

AUSTRALIA'S

HONEYBEE NEWS

"The Voice of the Beekeeper"
www.nswaa.com.au

Volume 12 Number 6
November - December 2019

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Note: Rates from 1 March 2017

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- Support beekeepers in all regions through 9 NSWAA Branches
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- WFI - Insurance for Rural Business, Business & Strata - 1300 934 934. WFI provides commission to NSW Apiarists' Association (NSWAA) to help member benefits. Please let your local Area Manager know that you are a member to receive this benefit for the Association. - Ms Jane Jones Mob: 0417 943 451 E: jane.jones@wfi.com.au
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PRESIDENT'S REPORT



Presidents Report

Drought and bush fires have been the main concern for beekeepers. The fires in northern NSW have been horrific with very hot fires destroying apiaries and most likely killing many mature eucalypts. Most of the burnt forests and National Parks will not be useful for beekeepers for 20 years or more. NSWAA is collating figures on destroyed hives and burnt bee sites. We will use these figures when we lobby government for increased access to public resource.

As I write this there is a large fire just north of Batemans Bay in an area where there were a lot of beehives working grey ironbark. I am aware of no hives destroyed - some apiaries had fire go over the site and a lot of hives would have lost field bees.

These fires are a timely reminder to ensure you abide by the conditions of your permit/licence. That is, inform the agency you have bees on site and clear around your apiary 3m. I have been told of several apiaries where the fire went through the apiary and because there was no leaf litter the fire did no damage to the hives.

On TOTAL FIRE BAN days beekeepers have an exemption and can light their smoker and work bees. Do not abuse this privilege and only use the smoker if the apiary area has no combustible material near by. The rules on using a smoker on Total Fire Ban days see article in this HBN.

With this terrible fire season it would be prudent for all beekeepers to check their insurance cover for their hives. Some have hives insured for \$500 per hive and others for just \$200. Can your business survive without suitable insurance?

The executive have done several radio interviews reference bees and the fires. After this we have been inundated with offers of land to place bees. We have collated these and sent out via the branches. Do not hesitate to contact these land owners — some of these properties will make good long term sites.

The citrus in the Leeton Griffith area yielded well this year though a lot of beekeepers would have not seen this due to overstocking of orchards. A lot of beekeepers would have done better on Pattersons Curse which did yield and breeds great bees.

One or two enterprising people advertised as bee site brokers for bee sites in the Leeton and Griffith citrus area. This contributed to the overstocking. As an Association we cannot stop this. However those desperate for sites ask the broker questions - such as: How close will my apiary be to another apiary? Is the site on private land? Overstocking creates biosecurity issues and can upset land holders. NSWAA is trying to get increased access to resource and now we have some landholders that will not let bees back on their land due to bad experiences with bees. The citrus orchard still has a business to run - pick fruit and spray fruit. Orchardists want to be able to do this without being hammered by bees.

Thank you to David and Wendy Mumford for hosting the Riverina launch of Certificate III in Beekeeping as a High School elective. See article in this HBN. I believe one student from Gundagai has signed up for this. A good initiative to get young people in our industry.

NSWAA has contracted a new website designer/manager - It is the same manager that the ABA use. Their website is great. The new website should be up and running prior to membership renewals. Robyn Lewis has taken over as our secretary with the changeover seamless. Contact details are in this HBN.

The conference planning including tradeshow, honey and honey products competition are progressing well. See update in this issue.

Congress will be in the Sydney area in 2022. An exciting time ahead.

I attended the state Biosecurity roundtable - which was an eye opener. Our biosecurity border protocols stopped over 100 insect pests in 2018. This means less chemicals that our bees will be exposed to in the future. Another figure is that one pest establishes in Australia every week.

Recently we became aware that there may be a large environmental water flow down the Murray in January. Last time there was an environmental flow in summer there was a huge fish kill and the river red gums were cooked in the Barmah forest. This flow will happen when the red gums are flowering on the best budding in 15 years. If

this environmental flow goes ahead it will be to the detriment of beekeepers, fish, red gums and nocturnal marsupials. NSWAA will raise our concerns if this environmental flow is to happen.

NSWAA made a submission to the Federal Government Inquiry ‘\$100 billion of Agriculture by 2030’. Ian Cane representing AHBIC and I made an oral submission to the panel. We made a 5 minute speech then answered questions for 25 minutes. The feeling was positive. The Almond Board had also made a submission and supported our call for increased access to public resource.

We still have requests in to see the state forest minister and also the state minister for the environment. We regularly keep reminding them of our request for a meeting. We have a list of discussion points for each minister. We did meet with the shadow minister for the environment Hon Kate Washington.

NSW DPI have put in place free sugar for beekeepers who have had their forest sites burnt out. Details went out as an EBe to all members and also appears in this HBN. Note this is only applicable until these fire events are deemed finished. NSWAA welcomes this initiative for all NSW beekeepers.

For most beekeepers this has been a tough depressing year. Regardless of this spend time with your family over the festive season. From the

NSWAA executive team have a Merry Christmas and a happy New Year. May 2020 be a wetter and better year for all.

Stephen Targett
0428649321

The next Executive meeting of NSWAA will be held on Monday 17th February 2020 in Dubbo

Please forward any discussion items or motions etc to info@nswaa.com.au no later than Friday 31 January 2020 for inclusion in the agenda

NSWAA Executive Responsibilities

Stephen Targett NSWAA President	Steve Cunial NSWAA Vice President	Neil Bingley NSWAA Executive Councillor	Brian Woolfe NSWAA Executive Councillor	Ray Hull NSWAA Executive Councillor	Elizabeth Frost NSW DPI Advisor
AHBIC Diseases & Quarantine Committee		AHBIC Resources Committee	Bee Industry Biosecurity Consultative Committee (BIBCC)	Honeyland	AHBIC Education Committee
State Conference	Sponsorships & Trade Show	State Resources	State Advisory Group (SAG)		
Bee Industry Biosecurity Consultative Committee (BIBCC)					



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2020 Conference AGM Update

3 international speakers confirmed

Dinner Speaker has been engaged

Wed 20th May is World Bee Day

1-3 pm professional development - Business structures advantages and disadvantages of each. Sole trader, Limited company, Family Trust etc.

Publicity event including tradeshow, honey show and observation hive. Open to the public.

5.30pm Branch executive meet with NSWAA president and vice president.

Constitution - Executive will be asking to insert 'NSWAA is a non-profit organisation' into the constitution.

Honey Show will include sections for honey, cooking and handicrafts.

****** HALF PRICE Conference Registration for those who register early ******
Due to tough season for our members

Goodwill by NSW Landowners

I had an interview with ABC Port Macquarie where I stated that many beekeepers had lost a lot of resource for their bees due to the northern bush fires. The response from NSW land owners has been amazing. Landowners have offered their land for beekeepers to place bees. The size of the land offered has ranged from a few hectares to hundreds of hectares and in all eastern parts of the state. NSWAA has thanked them all for their offer. Their details have been collated and sent out to all members. Some properties are next to National Parks.

Be aware that this land has not been assessed for suitability for bees. It is up to the beekeeper to contact the landowner and conduct their own assessment. The only thing that NSWAA asks is that all landowners contacted by beekeepers are thanked for their offer of land even if it is not suitable.

These land owners have gone out of their way to assist beekeepers - PLEASE MAKE SURE THEY ALL HAVE A POSITIVE BEE EXPERIENCE.

Stephen Targett
President

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APIARY SITES PROGRAM UPDATE

Nick Geoghegan, NSW DPI

nick.geoghegan@dpi.nsw.gov.au

Long Term Vacant Sites Pilot passes 500 sites allocated

The online pilot of Long Term Vacant apiary sites in conjunction with Forestry Corporation continues to provide opportunities for beekeepers to find new options to place their hives in State Forests.

Since the pilot started in July over 500 sites have been allocated. After an initial rush when the online map was first published, hold requests and applications are continuing to come in at a more steady rate. Applicants appear to be looking wider across the states as many recent applications are the first ones received for some forests. Almost 3,000 potential sites are still on the map. See the DPI Bees website for more details: <https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/animals-and-livestock/bees>

Bushfire safety when visiting apiary sites

At the time of writing bushfires are burning across the state. We've added an article on keeping safe during bushfire periods to the DPI website. Find it under "Seasonal management of Honeybees" in the "Managing your Hives" section of the DPI website (<https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/animals-and-livestock/bees/management>). This includes the strict conditions under which Bee smokers can be used in NSW during a Total Fire Ban in addition to precautions to take before visiting a site. Having fire fighting equipment, water, or a fire extinguisher close to hand is critical in the unlikely case where it is necessary to use a bee smoker during a Total Fire Ban.

Access to public apiary sites

Access to public apiary sites can sometimes be challenging. Beekeeping is not the primary use of these public lands and agencies do not have the resources to open and maintain roads and tracks solely for beekeeping.

In some situations apiarists have been unable to access potential Forestry sites due to locked gates and "private land" signs. This was despite roads appearing like public roads on the map. It's important to understand that not all access roads to public sites are owned or controlled by Forestry Corporation, NSW National Parks or the LLS. Roads may be managed by council, Crown lands, RMS or they may be privately owned.

Private access roads

In the case of private ownership, owners have the right to install and lock gates to protect their property and discourage misuse of the road (e.g. 4WDs). If you encounter a private gate when trying to access a site it's possible you won't be able to get access. Your options are either not to apply for the site or try to negotiate access from the owner.

