, he and two of his sons Jerome and Joshua were keen to learn. His hives were headed by old queens. A lot of time was spent on the importance of quality combs, correct supering, understanding how to interpret field conditions and relating that to management handling bees.



*Explaining colony management to Bob and Jerome Buster*

### **Flora**

The flora is different from the other islands we visited, but the bees can certainly survive and Bob had an understanding of flora and identified November as the best month to visit.

### **Queen Rearing**

One of the main aims was to teach queen rearing so colonies can be headed by young queens instead of relying on swarming to queen the colonies.

Emails prior to our visit allowed equipment to be prepared by Bob and we were able to take grafting tools and queen cells.

With fresh nectar and pollen available and plenty of drones, Bob and his two sons, on their first attempt, were very successful in starting cells.



*Bob Buster Grafting*

Some of which were used to put into nucs split from his managed hives and by splitting a strong feral colony.



*Finished Queen Cells*

### **Honey**

Bob had a honey extractor so we were able to remove honey from his managed hives for which he has a ready market.

The honey was amber colour of good density and flavour.

### **Feral Bees**

Bob and his sons have information on Bee lining, but most feral bees are found by word of mouth. Feral bees seem to be fairly common over most parts of the island we even visited one in the rainforest area. Three feral colonies were removed during our visit and others located. Bob is hoping to expand his apiary on Eua and establish an apiary on Tongatapu.

### **Tongatapu**

This is the main island with direct flights from Sydney to its capital Nuku'alofa.

It is the commercial and transport hub, the centre of Government and the Monarchy. Discovered by Able Tasman in 1643. It is rather flat, built of coral limestone with a flying fox colony at Kolouai that depends on nectar, pollen and fruit to survive. This is an indicator of how honeybees may also survive.

This is the island that has had the most beekeeping activity. A New Zealand Company, Kintail Apiaries established colonies in 1970/ 71 to rear early queens for the New Zealand market on the island in the hope of establishing a queen rearing business. When the Tongan mite *Edbarellus tonganus* was discovered in colonies that ended any export chances. It was not known if the mites attack bees or their brood, we didn't observe these mites and none were on the samples we collected.

During a boom in squash production many nucs were imported into Tongatapu and Eua from Fiji. We have been told American Foul Brood disease made it very difficult to keep bees on Tongatapu as colonies kept getting reinfected.

On our visit only feral colonies could be located, three in total. Two had been present for a long time, one in a tree and another in a rock wall with the third one present in a house for about 6 months.



*Catching flying bees from a feral colony in a house wall using a container with two plastic tubes called a Pooter.*



The tube you suck on has the container end blocked with gauze to prevent bees being sucked up into your mouth. The bees get trapped in the container.

All colonies were sugar shaken by collecting flying field bees no Varroa was found and Varroa has not been reported on Tongatapu.

Feral bees appear to be fairly widespread over the parts of the island we visited from the activity of the bees foraging on flowers.

The flora seems similar on Tongatapu and a personal communication with Milton McKenzie, a New Zealander who lived and kept bees there is of the opinion it may be necessary to feed sugar syrup at certain times of the year to keep colonies strong.

Without being able to see inside a managed hive it is difficult to determine how well colonies are doing, however observing the flight activity indicated that they were doing well.

Attending a Rotary meeting led to a meeting with an agronomist from a large agricultural company growing crops in Tonga, who appreciated the value of encouraging the use of bees to pollinate crops. They were supplied with pollination information.



A market research garden where managed bees would improve yields

Visiting the markets clearly indicated how many crops would benefit from managed honeybee pollination instead of relying on feral bees and it is hoped this can be further developed.

Tongatapu is the main cropping island where managed bees would improve yields.

A farmer Peuafi Leuila who works land in Tongatapu but lives in New Zealand is hoping to get hives. He has enrolled on our advice in a beekeeping course in New Zealand to learn about beekeeping then use his knowledge to start an apiary in Tongatapu with local bees.

