AUSTRALIA'S
HONEYBEE NEWS
"The Voice of the Beekeeper"
www.nswaa.com.au
Volume 16 Number 2
March - April 2023

Inside:

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Photo by
Jaye Hughes
Bidgee Pollination

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AUSTRALIA'S HONEYBEE NEWS

The official Journal of the NSW Apiarists' Association (NSWAA)

www.nswaa.com.au

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Friday 19 May 2023

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

It is already March and the year is moving along very quickly or is that old age catching up to me? Boy how time flies when you are having fun!

Well I am not going to beat around the bush, lately there has been a number of fires started by beekeepers being careless with their smokers. I thought by running "beekeeping during bushfire periods" would be enough to bring everybody back to reality about how easy a bushfire can start but obviously not. I know accidents do happen but we need to be very careful when using a smoker in dry times, sometimes no damage is done but it could easily be an apiary, building or property that is destroyed. If this keeps happening, we may even see a ban placed on the use of smokers during these times and that will affect the industry badly. So please use common sense when using a smoker in dry times, don't place it down on dry grass and make sure you have put it out when you are finished using it.

Next month will see Honeyland taking place at the Royal Easter Show in the arts & crafts building where we were last year. If you are at the show pop around and say G'day to the volunteers who have given up their time to promote our great industry. To all those who have donated honey for this year I would like to say thank you very much. This is a great way to interact with the public and educate them about our beautiful honeys that are not adulterated and are uniquely Australian.

As the NSW Government is in caretaker mode until the election has been held, it is really hard to get answers from government departments as to what is happening in regard to the Varroa response. We have seen very little communication coming from DPI about the required alcohol washes needed to be done to be compliant, this has been discussed and agreed that it needs to be changed for the better otherwise it is unworkable and impossible for beekeepers to comply. I am waiting for the order to be changed so members can be informed and know where they stand. It is still necessary for you to report your alcohol washes to DPI by filling in the online form or by calling 1800 084 881.

The Conference is shaping up to be one not to be missed. It has taken more time then normal to get the conference organised and many adjustments have been made trying to get outstanding speakers to come for us. It is going to be two days packed with information for all. NSW AA has been successful in obtaining a grant to help with the cost of the conference for this year, more on this will be released after the election.

I would like branches to think about what education courses they would like to have for their members. This could be anything from pest and diseases, chemical courses, first aid, governance, use of drones, advance 4X4 driving, chain saw and forklift license; just to name a few! Most courses only allow for 20 students at a time, and we need to give the training organisation time to get ready. I will have a full list of available courses sent to each branch within the next few weeks.

It is good to hear that some areas are obtaining honey. The North Coast has gone very dry for honey lately even though there is flower appearing on trees like bloodwood and ash. There has been a bit of ti-tree flowering as well but nothing to write home about. I have heard the red stringy down south has been doing a bit and that's good for those that have sites in those areas. Bloodwood, apple box and a few other trees have been yielding but in general it has been a poor year for honey, some beekeepers have not even turned their extraction plants this year. With all this said, the price of bulk is still going down.

With the berry industry needing pollination now and a lot are in the eradication zone, which means the bees are going on a one way trip, it is concerning that many inexperienced people are buying hives for this purpose. Growers have contacted me regarding the price some beekeepers are asking and also the quality of bees being supplied. I am not here to tell anybody what price they should sell their hives for or comment about quality of gear but I will say this does reflect on our industry and we need to be professional about our dealings as it could damage our image over the years to come.

Kind regards,
Your President,
Steve Fuller

NSWAA

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CEO Update

CEO Update March 2023

CEO Update
Mad March has lived up to its reputation. The Varroa response continues to grow in size, however the NSW DPI keep delivering their best effort to resource it and continue with eradication. The executive came together in Canberra to hold an executive meeting and a strategic planning workshop. I have been busy with CCEPP and NMG commitments along with meetings with Plant Health Australia, Department of Agriculture and CRC for pollination meetings this month.

Varroa Response
The response continues to find low level detections in the purple zones. Whilst not unexpected it is slowly growing the red zones and encompassing more beekeepers and hives. It is devastating for those caught in the red and purple zones.

A focus on surveillance in the southern end of the Central Coast complex is underway to gain confidence there are no mites in the suburban areas of Sydney. Tracing work and general blue zone surveillance also continues.

Negotiations for permit framework has meant hives have been moved into the Nana Glen red zone to facilitate pollination on a one-way trip. Compliance continues to be an important part of the response with additional compliance staff recruited into the response. A greater focus on blue zone movement declarations and alcohol wash submissions will increase the amount of penalty notices issued.

CRC for Pollination Security
The first stage application for the CRC for Pollination Security has been submitted by the CRC bid team. This has been a huge undertaking for the bid team to get the application in. AHBIC was unable to support the bid through a partner declaration (a pledge of in-kind financial support) at the 11th hour due to concerns around how the application was written and how it reflected our industry.
This was a tough decision for the executive to make as it has significant implications. It was the strong view of the executive that the application didn't reflect our industry positively. The clear goal of the CRC to find alternatives to honeybees for pollination also wasn't in the best interest of creating a prosperous honey bee industry. The AHBIC executive is willing to work with the CRC for Pollination Security in the future should the opportunity arise. AHBIC did however provide a letter of support to the bid.

The Month Ahead
AHBIC is participating in the AgriFutures Levied Industry Forum to discuss common issues across industries and work on solutions with an opportunity to provide feedback to AgriFutures. I will be attending the national biosecurity roundtable towards the end of March and a Forum in Dubbo on transitioning away from diesel. We continue to meet with government to lobby for better pre-border testing of imported honey.

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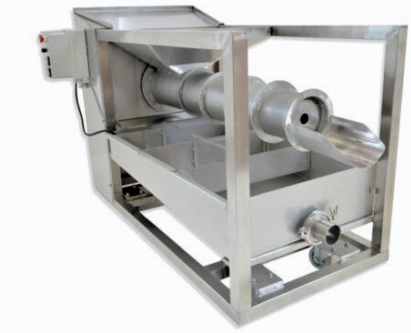

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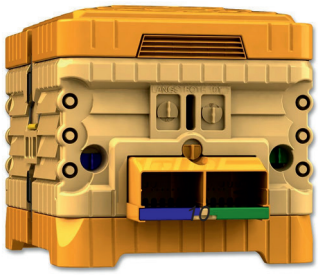

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Friday night will host our Annual Conference Dinner, **sponsored by Varroa Easy Check**. Featuring a two course meal, entertainment by Comedian Ventriloquist, Darren Carr, and a live auction, this will be a night not to be missed!

Full Conference Registration - this includes all conference sessions on both Thursday, 18 and Friday, 19 May 2023 including morning tea and lunch both days, entry to the Trade Exhibition and one ticket to the Trade Exhibition Evening

Member	$250	Early bird rate	$175
Partner of a member	$180	Early bird rate	$105
Non-Member	$325	Early bird rate	$250

Single day rate (either Day 1 or Day 2)

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Non-Member	$200	Early bird rate	$175
Trade Exhibition Evening	$20		

Annual Conference Dinner and Entertainment $65

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NSW APIARISTS' ASSOCIATION INC.

ABN: 89 417 216 326

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The Association's **membership year ends on 28 February 2023** and your membership subscription is due for renewal. Please complete this membership form and return it along with your payment to ensure your membership remains current.

Complete the section below and return it to info@nswaa.com.au or PO Box 3055, West Tamworth NSW 2340

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NSW APIARISTS' ASSOCIATION INC.

ABN: 89 417 216 326

OBJECTIVES OF THE ASSOCIATION

To provide a means whereby the apiarists of this state may be represented through a common organisation for the welfare of the Industry.

To provide relevant information on the production of apiary products and services produced in NSW and to ensure an adequate return to the apiarist, for their labour and capital in the Industry.

The Association is committed to increasing the demand for apiary products, disseminating information to Members, securing business concessions for members and protecting the natural resources valuable to bees.

To co-operate with the relevant government agencies in instructional and experimental work connected with the Industry.

To assist Members in their apicultural rights, secure effective legislation and administration in affairs affecting the Industry.

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

Membership of the Association provides beekeepers with a voice in industry affairs, either through the members' branch or through the Annual State Conference.

The Association's publication, ***Australia's Honeybee News*****,** helps keep members abreast of political, technical and economic developments that affect their livelihood. It is published six times a year and is free to members.

Most importantly, membership of the Association directly supports the state's only organisation of professional beekeepers ... the only organisation that can help you survive.

The Association fights for better prices, better access to honey and pollen producing flora, better protection from agricultural chemicals and better research and development.

Voting in ballots is proportional to operational size and ranges from 1 to 12 votes depending on the number of hives owned.

BRANCH STRUCTURE

Anybody of not less than ten members may apply to the Executive Council for registration as a branch of the Association.

Branches run their own programs and conduct their own business. They also have the right to be represented at meetings of the Association's Executive Council.

Most members of the Association are also members of their local branch. Presently there are branches in the Central Tablelands, Hunter Valley, North Coast, Northern Tablelands, Riverina, Southern Tablelands, Sydney Metropolitan, Tamworth and Western Plains.

THE VOICE OF THE BEEKEEPER

President
Steve Fuller
P: 0488 434 498 E: steve.fuller@nswaa.com.au

State Secretary/Treasurer
Candice Clifford
P: 0466 339 506

Contact Us
NSW Apiarists' Association Inc
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NSW APIARISTS' ASSOCIATION INC.

ABN: 89 417 216 326

2023
NOMINATION FORM - EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

NOMINEE (Person you are nominating)

Name: …… Member No: ……
(please insert nominee name) (insert nominee member number)

I hereby accept this nomination.

Signed: …… Date ……
(to be signed by nominee)

NOMINATOR

I …… Member No: ……
(please print your name) (insert your membership number)

hereby nominate the person listed above as the Nominee for a position on the NSW Apiarists' Association Inc. Executive Council.