To determine ownership, submit a land title request with Lot and DP numbers to identify the owner. If it is privately owned, contact the owner to discuss access. Bring honey and remember they have no obligation to let you use their road even if there's a public site on the other side of it.

If you determine the ownership is public but if there is a locked gate claiming the road is private, you should report this to the manager of the road so they can take action.

Contributions

Do you have something you would like published in Australia's Honeybee News?

Perhaps a favourite recipe or an update from your Branch, then email it to the editor

honeybeenews@icloud.com

Welcome New Members

Aaron McMahon - Pimilco NSW

Michelle Cole - Ophir NSW

Rachel Peedom - NSW

Seezar Saco - Wakely NSW

Peter Czeti - Amaroo ACT

Charlotte Underwood - Marom Creek
NSW

Australian Honey Bee Industry Biosecurity Code of Practice (the Code).

A new condition will come into effect from 1 July 2020 requiring existing and new beekeepers registered in NSW to comply with the Australian Honey Bee Industry Biosecurity Code of Practice (the Code).

NSW DPI recognises your association as a reputable source of information among beekeepers in NSW. We would therefore greatly appreciate any assistance you can provide to help us ensure that NSW beekeepers are appropriately informed of the upcoming changes to conditions of registration prior to 1 July 2020.

A virtual folder containing a number of electronic resources including newsletter articles, fact sheets and flyers can be accessed by [following this link](#). If you could please share some of the articles and any of the contained information via your communications channels it would greatly assist us to ensure we are reaching as many NSW beekeepers as possible to inform them of the upcoming changes to their registration.

NSW DPI hopes to work closely with industry over the coming months to support beekeepers prior to the change coming into effect. We will continue to communicate updates and resources as they are developed and they will continue to be made available on the NSW DPI registration webpage. If you can think of any communications materials you think would assist in this space please don't hesitate to let us know. We are more than happy to develop any materials that may assist beekeepers to accept and adopt the Code.

NSW thanks you sincerely for any assistance you can provide to help us get this important message to our beekeepers.

Yours sincerely,

Rebekah Pierce
Acting Leader Regional Pest Management



Department of
Primary Industries

New registration portal

The beekeeper registration process is now managed by NSW Department of Primary Industries (NSW DPI).

Updating the registration portal allows beekeepers one place to:

- Register
- Renew
- Maintain records of hive movement
- Notify of bee diseases



To find out more about the changes, visit
www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/bees

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Beekeeping during bushfire periods

Use of Smokers in NSW

Beekeepers should use extreme caution when using a smoker at all times. In times of a Total Fire Ban you should avoid the use of smokers except in emergency situations. Bee smokers are exempt from a Total Fire Ban only if they are used under very strict conditions including only lighting the smoker in a safe location. These are outlined in the NSW Rural Fire Service schedule of exemptions (See extract below from November 2019):

Bee hive smokers

Fire lit, maintained or used in connection with the management of bees and bee hives, provided that:

- the fire is lit, maintained and used in a bee hive smoker that is commercially available, made of metal and designed to prevent the escape of fire, and
- the fuel for the bee hive smoker is lit inside a building or vehicle by a responsible adult person and the smoker is sealed prior to leaving the building or vehicle and being taken to the hives, and
- fire is not permitted to escape from the bee hive smoker, and
- the bee hive smoker is under the supervision of a responsible adult person at all times while it is alight, and
- the fuel for the bee hive smoker is totally extinguished inside a building or vehicle by the responsible adult person at the completion of use of the smoker.

In addition to these mandatory precautions, having water or a fire extinguisher close to hand is critical in case sparks escape from the smoker. Further advice on the safe use of smokers is available on the [Professional Beekeepers community of practice website](#).

Visiting National Parks or State Forests

If you have a permit or license to keep bees on an apiary site in a National Parks NSW (NPWS) or Forestry Corporation NSW (FCNSW) forest you may need to visit your bees during the bushfire season.

Before travelling to the site:

- Check fire danger ratings for the area on [the RFS website](#). Consider these ratings carefully and whether your visit is essential considering the risks involved. In times of an Extreme or Catastrophic fire danger rating, forests are closed and should not be visited for the safety of you and of firefighting personnel.
- Follow RFS advice such as [their advice on travelling in a bush fire area](#).
- Check for Forest or Park closures. During a closure you will not be allowed to access your apiary site. Closures of FCNSW Forests are listed [on the FCNSW website](#) and on their “Visit NSW State Forests” Facebook page. Closures of NPWS parks and reserves are listed [on the NPWS website](#).
- Check for fires in the area on the [RFS website](#) or “Fires Near me” mobile app.

If fires are located near your hives, call the Rural Fire Service to discuss safe access to your hives.

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BUSHFIRE ROAD CLOSURES

NSWAA have been contacted as the police are frustrated with beekeepers ignoring road closed signs. If this continues police will take action against offending beekeepers. The following is the NSWAA position:

The recent and current out of control bushfires have made it very difficult for beekeepers to keep their hives from being burnt by the fires. This is a stressful time for beekeepers who have apiaries in the potential fire path.

Emergency services including police have a duty of care to safeguard the public and that includes beekeepers. Roads are closed for good reasons. Police have the authority to detain any one who ignores road closed signs due to a natural disaster such as fires. This includes beekeepers who ignore road closed signs and enter the danger area.

If it is a manned closed road, then by all means ask the police if you can enter to remove livestock (bees) from the fire front. If the police response is YES then remove hives with no delay and ensure authorities know when you have left the danger area. If the answer is NO then do not go to an unmanned road closed signed area and enter via the back door. This may result in being fined or temporarily jailed. Beekeepers are not above the law.

NSWAA requests all beekeepers obey all emergency service personnel directions. Beehives can be replaced - safety must come first.

FORESTS CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC

Most beekeepers would know that State Forests have been closed between Nabcac and the Queensland border for quite some time and the foreseeable future. Beekeepers can enter and work (with extreme care) in these forests as we are registered users of the forests - the same as the logging industry. The public cannot enter to rubberneck.



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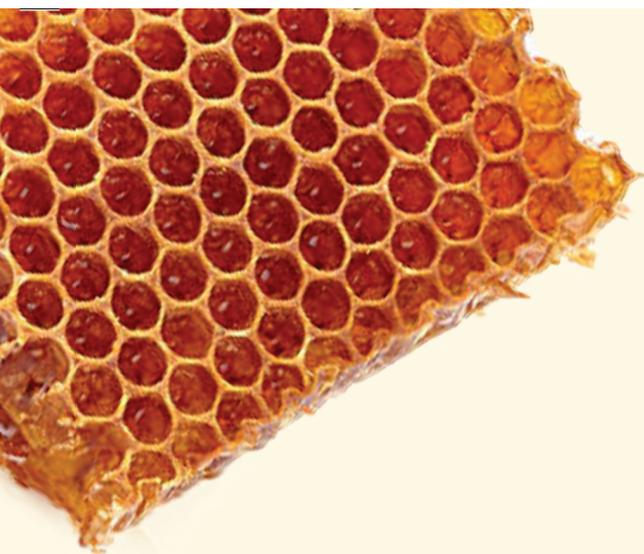
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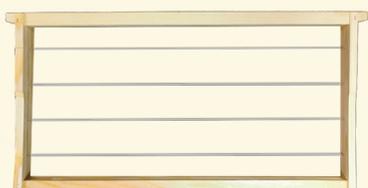
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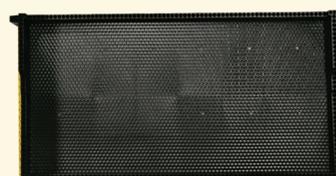
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THE FUTURE

Sometimes, to have a vision of the future, you need to have an understanding of the past. In recent years I have been involved in conversations where the 'new-bee' has come up with an exciting way of doing something; when, in fact, the concept or practice has been around for years, or even decades. If anyone does want to change the world, perhaps they are best starting by asking whether their idea has been suggested or trialled in the past.

Lack of adoption can be a major issue, but Australia is said to be a relatively quick market to take up technology. Therefore the reason for the lack of adoption is likely to be the high cost or the availability of the technology.

Likewise, I have seen some interesting ideas floated, but those involved haven't taken on advice to improve or modify their concepts to fit the market place.

I've approached the topic of 'the future' under a number of sub-headings. All of the following are my ramblings based on my experiences, observations and conversations.

Technology

This is the obvious topic, talking about the future. How might technology help our beekeeping? The way we keep honey bees hasn't changed in over 100 years. Our understanding of bee biology has improved, but we still need to do a lot of invasive management practices to monitor what is happening in a hive.

Bees largely communicate with pheromones. A technology most of you should be familiar with is the Roadside Breath Test (RBT) where the police officer sticks an alcometer in our driver's window for us to speak or breathe into. This technology is picking up and measuring the presence and level of alcohol in our breath-based chemical signals.

Anyone who has been into an airport in recent years may have been 'swabbed' for explosives. A machine on site is looking for tell-tale chemical signals. Food manufacturers are increasingly using a technology called an 'e-nose' to detect unwanted yeasts in a manufacturing or preparation area.

