



# Varroa mite detected in beehives at the Port of Newcastle

25 June 2022

## **Re: Biosecurity (Varroa Mite) Emergency Order 2022 under the *NSW Biosecurity Act 2015***

NSW Department of Primary Industries surveillance this week detected Varroa mite (*V. Destructor*) in biosecurity surveillance hives at the Port of Newcastle.

An emergency eradication program was immediately initiated and announced by the Minister for Agriculture Dugald Saunders yesterday, once molecular testing had confirmed the species identification.

A biosecurity control order was also put in place, banning the movement of hives within a 50km radius of the infestation site and requiring beekeepers to report the location of any hives within that zone.

NSW DPI has been working with apiary industry bodies and stakeholders since the detection was first identified to ensure beekeepers are informed and empowered to be part of this critical response.

This email is to further update all registered beekeepers of developments and what is required under the Control Order.

## Varroa mite biosecurity zone and what to do

Within the biosecurity zone:

- no hives or bees can be moved
- no honey or comb can be removed from hives
- hives must not be tampered with unless directed by a NSW DPI officer

Beekeepers must also let NSW DPI know the location of all hives within the zone by:

- completing the [Report a biosecurity concern form](#);
- emailing [hive.location@emergency.dpi.nsw.gov.au](mailto:hive.location@emergency.dpi.nsw.gov.au); or,

- calling the Exotic Plant Pest Hotline, **1800 084 881** (9 am to 5 pm, 7 days a week).

The eradication plan includes treatment of beehives within a 10 km emergency zone around the infestation and inspection of managed and feral honey bee colonies within 25km.

To check if your hives are within the biosecurity zone, visit [www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/varroa](http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/varroa) and use the address finder on the interactive map.

## Hives outside the biosecurity zone

If you have hives outside the 50 km biosecurity zone, please continue to inspect them for [signs of varroa mite](#) or other pests, such as small hive beetle or American Foul Brood, and report any concerns using the contact options listed above.

Varroa mites are tiny reddish-brown parasites and individual mites can easily be seen with the naked eye.

NSW DPI thanks beekeepers for working side-by-side with government as part of Australia's early warning system to detect exotic honey bee pests, and the National Bee Pest Surveillance Program, which includes surveillance hives and catch boxes at strategic locations around our ports and airports.

Australia is the only major honey producing country free from varroa mite. If varroa mite establishes here it could cost Australia's honey industry more than \$70 million a year and adversely impact multibillion-dollar plant industries, which rely on bee pollination.

NSW DPI has more resources available via the following links:

- [Varroa mite](#)
- [Hive inspection techniques](#)