Signed: …… Date ……

SECONDER

Name: …… Member No: ……
(please insert your name) (insert your membership number)

hereby second the nomination of the person listed above as the Nominee for a position on the NSW Apiarists' Association Inc. Executive Council.

Signed: …… Date ……

- No Member of the Association shall be eligible for election to the Executive Council unless they reside in NSW or the ACT and has been a Financial Member for at least two successive years immediately prior to the date of the holding of the Annual Conference at which Nominations for election are received
- Each member shall be elected for a 2-year term and must retire from office at the Annual Conference held at the end of such 2-year term, but if eligible, may seek reappointment.

Return:
By Post to: Secretary/Treasurer, NSW Apiarists' Association, PO Box 3055, West Tamworth NSW 2340
Or Email to: info@nswaa.com.au

This form must be received by NSWAA no later than 5pm, 27 April 2023

President
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NSW APIARISTS' ASSOCIATION INC.

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2023 AGM AND CONFERENCE REGISTRATION

Thursday 18th and Friday, 19th May 2023
Penrith Panthers Rugby Leagues Club
123 Mulgoa Road, Penrith NSW 2750

2023 DELEGATE DETAILS	Delegate(s) Name(s):	
☐ NSWAA Member (Insert number)	☐ Non-member	
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Phone/Mobile:	Email:	
A - FULL CONFERENCE REGISTRATION - Each registration includes all conference sessions on Thursday, 18th & Friday, 19th May 2023, morning tea and lunch both days, entry to the Trade Exhibition and one (1) ticket to the Trade Exhibition Evening		
Member	☐	$250
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B - ADDITIONAL TICKETS - Please purchase one day tickets, dinner tickets and any additional Trade Exhibition Evening tickets here		
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*Note: Photographs and videos will taken at this event. By attending this event you hereby acknowledge this and consent to the possibility of having your photo/likeness/recordings posted publicly and on social media.

New South Wales Apiarists' Association inc.

'The voice of the Beekeeper'

2023 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING & CONFERENCE – DAY 1 **Thursday, 18th MAY 2023** Penrith Panthers Rugby League Club, 123 Mulgoa Road, Penrith NSW	
8:00 – 9:00 am	**Registration / Member Check-In**
9:00 – 10:00 am	**Welcome – Steve Fuller, NSWAA President**
	Apologies Minutes Silence for Passed Members
	Minutes 2022 AGM (as read) Business Arising from 2022 AGM Minutes Presentation of 2022 Financial Report Presidents Report (as read) Nominations for Executive Council Scrutineers appointed (if required) Poll Declared Open (if required)
	Official Opening – **Dr John Tracey** – *Deputy Director General, Biosecurity and Food Safety, NSW Department of Primary Industries (DPI)*
10:00 – 10:10 am	Platinum Speaker presentation **– Beewise Australia**
10:10 – 10:30 am	Australian Honey Bee Industry Council (AHBIC) **– Stephen Targett –** *AHBIC Chair*
10:30 – 11:00 am	**Morning Tea - sponsored by Hornsby Beekeeping Supplies**
11:00 – 11:35 pm	DPI Varroa Response – **Dr Satendra Kumar** – *DPI Director Plant Biosecurity, Product Integrity*
11:35 – 11:50 pm	Varroa eDNA research – **Dr. John Roberts –** *Senior Research Scientist, Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO)*
11:50 – 12:30 pm	Key Note Speaker - Varroa mites make 'fat bees skinny bees'
12:30 – 1:30 pm	**Lunch**
1:30 – 2:00 pm	Key Note Speaker - **David Mendes** – *Project Apis mellifera board member* US industry-funded forage, Varroa and mite tolerance breeding research
2:00 – 2:15 pm	Varroa monitoring with US industry - **Emily Noordyke** – *DPI Plan Bee Technical Officer*
2:15 - 2:30 pm	Pacific Labour Scheme **– Dr. Cooper Schouten** – *Southern Cross University*
2:30 - 2:45 pm	Honey bee nutrition **– Dr Madlen Kratz** – *DPI Honey Bee Industry Development Officer*
2:45 - 3:00 pm	Clover4Bees – **Dr Richard Hayes –** *DPI Senior Research Scientist*
3:00 - 3:15 pm	Almond Board Australia (ABA) – **Tim Jackson** – *ABA Chief Executive Officer*
3:15 - 3:30 pm	Berries Australia – **Rachel Mackenzie –** *Executive Director*
3:30 - 4:00 pm	Bushfire Industry Recovery Package projects – **Dr. Kenya Fernandes** – *University of Sydney Microbiologist*
4:00 pm - close	General Business
5:30 – 7:30 pm	**TRADE EXHIBITION EVENING – sponsored by Lockwoods Beekeeping Supplies**

New South Wales Apiarists' Association inc.

'The voice of the Beekeeper'

2023 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING & CONFERENCE – DAY 2 **Friday, 19th MAY 2023** Penrith Panthers Rugby League Club, 123 Mulgoa Road, Penrith NSW	
8:00 – 8:30 am	**Registration / Member Check-In**
8:30 – 8:45 am	National Parks Update
8:45 – 9:00 am	BPASS & Crown Lands - **Nick Geoghegan –** *DPI Program Coordinator Apiculture Resource*
9:00 – 9:10 am	AgriFutures grant: I.D. & develop tech for improved hive performance – **Aidan Whitby**
9:10 – 9:20 am	AgriFutures – A Snap Shot – **Steve Fuller** – *AgriFutures Advisory Panel Member, NSWAA Pres.*
9:20 – 9:30 am	Accredited education & training - **Kelly Lees** – *DPI Honey Bee Education Officer*
9:30 – 10:00 am	Key Note Speaker – **Dr Nadine Chapman -** *Research Fellow, University of Sydney* Resilient beekeeping – breeding for Varroa resistance
10:00 – 10:30 am	**Morning Tea - sponsored by Hornsby Beekeeping Supplies**
10:30 – 11:15 am	Key Note Speaker – Understanding the Mysterious Tropilaelaps Mite
11:15 – 11:45 am	Genomic testing for Varroa – **Professor Alexander Mikheyev** – *Australian National University*
11:45 – 12:10 pm	Plan Bee after Varroa – **Elizabeth Frost** – *DPI Technical Specialist Bees*
12:10 – 12:20 pm	Marcus Oldham – **Zac Alcock –** *2022 NSWAA Attendee, NSWAA Executive Councillor*
12:20 – 12:30 pm	Announcement of Marcus Oldham Nominee for 2023 Ratification of 2022 Financial Report Announcement of closing of votes for 2023 Executive Council
12:30 – 1:30 pm	**Lunch**
1:30 – 1:45 pm	Driving consumers' honey desire – **Dr. Soumi Paul Mukhopadhyay** – *DPI Sensory & Consumer Science Researcher*
1:45 – 2:00 pm	Honey chemistry analysis results – **Dr. Jamie Ayton**, *DPI Chemist*
2:00 – 2:15 pm	Small hive beetle research, gaps, & *Kodamaea ohmeri* yeast
2:15 – 2:30 pm	Small hive beetle external trap research
2:30 - 2:50 pm	NSW compliance
2:50 – 3:00 pm	Bee Biosecurity update – **Rod Bourke** – *DPI Bee Biosecurity Officer*
3:00 – 3:30 pm	Flood assistance – **Rural Assistance Authority**
3:30 pm - Close	Notices of Motion General Business Announcement of Executive Council
6:00 – 7:00 pm	**Pre-Dinner Drinks Function - sponsored by Hive & Wellness Australia Pty Ltd**
7:00 pm	**ANNUAL CONFERENCE DINNER - sponsored by Varroa Easy Check** **ANNUAL CONFERENCE DINNER ENTERTAINMENT – Darren Carr**

Plant Profile: manna/ribbon/white gum (*Eucalyptus viminalis*)

The following plant profile is from *Honey & Pollen Flora of South-Eastern Australia* by Dr. Doug Somerville. This book focuses on the value of plants to nectar and pollen-eating animals, honey bees in particular. The result of over 30 years of research, it brings together scientific knowledge and the experience of hundreds of beekeepers into a valuable reference work. The book can be purchased from Tocal College here: www.tocal.nsw.edu.au/publications/bees

Honey and pollen flora feedback form:

NSW Department of Primary Industries values your experience working plants for honey and pollen. We would love to hear your feedback on the plant profiles republished in the Honey Bee News. Any help you can provide will be considered in the next update of Dr. Doug Somerville's *Honey & Pollen Flora of South-Eastern Australia*. Please submit your feedback here: https://forms.office.com/r/BmT1kFkF0B

Manna gum

Eucalyptus viminalis

Can also be referred to as ribbon gum. This profile refers to *E. viminalis* subsp. *viminalis*.

This species is especially valuable in preparing hives for winter and as a source of stores for wintering bees.

Manna gum is valuable as an ornamental and as a source of shade and shelter. The timber is yellowish or pink and has an open grain. It is not durable.

Habit: Varies considerably in form depending on its environment. On deep rich valley soils it can reach a height of 40 m and a trunk diameter of 1.5 m, with a long straight trunk. On poor shallow soils in elevated windy locations where there is little rain it is usually crooked and gnarled with a short trunk and a more open spreading crown.

Occurrence: Found mainly in pockets in all parts of the tablelands and coast of NSW. Extends north into Qld, south into Vic., SA and Tas. It grows from near sea level in the south to altitudes of over 1000 metres in the north, ranging from wet to dry sclerophyll forests. It develops best on moist, well-drained, alluvial and basaltic soils in mountain valleys and grows with a wide range of other eucalypts, the species varying with the locality. The majority of apiary sites for manna gum in NSW are located on private property.

Bark: The bark is rough, grey and persistent on the lower 1–3 m of the trunk. It is shed in long ribbons from the remainder of the trunk and branches, hence its common name. The exposed bark is smooth and white or may sometimes be pale yellow or pink.