How about a gadget that beekeepers could slip into the entrance of a beehive and, which based on chemical or olfactory signals, would provide you with:

- estimated age of queen (strength of queen substance)
- presence or absence of a queen (queen substance)

- amount of brood (brood pheromone)
- presence and incidence of chalkbrood
- presence and incidence of EFB (European Foulbrood)
- presence and incidence of AFB (American Foulbrood)

All these things are theoretically possible now. Adaptation of technology to achieve this aim would dramatically reduce the invasive inspection work necessary to regularly monitor and manage a beehive. Such technology would also remove the need to have highly trained people inspecting a colony, being able to interpret visual signs of disease and estimate the age of the queen.

Another technology that has been around for some years, but has had a slow uptake, is that of remote weighing of beehives. Many commercial beekeepers within Australia transport their apiaries many hundreds, and occasionally thousands, of kilometres from their home base. This makes it a major event to check on the condition of the hives. Do you take extra supers? Or do you need to move one or more apiaries as they are not performing compared to the rest of your apiaries?

You can invest in this technology now. There have been a few companies come and go in this space, but they tend to be a bit on the expensive side. An apiary of say 100 hives really should have at least 4 hives with load cells attached. There is frequently a significant variation across a load of bees, and measuring one or two hives is unlikely to pick this up. Even four hives is a small subset, but in many beekeeping operations this equates to one pallet of beehives.

Multiply this by however many apiaries or loads of beehives you manage. Add load cells to any test hives you may have scattered around your operational area. The number of load cells and associated equipment escalates. Add to this the fact that moving beehives around the country on dirt roads, unloading and loading etc. is hard on beekeeping equipment, plus the risk of theft, vandalism, flood and fire.

Do you really want to risk placing high tech equipment on your beehives if there is a real risk it will get damaged or disappear? I had a mob of emus show a great deal of interest around a load of bees last year, judging by the tracks around the hives. Just imagine what they would do with anything shiny attached to a hive.

I was introduced recently to a company looking at putting monitors in each hive to measure temperature, humidity

and a few other things I've forgotten. They hadn't included weigh cells yet, but the concept is an interesting one, even though they were unable or unwilling to tell me how much this technology might cost.

One thing about technology, it is becoming cheaper and more affordable by the day.

Pests and diseases

As far as diseases go, Australia has most of them. There is some debate about viruses and they may, or may not, be significant but AFB, EFB, chalkbrood and noseema are serious distractions. These current diseases of brood and adult bees are a major focus affecting the bottom line of the productivity and profitability of beekeeping in Australia.

Varroa mites will eventually find their way to Australia. I worked in Canada in the early 80s before the arrival of mites there. I've been back since and, low and behold, they still have a thriving beekeeping industry, even with mites. New Zealand's North Island was invaded with varroa mites in 2000 and in 2006 the South Island, and there are now more beehives in NZ than there were then.

The point is that beekeeping continues with mites. Without human intervention they 'mostly' die, or at least become very unproductive. With good intervention management practices, colonies of honey bees continue to thrive and produce. Mites add an extra layer to beekeeping management. Something we don't have to contend with in Australia yet, but some day sooner or later we will.

Mites may actually have a 'silver lining'. It is now recognised that much of the horticultural and cropping scene in Australia benefits from wild honey bee populations. Varroa, in most parts, removes this group from the equation, left with native bees and managed bees. I wonder which group are the most economical to pollinate a crop with? Varroa will see an escalation in the demand for paid pollination services, make no mistake.

The other pest or should I say, group of pests, are the hornets. Within certain regions throughout Asia, various species of hornets play havoc with colonies of honey bees. Mostly they are not as universally adaptable as, say, varroa mites, but within these countries they do cause a lot of grief at a local regional level.

Some of these pests have established outside of their home range, with particular examples in Europe. Little seems to be known about their potential risk and threat to Australian beekeeping, but given our geographic proximity to many of these predatory insects, we should probably be giving them a lot more attention.

A bit of a worry for Australia's ecology is the introduction of various exotic ant species. Names such as yellow crazy ants and red fire ants sort of tell the story through their names. All bad news, with possibly serious consequences for beekeepers if they become established and wide-spread within Australia.

Peak Industry Body

The image of the overall Australian beekeeping industry from the outside is possibly one that many within the beekeeping industry do not fully appreciate and understand. While the state beekeeping annual conferences are reasonably well constructed and attended, we have no annual Australian beekeeping convention to focus the developments and achievements of Australian researchers and feature the industry on the national and international stage.

Many primary industries now have annual conventions, including the vegetable industry. In 2018 Australia held its 2nd Australian Beekeeping Congress on the Gold Coast. The first one was in 1988, also on the Gold Coast. I attended both events and, by whatever measure you use, they were both highly successful and created a single national focus for the beekeeping industry, scientists and the wider beekeeping industry, an opportunity for 'all' to benefit.

The evolution and success of each state beekeeping organisation to produce a regular newsletter/magazine has been quite impressive during the last 20 to 30 years. The *Honey Bee News* (NSW Apiarists' Assn) in its current format is now 11 years old. There are previous formats for the written communications to members, but the style, format and even name will continue to evolve and change over time.

I have from time to time, received copies of other state journals and have been struck with the repetitiveness of many articles through the journals. Editors regularly struggle for content, particularly Australian content. I cannot help but feel that it is also time for a national professional beekeeping journal which combines the efforts of all the existing state-based journals. The individual contributions from the relevant state presidents can easily be accommodated into such a journal. What has struck me over the years is the common issues the various states often experience, but with the players in these states having little knowledge of what is happening in other state organisations. A national journal will assist the evolution of the Australian beekeeping industry.

Under these circumstances, trade companies can really put some effort (read expense) into promoting their products and/or services. As the cropping and horticultural industries grow and their reliance on professional paid pollination services expands, then so will their desire to engage with the beekeeping industry. The almond industry at present needs to attend the SA, VIC, NSW and QLD state conferences to engage!

The size of the NSW state conference attendances is around 200 people, less for some other states. At a national convention, expect close to 1,000 attendees. Do you think people will come? Of course they will, if the speakers and trade show are well publicised and relevant.

Time for an annual Australian Beekeeping Congress to rotate around Australia. This will also stop this

competition between states for such events, which has historically been the case. The professional image of the Australian beekeeping industry will be significantly enhanced by such an event.

Being involved in the research and development field for 30 years, there is a real disconnect between researchers. The creation of one national event allows those involved in, and entering into, the bee science field to meet and engage with fellow researchers from all parts of the country

Honey

The word 'honey' use to conjure up images of a sweet substance that bees create. This is still the case, but the word now means so much more.

I recently had the privilege of sitting in a seminar where the speaker was describing broadly what each generation of consumer is looking for in their purchase of products. When it comes to food (read honey), the younger generation want to know the story behind the food they consume. You can quickly visualise information on each jar of honey that describes the location the honey was produced, the individual producers profiles and specific floral sources, plus any medical honey info. This could be provided relatively easily with a scannable bar code.

The beekeeping industry will have to fight hard to keep the confidence of the consumer as to what they are buying is authentic and not fake or adulterated. As honey

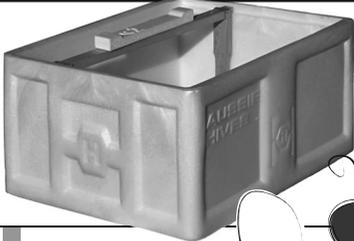
increases in price and becomes more of a luxury item, the more others will try to produce cheaper substitutes to unfairly profit from these higher prices.

The bioactive honey theme has seen the rise and rise of manuka (*Leptospermum scorparium*) honey in New Zealand and Australia, plus the whole genus of plants in the *Leptospermums* has attracted a lot of attention within Australia. This group of plants, comprising over 80 species, is Australian in origin. The researchers working in this field have identified several other *Leptospermum* species that produce 'active' honey. Historically, this group of plants would not have received much interest from beekeepers due to low yields, dark, strong flavour and often the forming of a jelly consistency which was hard to extract. How times change!

The new area of bioactivity in the honey scene is revolving around the hydrogen peroxide levels of honey. A few honeys that have been tested have been found to exhibit high levels of this compound, which makes them particularly anti-microbial and useful from a medical perspective. Jarrah in Western Australia currently achieves a premium on the honey market due to its high levels of hydrogen peroxide. Spotted gum honey has been identified as also having high levels of this compound. In fact, initial research into Australian honey in general, suggests that many of the honeys sourced from Australian eucalypts may have worthwhile levels of hydrogen peroxide.

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PATENT PENDING



This elevates honey well beyond a sweetener to put on your toast or into your cup of tea. Another topic currently being discussed is the antifungal properties of some honey sources. This is an area of research yet to be fully explored.

Honey bee nutrition

An area of beekeeping science I am particularly interested in, but an area of research that has received spasmodic investment for decades. The bee world has an idea about protein and amino acid requirements of bees, but next to nothing about mineral and vitamin requirements of bees. The fatty acid/lipid nutritional demands of young larvae have been only partially investigated.

So what does this tell you about the proliferation of 'complete' pollen substitutes or supplements on the market? Hmm, think about it!

There is a lot of discussion on the number of hives that will be required for almond pollination. Where are the apiary sites or the floral resources to support them when they are not pollinating?

