

AUSTRALIAN HONEY BEE INDUSTRY COUNCIL

ABN 63 939 614 424



Monthly NEWS

To: The Australian Honey Industry From: Stephen Ware – Executive Director
July 2010 Update

AHBIC acknowledges the **beekeeper suppliers** who contribute via their packer/queen bee supplier to AHBIC. We urge beekeepers to support those Packers/Queen bee breeders who contribute to AHBIC.

**DOES YOUR HONEY BUYER(S) OR QUEENBEE SUPPLIER'S NAME APPEAR ON THIS LIST?
IF NOT, THEN ASK 'WHY NOT?' AHBIC WORKS FOR YOU!**

SUPPORT THOSE WHO SUPPORT YOUR INDUSTRY!

Australian Queen Bee Exporters
Australian Queen Bee Breeders Association
Australian Honey Products
Bees Neez Apiaries
Capilano Honey Limited
Dewar Apiaries
FCAAA
Gell's Honey
Honey Packers & Marketers Association
Hoskinson, H L & H M
Morgan, Trevor
Papworth, F & E
Pollination Association of WA

Pobke, Barry
Saxonbee Enterprises
Spring Gully Foods Pty Ltd
Stephens, R
Stevens, Graeme
Tasmanian Crop Pollination Association
Tasmanian Honey Company
Weatherhead, T & M
True Blue Honey
Weerona Apiaries
Wescobee Limited
Wilson, Col

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AHBIC RESOLUTIONS

Set out below are the resolutions passed at the AGM other than those of a procedural nature.

1. That all groups currently represented in the Constitution, as affiliated associations only have one vote. *(Carried over till next AGM -Constitutional Resolution)*
2. That the Executive Director be asked to work with the Food, Safety & Residue Prevention Committee to process the issue of honey orders under the Export Control Act.
3. That AHBIC work to seek changes to the Imported Food Programme to ensure that AFB spores not present in Australia be prevented from being imported.
4. That AHBIC seek alternate methods of funding for Emergency Animal Response Deed Arrangements and maintenance of the Animal Health Australia Contingency Fund.
5. That the Executive Director seeks clarification from AHA in respect of the \$4,000 in consulting fees and query the cost of audit of the Contingency Fund.
6. That the AHBIC Executive for 2010/2011 be:

Lindsay Bourke	Chair	Ed Planken	Deputy Chair - 1 year term
Ken Gell	2 year term	Trevor Weatherhead	2 year term
Ian Stephens	1 year term	Trevor Morgan	1 year term
7. That AHBIC look at the current restrictions in the protocol of importing Queen Bees into Japan with the view of them being taken to the WTO in respect of *Nosema Apis*.
8. That AHBIC seek that the RIRDC research and prepare a booklet continuing a complete list of chemicals including RT25 measurements that affect bees and beekeeping in Australia.
9. That AHBIC request RIRDC to instigate research into the effect of neonicotinoids in Australian conditions, e.g. seed dressings, in irrigation, and all spray methods of application and usage on both young and adult bees including any residual time and report back to beekeepers as a matter of urgency.
10. That AHBIC seek assistance from the Federal Government for better protection by law from the effects of agricultural and horticultural chemicals.
11. That AHBIC where appropriate seek to consult with the relevant industry sectors before important decisions are made affecting that sector.
12. That through AHBIC Australia immediately implements a provisional ban on the importation of Honey & Bee products from New Zealand on the basis it may contain unwanted viruses and impediments to the Australian apicultural industry due to New Zealand's unproven freedom status.
13. That as Chinese honey in particular is subject to ongoing residue breaches in the international market, that any honey entering Australia from that origin be subject to an expanded range of testing for Antibiotic and Pesticide residues along with adulteration tests on each and every individual sea container lot that enters Australia. Additionally that the "Honey" in analysis has the

complete complement of natural sugars to prove the product has not been tampered with to avoid the law on rejection.