Leaves: Adult leaves are alternate, stalked, lanceolate to narrow-lanceolate and 10–17.5 cm x 1.2–2.5 cm. They are yellowish green, concolorous, and thin. Intramarginal veins are distinct.

Buds: Buds are ovoid, 6–9 mm x 5 mm, and may be sessile or on short stalks. They are mostly green, but may sometimes be tinted yellowish green or ash-coloured. The operculum is conical or hemispherical and often slightly shorter than the calyx tube. Buds may be beaked, in which case the operculum may be longer than the calyx tube.

Buds form in mid-summer and are carried for about 15 months.

RATING

Flowering period												
Months	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Response Level												

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Facts About a Beekeeper

Frank Malfroy

Feb 1978
I was standing on an old wooden bridge that joined both sides of "Noel's Farm" – Gretchen Wheen's property on the riverbanks of the Hawkesbury River at North Richmond. The flood waters were lapping at my boots. The main road that crossed the Blue Mountains to Lithgow and beyond was 30 feet below. The previous day, on the advice of Neville Cutts, Gretchen, Frank (her cousin) and I loaded his old Ford truck with as many baby nucs that we could fit on and headed across the flood plain to Richmond and higher ground. We never made it. Gretchen had an export order to Iran, so the crew, myself and friends, commuted to and from Gretchen's in a tinny to outlying nuc yards that weren't flood affected.

The Heath Boom Loader on Frank's truck was slightly above the water level as we motored to and fro. The buoyancy of the nuc boxes kept the truck floating. Like the top deck and turret of a submarine. The truck was never the same. A year later, when Frank was going for his annual truck driver's licence – he was an old bloke even back then – the truck broke down and he and the examiner had to walk the 10 kms back to the registry office together.

I'd been working with Gretchen for a couple of years. This and other misadventures convinced me that queen bee breeding wasn't for me.

Autumn 1981 – I'd put together a couple of small loads of bees and was down around Jingellic on the NSW side of the Murray River, on that big Red Stringy crop, in a primitive mobile van. Phillip Eastly was across the border at Yackandandah on his legendary honey flow. This story was confirmed and embellished recently in a conversation with Laurie Kershaw over a couple of beers at the Dubbo RSL. I returned to Freemans Reach with a modest crop, in 60 lb tins of course, EFB and a wife.

The 80s saw the family arrive – Tim, Alex and Sam. The mobile plant was parked in the back paddock subsequently housed guinea pigs, chooks and ducks. Janne and I started life in a caravan, then a shed and as I say to people – the lifecycle of a beekeeper – starts in a shed and finishes in one.

By the time the house was finished the children had all grown up and left the roost. Then the missus. It was a tough time in the early 2000s with the Hawkesbury being the epicentre of the SHB incursion. I struggled with it, had bad mental health issues, but managed to pull through, due entirely to the help of my family and young offsider, Lewin.

I can fully understand how difficult it must be for those beekeeping families on the Coast who had to endure the fire storms of 2019, then the floods and now the varroa incursion, it's the toughest gig ever– husband, father, beekeeper. My 28-year marriage didn't survive it.

Hey, but then I met Jenny and life's turned around. We've got our beautiful little farm – "The Lazy Bee and the Double D Ranch", just out of Lyndhurst and life's as sweet as Fuzzy Box honey on a bit of crumpet. Back doing a few queens, and Jenny's son Matt and his family, have come on board to establish the dynasty. It's gotta start somewhere.

Jenny and I love our road trips – up to Alice, Uluru and the McDonald Ranges. Pitch a tent beside the campfire. Then an epic 8 week trip in a "fried out combi" starting in California and down through "middle America" – working and staying with some of US big bee operations – finishing up in Austin, Texas and meeting up with Danny and Laura Weaver at their "Dripping Springs" Ranch – introduced them to "CHUX" therapy for SHB control, which they now sell on their website.

Finally, great mentor, then friend, Warren Taylor, said to me way back when he was still with DPI. "Frank", he said, "Yes, Mr Taylor", I said. He said "Beekeeping, it's as disease". Never found the cure.

Written by Frank Malfroy

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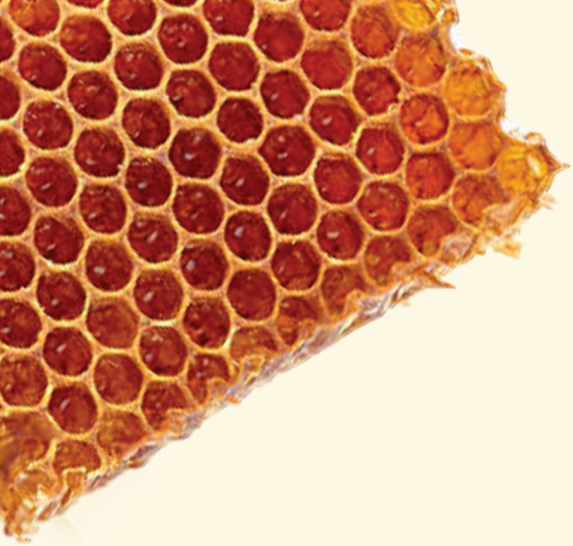
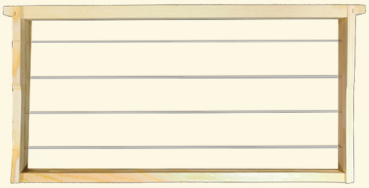
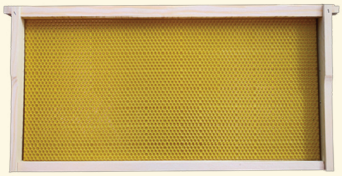


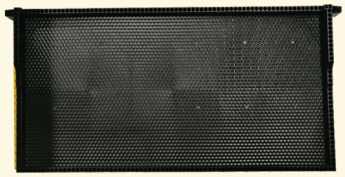
Bee Frames - Wood and Plastic



Wood Frame Full Depth
Assembled With Wire



Wood Frame Full Depth
With Plastic Foundation
(Not waxed)



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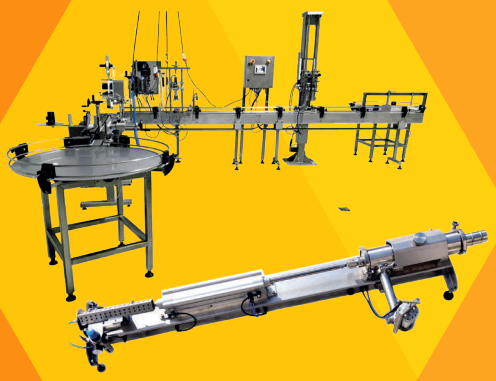
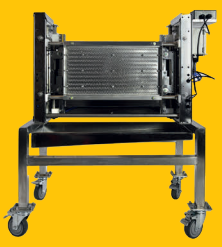


PACK

PROCESS



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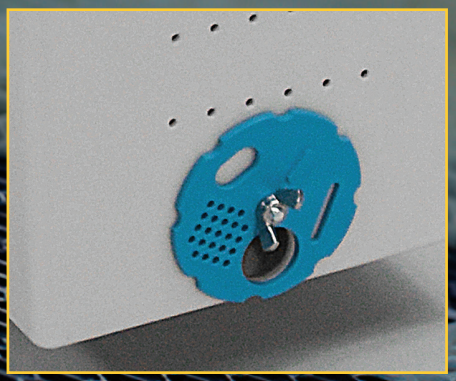

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Bee pest management

Pest management is good business and biosecurity is everyone's business, whether you're a commercial or recreational beekeeper. With three La Niña's and multiple flooding events statewide, this season was full on with regards to pest management. For example, increased numbers of small hive beetle required beekeepers to review their standard pest management practices and work harder than normal to keep beetle levels low. The following three steps are transferable across bee pests and their management. Let's start with small hive beetle.

Three steps to keeping your bees safe from small hive beetle (SHB):

1. Know the level of beetles in your hives,
2. Know what level of beetles is safe for your environment/management,
3. Know what tools you have to keep beetle populations at a safe level:

a. Tools that affect beetle reproduction (keep a low population of beetles low)

b. Tools to use for a serious infestation (bring a high population of beetles down)

Bee Biosecurity Officer Rod Bourke's past Honey Bee News articles, AgriFutures' reports and NSW DPI Primefacts on SHB management options are all excellent resources outlining the management tools for SHB. Historically the main SHB management in Eastern Australia has been to:

- maintain strong, healthy colonies with young productive queens
- unite weak colonies together or combine them to strong colonies (if free of American foulbrood)
- boost weaker colonies with a frame of capped brood from strong colonies (if free of American foulbrood)

On the other side of the coin, the hive conditions above which help control SHB levels and make a honey crop, are the perfect conditions for Varroa reproduction. Both SHB and Varroa are capable of prolific multiplication. Under laboratory conditions 80 SHB can become more than 36,000 adult SHB by day 63, as observed in SHB research undertaken by past NSW DPI Honey Bee Industry Development Officer Nick Annand.

Caption: Small hive beetle adult with honeycomb for scale. Credit: Mississippi Beekeepers Association

In a scenario where a single Varroa mite infests a bee hive and has two daughters, and each daughter after that has two offspring and so on and so forth, Varroa numbers explode. In reality many factors affect Varroa's reproductive rate (environment, beekeeper enterprise management, Varroa treatment regime, re-infestation, honey bee behavioural tools against Varroa, etc.), but let's just say the phrase 'breed like rabbits' should be retired. Here's what it looks like to 'breed like Varroa,' if one female mite infests a bee hive and if all her daughters also reproduce successfully.

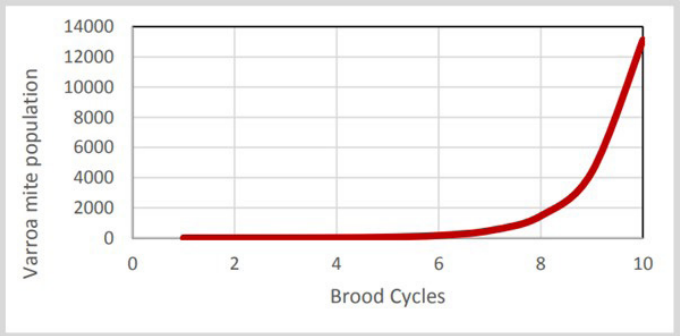

Figure 1. Exponential growth of Varroa population in one hive, starting from one female mite. Credit: Meghan Milbrath, Michigan State University Extension.