If we consider other livestock enterprises, then supplementary feeding or lot-feeding has become the economic imperative for agriculture. Economics will largely drive this whole area of beekeeping management and communicate the need for further research going forward. Supplementary feeding of bees to 'keep them

alive', 'maintain colony strength' or 'build populations' for a targeted purpose, i.e. pollination contract or high value honey crop, will be a matter of fact for most beekeepers in the future.

In my experience, beekeepers often make poor choices when it comes to management around bee nutrition.

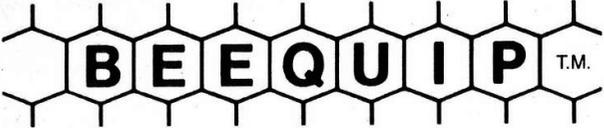
Some of those poor decisions include:

- not feeding supplement early enough, before the bee population starts to decline or demonstrate nutritional stress
- the amount of supplement provided to honey bee colonies is not volumetrically enough
- the frequency of feeding is not regular enough to maintain the stimulus to the colony
- old mixtures and supplements stored for 12 months or more at best lose some of their nutrient value, at worst become toxic to bees when fed
- feeding protein supplements when bees really need carbohydrate supplement (i.e. sugar)
- believing that one feed will suddenly make a big difference to a colony of bees and arrest the population decline within the beehive.

Some beekeepers really have their act together and provide supplements very effectively. Those in this category usually comment on the cost of this exercise.

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Thus, it all comes down to the economics. Does the expense of providing supplements produce an economic benefit to the beekeeper?

Well, this is a very individual situation and may vary from one year to the next, based on what flowering plants bees have access to and how good the nectar and pollen rewards are to the requirements of the colony of honey bees.

What we can expect to see is a greater reliance on supplementary feeding to produce a targeted outcome. Also, the animal welfare issue is likely to pop its head up eventually. This is likely to pay particular attention to ensuring that the nutritional welfare of bees are well catered for by reducing the possibility of colonies of bees starving, by providing artificial supplements when and if required.

Business structure

An interesting subject, as one business model does not fit all circumstances or peoples' approach to keeping bees for profit. The traditional model in the last 50 to 60 years is based on bulk honey production.

Bulk honey producers usually manage hundreds of beehives, have large trucks, travel significant distances, and have large efficient and modern extraction plant facilities. These businesses, in most cases, sell their bulk honey to a honey packer.

There has always been the producer/packer who usually manages less hives, but pack and markets their own honey directly through retail outlets, such as green grocers, independent supermarkets, tourist shops, etc. Some of this group also choose to sell at local farmers markets. Although my observation of farmers markets in recent years is that this is often a crowded environment to sell honey, with several stalls pedalling the same thing.

The struggle is then to make your honey different to everyone else's. Most criticise the "opposition's" honey, rather than elevate their own product. Oh well, not such a strange human behaviour, but not helpful in elevating honey in the minds of consumers generally.

A new business structure is that based on urban areas where the beekeeper develops a business relationship with many people with suitable backyards (including roof-tops) to locate one or more beehives. The property owner may own the beehive and pay a management fee to the beekeeper, or the beekeeper provides some honey to the property owner and keeps the rest. I suppose your imagination is the limitation to the number of combinations of business relationships that may occur in this space.

All three business models can, and do, value add to their business other products and services. The larger beekeepers are likely to provide hives for professional paid pollination services and be willing to transport them significant distances. The smaller beekeeper possibly providing pollination services on a smaller scale, particularly into green houses, is more likely.

Producing honey also means producing beeswax. The smaller producers may wish to value add this wax rather than selling it in bulk. Candles, creams, food wraps are just some of the products to consider.

Propolis and pollen are two potential products for some beekeepers to consider. Likewise, the specialist productions of queen bees, package bees or nucleus colonies are all profitable exercises for some beekeeping businesses.

So what will the future look like? Well, it will depend on the circumstances of the individual and their skill set. Managing bees is often referred to as an art form

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as much as a science. Marketing also requires a certain flair and set of skills. Depending on where you see the opportunities, is where the future is.

Footnote:

This will be my last story for 'Doug's Column' for Honey Bee News. I have generated stories for every issue of the current format (past 11 years) and was a regular contributor to the previous newsletters produced by the NSW Apiarists' Association.

At times it has been difficult to come up with an article, other times it just flows. The kind lady who converts my scribble into legible text refers to these articles as my 'soap box stories'.

The views expressed in these articles are mine and mine only. They are not refereed or approved by others and as such, may 'occasionally' have mistakes or stretches of the imagination.

Writing for magazines is a lonely journey, for you rarely receive feedback, good or bad, so you never know how you are travelling.

Anyway, I hope you, the reader, have gotten something out of them. Each article is a major commitment of my time to produce. I hope some of them were of value to you!

As for the future, my time in NSW DPI, after 32 years, is coming to a close. It is time to do other things in life. I have been extremely fortunate to have a very patient wife, maybe she has a list of things she wants me to do?!

(As always many thanks to Vicki Saville for typing my hand written scribbled notes for nearly 33 years and Annette Somerville the eternal teacher whom hasn't given up on my education by correcting the grammar and proof reading numerous documents and alas my final Doug's Column)



On the 13 November, some 35-40 "Bee" interested people attended a screening of "The Pollinators" in Tamworth.

A great snapshot of the Pollination industry in the US.

Industrial farming methods, monocultures, widespread use of chemicals some residual for more than 12 months plus varroa all adding up to more than bees can cope with, was an underlining theme.

Some interesting changes in practices commented on by long time beekeepers, in the past one man could look after 1,500 hives now its common practice now to have 100 queens on hand when inspecting hives and we need to check hives every two weeks for failing or no queens, otherwise deadouts. No queens older than 12 months.

«Previously queens lived least 3 some 4 years and superseded themselves.» commented one beekeeper.

Some 40 - 50% of hives die out and are replaced the following season. Lot of extra work and a reduction in honey production.

General belief that the pollination industry is at its limits with the industry struggling to maintain 2 million hives currently in use.

Some light on the horizon with a movement to change farming practices..

and Yes they bog their loaders as well!!!

Norm Maher
Secretary
Tamworth Branch



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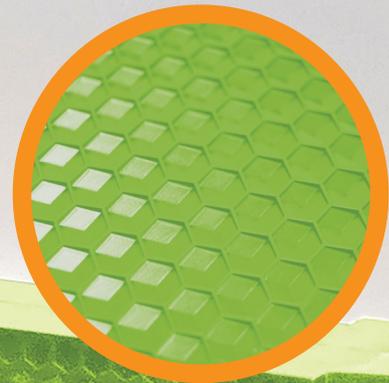
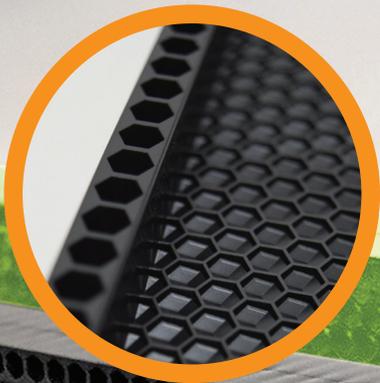
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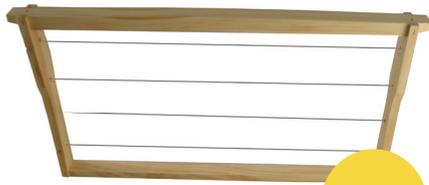
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Drought and bushfire assistance for beekeepers

For NSW beekeepers impacted by drought and recent bushfires, NSW DPI Acting, Director Engagement, Engagement & Industry Assistance Pip Job, based at Dubbo, has created the 16-page information sheet “Primary Producers Assistance Guide for Beekeepers.”

This guide outlines existing assistance you may already be accessing, such as fee site waivers for apiary sites on public lands, primary producer vehicle registration and subsidies for transport of water and fodder, as well as additional details and contacts for:

- NSW DPI Rural Resilience Program officers
- Local Land Services
- Ag and Animal Services Hotline
- Disaster Welfare Assistance Line
- Rural Assistance Authority
- Rural Financial Counsellors
- Emergency assistance insurance claims
- Disaster Relief Grants and recovery payments
- Farm Household Support
- Centrelink – Farm household case officers
- Emergency Water Infrastructure Rebate scheme
- Charities, social and mental support organisations

Additionally, **NSW DPI DroughtHub** is your one-stop destination for drought-related assistance, subsidies, maps, news and seasonal updates. Visit the DroughtHub here:

www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/climate-and-emergencies/droughthub

IMPORTANT:

Ag and Animal Services Hotline - 1800 814 647

Call this NSW DPI hotline to report damage and stock losses and to request assistance. Available help includes;

- Emergency fodder
- Emergency stock water
- Veterinary assistance
- Stock destruction and burial
- Livestock feeding and management advice

NSW DPI Rural Resilience Program

The NSW DPI Rural Resilience Program has staff across NSW and can provide support by way of referrals, liaising with other services and delivering initiatives tailored to the particular need of the community and primary producers. Rural Resilience Officers and Support Workers work closely with other partners such as the NSW Rural Assistance Authority, Rural Financial Counsellors, the Rural Adversity Mental Health Program (RAMHP) and the Local Lands Services to do this.