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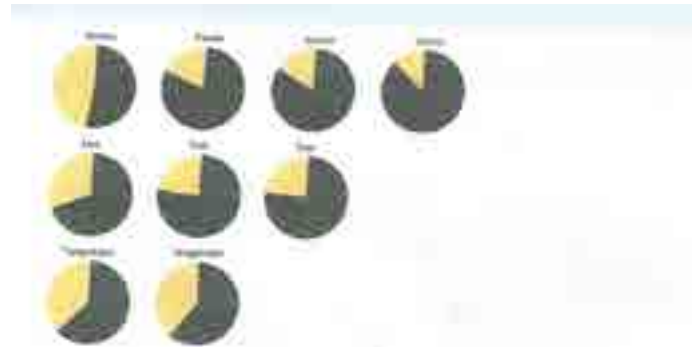
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## DNA of the Bees

Dr Nadine Chapman, a Bee Biologist from the University of Sydney was sent samples with a quarantine permit from the three islands of bees prior to our trip. As on the first trip, it was confusing as to what race the bees were, some funding was provided by the Illawarra Branch of the ABA for this work. It turned out they were hybrids, of mostly Western European origin, ie *Apis mellifera Iberiensis* and or *Apis mellifera mellifera*.



Pink= African lineage

Yellow= Eastern European C lineage (*A. mellifera ligustica*, *A.m. carnica* etc)

Black= Western European M lineage (*A.m. mellifera*, *A. m. iberiensis*)

We are hoping to continue to assist the beekeepers in the Kingdom of Tonga by working with the Rotary club of North Frankston, Victoria Australia, who set up the Hango college 100,000 litre water storage and delivery system there. Also with the Hango Agricultural college as well the Rotary club of Nukualofa and the Methodist Church of Tonga, to increase the knowledge and beekeeping skills. This would enable Tonga agriculture to have increased yields and increased varieties of produce. We also hope to work with TBEC, Nishi Farms and beekeepers on Vava'u to improve their beekeeping skills.

These organisations have already been involved in the research described above or have been informed of the project. By email we have been kept up to date with the progress. All the grafted queen cells put into queenless nucleus colonies mated and had supers added.

Question have also been answered. We are so lucky to have beekeeping association journals and an advisory service for Australian beekeepers to learn best practices.

Bruce White OAM  
blwhite11@hotmail.com

Dr Emily Remnant, Sydney University  
emily.remnant@sydney.edu.au

Dr Lamorna Osborne, President NSW ABA & Illawarra Branch  
education@beekeeperssutherland.org.au

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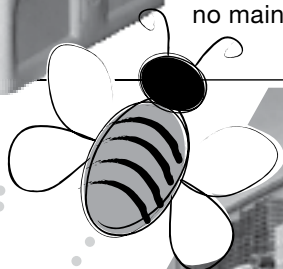
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# AUSTRALIAN HONEY BEE INDUSTRY COUNCIL

Executive Director: Trevor Weatherhead Phone: 07 5467 2265

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FOR THE LATEST NEWS GO TO THE AHBIC WEBSITE: [www.honeybee.org.au](http://www.honeybee.org.au)

## NEWS UPDATE - MARCH 2016

### 2016 AUSTRALIAN BIOSECURITY AWARDS

I was honoured to receive the David Banks Lifetime Achievement Award at the 2016 ABARES Outlook dinner on 1 March 2016.

David had been a good friend to me and was a great advocate for our industry and we achieved much in biosecurity through his great work. It will be 11 years this coming May since he was killed in the plane crash at Lockhart River on Cape York.

The beekeepers of the Northern Territory also received an award in the Industry Category. This was accepted by Andrew Shugg on behalf of the Northern Territory beekeepers.

For details of the awards see <http://www.agriculture.gov.au/biosecurity/australia/public-awareness/aba>

### HONEY MONTH

Information on what is happening for Honey Month 2016 around Australia is starting to appear on the AHBIC website <http://honeybee.org.au/education/honey-month-2016/>

Make a point of checking the website on a regular basis to see what is happening in your State.