Michigan State University (MSU) Assistant Professor Meghan Milbrath explains in a series of extension tools that "Varroa mite populations, when left unchecked, can grow quickly. Each female mite reproduces multiple times in her life, and each time she reproduces, she lays multiple daughters (and they all reproduce multiple times, and they all produce multiple daughters, and those daughters reproduce…). All of this reproduction is occurring under capped brood cells, which means two things:

1. The more capped brood we have, the faster Varroa can reproduce, and
2. The population of Varroa is hidden from our eyes as it grows out of control. A honey bee colony can look very healthy and large one week, and explode with Varroa mites the next."

Caption: Varroa mite with honeycomb for scale. Credit: Shutterstock.

Eradication of the Varroa incursion in NSW continues. However, it doesn't hurt to scenario plan how you would manage it in your hives. The steps above for SHB management are readily transferable to Varroa. Think about your unique beekeeping scale, management style and environments. Reviewing that, how and when might you implement the three steps below to keep your bees safe from Varroa if you had to?

In countries where Varroa is endemic (there to stay) the most successful beekeepers:

1. Know the level of Varroa in their hives (via alcohol wash/sugar shake monitoring),
2. Know what level of Varroa is safe for their environment/management (long or short bee breeding season, harsh or mild winters, migratory/ stationary, etc),
3. Know what tools they have to keep Varroa populations at a safe level:
a. Tools that affect Varroa reproduction (keep a low population of mites low)
b. Tools to use for a serious infestation (bring a high population of mites down)

Learning from Varroa research and practical experience is critical. AgriFutures and HortInnovation have funded researchers to work through relevant Varroa research, management practices and miticide developments to understand the best options for Varroa management in Australia, should it evade eradication. AgriFutures-funded researchers include Julia Grassl (UWA), Nadine Chapman, Emily Remnant and Michael Holmes (USyd), John Roberts (CSIRO), Alexander "Sasha" Mikheyev (ANU) and Jody Gerdts (BeeScientifics/La Trobe Uni). HortInnovation-funded researchers include Macquarie Uni researchers Mary Whitehouse, Francesco Stolfi, Maciej Maselko, Fei Liu, as well as myself (NSW DPI), Mark Harvey (WA Museum), Juliana Rangel (Texas A&M), Mark Goodwin (NZ Emeritus Professor) and NZ Plant & Food Research scientists James Sainsbury, Ashley Mortensen, Megan Gee and Michelle Taylor. Some of these researchers will be presenting at the NSWAA Conference and other beekeeping conferences this year. Take the opportunity to listen and ask them questions in person by attending conference this year. In the meantime, keep monitoring your hives for Varroa with alcohol washes, get scenario planning, and seek reliable information on Varroa pest management practices from overseas.

References

Michigan State University, Entomology Department. (2016) *Keeping honey bee colonies safe from the Varroa mite.*
Michigan State University, Entomology Department. (2018) *Keeping your bees safe from the Varroa mite.*

Vale Monica Dibley

Monica Dibley (nee Gudgeon) - 1922 - 2023

Monica passed away peacefully in Queanbeyan (12.01.2023) after a short illness.

Born in Mudgee, she moved to Bathurst where she met and married Darcy Dibley, third generation apiarist from Bathurst.

Monica's formula for a long life: a happy, loving and nurturing family, engagement with the community, a love of music and art, a tennis player and horsewoman, a lover of nature, and 'a farm girl at heart'.

Darcy passed away in 2001. He was actively involved in the apiary industry at a local, state and national level, as President of Bathurst Apiarist Association, Branch Secretary, President NSW Apiarist Association and in the Federal Council of Australian Apiarists Association.

Monica is survived by her adoring daughter's Dianne, Roz and Jen, granddaughter's Ellie and Luci, and her great grandchildren.

Bee-Creative 2023

Art washes away from the soul the dust of everyday life

– Pablo Picasso

Introduction

Welcome to the 2023 NSWAA Bee-Creative Exhibition.

A creative outlet can help deal with anxiety and stress and is a lot of fun. Bee-Creative is designed to showcase the artistic benefits for those not just in the beekeeping industry but also any bee themed art and craft. Everyone is welcome to share their interests.

Certificates will be awarded for most popular display as voted by delegates and trade exhibitors. Voting to commence Thursday morning, finishing Friday morning of the conference day.

Winners will be announced after lunch on Friday 19th May 2023.

General Conditions

- Submission for entries must be received by **Sunday 30th April 2023.**
- Entries must be delivered to the Conference located at Penrith Panthers Rugby League Club on Wednesday 17th May 2023 from 3-00 pm to 5-00 pm or by appointment.
- Commercially obtained items are not allowed. Completed items are to be hand made
- There is no limit on the number of entries from one person
- Items to be clearly marked and labelled on back
- All Exhibits must be suitably presented in a clean and neat manner.
- Craft exhibits are to be no longer/heavier than one person is able to carry.
- Framed exhibits must be presented ready to hang.
- Quilts must be able to be displayed.
- Exhibits to be displayed at the discretion of the organisers.
- Exhibits are not to be removed during the Show.
- All exhibits shall remain the property of the exhibitor.
- Permission is assumed to reproduce any exhibit for publicity purposes.
- Every care will be taken with exhibits but no responsibility will be accepted.
- Exhibits to be collected on Friday 19th May 2023 during the lunch period.
- All craft types are encouraged
- If submitting a junior category please indicate age
- Bee Creative.

For further information please contact Janine Rudder 0428 431502 or jbrbees@gmail.com

110th Annual Conference
18th & 19th May 2023

Bee-Creative Entry Form

Name: _____

Address: _____

If Junior/Age: _____

Email: _____ **Contact Phone:**_____

Brief description and size of item:

_____

_____

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Story about item (no more than 200 words) Note this may be printed and displayed with item

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I agree that I have read and understood the above conditions

Signature: _____ Dated: _____

Please submit entries to jbrbees@gmail.com. All entries will be notified of acceptance

Honey Bee Industry Development Officer Report

Madlen Kratz
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Old comb = a less productive colony

We have all observed frames of a hive age over time. Some say…..
"They just get a little darker with time."
"The queen prefers to lay in darker frames."
"I can see the eggs more easily on darker combs for grafting."
"I use the dark frames in my honey supers."

The real question is…. How dark is too dark, and why does it matter?

To answer this question, we need to first consider what actually happens to combs as they age.

Honey bees unlike for example our native stingless bee species, *Tetragonula carbonaria* (endemic to the north-east coast of Australia), reuse their brood combs.

The process of pupation
Each time a larva pupates it spins a silken cocoon that remains in the cell after the adult emerges. Over time as more and more bees hatch from the same brood cells, more and more silk is accumulating against the cell wall. Eventually, the diameter of the cell shrinks. Interestingly, as less space becomes available in individual cells for future generations, the smaller the bees become.

> Bees reared in old comb may weigh up to 19% less than bees reared in new comb (Buchner 1955).

The effect of smaller body size during emergence from old combs applies not only to worker brood but also to drone brood!

Consequences

- Larvae may be forced to moult pre-maturely ie. nurse bees cap the cells before larvae have developed to its largest size potential (Abdellatif 1965)
- Adult bees with lower body weights have reduced lifespans (Black, 2006)
- Smaller bees have a reduced capacity to carry pollen and honey (Mostajeran et al. 2006)
- Drones of smaller size are outcompeted by larger drones. In drones body size is correlated with sperm production. Larger drones produce more sperm (Rangel & Fisher, 2019).

A note to queen breeders ……
Yes, as mentioned above, comb age affects the quality of drones that a colony can rear, but there is more!

A study (Taha et al. 2021) conducted in Egypt in 2021 found a correlation between comb age and the weight of developing queen cells containing royal jelly, ultimately resulting in smaller queens being raised in colonies with old comb. Developing queen cells that were raised in colonies containing old comb (4-6 years) verses newer comb (1-3 years) were on average more than 35% lighter. Newly emerged queens were up to 22% lighter.

You may think, hang on but queens do not hatch from the same cells over and over, how can this be the case?

> Compromised nurse bees are likely to have a limited capacity to feed the next generation. Since nurse bees feed all colony members including the next generation of workers, drones and queens, there is a direct flow on effect on the productivity of the entire colony.

Hive productivity
A colony can only show its full potential when it has the support of its workforce at maximum capacity as demonstrated by Taha et al., (2021) comparing hive productivity of colonies with new (1-3 years) vs old (4-6 years) comb.

- Colonies with new combs have shown to store about 67% more pollen than colonies with old comb
- Colonies with new combs store almost 90% more honey than colonies with old combs
- Colonies with new combs rear about 97% more worker brood than colonies with old comb

This vast difference in productivity is explained by larger bees being able to gather more resources, raise larger amounts of brood and therefore build and maintain larger colonies.

Weak colonies consume a large part of the collected nectar while trying to build up their populations, making for a smaller or non-existent honey crop. In small colonies, a larger proportion of the total population engages in brood rearing than in stronger colonies where a larger proportion of field bees is available to gather nectar.

> "Colonies with maximum populations produce not only more honey per colony but also more honey per bee than smaller colonies. One full strength colony containing 60,000 bees normally produces 50% more honey during a 2-week honey flow than 4 small colonies together, each with 15,000 bees." C.L. Farrar (1937)

Wax comb- toxins and pathogens

Wax comb consists primarily of hydrocarbons and ester components, which acts like a sponge. For this reason wax can absorb pesticides, heavy metals, but also accumulate fungal and bacterial spores, all of which can be detrimental to the colony's welfare and contribute to the shrinking of the cell's diameter as described for repeated pupation cycles.