14. That all National Industry conferences be held within a 25km radius of the capital city in which it is held to better facilitate attending invited speakers and interstate guests. *(Left to lay on table)*
15. That AHBIC look into preventing the importation of honey that is produced under systems which are not equivalent to our current domestic production requirements.
16. That AHBIC pursue the development of a potential external hive beetle trap.
17. That the AHBIC Executive investigates the benefits to some form of association with the National Farmers Federation.
18. That AHBIC continue to work on access protocol for Queen Bees and Package Bees in the following markets: Korea, USA, Canada & Japan.
19. That AHBIC ask RIRDC to investigate what strains of AFB are present in Australia.
20. That AHBIC address the issue of reopening the Eastern Creek Quarantine Station for queen bees as a matter of urgency to facilitate the importation of queens.
21. That if it is necessary to re-locate the quarantine facility, AQIS be asked to approach the Whenn Foundation regarding the possibility of using their site on the outskirts of Sydney.
22. That AHBIC explore the ways to collect honey levies from all beekeepers regardless of size and production.
23. That AHBIC ask RIRDC to update and do an on demand printing of the books *Beekeeping* and *Honey Flora of Victoria*.
24. That AHBIC prepare a document outlining new funding proposals to be distributed to all registered beekeepers in Australia.
25. That AHBIC continue to pursue the eradication of *Apis cerana* in Cairns QLD.
26. That AHBIC continue to pursue Apiary Market Access to all potential export markets.
27. That AHBIC continue to investigate and increase preparedness in respect of Pyrrolizidine Alkaloids (PAs).
28. That as a matter of priority AHBIC seeks continuation of funding for matching R & D through RIRDC.
29. That in principle AHBIC supports the development of a CRC bid in the honeybee pollination area.
30. That the year 2011 Annual General Meeting of the Australian Honey Bee Industry Council be held in South Australia.
31. That the various associations funded the attendance of their delegates for the 2011 Conference.

AHBIC PROFILE – EDDY PLANKEN

Interviewing AHBIC Deputy Chair Eddy Planken one gains the impression that there are not enough hours in the day for this busy multitasker.

Eddy is CEO of Western Australia's largest packing and exporting honey company, Wescobee. He has worked tirelessly over the years for the honey industry and besides taking on the AHBIC Deputy Chair role again this year, he is currently the Honey Packers & Marketers President, a Board member of B-Qual, a member on AHBIC's Food Safety & Residue Prevention Committee and has just recently retired as World President of the International Honey Exporters Organisation (IHEO) – a position held for ten years.

When it comes to producing and packing honey in Western Australia, Eddy admits, differences abound compared with their east coast counterparts.

Western Australia produces a unique range of honeys which are very much darker and robust than those honeys produced on the east coast. These include Blackbutt, Redgum and Jarrah - a honey now famous for its healing properties. WA's average colour on honeys is around 65mm with very little produced in the 10-25mm bracket.

Whilst beekeepers follow honey flows from Geraldton (450km north of Perth) to Kalgoorlie goldfields (595mm east of Perth) and to Albany in the southwest (390km south), the major proportion of production occurs close to home in a radius of 250km from Perth.

Production starts north of Perth in the spring for wildflower type honey and then by Christmas has moved south and east to the Eucalypt forest areas. The major part of production in WA comes from natural forest reserves. Canola and Salvation Jane represent only 10 per cent of the production.

Eddy is proud of WA holding the Guinness Book of Records for honey production which occurred in 1958 on a major Karri flow. Unfortunately, due to timber cutting and climate change WA no longer produces commercial crops of Karri which is one of the tallest hardwood trees in the world.

However, some commercial beekeepers see yields in non drought years of up to 300kg per hive due to good climatic conditions, soil types, freedom from European Foulbrood (EFB), a strong bee breeding program and good husbandry.

As Eddy says, most people wonder why WA is EFB free. Two important factors determine this (a) strict quarantine border control for the movement of honey into the state, honey has to be heat treated before entering WA and a ban is in place on importing used beekeeping equipment and (b) nutritional levels, strong bees stock and barrier controls used by beekeepers in the apiary all add to keeping WA EFB free.