Web: www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/about-us/rural-support/rural-resilience-program

Contact your local officer for assistance:

Northern Rivers

Jen Haberecht
Coffs harbour
M: 0400 160 287
E: [jen.haberecht.@dpi.nsw.gov.au](mailto:jen.haberecht@dpi.nsw.gov.au)

Northern Rivers

Kathy Goulding
Wollongbar
M: 0407 175 043
E: kathy.goulding@dpi.nsw.gov.au

North West NSW Animal Welfare support

Ray Weinert
Tamworth
M: 0447 634 507
E: ray.weinert@dpi.nsw.gov.au

Riverina

Danny Byrnes
Hay
M: 0400 374 258
E: danny.byrnes@dpi.nsw.gov.au

Southern

Ted O’Kane
Goulburn
M: 0427 781 514
E: ted.okane@dpi.nsw.gov.au

Hunter & New England

Karen Sowter
Scone
M: 0400 869 136
E: karen.sowter.@dpi.nsw.gov.au

Lower Hunter & Mid Coast

Peter Brown
Taree

M: 0437 671 459
E: peter.brown@dpi.nsw.gov.au

North West Plains

Grace Murray
Bourke
M: 0439 531 107
E: grace.murray@dpi.nsw.gov.au

Far West

Ellen Day
Broken Hill
M: 0427 639 761
E: ellen.day@dpi.nsw.gov.au

Central West

James Cleaver
Dubbo
M: 0408 687 165
E: james.cleaver@dpi.nsw.gov.au

Central West/ Riverina

Lisa McFayden
Condobolin
M: 0448 366 395
E: lisa.mcfadyen@dpi.nsw.gov.au

Central West

Sue Freebairn
Coonabarabran
M: 0429 212 368
E: sue.freebairn@dpi.nsw.gov.au

Central North

Amanda Glasson
Coonamble
M: 0438 082 731
E: amanda.glasson@dpi.nsw.gov.au

Rural Financial Counselling Service (RFCS)

The RFCS provides free and impartial rural financial counselling to eligible primary producers, fishers and small rural businesses. Rural Financial Counsellors can:

- help identify your financial and business options
- help negotiate with your lenders
- help you develop an action plan
- help support you to access the Farm Household Allowance (FHA)
- give you information about government and other assistance schemes

Rural financial counsellors do not provide family, emotional or social counselling or financial advice, but they can provide referrals and information.

RFCS Northern Region Contacts

Mobile Counsellor

Veronica Mortell
Location: Mobile
M: 0447 343 663
E: veronica@rfcsnr.org.au



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 M: 0408 936 268
 Fax: 02 6778 4101
 E: armidale@rfcsnr.org.au

Casino

Steve Sibley
 T: 02 6662 6191
 M: 0429 626 191
 Fax: 02 6662 3107
 E: steve.sibley@rfcsnsw-northernregion.org

Ross Turvey

M: 0458 222 216
 Fax: 02 6662 3107
 E: ross@rfcsnsw-northernregion.org

Glen Innes

Stuart Brummell
 T: 02 6732 3325
 M: 0448 035 152
 Fax: 02 6732 6723
 E: stuart.brummell@rfcsnsw-northernregion.org

Gunnedah

Andrew Formann
 Phone: 02 6742 0578
 M: 0447 393 624
 E: gunnedah@rfcsnr.org.au

Inverell

Geoff Mill
 T: 02 6721 0030
 M: 0429 787 609
 Fax: 02 6721 0960
 E: geoff.mill@rfcsnsw-northernregion.org

Macksville

Terry Pearce
 T: 02 6568 3888
 M: 0429 626 503
 Fax: 02 6568 3866
 E: macksville@rfcsnsw-northernregion.org

Moree

Leah Bailey
 T: 02 6752 3561
 Fax: 02 6752 3249
 M: 0439 807 712
 E: leah.bailey@rfcsnsw-northernregion.org

Scone

Angela Hayes
 T: 02 6545 3544
 M: 0447 800 040
 Fax: 02 6545 3550
 E: angela.hayes@rfcsnr.org.au

Tamworth

Julie Roy
 T: 02 6761 3336

M: 0427 924 798
 E: tamworth@rfcsnr.org.au

Taree

Michael Ramstadius
 T: 02 6551 5879
 M: 0448 035 143
 Fax: 02 6551 2288
 E: taree@rfcsnr.org.au

Tocal

Shannon McCormack
 T: 02 4393 8942
 M: 0439 956 165
 E: hunter@rfcsnr.org.au

Web www.agriculture.gov.au/ag-farm-food/drought/assistance/rural-financial-counselling-service

The Rural Adversity Mental Health Program (RAMHP)

RAMHP provides a range of information services to individuals, communities and service providers to link rural and remote people to the help they need. This includes information on where to access services, common mental illnesses and how to keep mentally healthy, as well as the Glove Box Guide to Mental Health.

To find the location of your nearest RAMHP Officer call **02 6363 8444** or contact:

Bega

Jennie Keioskie
 M: 0447 278 957

Cootamundra

Faith Rogers
 M: 0427 273 895

Forster

Kylie Atkinson
 M: 0437 268 325

Ivanhoe

Marie Kelly
 M: 0429 674 307

Lithgow

Sonia Cox
 M: 0448 125 676

Mudgee

Cas Mastrone
 M: 0436 932 919

Orange

Phil Worrada
 M: 0436 921 076

Tamworth

Sarah Green
 M: 0428 109 990

Yass

Judy Carmody
 M: 0417 131 301

Canowindra

Di Gill
 M: 0427 460 430

Dubbo

Camilla Kenny
 M: 0419 299 493

Grafton

Samantha Osborne
 M: 0402 892 642

Lismore

Steve Carrigg
 M: 0477 368 183

Moree

Letitia Cross
 M: 0477 343 628

Nowra

Alison Tye
 M: 0436 826 672

Port Macquarie

Orry Berry
 M: 0409 834 501

Wagga Wagga

Aimee Makeham
 M: 0428 249 719

- **Kids Helpline** T: 1800 551 800 telephone counselling service 24 hours, seven days a week
- **Community Mental Health Line** Tel. 1800 011 511
- **MensLine Australia** Tel. 1300 789, 24 hours a day, 7 day telephone counselling for men
- **Beyondblue** depression information line. **Tel.** 1300 224 636
- **Lifeline** Tel. 13 11 14, 24 hours a day, 7 day crisis support and suicide prevention services
- **Australian Red Cross** The Red Cross provides personal support during a disaster and an outreach service to affected households. Contact 1800 660 066 or (02) 49413200 in the Hunter area.
- **Black Dog Institute** T: 02 9382 4530.



Figure 1: Reach out for a helping hand, or tarsi in this case.

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Contact Bruce Porter
for more information

0428 480 650 or 4871 1211

Executive Meeting 18th November 2019 Outcomes

Resource Matters

- NSWAA will be pushing for a small holding fee on all bee sites that have been burnt out in State Forests or National Parks.

- NSWAA will be trying to get access to National Parks that have not been burnt out for beekeepers who have lost a lot of sites due to bushfires.

- Native Title - still ongoing. Will be agenda item at AGM.

Website

Our new website designer gave us an update - we are all positive that by Feb 2020 the new website will be running and have a lot more functionality than the old website when registering for conference etc.

Constitution

Will take to AGM for amendment to state that 'NSWAA is a not for profit organisation'. This may open up more grants for our organisation.

Biosecurity

There have been issues with how DPI staff issue directives. NSWAA has agreed to explore the writing of a BIOSECURITY Document - this will help DPI as well as inform beekeepers on what to expect from DPI staff.

Conference/AGM

We have three confirmed overseas speakers. Conference Registration will be half price (of the 2019 registration) for people who register early. Register in the last two weeks before conference and pay full price. There will be a dinner speaker - Luke Kennedy.

Conference Honey Show

This is going ahead thanks to Suellen. There will be crafts and cooking judging as well as honey.

World Bee Day is 20th May 2020

NSWAA is planning a publicity campaign around this - to include the public accessing honey show and bee trade show Wednesday.

Professional Development

Wed 20th May 2020 1-3pm will be Business Training conducted by DPI. Will cover the pro and cons of business structures (sole trader, limited company, family trust, etc.) - to include tax, business succession etc.

Bushfires

NSWAA will send out an email to branches to get figures on hives destroyed, hives damaged and number of bee sites burnt out. NSWAA will collate and use when we are talking to government.

S. Targett



NSWAA

BEE TRADE SHOW

When

20– 22 May 2020

Where

West Tamworth League Club

58 Phillip Street TAMWORTH NSW

***Entry into the Bee Trade Show entry included with
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Wine & Cheese Night 21st May 2020

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Email *tradeshow@nswaa.com.au*

www.nswaa.com.au



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BEE BIOSECURITY OFFICER REPORT



Rod Bourke - NSW Bee Biosecurity Officer
NSW Department of Primary Industries - Biosecurity NSW
Tocal Ag College, Tocal Rd Paterson NSW 2320
Ph: 02 4939 8946 Mob: 0438 677 195 Email: rod.bourke@dpi.nsw.gov.au



Controlling disease and managing weak hives.

Hopefully by now everybody has seen the Australian Honey Bee Industry Biosecurity Code of Practice (the Code) and had a chance to read through it. If you've somehow managed to miss it you can easily find a copy online and you should make it a priority read for your management practices (particularly in NSW where the Code will become mandatory from 1 July 2020). In reading, you will note that its content is all quite reasonable and it should be relatively easy for most commercial operators to achieve and surpass the requirements it sets out.