Honey bee colonies in the wild

Honey bee colonies in the wild have a natural way of recycling old comb.

On average a colony can survive for about 6 years in the wild (Seeley 1978). Any wax or honey comb that is left behind is removed and "cleaned up" by wax moths, mice, beetles and other scavengers, leaving an empty cavity free of contaminated old comb for the next colony to live in. However, in managed hives it is the beekeeper's responsibility to replace and recycle old comb.

The bottom line is that old combs act as a biological sink for toxins and pathogens and can become a physical constraint on larval development, affecting the productivity of the entire colony and the returns for the beekeeper!

WOULD YOU THINK TWICE ABOUT REPLACING OLD COMB?

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Australian Manuka Honey

Upcoming Changes at The University of the Sunshine Coast Honey Lab: What is New? and What are the Impacts on Manuka and Honey Testing?

The Varroa mite incursion into NSW has impacted beekeeping activities in that state this year. Our lab remains open to accept **FILTERED** and **PROCESSED** honey samples that are free of contamination or bee bits. Contaminated samples from NSW are disposed of without testing, while non-contaminated are tested.

The University of the Sunshine Coast has rebranded itself to UniSC (formerly USC). We are now UniSC Honey Lab. This means UniSC Honey Lab has simply changed its acronym and logo. We will continue to support beekeepers and the honey industry by providing the three in one analysis of manuka honey. You may notice that the insignia on the reports will change shortly as the old logo is phased out.

Dr Peter Brooks is retiring as an academic at UniSC in December 2022 but, returning as a Volunteer Researcher in 2023. We hope to continue our research under the leadership of Dr Asmaa Boufridi. Dr Boufridi is a Natural Products Chemist and has previously worked closely with the team. Interestingly, Asmaa's grandfather was a beekeeper, and she has fond memories of him working the bees. No doubt, Peter will still be pursuing his passion which is the chemistry of Australian honey and its bioactivity. We wish Peter all the best for his "retirement" and welcome Asmaa into her role as we continue the usual testing and explore other components that contribute to bioactivity in Australian honeys.

Bioactives and Phenolics: We know that Manuka honeys are highly valued for their antibacterial (Non-Peroxide Activity) and anti-inflammatory properties. Their wholesale and retail values are based on the levels of bioactive molecules, including Dihydroxyacetone (DHA), Methylglyoxal (MGO) and 5-Hydroxymethylfurfural (HMF), and Phenolic compounds present in the honeys. The concentration of these compounds is dependent on such factors as nectar source, species, storage time and temperature.

Research at the University of the Sunshine Coast (UniSC) shows Phenolics, which are linked to antioxidant and anti-inflammatory activities, are typically 10 or even 20-fold higher in Manuka honeys than non-Manuka types. Good science underpins the understanding of these and other factors that affect the value of the product. With support from AgriFutures, CRC for Honey Bee Products and Hive & Wellness Australia, the University of the Sunshine Coast Honey Laboratory has analysed the bioactive components of Australian Manuka honeys and nectars to better understand the source species and regions producing these honeys, and their health benefits. More details can be found on the CRCHBP website: https://www.crchoneybeeproducts.com/, or from the Australian Manuka Honey Association website: https://manukaaustralia.org.au/ . The honey lab team, in particular Georgia Moore, is working on determining the phenolic content of a range of Australian honeys (not limited to Manuka) to develop a cost-effective means of establishing the origin of honey varieties. We think that substantiating floral and even regional origin of varieties of honey is important for Australia's reputation as a safe reliable honey producer and could lead to other varieties commanding higher market share and price.

The commercial value of Manuka honeys is due to a naturally occurring component in Manuka honeys called Methylglyoxal (MGO). It develops when bees forage on some species of *Leptospermum*. Since MGO is not present in the flowers, we tested floral nectar for dihydroxyacetone (DHA), which is converted into MGO as the honey matures and offer general advice here on target species, storage and maturing of these types of honey.

Target species: Australia has more than 80 species of *Leptospermum*. New Zealand predominantly (but not exclusively) has one, *L. scoparium*. Not all species of *Leptospermum* produce DHA so, it is important that beekeepers know which species produce DHA and therefore the more valuable honey product. The activity and identification guide of many species studied by Dr Simon Williams during his PhD at the University of the Sunshine Coast can be found at: https://www.agrifutures.com.au/product/a-beekeepers-guide-to-australian-leptospermum-trees-and-honey/

Some species, such as, *L. coriaceum*, *L. laevigatum* or *L. trinervium* do not present any DHA (0 ppm) in their nectar, while other common species showed presence of DHA in nectar at different concentration. Common species and their average DHA in nectar content are also listed below:

Species	Average DHA (ppm)	Species	Average DHA (ppm)
L. lanigerum	3433	*L. polygalifolium*	8883
L. liversidgei	6712	*L. scoparium*	2360
L. nitens	9579	*L. speciosum**	15021
		*L. whitei**	16568

*Note that while some species have high DHA, the plants may have rather specific growing conditions (*L. whitei*) or may

not produce good nectar flow every year (*L. speciosum*).

Storage: Maximising the value of Manuka honey involves optimising conditions for conversion of DHA to MGO as honeys mature. The following is general advice:

Over time DHA converts to MGO as honey matures. The rate of this conversion and the quality of the honey is influenced by storage conditions. In trials at the UniSC Honey Lab, young honeys with high measurements of DHA were stored at 5°C, 22°C, 37°C and 65°C tested to track this conversion:

- **At 5°C** there was **little change**, cool storage maintained the honey (i.e. MGO did not develop, nor d DHA decrease).
- **At 22°C** initial DHA decreased and importantly **MGO developed (increased).**
- **At 37°C** DHA decreased rapidly but, MGO after an initial small rise then began to fall.
- **At 65°C** DHA and MGO were **destroyed** within days.

Maturing: The prolonged heating of this type of honey destroys its value. There is a point where the net conversion of DHA to MGO ceases. When the ratio of DHA to MGO falls below a ratio of 2:1, the system occurring in honey no longer supports the development and maintenance of MGO. Most honeys reach their peak value in 12-18 months with proper storage. After this, the production of new MGO is outstripped by decomposition of existing MGO, and the activity levels slowly fall. So not all DHA converts to MGO. Another consequence of prolonged heating is high HMF levels. The take home message is: **Leaving honey drums outside in the sun, or prolonged heating destroys the honey's value.**

To assist in estimating the maturing of a honey, the Honey Lab produced an Activity Estimator. Our calculator uses the current DHA, MGO and HMF values at either 22°, 37° or 65°C to see the approximate predictions out to 52, 26 weeks or 7 days respectively. Figure 1 illustrates changes at 22°C over one year, starting at DHA 1000ppm, MGO 100 ppm and HMF 10 ppm.

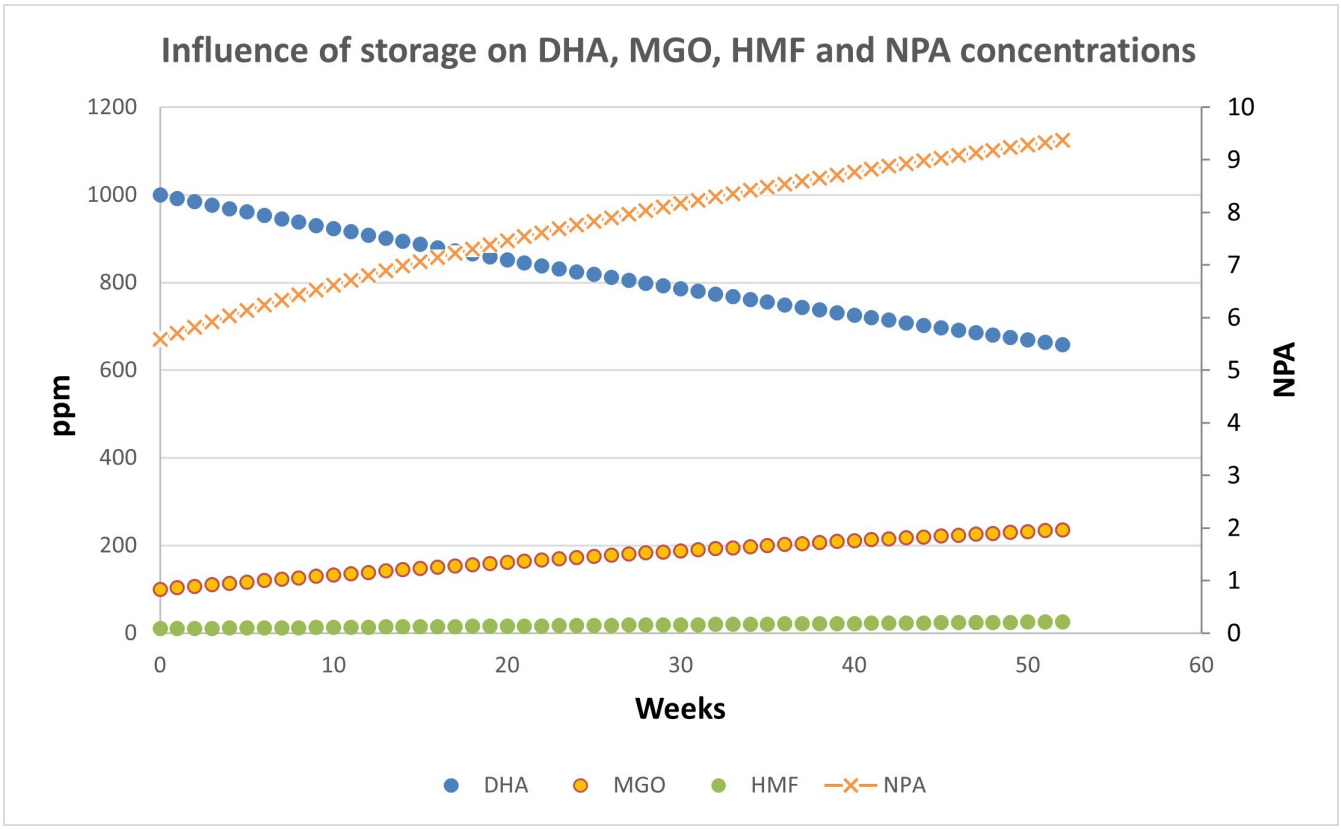

Figure 1: Changes in concentration of DHA, MGO, HMF and NPA at 22°C over 52 weeks.

