

# Monthly NEWS



To: The Australian Honey Industry

From: Trevor Weatherhead – Executive Director

## SEPTEMBER 2013

### VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS to AHBIC are GRATEFULLY RECEIVED

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 or QUEENBEE SUPPLIER appear on this list?  
If not, then ask “Why not?” AHBIC WORKS FOR YOU!**

**The following list recognises contributions received since 1 September 2012**

*Some contributors have asked to remain anonymous while others have not supplied their publication wishes*

AB'S Honey	FCAAA	Pluschke, Doug
Adams, Richard	Geelong Beekeepers Club	Pobke, Barry
Auckett, John	Gells Honey	Pritchett, Bruce
Beswick Bees	Gillies, Hugh	Proebstl Investments
Blair-Hickman, R & R	Glasby, Garry	R. Stephens
Bliss, Stephen	Green, Lionel	Richter, Phil
Bourke, Lindsay	Grosso, Joe	Ringin, Bill
Buntine, Robert	Hoskinson, HL& HM	Roberts, I J & J H
Bush Honey - (Midgley Family)	Ipswich/West Moreton	Saxonbee Enterprises - Rod Pavy
Camelite Monastery	Beekeepers Assoc	Schard, Peter
Camilleri, Michael	Jones, Daniel	Siacci, Colin
Capilano Honey Ltd	Kennett, JL & KA	Squire, Gary
Clifford, Ray	Kininmonth, Ian	Superbee
Constantelos, Stan	Lagoutatzis, Nikolaos	Sutherland, Karen
Cotton, A J &	Lees IP & LD	Thompson, G
Crabb, David	Leo, Victor	Triantafillopoulos, Stavros
Cutts, Neville	Lockley, Beverley	Vu, Dinh Long
D'Amico, John	MacGibbon, Kevin	Watson, Maurice
Dawes, Chris John	McAlister, Ross	Weatherhead, T & M
Davey, RE	McDonald, RG	Weerona Apiaries
Daybreak Apiaries	McGlew, GC	Wescobee Limited
Dewar Apiaries	Merrett, Anthony J	Williams JW & MA
Doncaster Bee Club	Miller, Clem	Wisken, Ian
Doyle, Anthony	Morabito, Bruno	Wythe, EC & HS
Dunlop, PG & RD	Morgan, Trevor	Zadow Apiaries
Ellis, Declan	Niacol Pty Ltd	Zuchowski, Janusz
Enslin, Darren	Norcic, John	
Ewington, P & M	Papworth, F & E	

**Thank you to all our contributors. AHBIC appreciates your ongoing support**

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## **AHBIC RECEIVES GOVERNMENT GRANT**

The AHBIC Executive is pleased to report that it has received a \$67,000 grant from the Department of Agriculture (formerly Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry) for use in setting up a Biosecurity Strategy for the beekeeping industry.

There is an Industry Working Group (IWG) made up of the AHBIC Disease Committee Chair, Craig Klingner who chairs the IWG, AHBIC Chairman, Ian Zadow, and Sam Malfroy from Plant Health Australia (PHA). They have met and have put in place a contract for Plant Health Australia and Michael Clarke from AgEconPlus to work on gaining support for the Biosecurity Strategy.

The IWG are working on preparing a case for the industry Biosecurity Strategy to present to industry.

## **NEW GOVERNMENT**

With the recent Federal elections and the change of Government, there are new Ministers appointed and Departmental name changes.

What was called the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) is now called Department of Agriculture. The new Minister is Barnaby Joyce, the new member for New England. His Parliamentary Secretary is the Tasmanian, Senator Richard Colbeck.

AHBIC has written to the new Minister congratulating him on his appointment and asking for the opportunity to meet with him at some time soon.

No doubt our industry will have reasons to talk with other Ministers as issues arise.

## **NEWSLETTER CHANGES**

You will notice changes to the front of the AHBIC newsletter. Those appearing as voluntary contributors are those who have contributed in the past 12 months. Some contributors ask to not have their name there and for others they did not indicate if they wished their name to appear.

I have been asked if AHBIC sends out renewal notices. As it is a voluntary contribution, there are no renewal notices. However, what is intended is that an email or letter will be sent out to those who contributed 12 months previously thanking them for their support and inviting them to again contribute.