The overall purpose of the Code is to raise the minimum standards for beehive management, reduce the amount of disease, especially American foulbrood (AFB), and to strengthen our surveillance of exotic bee pests (especially mites such as Varroa and Tropilaelaps).



You won't see this if you aren't looking...you need to learn to look regularly or it will be too late to contain any incursion.

An underlying benefit of the Code is that the management practices outlined not only help us to prevent disease, but also put beekeepers on the front foot should it eventuate that an exotic pest (e.g. Varroa) becomes established in Australia. By adopting the Code, the whole industry will be better placed to deal with Varroa should it arrive.

It's high time we as beekeepers evolve and adopt these new practices. We know the risks and need to take responsibility for preventing them. This is covered in one of the fundamental points in the Code:

Part B, point 4 - Beekeepers must control or eradicate pests and diseases and must manage weak hives.

Sounds simple enough, and you may think that you're already doing this. But let's have a look at this point in more detail. Not only does the Code outline the requirement to manage pests, diseases and weak hives,

it also specifies the practices you should be undertaking to ensure you are doing it correctly. If you are in fact meeting this requirement, your management practices will include

- minimising the likelihood that a pest or disease detected in their hive will either weaken the hive or be transferred to another hive
- managing weak hives so as not to be attractive to robber bees
- immediately remove or manage any dead hive or hive with insufficient bees to prevent robbing
- manage AFB detections immediately by destroying infected hives, including all bees, and rendering and maintaining the hive and appliances bee-proof until they are cleaned, sterilised or destroyed as appropriate (see the Code for more detail)



Robbed out hive...risky.



Outright scary when you see the brood frames that were in it! Preventing this occurrence is critical to reducing new AFB outbreaks.

These requirements set out some very important pathways, which if followed at all times greatly reduce the opportunity of your operation suffering significant financial losses due to ongoing disease, plus very

importantly reduces the chance that YOU will spread disease to other beekeepers. Our industry would be in a far better position if all beekeepers aimed to manage disease (looking for it regularly and destroying any hives with AFB), prevent its spread (by stopping the use of antibiotics and only making up new colonies from healthy ones, plus preventing robbing) and eliminate it (adopting barrier systems to weed it out and stop its horizontal spread through your own operation).

A lot of AFB is blamed on the dead-outs of other beekeepers, and whilst this can sometimes be the case it is often not. Most of the AFB that beekeepers encounter has already belonged to them for quite some time (established within their own apiaries), and is often propagated and nurtured due to the beekeeping practices that they use. You may have at one stage picked up AFB from a dead-out, or from live hives or used equipment brought into your system, but once it is there you need to follow good biosecurity or you will start to spread it yourself. You will breed up AFB.

Swapping around gear from one hive to another will always be a possible transfer point for AFB, so any operation that does a lot of this “gear swapping” will always experience recurring AFB problems, especially if they do not keep adequate records to trace back any problems. The same can be said for operators that don’t regularly replace enough brood combs and don’t irradiate any risky or suspect equipment before reuse.

It is far better to put your efforts into preventing and controlling risks than to put this amount of work (and then a whole lot more) into cleaning up a mess that was often preventable in the first place.

If you’re still not convinced by the Code and prefer ‘the old ways’ then let’s consider a scenario where Varroa becomes established in Australia. It’s a likely enough scenario, and if it happens then better beekeepers (who have adopted the Code) will do very well. Their success will be founded on established management practices to control pests within their hives. If you are an efficient and productive beekeeper then Varroa will be something that you will be able to work into your regular hive management program relatively easily.

Varroa spread can behave in similar ways to AFB. When a hive suffers from the onslaught of high Varroa numbers the mites start facing higher competition from other Varroa within the hive. As they run out of bee brood to reproduce in, they start leaving for greener pastures! After jumping onto different bees out in the field or floral resources being worked by your hives there can be quick jumps in Varroa numbers, which will immediately impact your hive health and productivity. It is therefore vital that beekeepers start to increase their ability to manage the strength and health of their hives now, or they will not get far past a Varroa incursion should we see it here!



A dead AFB hive with rodent nest...very high biosecurity risk and nothing less than extremely shoddy beekeeping! If you do this then Varroa will definitely get you!

As an industry we are only as strong as our weakest link, and we currently have a lot of weak links in our industry. Improving the minimum standards through the Code has so many benefits for our industry that it is essential that we strive towards this goal.

Having beekeepers properly inspect and manage the brood box of their hives regularly has many benefits, such as

- stronger and healthier bee populations
- less queenless, drone layer and swarming hives
- more consistent hive strengths
- higher honey production
- able to produce more nucs or splits
- able to better control AFB and other brood diseases
- more profitable operation



Profitable beekeepers find this problem quickly and reduce any losses by requeening promptly...but you do need to actually lift the excluder to find it!

Adopt the Code today for the benefit of your bees and our whole industry. Make sure you’re not left behind as the industry evolves and it only becomes increasingly hard for you to keep beekeeping ‘the old way’. The Department of Primary Industries is here to assist, but at the end of the day everybody managing hives needs to do their bit to ensure that the industry is as best protected as we can make it. Adopting the Code is a big step in the right direction.

Bee Emergency Response Forum Narrandera

David and I would like to extend our thanks and appreciation to Narrandera Shire Council for facilitating and sponsoring the Bee Emergency Response Forum at Narrandera on July 17, 2019.

The forum was the result of a conversation that David and I had with Narrandera Shire Council General Manager- Mr George Cowan and Economic Development Manager- Mr Peter Dale a few weeks prior. Narrandera Shire Council felt that it would be very beneficial to our region and were happy to be the facilitator as well as being the sponsor of the forum.

The presentation which we compiled was well received by all Emergency services, NSW DPI, Heavy vehicle recovery operator and beekeepers in attendance. They all acknowledged that they had no idea about how to respond should a bee truck incident / accident occur.

Two major discussion points that did arise were: the need for a dedicated 24hour phone line to ring if a serious bee truck incident / accident were to occur as well as a 10 – 12 step checklist to help first responders both deal with the incident / accident and to help ensure their safety whilst doing so.

It is very clear that the Bee Emergency Response Forum was a very important conversation that needed to be had, with all first responders in attendance not being aware of the magnitude of the issues that could arise should a bee truck incident / accident occur.

It is gratifying to acknowledge how a conversation in May between the Narrandera Shire Council General Manager and Economic Development Manager and ourselves, led to such an important forum being held two months later.

We extend our thanks and appreciation to Hive & Wellness for the input which they provided for use in the power point presentation at the Bee Emergency Response Forum.

David & Wendy Mumford



Beekeeping School Based Traineeship

On Wednesday 25th Sept 2019, in collaboration with NSW Agrifood ITAB, NSW Dept of Education and NSW Dept of Industry, we held a Beekeeping School Based Traineeship Showcase Day at our premises at Narrandera. We were approached by Melissa Wortman, NSW Agrifood ITAB, some months ago about holding a Beekeeping Showcase Day and thought that it would be a great way to find future potential beekeepers.

It is a unique way to encourage students to think and learn about a different aspect of agriculture that most would have no contact with or knowledge about otherwise.

There were more than 20 students from a variety of schools across the Riverina in attendance as well teachers, DPI staff, beekeepers and parents. Those who are not a part of our industry were amazed by the opportunities which are available to students if they choose to peruse a beekeeping career.

The day comprised several sections – watching a short video about beekeeping, learning what a traineeship entailed and employers' expectations, a basic rundown of how honey is extracted, looking in a beehive and Q & A.

We were also fortunate to have Bruce White OAM in attendance. Bruce was happy to impart some of his beekeeping knowledge as well as open hives so that the students and the adults could look in a beehive. The students and adults also had the opportunity to ask questions as well as being able to chat informally with beekeepers.

If beekeepers in other areas are approached to hold such a day, we would encourage them to do so. It is a great way to promote our industry as a career option not only to the students in attendance but also for teachers to take back to their schools for future years.

David & Wendy Mumford



**Tamworth Branch
NSW Apiarists'
Association Inc.**

**23 MAY 2020 9AM – 4PM
Following NSW State Conference 2020**



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Under 18's Free
Public Welcome**



Beekeeping Field Day



Guest Speakers

10AM: Allan Thomas

Whats Happening Here ?

A different look at inside the hive.

11AM: Elizabeth Frost - TBC
Total Research Program Educational
Courses

12PM: Rod Bourke - TBC
DPI Biosecurity Update



Meals & Refreshments

Meals and
refreshments are
available all day from the
Jockey Club
Restaurant

**CWA Bake Sale for
homemade sweets and
cakes**



Expressions of Interest

Beekeeping Trade Exhibit
Stands

4 x 4 Equipment

Truck & Ute Displays

Material Handling Stands

General Market Stalls



For Stall bookings please contact Justin Wall. 0437690393. Justin_Wall@icloud.com

PRESS RELEASE / 5 December 2019

Schütz Australia: New factory in Yatala brings Schütz closer to customers in the east of the country



Selters/Yatala (hds).- The new Schütz Australia factory was officially opened on the 15th of November with a festive programme that also featured traditional elements of Aboriginal culture. “G’day Down Under!” – around 100 guests, including numerous customers and suppliers as well as representatives from the media, came to the opening in Yatala south of Brisbane. As well as ideal logistic connections, the new 19,000-square-metre company site has state-of-the-art facilities for the production of new IBCs, IBC and drum reconditioning as well as high-performance storage and logistics facilities. The new plant is an investment that will optimise supplies to customers in the eastern part of the country.