Generally, when the level of MGO reaches about half the DHA level, then your honey is close to the point when MGO begins to fall. In general, when DHA is less than double the MGO, then MGO has peaked.

Knowing which honey has the potential to develop MGO means that honey should be tested for DHA and MGO. Unless sampled correctly, the numbers generated by any testing laboratory may not represent the true value of the honey. Our lab often tests honey for a seller, then later the same honey for the buyer only to find different results. Poor sampling is often the problem.

Sample preparation: — *A test result is only as good as the sample submitted for testing*.

- **Use clean plastic sample containers** with a secure screw top.
- **Provide clean, well-mixed samples** — Remove bee bits and wax. Honey from different hives or frames vary and

honey extracted into storage drums may layer from top to bottom and from the centre to the sides. Stir the storage drum prior to sample collection. Alternatively, use a pipe to take a diagonal core sample from the opening to the bottom of the opposite side of the drum. Collect this, mix well and then take the 50 g sample for testing so that you provide an average of the drum. ie. Off-the-top/ or bottom sampling does not represent the whole drum or IBC.

- **Provide sufficient sample** for testing — Please provide 50 g of clean, well-mixed honey for DHA, HMF and MGO analysis to the USC Honey Lab.
- **Assign a unique sample code** to each sample you send in. Clearly **label this on the lid and sample jar**. Make a list of these sample codes samples you send for analysis.
- **Include the sample list in the box of samples and include your full contact details.**

Blending to an MGO Activity.
The general advice is to never blend an active (contains MGO) honey with a zero active (no MGO) honey, or some MGO will be consumed by proteins etc in the non-MGO honey.

It is always best to aim for 5-10% over the desired MGO levels, and not to go below 2:1 DHA:MGO.
To estimate mixing two honeys use a weighted average.

There is a bit of maths involved so, we recently created an interactive spread sheet that will give you a good indication about how to blend to a desired MGO level. If you think this would help your operation, then email the UniSC team (Peter's email is below) and ask for one.

Interpreting the Honey Analysis Report
Currently the lab provides a report on a 3-in-1 chemical test performed on the sample provided. DHA, HMF and MGO are in ppm (parts per million). HMF is an indicator of age or heat treatment of honey. This helps beekeepers show that their honey has not been mistreated. DHA converts naturally in Manuka honeys to MGO which is the active component. The MGO value is mathematically converted to an NPA number between 0 and 25 or above.

Estimation of NPA from MGO values

MGO in ppm	NPA
85	5
260	10
515	15
830	20
1200	25

This information has been provided by the team at the UniSC Honey Lab. Chau, Georgia, Linda, Asmaa and Peter

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TOUGH + READY

BEE BIOSECURITY OFFICER REPORT

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Some questions and answers about alcohol washing.

I have had extensive conversations with many beekeepers over recent months about alcohol washing.

The most frequent questions coming up are;

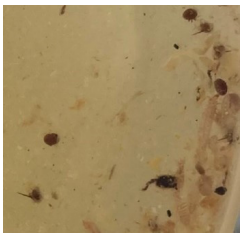
- It takes a lot of time, so why do I even need to do it.
- How long do we need to do this for?
- How many hives do I need to do?
- Which bees should I sample?
- How can I make it easier/faster and impact my beekeeping activities less.
- It's not as accurate as mite strips/sticky mats, so why even bother with it.

The main answers to each are as follows;

It takes a lot of time, so why do I even need to do it? Under current circumstances in NSW alcohol washing is your best method of finding mites in your bees, and with the Varroa control orders in place it is a legal requirement for you to undertake it in every apiary every 16 weeks. Most beekeepers are unable to visually see mites on live bees as they work a hive, and even if they did they would have no accurate way to determine how many mites there are per 100 bees.

The real reason why you need to do it is because if your hives actually have detectable numbers of varroa mites in them then YOU are a biosecurity risk to the rest of the nation's beekeepers. The entire industry Australia wide wants eradication of varroa mites, so if YOU HAVE MITES then DPI needs to know.

By using an accurate predetermined measure of bees (eg. a heaped half cup equals approximately 300 bees) in their wash they know that if they find 3 mites it is 1 "phoretic" mite per hundred bees (1% infection rate), or finding 9 would equal 3 mites per hundred bees, or 3% infection rate. If you have a 3% infection rate of phoretic mites (when they are an ecto-parasite living and feeding on the fat body of a worker bees) then you probably have another 6-10 mites per hundred bees that are "reproductive" mites currently living under capped brood. Reproductive mites are the ones that we cannot see and they cause the major expansion in varroa numbers when the bee hatches and 3-5 fertilized female varroa leave that brood cell with it.



Varroa, bee stings and other rubbish in a cloudy wash. Decant off extra alcohol to reduce the depth, use your glasses, jeweller's loupe of magnifying glass (to see clearly) and remove any likely looking objects with an eye dropper into clean alcohol for a better observation.

Final result from the same dirty alcohol wash pictured. If you found even one of these mites in an alcohol wash then DPI needs to know about it immediately.

Varroa versus bee sting. Use your glasses etc. when alcohol washing bees (and checking your brood) so that you can clearly see what is there.

How long do we need to do this for? Frequently and forever may be the correct answer if Varroa is not eradicated. In any country with established varroa populations within their managed bees, alcohol washing is the most common method used to determine how many mites are on average present across the apiary. The result determines when to spend the next amount of money on time, miticide strips and/or other anti-mite management that needs to be done to control the mite populations. Once you have done those treatments then as a follow-up you need to alcohol wash those bees again to see if your anti-mite methods were effective.

For now, please follow the DPI guidelines which set out how many of your hives per apiary need to be sampled every 16 weeks. It is really important that ALL NSW BEEKEEPERS continue looking for mites in their hives, so regularly go to the varroa page to check for updated requirements at **www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/varroa**

How many hives do I need to do? Under the regulations in place NSW DPI has requested that each Apiary be sampled every 16 weeks, and depending on the apiary size anywhere up to 100% of hives should be sampled (check the website for current testing requirements). The numbers used were not plucked out of thin air, but were calculated by highly qualified epidemiologists, whose expertise is in calculating sample sizes needed to determine that accurate results are achieved. Epidemiologists probably don't know much about commercial beekeeping, but on the flip side commercial beekeepers are probably not experts in calculating how many hives need to be sampled by alcohol wash to achieve accurate results that are acceptable to state area of freedom requirements that enable most beekeepers (out of red & purple zones) to operate somewhere close to normal.

If beekeepers don't undertake their alcohol testing requirements they are undermining the entire varroa

mite eradication plan. It is unrealistic to be wanting "business as usual" in the industry when this major pest eradication is underway, so everybody needs to make some adjustments to their approach and do their bit.

Which bees should I sample? When you open a hive and do your brood inspection you are working in the area that is most likely to contain varroa, especially if that hive only has small numbers of varroa. Why is this so? The very first varroa that arrived into that colony were probably on a returning field bee. Whilst foraging it may have co-mingled with other field bees from a heavily infested colony (I have personally seen that varroa can "jump" between bees very quickly), visited a flower where infested bees were recently on, robbed out an infested colony or maybe this bee had itself drifted from an infested colony. Another option is that a newly introduced queen or her escorts had varroa on them, so putting this queen into the hive has also introduced varroa to it.

When a phoretic mite arrives to a new colony with low varroa density it has found an oasis with untold potential, and its main priority is to reproduce. It will immediately aim to feed on the "fat body" of a healthy bee, which is often a fat healthy nurse bee (in the brood area). Once this "foundress mite" has adequately fed (Samuel Ramsay states this normally takes 3-13 days) it will look for a suitable brood area with advanced and "soon to be capped" larvae, and go into a cell when ready.

Whilst this mite is in its reproductive phase and protected under a capped cell it cannot be detected by either alcohol washing on mite strips/sticky mats. Newly hatching brood is therefore also a likely spot to find newly hatched varroa mites. In comparison you will only generally find mites in bees up in the honey super once the mite numbers have built up enough. Therefore you should ALWAYS take your alcohol wash sample of bees from the brood area, unless there is no brood, in which case mites are more dispersed amongst the bee population and could be anywhere.

How can I make it easier/faster and impact my beekeeping activities less? Most of the communications on alcohol washing talk about collecting your sample of bees from your colony and doing the wash as per the specified procedure, which takes 4-5 minutes per sample. To look at the nationally-agreed alcohol washing method please visit the Bee Pest Blitz website **beepestblitz.com.au** on 1 April 2023.

To handle the washing of a commercial sized operation you may need to think bigger than just washing 1 hive at a time, so one good method is as follows;

- Open each hive and as you do your brood inspection look for a suitable frame, especially one with capped and newly hatching brood and lots of nurse bees on it.
- Once you are certain the queen is not present shake the frame well to remove bees onto the hive mat, piece of cardboard or into a plastic container etc. and remove a heaped half-cup of bees (approx. 300 bees).
- Immediately toss these bees into a large jar or sealable container (eg. 2-5 L or larger as required) with adequate alcohol to cover the next few samples (continue to top up alcohol as required).
- As you work each additional hive place your next half cup of bees into this container until you have collected enough samples.
- At a slightly later time (when finishing up at site or back at base) you can then thoroughly shake those bees and look at them. Ensure you label each sample clearly so you do not mistake where it came from.

Because you have accumulated a much larger volume of bees you also need to upsize all the equipment used to separate them from any mites.