### ELECTIONS AT THE AHBIC AGM

At the upcoming AHBIC AGM in July, there will be elections held for Chairperson and two Executive positions.

Ian Zadow is the current Chairperson and is eligible to renominate. However, Ian has indicated he will not be seeking nomination as Chairperson.

The two (2) Executive members whose terms are expiring are Trevor Morgan and Peter McDonald.

Trevor Morgan is not eligible to renominate as he has served six (6) years continuously. See 5.7 of the AHBIC Constitution. Peter McDonald is eligible to renominate.

Please note that any nominations for Chairperson needs to be with the AHBIC Secretary 28 days prior to the meeting i.e. 16 June 2016. If no nominations are received then nominations will be taken from the floor. Nominations for the Executive can be made at any time up until the elections.

Also please note that any nominations need to have been a financial member of a member body of AHBIC for two consecutive years prior to the elections. See 5.2.4 (a). It also says in 5.2.4 (b) that the person must be a full contributor to AHBIC.

### NEW CHINESE PROTOCOLS

The Department of Agriculture and Water Resources (DAWR) has received draft protocols from China in relation of the import of honey and royal jelly into China.

We have had a teleconference with DAWR to have a preliminary look at the documents supplied by China. Industry reps on the teleconference were Jodie Goldsworthy, Ben McKee, Ross Christiansen and Trevor Weatherhead. Ian Zadow was an apology.

After much discussion on the teleconference, industry is to provide comments on the health certificate to DAWR and the DAWR is to look at the questionnaire. Industry will help out with information for the questionnaire.

I am not aware of anyone who is exporting Australian produced royal jelly to China. If you are, please contact me so we can include you in our review of the proposed health certificate. Although we have 18 months to consider these documents, we need to start working on them now.

### QBA CONFERENCE AND AHBIC AGM IN TOWNSVILLE

Details of the Queensland Beekeepers Association conference plus the AHBIC AGM will be in the next newsletter. They will include accommodation details and registration forms.

### BUMBLE BEE INQUIRY

AHBIC and the Tasmanian Beekeepers Association have put in a submission to this Inquiry. All submissions can be seen at:

[http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary\\_Business/Committees/Senate/Environment\\_and\\_Communications/Bumblebees/Submissions](http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Environment_and_Communications/Bumblebees/Submissions)

### TAXATION INQUIRY

AHBIC received advice of "An inquiry into the provisions of the Tax and Superannuation Laws Amendment (2016 Measures No. 1) Bill 2016" with only a few days to put in a submission. AHBIC did prepare a submission. All submission can be seen at:

[http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary\\_Business/Committees/Senate/Economics/TSLAB\\_measures\\_2016/Submissions](http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Economics/TSLAB_measures_2016/Submissions)

### TASMANIAN FIRES

Fortunately the loss of hives was not as great as was feared. It is estimated that around 100 hives were lost.

Of course the big loss was the inability to get into sites, the loss of the temperate rainforest where the leatherwood grows as an understorey and the manuka country. Also hives had to be moved off the honey flow due to the progress of the fires.

With the loss for the temperate rainforest, the hot fires mean that the leatherwood will not regenerate.

In the manuka country, it will regenerate but will not yield for a few years.

There will be a shortage of leatherwood this year. The Tasmanian Beekeepers Association are meeting with the Government to look at what options there are.

### WESTERN AUSTRALIAN FIRES

There have been no more losses of hives reported since the last newsletter.

There have been losses of many sites north of Perth in the wintering areas plus the other areas previously reported.

### NEW RIRDC MANAGING DIRECTOR PLUS SHIFTING

RIRDC have advised that Mr. John Harvey has been

appointed as the new Managing Director. He will take up the position as from 3 May, 2016. He takes over from Mr. Craig Burns. Craig Burns served as the Managing Director for six (6) years.

Also there have been moves to have RIRDC shift out of Canberra to a regional centre.