Many beekeepers made a contribution by direct deposit so I do not have contact details for them. If you are one of these, AHBIC invites you to again contribute and supply us with your contact details.

AHBIC can only operate to benefit the beekeeping industry by the voluntary contributions received from packers and beekeepers. AHBIC would like to thank you all and invite you to make an annual contribution.

## AHBIC EXECUTIVE MEETING

The Executive met in Adelaide on Monday 23 September. It was followed by the AGM and meeting for B-Qual. Some of the issues discussed were:-

The Honey Week Committee had its first phone hook-up. It was thought that it was hard to try to have all States participate on the one day. It was thought that maybe all activities could be in the one month. The Committee is looking at several issues and will meet again soon.

The Executive has decided to go ahead with having the queen bee levy set at zero. The 12 levy principles have to be met and all levy payers need to be contacted. The rationale is that the queen bee levy is costing more to collect than it collects. In 2011-12 it lost around \$4,000.

The Executive is looking at ways of reducing the levy collection cost for the honey levy. This levy is a vital part of the industry's research effort and we need to maximise the amount of money available for allocation to research.

A more comprehensive report on the meeting will be forwarded to member bodies of AHBIC shortly.

## FARMER OF THE YEAR AWARDS



It happens to best of them!

Congratulations to Lindsay Bourke for making the finals of the Farmer of the Year awards in two categories - Diversification Farmer of the Year and Biosecurity Farmer of the Year.

Whilst not winning these sections, Lindsay's involvement highlights to the rest of the agriculture community that in the beekeeping industry we do have people who do more than just produce honey. I am sure that if these awards are held again next year Lindsay would encourage members of our industry to nominate or be nominated for the awards.

## **B-QUAL**

B-Qual is a wholly owned company of AHBIC which is responsible for the quality assurance program developed by AHBIC. With more and more companies, which buy honey from the various packers, asking that their suppliers have a QA program, B-Qual is an excellent way to meet this requirement.

We would encourage you to look at becoming a part of the B-Qual program if you are not already a member. Some packers provide an incentive for beekeepers to be B-Qual assured. For details on the B-Qual program go to the AHBIC website <http://honeybee.org.au/> and click on B-Qual.

## **CROP REPORTS**

### **SEASONAL NOTES**

**From Bob McDonald, Victoria.  
September/October 2013.**

August weather has been wetter and colder than usual. There have not been any heavy rain events, but the overall total finished up fairly high in most areas.

North West Mallee is the only area where moisture levels are critical.

September weather started out hot, which created moisture stress on crops in the Mallee and Northern areas until we received general heavy rains across the Mallee, Northern Victoria and the NSW Southern Riverina.

The early September heat saw Canola finish quickly in the Mallee, and put some crops elsewhere under severe stress.

However, Canola has yielded surplus honey, with some beekeepers harvesting reasonable crops.

Although Canola in the North West Mallee finished quickly, the warm weather has resulted in Citrus flowering early, and at the time of writing, is yielding surplus honey.

Elsewhere, Canola in the Southern Riverina has responded to the rains but generally, is past its peak and should finish by mid-October.

Paterson's Curse was put under stress with the early September heat and, in some cases has not responded well with the rains. It is not as good a prospect for spring honey as it looked some six weeks ago.

Other spring prospects are poor.

Tea tree in the Mallee is carrying very little bud because of the very dry late summer and autumn, when it usually sets buds.

There is also a question mark over White Mallee (*Euc. gracilis*) yielding useful honey, with the Mallee drying off fast.

Box-Iron Bark belt of forest – Yellow Gum (*Euc. leucoxylon*) across the Box-Iron Bark belt of forest and across into Western Victoria has very little blossom left and will be of very little value, although there are a few pockets of useful blossom left yielding nectar.

## **SOUTH AUSTRALIA – Keith Gibbs**

Most bees have left almonds and gone to canola and Euc leucoxydon (blue gum) or orange (which is flowering very early this year).

Some apiarists have chased Euc cyanophylla (blue mallee), but has been disappointing.

The weather more changeable than usual making it difficult for beekeeper's to manage hives.

We've had a reasonably wet winter giving ground florals good potential to yield.

There is nothing on the horizon that stands out but Lucerne could be a major saviour between now and the end of this year.

It could be a battle to get bee numbers up and produce a reasonable crop of honey this season.