- I use 2 x 10 L buckets, a rainwater tank filter screen (that sits nicely in the bucket), mesh paint filters and something to screen out the bees. That bee-filter could be a very coarse honey screen, 4 to 6 mm galvanised mesh, a pasta colander or a mesh basket, just as long as it stops the bees but let's smaller items pass through.

Equipment used to test 6 samples at once versus one.

3-6 mm mesh will work as a bee strainer (that lets varroa through). You will always get better results if you rinse the bees multiple times as mites get stuck in a clump of bees.

- once you have poured everything into your filter assembly put your glasses on and have a look, firstly in the bottom of the shake container and then on the finer filter. If you see anything that pretty much looks like varroa then please take a well-focused photo (so you can have a better look) collect it as a sample and call DPI immediately.
- If you did not find any mites from the first rinse then chuck all the bees back in the bucket of alcohol

to resuspend them, give them another good agitation, place the screens on the other bucket and pour everything through again. Research has been shown that doing this process a total of 3 times will give you very accurate results.

Please report all results on the DPI website https://fal.cn/3vuYE

6 sample combined wash that was shook and rinsed 3 times showing a similar mite count result per ½ cup sample as a regular 1 sample wash (also shook and washed 3 times). Please note that for demonstration of accuracy this was all sampled from the same hive at the same time.

It's not as accurate as mite strips/sticky mats, so why even bother with it? At this point the only permits available to use miticide strips in NSW are held by NSW DPI, and they are only allowed to be used for their own strictly managed surveillance activities with regards to the varroa response.

If there is any change in the situation (transition to management etc.) then they would become more widely available. Specific training would also be rolled out by DPI so that approved treatments would be used correctly and appropriately by beekeepers. At this point alcohol washing is the best option that NSW beekeepers can undertake to do their own hive surveillance.

Bee Pest Blitz. In previous years NSW DPI has run "Sugar Shake Month" every autumn. This initiative is being replaced with a nationally coordinated 'Bee Pest Blitz' month-long event which calls on beekeepers to conduct surveillance for high priority exotic pests using the alcohol wash method. The campaign kicks off 1 April and all the bee surveillance resources and tools can be downloaded at **beepestblitz.com.au.**

NATIONAL BEE BIOSECURITY PROGRAM

The National Bee Biosecurity Program is funded by the honey bee industry through a component of the agricultural honey levy, with state governments contributing in-kind resources. Plant Health Australia manage the program on behalf of Australian Honey Bee Industry Council.

New digital beehive monitoring system improves efficiency of managing remote beehives

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Many beekeepers travel long distances to visit their apiaries. If that's you, you'll appreciate how valuable it would be to have an insight into the health of your hives and the needs of your bees, before you make the trip to check on them. Just imagine how much more enjoyable and efficient beekeeping could be if there were no surprises when you arrived at the apiary.

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Show Co-ordinator - Paul Drew 1 Wewak Place Bossley Park 2176
Email: honeyshow.nswaa@gmail.com Ph 0479157039
https://www.facebook.com/honeyshow.nswaa/

HONEY CATEGORIES

Class #	Class Description
1	Liquid Honey—Yellow Box
2	Liquid Honey—Iron Bark
3	Liquid Honey—Other Eucalypt —Light
4	Liquid Honey—Other Eucalypt —Medium
5	Liquid Honey—Other Eucalypt —Dark
6	Liquid Honey—Non-Eucalypt —Light
7	Liquid Honey—Non-Eucalypt —Medium
8	Liquid Honey—Non-Eucalypt —Dark

BEESWAX

14	One Block Natural Beeswax Yellow min 1kg
15	One Block Natural Beeswax White min 1kg
16	Six (6) Natural Beeswax moulds

BEESWAX CANDLES

17	Matching Pair of Rolled Beeswax Candles
18	Matching Pair of Dipped Beeswax Candles
19	Matching Pair of Moulded Beeswax Candles

POLLEN

20	Natural Pollen (min 100mL)

Class #	Class Description
9	Natural Granulated Honey—Fine Grain
10	Natural Granulated Honey—Coarse Grain
11	Creamed Honey
12	Chunk Comb in Honey (piece of honeycomb - min 4x11cm to be of same floral source as the surrounding liquid honey)
13	Collection of Honeys—3 jars comprising 1 each of different variety/colour/granulated honey—each jar labelled as to variety/style

21	One (1) Frame Capped Honey—Full Depth
22	One (1) Frame Capped Honey—Ideal Depth

APIARY COLLECTION

23	Collection of Apiary Products—Visually appealing display of apiary products & educational material

Minimum 5 Apiary products—produced by the Exhibitor to be displayed. (Suggested examples— liquid honey, granulated/ creamed honey, frame & chunk honey, pollen, propolis etc)
May also include educational material suitable for public/community awareness. Other items forming part of display need not be produced by the exhibitor but must not to show commercial or maker labels nor advertising and must be an Australian product related to Apiary products.
Maximum space 1mt x 1 mt square.

NSW Apiarists' Association Inc.

Honey & Apiary Related Products Competition and Show - 2023

Show Co-ordinator - >Paul Drew 1 Wewak Place Bossley Park 2176
Email: honeyshow.nswaa@gmail.com ph: 0479157039

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Class #	Class Description
13a	For entries from Branch's and Clubs of Associations Collection of Apiary Products—Visually appealing display of apiary products & educational material Minimum 5 Apiary products—produced by the Exhibitor to be displayed. (Suggested examples— liquid honey, granulated/ creamed honey, frame & chunk honey, pollen, propolis etc) May also include educational material suitable for public/community awareness. Other items forming part of display need not be produced by the exhibitor but must not to show commercial or maker labels nor advertising and must be an Australian product related to Apiary products. Maximum space 1mt x 1 mt square.

Class #	Class Description
23a	For entries from Branch's and Clubs of Associations Collection of Honeys—3 jars comprising 1 each of different variety/colour/granulated honey—each jar labelled as to variety/style

NSW Apiarists' Association Inc.

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PHOTOGRAPHY CATEGORIES

Class #	Class Description
24	Bees in Action (Depicting Bees/Beekeepers in action)
25	Bees Vital for our Food (Depicting Bees in Food Crop Pollination)
26	Liquid Gold (Honey—may be in hive/processing/consuming)
27	Strength in Numbers (Swarms/colony)
28	Solitary in Nature (Native Solitary Bees or Single Bee in work)
29	Natural Beauty (Bees in the Landscape)

MEAD CATEGORIES

30	Traditional or Straight Honey Mead.
31	Melomel or Fruit Mead.
32	Spiced Mead.

NSW Apiarists' Association Inc.

Honey & Apiary Related Products Competition & Show - 2023

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ENTRY FORM – ALL CLASSES

Exhibitor/s Name: _____

Exhibitor/s Address: _____

_____

Exhibitors Contact: Ph: _____ Email: _____

Required For **Classes 1-23** - Beekeeper/Producer Name if not the Exhibitor/s: _____

Beekeeper Reg'n State: _____ Registration Number: _____ Reg'n Expiry Date: _____

Note: Registration Validity will be verified with relevant State Agencies. Only valid and current registration will be eligible to enter

Exhibitor Declaration: I hereby agree in entering the above exhibits, subject to the rules and regulations, and will not hold the NSW AA Executive or NSWAA Honey Show Committee responsible for any loss or damage to exhibits through accident, wrongful delivery or otherwise. By signing this declaration I acknowledge the full responsibility for my exhibits and declare that I am eligible to enter by virtue of holding current & valid Beekeeper Registration or immediate household member of a validly registered Beekeeper.

Exhibitor Signature : _____ Date : / /

Class #	Class Description	Floral Source	Resource Region or Image Region	Production Year

Please make cheques payable to NSW Apiarists Association.

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Fact sheet

Plant Health AUSTRALIA

ESTABLISHED PEST

American foulbrood

What is American foulbrood?

American foulbrood (AFB) is a fatal microbial disease of honey bee brood caused by the spore forming bacterium *Paenibacillus larvae*. The disease is caused when young larvae ingest spores of the bacterium which germinate in the honey bee's gut. The brood usually dies at the pre-pupal or pupal stage.

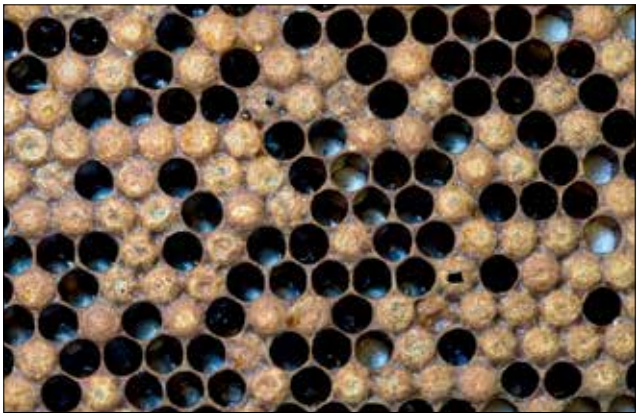
What should beekeepers look for?

Brood combs should be thoroughly examined for AFB at least twice a year, preferably in spring and in autumn, although AFB can occur in hives at any time of the year. Beekeepers should remove each brood frame from the colony and look for symptoms such as sunken, darkened and greasy looking, perforated cappings and irregular brood pattern in advanced infections. Look closely, as early infections may only have as few as one or two cells showing disease signs.

Brood infected with AFB generally die after the cells are capped and the affected brood becomes discoloured, changing from the healthy pearly white to a darker brown as the disease progresses. At this stage of infection beekeepers should conduct the ropiness test. Thrust a matchstick into the infected individual in the cell and if the semi-fluid remains are drawn out in a ropy thread it indicates the hive could be infected with AFB. After about a month, infected brood dry to a dark scale which adheres to the wall of the cell.

What can it be confused with?

AFB can be confused with European foulbrood (EFB). The majority of EFB infected larvae die before capping and appear coiled in their cells, unlike AFB where the majority of infected larvae die after capping. However, when EFB infected brood die at older stages they can be confused with AFB.