During a factory tour, guests watched the modern production lines operating live; all production facilities comply with the highest environmental, safety and quality management standards. IBC reconditioning started here in January 2019; G2 110-litre drums used for agrochemical products are also returned to Yatala and reconditioned. The next operational phase commenced in April, with the start of production of new containers on the Ecobulk MX line.

As the company’s new manufacturing hub on the east coast, the plant provides sustainable packaging and services to customers in Queensland and New South Wales. It also significantly boosts delivery reliability and flexibility. In addition to the ultra-modern production facilities, the company’s local administration and sales offices are also located on the site.

Preserving tradition – shaping progress

The event began with an Aboriginal smoking ceremony. In accordance with the ancient customs of Native Australians, indigenous plants are smouldered to produce smoke that is believed to have cleansing powers and repel evil spirits. After this traditional ceremony, Alan Barham, Managing Director Schütz Australia, Roland Strassburger, Schütz CEO, and Andreas Wolf, Business Unit Manager Asia/Pacific Schütz, welcomed the guests, who included Andrew Shields representing the Gold Coast Central Chamber of Commerce. In his speech, Barham first thanked customers and business partners present for their many years of loyalty and excellent partnership. He then summarised the 40-year history of the Australian Schütz subsidiary with its three locations in Melbourne, Perth and Yatala. His speech concluded by highlighting the logistical, economic and ecological advantages of the new plant in Yatala.

In his speech, Wolf underscored Australia’s importance as a global supplier of raw materials and semi-finished products. With its extensive range of packaging for liquid products, Schütz Australia makes a significant contribution to ensuring that a large proportion of

these products can be shipped safely and quickly to customers in Australia and around the world. He also stressed the aspect of sustainability – a key part of the company philosophy since the foundation of the Schütz Group, and also a universal objective in Australia to ensure the protection of its unique flora and fauna. As the biggest reconditioner of IBCs in the world, Schütz’s local activities not only include the collection of used IBCs and drums, but also professional, resource-saving reconditioning in a closed-loop system.

Optimum logistics and recycling for effective sustainability

The new location is strategically located close to the major industrial regions of Brisbane and the City of Gold Coast. The border between Queensland and New South Wales is about 50 kilometres away. This location offers an ideal infrastructure with excellent access to national road and rail transport. The port of Brisbane is only 40 minutes away for sea transport. The new production plant will significantly optimise the supply chain to the many customers in the region – both economically and ecologically. Shorter transport routes for the delivery of new IBCs and the collection of empty containers will save time, lower costs and reduce CO2 emissions.

The Schütz Ticket Service is also firmly established in Australia. The empty Ecobulks are collected and reconditioned under the most advanced conditions and in compliance with globally uniform process standards. All components that come into contact with the filling product, such as inner bottles, fittings and screw caps, are replaced with brand-new components. The result is a Recobulk that corresponds fully in terms of safety and quality to an Ecobulk with the same standard specification and which, compared to a new IBC, saves around 100 kilograms of CO2 during production.



Caption:
The new factory of Schütz Australia in the south of Brisbane.

Photo: Schütz

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT INQUIRY

NSWAA made a written submission to the Federal Government Inquiry ‘\$100 Billion of Agriculture by 2030’. Then AHBIC (Ian Cane) and NSWAA (Stephen Targett) presented to the Inquiry in Sydney. The format for presentation was we made a 5 minute presentation then the four ministers asked questions. Imports was not in our written submission.

KEY POINTS.

RESOURCE ACCESS POLICY.

- Policies to access the Public Land Estate is different in various States, Victoria compared to Queensland.
- Queensland and the loss of National Park bee sites.
- Research as to the overall impact from commercial managed honey bees is benign.
- If you don’t have increased access to National Parks we are not going to reach \$100 billion? Certainly in a State like Queensland.

POLLINATION DEPENDENT INDUSTRIES SUPPORT.

- Evidence from the Almond Industry on how important honey bees are.
- Previously we had a briefing with the CEO of the Almond Board about supporting AHBIC wherever possible. (Great to hear the actual results.)
- No bees equals no almonds, this was well understood by the Committee.

VARROA.

- Varroa will change the whole market. At the moment there are a lot of people with crops who either understock what the DPI recommend they should have in their orchard, because they’re relying on the feral beehives around them to assist with the pollination, or don’t stock at all. When we get varroa those people are not going to have a crop for one or two years, which is going to significantly hurt.
- It will be a lot harder to keep the bees healthy in that environment post-varroa than now, our Public Land Estate will be critical in this process.
- We have received great support from Government Agencies, we now have increased our port hive surveillance numbers and upgraded the technology, so we’ve got cameras and motion sensors in place.

IMPORTS.

- Honey can be imported for approx \$2.50 per kilo, landed here in Australia. We’re receiving around \$5.00, \$5.20 per kilo at the moment. If we didn’t have imported honey coming in at that price—we don’t have a problem if it’s real, unadulterated honey coming in. It’s a global world, and we trade on the global markets. Honey should be exactly the same. It’s the adulteration that’s the issue.

ADEQUATE FLORAL RESOURCES.

- The Industry is heavily dependent on the Public Land Estate for floral resources. (Food for bees)
- Excessive timber harvesting is changing the long-term structure of the forest, it changes the long-term reproductive capacity of those forests. There is really long-term impact—I’m talking decades—when you excessively harvest forests. The industry is not against timber harvesting per se, but the excessive nature of it is probably the single biggest issue up and down the eastern seaboard.
- Victoria has completed a number of trials, focusing on both Industries co-existing.

CHEMICAL USAGE.

- Our Public Land Estate will and are a great safe haven from the pesticides and chemical exposure. It provides the healthy environment for our bees plus a healthy food source.
- Cause of mass bee deaths in the USA.
- Varroa mite viruses and certain chemicals appear to be contributing to this issue.

AGRONOMIST TRAINING

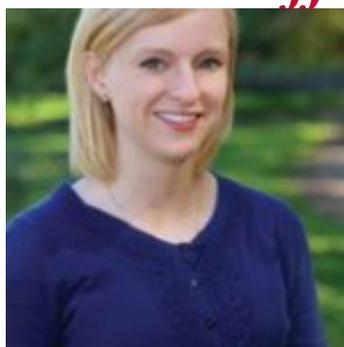
Australia will not reach \$100 billion by 2030 without pollination dependent crops. Impediments to this are:

Agronomists are not trained in;

- pollination;
- bees; and
- bees and chemicals - ‘safe passage of bees through the crop.’

Stephen Targett

Largest Winter Honey Bee Die-Off in the Books



Posted by Christina Herrick July 03, 2019

Beekeepers across the U.S. lost 40.7% of their honey bee colonies from April 2018 to April 2019, according to preliminary results of the latest annual nationwide survey conducted by the University of Maryland-led nonprofit [Bee Informed Partnership](#). Honey bees pollinate \$15 billion worth of food crops in the U.S. each year.

The survey results show the annual loss of 40.7% this last year represents a slight increase over the annual average of 38.7%. However, winter losses of 37.7%, were the highest winter loss reported since the survey began 13 years ago and 8.9 percentage points higher than the survey average.

“These results are very concerning, as high winter losses hit an industry already suffering from a decade of high winter losses,” says [Dennis vanEngelsdorp](#), Associate Professor of [Entomology](#) at the University of Maryland and President for the Bee Informed Partnership.

During the 2018 summer season, beekeepers lost 20.5% of their colonies, which is slightly above the previous year’s summer loss rate of 17.1%, but about equal to the average loss rate since the summer of 2011.

“Just looking at the overall picture and the 10-year trends, it’s disconcerting that we’re still seeing elevated losses after over a decade of survey and quite intense work to try to understand and reduce colony loss,” adds [Geoffrey Williams](#), Assistant Professor of Entomology at Auburn University and co-author of the survey. “We don’t seem to be making particularly great progress to reduce overall losses.”

Since beekeepers began noticing dramatic losses in their colonies, state and federal agricultural agencies, university researchers, and the beekeeping industry have been working together to understand the cause and develop Best Management Practices to reduce losses. The annual colony loss survey, which has been

conducted since 2006, has been an integral part of that effort.

The survey asks commercial and backyard beekeeping operations to track the survival rates of their honey bee colonies. Nearly 4,700 beekeepers managing 319,787 colonies from all 50 states and the District of Columbia responded to this year’s survey, representing about 12% of the nation’s estimated 2.69 million managed colonies.

The Bee Informed Partnership team says multiple factors are likely responsible for persistently high annual loss rates and this year’s jump in winter losses. The No. 1 concern among beekeepers and a leading contributor to winter colony losses is varroa mites. These mites have been decimating colonies for years, with institutions like the University of Maryland actively researching ways to combat them.

“We are increasingly concerned about varroa mites and the viruses they spread, says vanEngelsdorp. “Last year, many beekeepers reported poor treatment efficacy, and limited field tests showed products that once removed 90% of mites or more are now removing far fewer. Since these products are no longer working as well, the mite problem seems to be getting worse.”

“But mites are not the only problem,” continues vanEngelsdorp. “Land use changes have led to a lack of nutrition-rich pollen sources for bees, causing poor nutrition. Pesticide exposures, environmental factors, and beekeeping practices all play some role as well.”