Albury/Wodonga had been a suggestion but it now seems the shift will be to Wagga Wagga. For the sake of our industry we can only hope that there will be no staff losses as a result of the shift as industry has built up a good relationship with the RIRDC staff over the years.

#### **ATO ADVICE**

AHBIC has received the following advice from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO). Please consult your own accountant to discuss any ramifications for your business.

Please note there has been an update to the asset names for the proposed effective life determinations ('plant' has been replaced with assets):

#### ***Agriculture (01110 to 01990)***

#### **ASSET LIFE (YEARS) REVIEWED DATE OF APPLICATION**

Bee farming assets:  
Beehives 13 \* 1 Jul 2016  
Processing assets 20 \* 1 Jul 2016

#### **RECENT EUROPEAN UNION REGULATIONS**

AHBIC has been advised that the European Union (EU) has now set a Maximum Level (ML) for lead in honey.

It is 0.1 mg/kg. This can be found at COMMISSION REGULATION (EU) 2015/1005  
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32015R1005&from=EN>

Australia does not currently have an MRL for lead but the National Residue Survey (NRS) staff have introduced a new Residue Action Limit (RAL), in effect a de facto MRL, for lead in honey of 0.1 mg/kg based on the new EU and existing NZ MLs.

The NRS is in place so that Australia can export honey to the EU but is increasingly been used to supply data for other countries which we export to.

Australian beekeepers and packers can be confident, from past analysis, that our honey will have no problems meeting the new ML set by the EU. Sources of lead in the past, other than from natural sources, have been from the lead solder in older extractors and storage equipment, galvanised drums which industry is phasing out and any old lead paint used on boxes.

So it is crucial that if you do have old extractors with lead solder that you take steps to replace that equipment or take steps to cover that solder with food grade paint and remove any boxes from your operation that have lead paint on them.

#### **SEASONAL WORKERS**

There has been a scheme in place where workers from certain Pacific Island nations can come to work in Australia for certain periods. It is called the Seasonal Worker Program and details can be found at <http://www.employment.gov.au/seasonal-worker-programme>

It has mainly applied to the horticulture industry but I have been advised that recent changes now allow workers to be employed in the beekeeping industry.

#### **APIMONDIA 2017**

Apimondia in 2017 is being held in Istanbul, Turkey. Their website has just been put up. It is [www.apimondia2017.org](http://www.apimondia2017.org)

#### **WORKING HOLIDAY MAKER VISA PROGRAMME**

AHBIC has been advised the taxation arrangements for this scheme, also known as the back packer tax, are going to be reviewed. I am not sure if any beekeepers use back packers as workers but if you do and you wish to have some comments made for this review please let me know so I can send the details of the review to you when I receive them.

#### **SENATE INQUIRY**

AHBIC has been advised of a Senate Inquiry into Primary Industries Levies and Charges Collection Amendment Bill 2016 See:

[http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary\\_Business/Committees/Senate/Rural\\_and\\_Regional\\_Affairs\\_and\\_Transport/Primary\\_industries\\_bill](http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Rural_and_Regional_Affairs_and_Transport/Primary_industries_bill) for more details.

#### **MEETING WITH APVMA**

Representatives from AHBIC and the National Council of Pollination Associations (NCPA) met with the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) in early March.

The main topic of discussion was the use and labelling of fipronil. AHBIC is to submit some more information to APVMA on fipronil. The issue of the lack of action by the Environmental Protection Agency in New South Wales to the complaints of beekeeper who have had hives poisoned was also discussed.

One thing that did come out is that there have been no "adverse experience reports" submitted to APVMA on poisoning of bees. Remember if it is not reported it did not happen. See: <http://apvma.gov.au/node/1101>

#### **BEECONNECTED**

BeeConnected has now been introduced into Canada.

For Australian beekeepers there have been a couple of issue that have been sorted out. For more information on downloading the BeeConnected app see: <http://www.croplife.org.au/industrystewardship/ppi/beeconnected/>

This program is a way of trying to ensure that beekeepers, farmers and pesticide applicators can know what is happening in an area. The more it is used the better the chances of not having hives sprayed.