## **CROP REPORT NORTHERN NSW – Casey Cooper**

The north of NSW has been very dry and unseasonable warm.

Large areas of canola produced good bees with a box or two of honey.

Small areas of White Box gave good honey and was kind to bees with late bud still producing.

Good bud on yellow box of which fifty % has already flowered with the warm weather the remaining buds flowering have been producing some fair honey.

Coastal areas are in need of good rain with early ironbark with little to no bud.

Wattle and hang down in pilliga scrub had a poor budding as did tea tree with only small amounts of sand gum with bud.

The north has just 30 to 40 mls of rain in past week though been so dry leading up to this event we will need two – three times this rain in next four to six week to bring on white clover and some short-term budders like silver leaf / coolabah.

## **CROP REPORT CENTRAL NSW – Mal Porter**

All the bees that went to the almonds are back in their local beekeeping areas on canola or in some cases capeweed. At the moment there seems to be some areas of the Central West and the West showing reasonable patches of Paterson curse. With the Central West having around 30 to 40mls of rain in September it did freshen up the weeds and canola but, with the September winds that we have been getting, it is time for more rain to keep the Paterson curse alive and strong.

As for eucalypts it still seems to be a year where we had a very mild winter and they have flowered out of season, and the later flowering trees are starting to flower now. Along the western rivers the river gums were showing reasonable budding, but once again I have been told that they have started to flower early.

Honey prices still sitting around the \$3.20 mark and not looking likely to move in the near future. Talking to one packer honey stocks were low but this hasn't increased honey prices yet.

With the September rain it has sparked some new growth on some of the trees in the Central west and Western areas, all you can hope for now is more rain in near future to carry this growth through to budding for next season. As we are heading into the summer months we all should be very careful when working our bees with smokers and the drying grass around the bee yards.

## WA Crop Report - Rod Pavy

Dry winter left bees with few reserves and some weak colonies. Late good rains have changed situation with spring build-up now well underway and coastal areas producing limited honeyflow.

Some beekeepers have moved onto Brown Mallet which appears well budded.

### QUARANTINE STATION OPEN AGAIN

The quarantine station at Eastern Creek is again open for the business of importing queen bees. A shipment from Canada is due soon.

It has been around seven (7) years since any imports of queen bees took place. It was closed due to someone saying that CCD was a threat. Industry could never find who made that statement and caused the closure.

There are a few minor issues to sort out but the way the quarantine station functions will be a fore runner to how the new facility in Melbourne will function when it is built.

It is crucial that there is a safe legal way for genetic material to be able to be sourced from overseas.

The disappointing part is that the Import Risk Assessment (IRA) for drone semen is still languishing somewhere in Canberra. This is also an important part of genetic material being able to be safely imported. You will recall that it was Recommendation 12 from the More Than Honey report that the IRA for drone semen importation be completed by the end of 2008.

### CONFERENCE DATES

There has been a change to the dates for the New South Wales Apiarists Association conference.

These are the dates as I have them at present.

Queensland Beekeepers Association	12 – 13 June	Toowoomba
New South Wales Apiarists Association	8 - 9 May	Narrabri
Tasmanian Beekeepers Association	31 May- 1 June	
WA Farmers Federation - Beekeeping Section	6 June	Perth
South Australian Apiarists Association	19-20 June	
Victorian Apiarists Association	TBA	
Honey Packers and Marketers Association	TBA	
National Council of Crop Pollination Associations	TBA	
Australian Queen Bee Breeders Association	TBA	
Federal Council of Australian Apiarists' Association	TBA	
Australian Honey Bee Industry Council	TBA	



VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS FOR 2013-2014 GRATEFULLY RECEIVED

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## TAX INVOICE/RECEIPT

Name: .....

Address: .....

.....

Email: (Please PRINT clearly).....

Phone: ..... Date:.....

### Yes I wish to support my industry

Up to 50 hives = \$50.00       51 and over hives = \$1.00 per hive

*Please circle your preference*

yes / no

Please publicise my name on the front of the AHBIC Newsletter

yes / no

I would like to receive the AHBIC Annual Report

yes / no

Please acknowledge this voluntary contribution with a receipt (*email preferred*)

Your contribution can be paid by **CHEQUE** (or Money Order) or **DIRECT DEPOSIT**

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*Thank you for supporting AHBIC to continue supporting your industry at a national level.*

*It is gratefully appreciated.*