According to Eddy, while WA is free of EFB, the honey industry's No. 1 pest, the Small Hive Beetle has travelled all the way across Australia from Queensland on the back of some product entering WA. However, it remains isolated in the very north of the state at the Ord River Scheme and a quarantine barrier is in place to prevent it coming to the main beekeeping area in WA's south.

With the commencement of the new season just around the corner, Eddy extends his best wishes to all beekeepers for a prosperous 2010 - 2011 season.

APIS CERANA UPDATE

Advice 73– 25 June 2010

With a change in the Management Committee of the Queensland Beekeepers Association (QBA) at our annual conference, Rodney Ruge has been replaced on the telephone hook-up by Daniel Jones.

Thanks to Rodney for all the work he has put in over the past few years on the Asian bee incursion.

Daniel is the representative of the Wide Bay Branch on the Management Committee taking over from Roy Barnes. Daniel did two (2) stints in Cairns in 2009 when beekeepers went up to help so is familiar with what is going on up in the north.

Finds for the past fortnight are:

IP110 was a nest in a tree at Aeroglen, a suburb of Cairns

IP111 was a nest in a traffic light pole in the middle of Cairns

IP112 was a swarm at Brinsmead, a suburb of Cairns

IP113 was a nest in fire brigade building in Gordonvale

IP114 was a nest 30 metres up a tree at Lake Eacham which was found by beelining

IP115 was a nest in a house at Aloomba

IP116 was a swarm at Gordonvale

IP117 was a small swarm outside a restaurant on a traffic sign in Cairns city

IP118 was a nest beelined to a tree at Redlynch, a suburb of Cairns

IP119 was a nest beelined at Behana Gorge

IP120 was a small swarm at the railway yards at Portsmith, a Cairns suburb

IP121 was a nest in a house at Manoora, a Cairns suburb

I should comment on the ability of the surveillance teams in the finding of IP114. It was 30 metres up a tree and the find was complicated by the fact that there was also a mellifera nest in the same tree near to the cerana nest. This just goes to show the skill of the teams working in the north and how we can have confidence in their work. Beelining continues at Gordonvale and Yarrabah.

There has been a lot of surveillance activity at Townsville and also south of Ingham. Nothing has been found. It is not expected that there will be finds in Townsville but it is being surveyed as a precaution. The traps, in all areas, have given no positive cerana. There have been plenty of mellifera caught.

Two (2) teams did sweeping at Fitzroy Island which is off the coast from Yarrabah. Training was also given at the same time to the Government staff who have care of Fitzroy Island and several other smaller islands further north. So this gives more eyes out there looking. A Rams Officer is to commence duty in Cairns next week.

Also Russell (Reg) Gilmour, who has been a Controller for the eradication program in the past, has been appointed as the Operations Manager in north Queensland. This means that the eradication and surveillance program will now be controlled from Cairns and not Oxley in Brisbane.

Advice 74– 14 July 2010

Finds for the past fortnight up to Friday 9 July are:

IP122 was a swarm at Earlville, a Cairns suburb

IP123 was a nest in the Goldsborough Valley
IP124 was a swarm at Bentley Park, a Cairns suburb
IP125 was a nest at Gordonvale
IP126 was a swarm at Green Hill
IP 127 was a nest at the Cairns Esplanade
IP128 was a nest at Bentley Park
IP129 was a nest at Gordonvale
IP 130 was a nest at Gordonvale
IP 131 was a Whitfield, a Cairns suburb
IP132 was a nest at Gordonvale
IP133 was a nest at Gordonvale
IP134 was a nest at Gordonvale
IP135 was a nest at Gordonvale

There have been no finds outside the RA which is good news. I spent some time with the surveillance crews and their level of expertise is second to none. Bee lining continues at Redlynch, Alooomba, Mt Peter, Yarrabah and Gordonvale. The dog was again present being given some training by the handler.

There have been many visitors to Cairns in the past fortnight looking at Asian bees plus strategic planning meetings. These include Biosecurity Queensland staff from Head Office in Brisbane plus Greg Fraser from Plant Heath Australia.

The next phone hook-up is scheduled for Thursday 22 July, as Friday 23 July is a public holiday for the Cairns Show, unless something else untoward crops up.