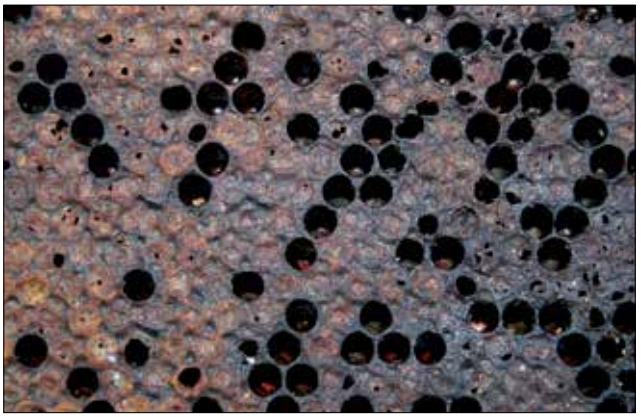


Doug Somerville, NSW DPI

Initial infection of AFB showing a few cells which are sunken and have chewed through cappings

Food and Environment Research Agency (Fera), Crown Copyright

A common test is to insert a matchstick into the dead brood and if there is a 'rope' AFB could present



Doug Somerville, NSW DPI

Advanced infection of AFB showing a large area of sunken, dark and chewed through cappings

Another potential difference between AFB and EFB is that when the ropiness test is conducted, by placing a matchstick into the affected brood, AFB infected brood could be drawn out in a longer ropy thread than EFB infected brood. However, when *Paenibacillus alvei* (a common secondary invader in EFB) is present it may also cause some extra ropiness which makes EFB infected brood resemble AFB infected brood. Laboratory diagnosis is the only accurate means to differentiate AFB from EFB.

How does it spread?

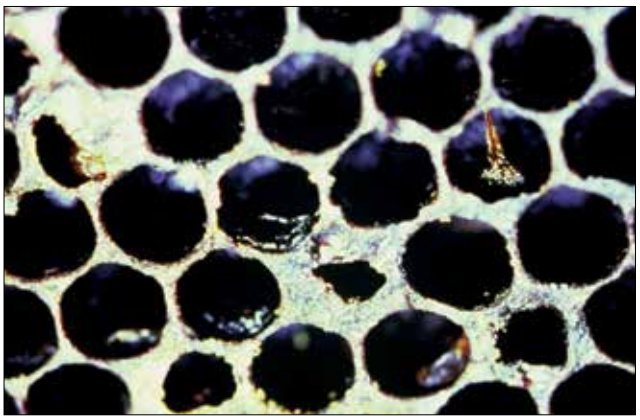
The main methods of AFB spread are through the interchange of infected combs and hive components, by feeding colonies infected honey or pollen, by honey bees robbing honey from infected hives or from extraction sites, as well as by honey bees drifting from infected colonies into neighbouring colonies. The spores of the bacterium are very infectious to larvae less than 24 hours old and can remain dormant for over 50 years.

Where is it now?

AFB is present throughout Australia; however, it has not been reported or confirmed in the NT, or Kangaroo Island (SA).

How can beekeepers protect their hives from American foulbrood?

Beekeepers should always check brood combs at least twice a year for early signs of AFB. Brood combs should be replaced every 3-4 years as old brood combs can act as a reservoir of the bacterium. To greatly minimise the spread of AFB throughout hives, beekeepers should put in place a barrier management system and clean hive tools and apiary equipment between hives and apiaries. If AFB is found in a hive, thoroughly clean all hive tools, gloves and apiary equipment before inspecting other hives or another apiary. When AFB is detected, contact your local department of agriculture, kill the infected colony and either irradiate or burn infected hive parts in a pit and cover the remains.



Michael Hornitzky

AFB infected cells showing brood drying to a dark scale on the side of the cell, and one scale having a 'tongue' can sometimes be observed

Food and Environment Research Agency (Fera), Crown Copyright

Black scale with a tongue is sometimes visible at the bottom of cell walls after the larva has died and dried out

For more information about AFB, go to **www.beeaware.org.au/american-foulbrood**. The BeeAware website contains extensive information on AFB, including:

- Disease cycle
- Symptoms
- Detection methods
- Spread and distribution
- Similar pests
- Management options
- Additional fact sheets and videos

Branch News

Southern Tablelands Branch

Southern Tablelands Branch held their Annual AGM followed by a general meeting located at the Eurobodalla Botanical Gardens on Saturday 18th of March.

The AGM went well, and the new branch executive is as follows: President- Myself (Zac Alcock), Vice President - Kevin Forde, Secretary - Garth McClay and Treasurer – Therese Kershaw.

I would like to thank the previous branch exec specifically Laurie Kershaw for the numerous years as our branch president.

At our general meeting we were joined by 2 guest speakers.

Richard Hayes from the NSW DPI Clover for Bees project gave an informative presentation regarding the project and their in-depth research on clover species for honey bees.

We were also joined by Jane Jones a farm insurance provider from WFI insurance.

The previous day Southern Tablelands Branch executive had a meeting with Eurobodalla shire regarding the approved Mogo mountain bike trail which will affect apiary sites on the south coast.

This was a productive meeting and hopefully with close communication we can minimise effects on our sites, but more work is still needed to assure this. I Gave an update on this at our general meeting.

Many Thanks to all who attended the Southern Tablelands AGM and general meeting.

Our next meeting date is to TBA with the potential of holding a first aid course for members at this next meeting.

Details of this meeting will be sent out in the coming weeks.

Zac Alcock,
President Southern Tablelands Branch

North Coast Branch

The North Coast branch held its first meeting of the year on the 3rd of February at the DPI buildings at Trenayr. This was a pilot idea to update beekeepers to what is happening within their local area, mainly Nana Glen.

This was well attended by 60 plus members and interested beekeepers from around the area. Speaker for the night was Steve Green and accompanying him was Lloyd Kingham for a Q & A session afterwards, more personal questions were answered after all was presented as both stayed longer for this reason.

I would like to thank all involved with setting this up, presenters and attendees. Hopefully this answered your questions.

On the 14th of February, 21 members attended Wollongbar DPI site for a Cert III chemical course. This course was organised through Tocal and was free for all members. We are in the process of organising another chemical course for our members down around Macksville. Thank you to all those that attended, and you are now able to work with chemicals safely.

I am really pleased of the members of the North Coast branch as they are happy to be involved when meeting and courses are announced

Thank you,
Steve Fuller
North Coast Branch President

Cover Photos

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Meeting / Conference Dates

BRANCH

Sydney Metro
First Tuesday of every month at 7.30pm at Chifley College Bidwell Campus, Daniels Road, Bidwell.

Central Tablelands
January - third Tuesday
April Saturday 22nd 10:30am Orange area
July Saturday 22nd 10:30am Bathurst area
October Saturday 21st 10:30am Orange area

Riverina
Our meeting dates are usually in the first week of February, May, August, and November each year.

Lately our meetings have been held alternatively between Wagga Wagga and Griffith.

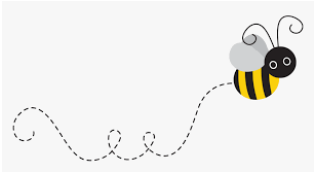
Usually on the first Monday, when held in Wagga Wagga and on the first Thursday, when held in Griffith.

The venues change to suit availability.

North Coast
Meetings are generally held on the last Friday of January, March, May, July, September & November

CONFERENCE

WA - 28, 29 & 30 April 2023 Claremont WA
Crop Pollination Assoc AGM -16 May 2023 Penrith NSW
NSWAA 18 &19 May 2023 Penrith NSW
Tasmania - 26 & 27 May 2023 Hobart TAS
QBA - 15 & 16 June 2023 TBC
SAAA - 22 & 23 June 2023 Clare SA
VAA - 5 to 7 July 2023 Bendigo VIC
AHBIC AGM - 8 July 2023 Bendigo VIC



BRANCHES	PRESIDENTS		SECRETARIES		EMAIL
Central Tablelands	Sam Lockwood	0477 460 642	Claire Bennett	0409 340 502	centraltablelandsbranch@nswaa.com.au
Hunter Valley	Col Wilson	02 4930 4950	Contact President		huntervalleybranch@nswaa.com.au
North Coast	Stephen Fuller	0488 434 498	Col Maloney	02 6663 7051	secretary.ncoast@nswaa.com.au
Northern Tablelands	Richard Willis	0428 323 812	Glenn McConnell	02 6732 3222	secretary.ntablelands@nswaa.com.au
Riverina	Stephen Targett	0428 649 321	Matthew Skinner	0427 651 360	secretary.riverina@nswaa.com.au
Southern Tablelands	Zac Alcock	0422 750 629	Garth McClay	0400 989 115	southerntablelandsbranch@nswaa.com.au
Sydney	Miskell Hampton	0437 913 831	Jane Flitter	0413 769 411	sydneybranch@nswaa.com.au
Tamworth	Ray Hull	02 6760 3634	Norm Maher	0447 603 245	secretary.tamworth@nswaa.com.au
Western Plains	Daniel Warman	0431 386 481	Shaun Sykes	0437 044 010	secretary.wplains@nswaa.com.au

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AUSTRALIAN QUEEN BEE BREEDERS ASSOCIATION (AQBBA)
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CROP POLLINATION ASSOCIATION (CPA)
Secretary: Janine Rudder PO Box 9305 Bathurst West NSW 2795 Ph: 0428 431 502 Email: jbrbees@gmail.com

HONEY PACKERS & MARKETERS ASSOCIATION (HPMAA)
Secretary: Mr Kevin Webb Email: kevin.webb@springgullyfoods.com.au

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- Provide opportunities to meet other beekeepers & NSW DPI representatives at meetings, workshops & conferences
- 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 you are a member to receive this benefit for the Association - Ms Jane Jones Mob: 0417 943 451 E: jane.jones@wfi.com.au
- Discounts available through Bee Hive Incentive Program
- SCHUTZ (Australia) Pty Ltd - IBCs special members; rate

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Note: Rates from 1 March 2017

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