[Karen Rennich](#), Executive Director for the Bee Informed Partnership and senior faculty specialist at the University of Maryland, elaborated on land use and environmental factors that may be significant in bee colony loss, including increases in extreme weather.

“The tools that used to work for beekeepers seem to be failing, and that may be evident in this year’s high losses. A persistent worry among beekeepers nationwide is there are fewer and fewer favorable places for bees to land, and that is putting increased pressure on beekeepers who are already stretched to their limits to keep their bees alive,” says Rennich. “We also think that extreme weather conditions we have seen this past year demand investigation, such as wildfires that ravage the landscape and remove already limited forage, and floods that destroy crops causing losses for the farmer, for the beekeeper, and for the public.”

Rennich and Williams say more research is needed to understand what role climate change and variable weather patterns play in honey bee colony losses

It's Show Time - Norm Maher

NSWAA Tamworth Branch took up an offer to attend the local show and spent "Children's Day" running nonstop presentations to school students and providing some very tasty samples. The display was further enhanced by live bees in an observation hive.

The following day branch members were kept busy answering all manner of questions from the public and we even saw, children bringing their parents to the bee stand they had visited the previous day.

One notable visitor was Governor General, former NSW Governor and beekeeper David Hurley. Seen here speaking with Rob Mitichie, Ray Hull and Belinda.



Enough honey was sold to enable the Branch to make a \$500.00 donation to the Annual Conference guest speaker's fund.

Following the show Ray hosted the entire student population from Dungowan PS to see a honey processing operation in action.

Branch President Ray Hull offered this wash up summary, "It was a great opportunity to engage with school students their teachers and the public as to what happening in the industry, how great our product is and to get their support. I would like to thank all the Branch members who gave their time, donated honey and display material, all in all a fantastic effort."

When asked if the Branch would do it again " Definitely" was Ray's word.



Norm Maher
Secretary
Tamworth Branch
NSWAA

Photos – Justin Wall

2020 Conference Dates

Bee Industry Council of WA
15 May, venue TBC

NSW Apiarists' Association
21-22 May, Tamworth NSW

Tasmanian Beekeepers Association
29-30 May, venue TBC

SA Apiarists' Association
11-12 June, venue TBC

QLD Beekeepers Association
18-20 June, Warwick QLD

Victorian Apiarists' Association
TBC

Aust. Queen Bee Breeders Association
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Varroa Mite Eradication Program



MEDIA RELEASE

7 November 2019

More Asian honey bees suspected at Townsville Port

Key points:

- Townsville residents are urged to check their properties and report bees, nests or swarms to 13 25 23 following a new discovery of Asian honey bee wings near the Port of Townsville.
- A nest of Asian honey bees carrying varroa mite was destroyed at the port earlier this year.
- Varroa mites could significantly damage the Australian bee industry and agricultural sector, disrupting honey production and pollination services.

Main story:

Biosecurity Queensland is calling on Townsville residents - particularly those living close to the Townsville port - to check their properties for bees following new evidence of Asian honey bee.

The National Varroa Mite Eradication Program in Townsville has again detected the presence of the imported bee pests (*Apis cerana*), this time through laboratory testing of Rainbow bee-eater pellets collected from two sites just outside the port boundary.

The pellets were collected in October in Cannan Street and on Benwell Road.

It follows the discovery of a nest of Asian honey bees that was confirmed to be carrying the destructive varroa mite at the Townsville port in May this year.

Varroa mites could significantly damage the Australian bee industry, disrupting honey production and pollination services. Early detection is vital to eradication and containment efforts.

National Varroa Mite Eradication Program acting manager Robert Stephens said the team had ramped up surveillance activity within a 2km radius of the port in an effort to find the nest the bees had originated from.

“Field staff have been all over the port as well as the neighbouring suburbs of South Townsville and Railway Estate since the wings were confirmed as being from the Asian honey bee,” he said.

“But we urgently need people to check their backyards for bees, nests and swarms and report any findings to us on 13 25 23.

“Asian honey bees are a natural host for the varroa mite but are not usually found in Townsville so finding the bee gives officers the best chance of finding the mite.”



VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS FOR 2018-2019 GRATEFULLY RECEIVED

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Macquarie ACT 2614

(AHBIC)

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PLATINUM	\$20,000 & above	BRONZE	\$ 500 & above
GOLD PLUS	\$ 5,000 & above	COPPER	\$ 100 & above
GOLD	\$ 2,000 & above	OTHER	Up to \$100

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Phone: Date:

Contribution by: **DIRECT DEPOSIT:** \$.....

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Please return this form to AHBIC by post or email to ensure your contribution is recorded correctly

POST: AHBIC, PO Box 42, Macquarie, ACT 2614
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Account Name: Australian Honey Bee Industry Council Inc

Banking **Bank:** Bendigo Bank

BSB: 633 000

Account No: 150 976 405

Reference: Please include your NAME as the Direct Deposit Reference



Contribution by credit card is now available through the AHBIC website at <https://honeybee.org.au/friends-of-ahbic-voluntary-contribution/>

Please indicate YES or NO

1. _____ Please publicise my name in the AHBIC Newsletter (as financial supporter **and** in monetary category)
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3. _____ I would like to receive the AHBIC Annual Report
4. _____ Please acknowledge this voluntary contribution with a Tax Receipt (email preferred)

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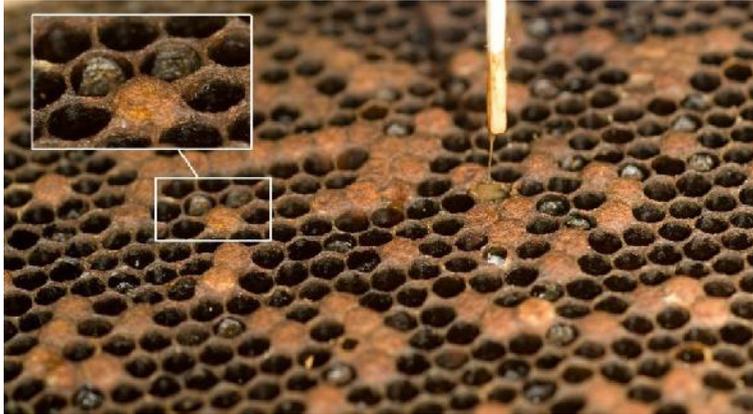
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Innovation is driven from ideas

The concept of using irradiation in the beekeeping industry all started with an idea on how to do things a bit differently.

We are constantly trying to develop ways to utilise our processes to help your industry in lots of new ways.

But without your ideas and input, gamma irradiation would not be where it is today.

Come and share your thoughts and ideas with us. You could hold the key to developing a new application that could alter the beekeeping industry forever.



Please contact us about any inspirational ideas you have



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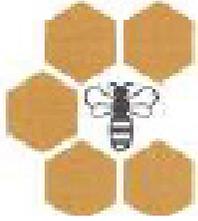
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AUSTRALIAN HONEY BEE INDUSTRY COUNCIL INC (AHBIC) UPDATE

Full newsletter available from <http://honeybee.org.au>

NOTE FROM CHAIR, PETER McDONALD

The AHBIC Executive have just wrapped up another period of meetings in late October, discussing the industry concerns that matter most to you. Our work is on behalf of the whole industry, from beekeepers with a single hive, to commercial operations of thousands.

One of our achievements was streamlining our operations so that we can be efficient and economical with our limited resources. We have to be.

Look at the list of AHBIC Friends. Compare that with:

- 25,000+ total registered beekeepers throughout Australia (as at Oct 2018)
- 1780+ Commercial beekeepers throughout Australia (as at Oct 2018)
- Many beekeeping equipment suppliers
- Numerous Honey Buyers/Packing businesses
- Countless clubs and associations.
- Significant numbers of pollination service brokers and companies

All of these are reliant on the roles that AHBIC performs to ensure the future viability of our industry and all at different times ask AHBIC for help.

We need many more Friends to support AHBIC financially so that we can work on the large amount of issues currently at hand as well as the many that continually develop. We would love to be more effective and responsive but constraints on funds limit our ability to do so.

For many years AHBIC has been working with partners to ensure there is an environment where beekeeping businesses have access to a skilled workforce. By focussing on beekeeper education there are now Certificate level accredited training courses available throughout Australia, with many beekeepers across the country being trained.

Another way we have been recently asked to help is to improve the ability of beekeepers to source foreign workers. This issue has been raised by multiple beekeepers, none of whom are current Friends of AHBIC. Not contributing financially will not stop us acting if the problem is a high priority to address, AHBIC has always acted on issues that are important to the industry no matter the source and will continue to do so into the future.

However, due to our current level of financial contributors to AHBIC, we need to be very conscious of where we allocate our time and funds for every issue that the people of the Honey Bee industry need addressed. Access to skilled foreign workers is exactly this type of issue. It could consume a large amount of time and effort to address and we need to be conscious of the impact this could have on other work AHBIC does such as biosecurity, sustainable access to floral resources, improved communications, increased funding initiatives etc. To that end we would like to understand this size of this problem for our industry. Does it affect more than just a few businesses, and is it a high priority to address? A few more details about how you can help are later in this newsletter.

AHBIC is your representative body and we want to address the concerns of everyone in the Honey Bee industry. We would like to help.

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