Trevor Weatherhead

STRIKEFORCE OF 400 TO FIGHT WAR ON LOCUSTS

Incident control centres staffed by a rolling strikeforce of up to 400 specially trained staff will be established across Victoria under a \$43.5 million Victorian Government strategy to tackle what experts predict could be the biggest locust plague in the last 75 years.

At Epsom north of Bendigo, Premier John Brumby announced that Horsham, Mildura, Swan Hill, Tatura and Bendigo were the planned incident control centres sites for the war on locusts with a statewide incident control centre to also be established.

“Our Government is taking action to support farmers to fight a forecast locust plague which has the potential to cost Victoria’s agricultural sector \$2 billion if left untreated,” Mr Brumby said.

“The advice of leading scientists indicates the scale of the spring outbreak could be as bad as we experienced in 1973 and 1974 when locusts swarmed through much of Victoria, prior to that the last outbreak of this scale was in 1934 so we could be facing a once-in-a-lifetime locust plague.

“We are not waiting. We are taking the necessary steps now so that when the locusts hatch, we are ready to act to protect Victoria’s horticulture, livestock and dairy industries.

“There is a relatively short time span of a few weeks when immature hoppers are most vulnerable to chemical spraying. That’s why it’s vital we have trained staff in key locations to work with communities during this critical period to reduce the impact of locusts.”

The locust strategy outlines a 100 per cent rebate to farmers to meet the costs of locust-spraying chemicals, incident control centres, the lease of fixed wing aircraft and helicopters to aerial spray and a major awareness campaign. The Premier will also chair a locust taskforce of four ministers.

At any one time there is likely to be three active incident control centres activated, determined by the geographical spread of locust hatchings. Staff will comprise DPI staff and contractors and will be responsible for locust surveillance, reporting and control activities in each region.

Depending on the locust spread Department of Primary Industries (DPI) offices at Kerang, Birchip, Hopetoun, Echuca, Castlemaine, St Arnaud, Maryborough, Ararat, Edenhope and Cobram and DPI depots at Ouyen and Piangil are also potential field office sites.

The Australian Locust Plague has also today been declared an exotic pest which will give DPI staff the ability to inspect and act on locusts on private land under exceptional circumstances.

“We are confident the landholders will do the right thing and spray locusts on their property but given the scale of the threat it’s appropriate to cover every possible scenario, such as when a landholder is away,” Mr Brumby said.

Mr Brumby said if locusts were allowed to hatch and swarm on a widespread scale, there were wide-ramifications beyond the agriculture sector including the closure of regional airports, cancellation of spring racing carnival events, damage to recreation reserves and parks and gardens, the cancellation or postponement of community events and road safety concerns.

NSW STEPS UP CAMPAIGN TO TAKE DOWN MYRTLE RUST

NSW has increased its fight to eradicate all symptoms of the recently discovered Myrtle Rust from the NSW Central Coast.

Industry & Investment NSW has been conducting surveillance and implementing control measures that have been successful in limiting the spread of disease, since it was first reported at a Central Coast property in late April.

Director of Plant Biosecurity at Industry & Investment NSW, Dr Satendra Kumar, said the interim response plan developed by NSW and approved by the National Management Group is now in place.

“We have put in place the best possible procedures to stop the spread of this rust, we will now step up our campaign to the next level,” Dr Kumar said.

“The plan will continue suppression of Myrtle Rust (*Uredo rangelii*) with an aim to eradicate the disease.

“Under the plan, all symptoms of Myrtle Rust and known susceptible host plants will be removed from the single remaining known infected property and a buffer zone around the property will be treated with preventative fungicides.

“The plan also allows for further host testing, so we can determine the potential impact of this pest on native Australian flora.”

Myrtle Rust may potentially be able to infect a range of plants from the family Myrtaceae, and has been found on three Australian species in the field: Bottlebrush (*Callistemon viminalis*), Turpentine

(*Syncarpia glomulifera*), and Willow Myrtle (*Agonis flexuosa*), with high levels of infestation on Willow Myrtle c.v. Afterdark.