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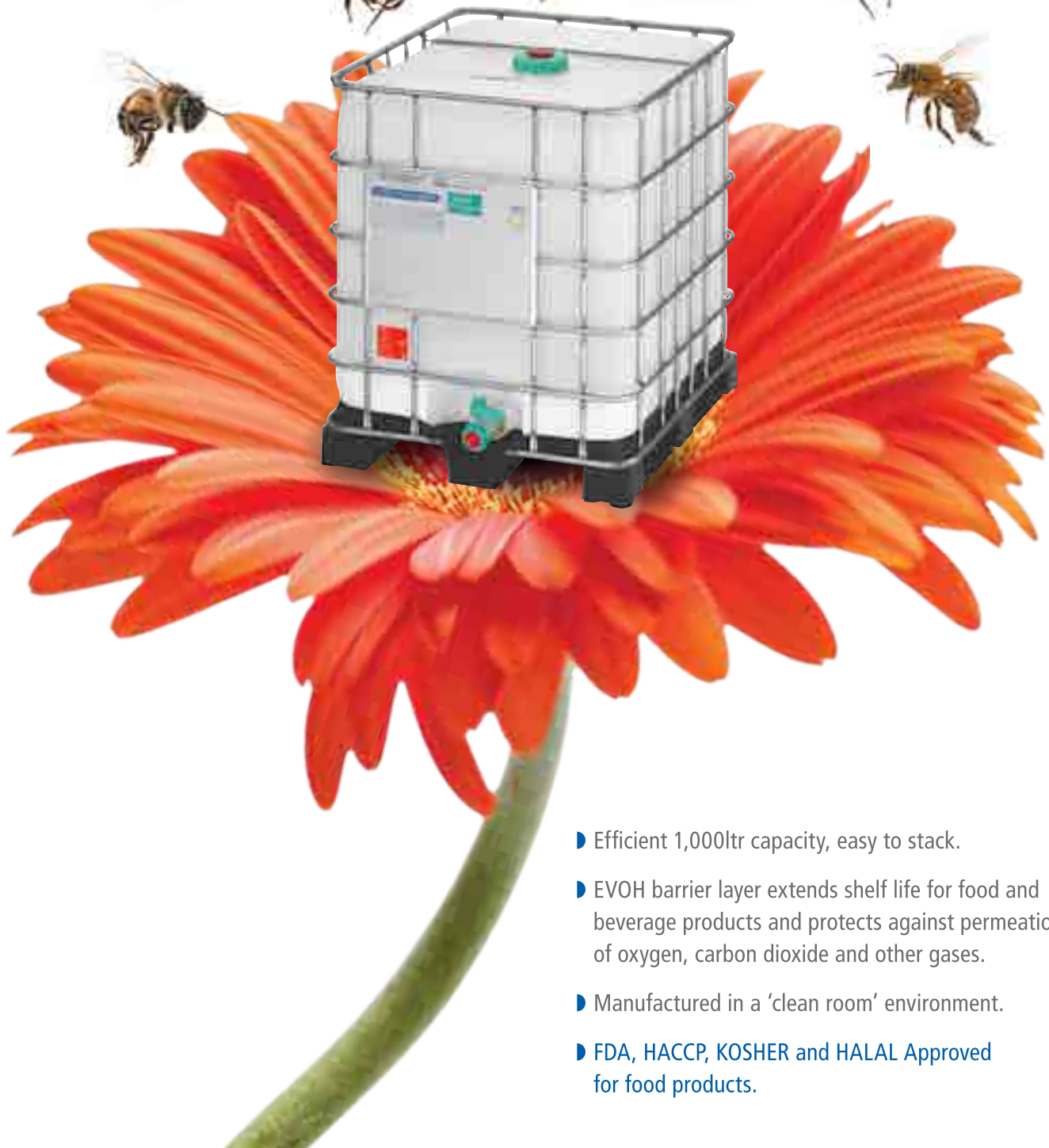
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