“NSW is now working towards implementation of a quarantine zone to help prevent the spread of Myrtle Rust into the greater part of NSW,” Dr Kumar said.

“Implementation and maintenance of the zone will facilitate market access for growers within the zone and provide future opportunity for negotiation of area freedom in the greater part of NSW.”

Several states have placed quarantine restrictions on the import of plants and plant material belonging to the family Myrtaceae and associated equipment.

These restrictions require the inspection and treatment of any stock prior to export. Growers are advised to contact the relevant state quarantine authority for further information before sending stock interstate.

BEES MAY SIP A TOXIC COCKTAIL

The Australian - 7 July 2010

Researchers in Britain are trying to find out where all the pollinators have gone.

Bees may be suffering from disorientation because of the side-effects of a cocktail of chemicals that could be accelerating their decline, according to scientists. The theory is to be investigated in Britain as part of a pound sterling 10 million (\$18million) project to find out the extent and reasons for a dramatic decline in numbers of pollinating insects. Scientists admit that they are not even sure if the figures of the decline being bandied about, of between 20 and 30 per cent in bee numbers and other pollinators, are accurate.

As part of the project, however, the brains of almost 2500 bumblebees and honey bees are to be monitored over the next four years to find out if powerful pesticides are disorienting them. Each bee will be caught, weighed and given a number like a supermarket barcode. Scientists will then try to track their movements between hives and pollinating flowers in gardens, parks, waste ground and farmland.

Scanners installed at the entrance of six hives will identify each bee and weigh it to see how much food it has taken to the hive. Three hives will be treated with pesticide while the other three are left free of chemicals. When they are recaptured, each bee will be weighed again to find out how much food, in terms of pollen and nectar, it has brought back to the hive.

Chris Connolly, from the Centre for Neuroscience at Dundee University in Scotland, who is heading the research, believes that a build-up of chemicals in bees' brains could affect their memories, communication skills in the hive and even their sense of direction. When scout bees find a source of food, they return to the hive and dance on the vertical walls of the honeycomb. The dance is in a figure-of-eight pattern with a waggle in the middle. The direction and duration of the waggle tells other bees where to find the food. "But they may not be able to do the waggle dance properly, they may do it in the wrong bit of the hive and other bees may not even recognise the dance," Connolly says. Sight and sense of smell could also be damaged and younger bee populations could even be less intelligent than their elders. The research will also look at whether bee behaviour is affected by temperature and rainfall.

Bees are subject to various pesticides intended to limit disease and prevent mite infestation in colonies. They also come into contact with pesticides used in agriculture. These are screened for safety before use, but the research will examine whether a combination of chemicals may cause damage to bees. "Many insecticides work by interfering with information flow in the brains of insects," according to Connolly. It is estimated that one-third of crops globally rely on insect pollination. In Britain the total loss of insect pollinators could cost pound sterling 440million a year.

WORK WANTED

Fit, 33 year old man with a keen interest in bees seeking position. I have a HC truck license, trade qualification in carpentry and willing to travel for work with an experienced, well established beekeeper. Currently I have very limited experience working with bees commercially but I have an aptitude for learning quickly and properly.

David Mobbs (02) 9858 4272 / 0434 674272 dmobbsy@hotmail.com

BIOSECURITY FARMER OF THE YEAR

Nominations are now being sought for Australia's "Biosecurity Farmer of the Year", as part of the [Australian Farmer of the Year Awards](#) being run by ABC Rural and Kondinin Group.

This Award will recognise farmers who are focused on the biosecurity of their farming enterprise. The Biosecurity Farmer of the Year is someone who has demonstrated initiative and motivation to address the potential risks to their businesses and their livelihood from diseases, pests and weeds.

Over the coming weeks you will see plenty of promotion in print and even more about the event on ABC Rural radio. Now is the time to make the most of this opportunity to raise the profile of your industry and your growers.

By promoting the award to your networks and encouraging or assisting your growers to nominate for the Biosecurity Farmer of the Year Award, you can highlight the efforts of your organisation to improve biosecurity and get recognised for your important contributions to the safe-keeping of Australian agriculture.

Nominations close **Wednesday 18 August**, and winners will be announced at a gala dinner in Sydney on 21 September as part of the [Farming Ahead 2010 Conference](#) (21-22 September). The Biosecurity Farmer of the Year Award will have categories for both plant and livestock producers, and finalists from both categories will have their travel costs met for the gala dinner.

Nominating is a simple process, and nominations are available on line at: www2.kondinin.com.au/awards/.

PHA, in partnership with Animal Health Australia (AHA), is sponsoring the Award as part of the Farm Biosecurity program. If you have any questions about the Awards and how PHA can assist you, please contact Jim McGrath, Communications Manager, on 02 6215 7708 or at jmcgrath@phau.com.au

APIMEDICA/APIQUALITY FORUM

On behalf of our Slovenian colleagues we are pleased to inform you that at the forthcoming edition of the Apimedita/Apiguquality Forum to be held in Slovenia from 28 September to 2 October 2010 there will be the possibility for you to evaluate honeys and honey-based beverages.

Evaluating honeys and honey-based beverages gives the opportunity to determine the quality, the safety and the pureness of these hive products. This also provides the guarantee for beekeepers of selling a natural, high quality product and for customers of tasting safe and healthy food.

We therefore invite all interested participants attending the Forum to submit their samples by 28 September 2010. The deadline for pre-registration instead has been fixed for 15 August 2010.

Looking forward to receiving honey samples from all parts of the globe and meeting you in Ljubljana (Slovenia), we remain,

Yours sincerely,
Riccardo Jannoni-Sebastianini
Apimondia Secretary-General
Rome, 9 July 2010

VALE - JOHN GUILFOYLE

Several of the Management Committee of the Queensland Beekeepers Association attended John Guilfoyle's funeral on 16 June 2010. John had passed away the previous week. There was a good sprinkling of beekeepers at the funeral with some coming from as far away as Western Australia.

John was born at Yarraman, Queensland in 1920. His early beekeeping was influenced by Owen Barnes, Roy Barnes's father.

In 1942 he went to Melbourne for the Melbourne Cup and stayed and worked for his mother's relations, the Wills, who had a small apiary and small manufacturing plant. On his return to Brisbane, John had decided to go into commercial beekeeping. As he found he was buying beekeeping equipment, John decided to rent a shed at Red Hill and started making beekeeping equipment. This was 1944.

John borrowed 38 pounds from his future wife, brought his first electric motor, built the saw bench by hand and inserted an advertisement in The Telegraph newspaper. The next day they received five (5) replies to that advertisement and the rest, as they say, is history.

John married his wife, Alice, not long after this and they bought some industrial land at Newmarket, a Brisbane suburb, and built a factory there. An advertisement in the Australasian Beekeeper (ABK) in September, 1946, showed the address as 22 Musgrave Rd, Red Hill and an advertisement in the ABK in June 1950, showed the address was 146-148 Edmonstone St, Newmarket.

A new and bigger premises was built at Boundary Rd., Darra in 1959 and this was the site until a couple of years ago when the site was sold. New sheds were built at Mutdapilly, south west of Ipswich and a retail store was purchased at Inala.

In 1961, John went to America and worked for Dadant where he learnt foundation making and beeswax technology. He applied this knowledge on his return to Australia.

John was responsible for establishing branches of his business in New South Wales, South Australia and Western Australia. John was an avid traveller visiting beekeepers around the world. At

conferences, John, jokingly, was often welcomed back to Australia as he had been overseas for so long.

In his travels overseas, John would visit Apimondia every second year. For many years John was Australia's representative on Apimondia. John was responsible and President for the First Australian Bee Congress held on the Gold Coast in 1972 and was on the Organizing Committee for the second Australian and International Bee Congress held at the Gold Coast in 1988.

John was a life member of the Queensland Beekeepers Association and was a recipient of the Goodacre Memorial Award.

This is only a short extract in the life of John Guilfoyle who had contributed much to the beekeeping industry in Australia.

Trevor Weatherhead
17 July 2010