



# Monthly NEWS

To: The Australian Honey Industry

From: Stephen Ware – Executive Director

August 2011

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!**

AB's Honey  
Australian Queen Bee  
Exporters  
Australian Queen Bee  
Breeders Association  
Australian Honey Products  
Barnes Apiaries Pty Ltd  
Beechworth Honey Pty Ltd  
Bees Neez Apiaries  
Black, R G & MJ  
Bowman Family  
Brooks, Graham  
Bush Honey  
Buzz Honey  
Capilano Honey Limited  
Ciphery, C & R  
Clifford, DA & JJ  
Codde, T J  
Cole, OF  
Cotton, AJ & McDonald, MA  
Craig, Athol  
Daybreak Apiary  
Dewar Corporation  
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P & M Ewington  
Gell's Honey  
Goode, TW & MA  
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Beekeepers Association  
Honey Packers & Marketers  
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Howard, OD  
L'Estrange, Tony  
MacFarlane, R H  
Marchant, R & S  
Marti, Rod T/A Gagarra  
Honey  
McLaren, Jane  
Meimetis, Steve  
Morgan, Trevor  
Mullen, Peter & Sylvia  
Nitschke, CJ  
Papworth, F & E  
Park, William F  
Pollination Association of WA

Pobke, Barry  
Rasmussen, Ivan  
Roberts, IJ & JH  
Saxonbee Enterprises  
Smith, C & B  
Spring Gully Foods Pty Ltd  
Stephens, R  
Stevens, Graeme  
Stevens, Howard  
Strout, Graham  
Tasmanian Beekeepers  
Association - NW Branch  
Tasmanian Crop Pollination  
Association  
Tasmanian Honey Company  
Thompson, N  
Weatherhead, T & M  
True Blue Honey  
Valkenburg, Simeon  
Warral Apiaries Pty Ltd  
Weerona Apiaries  
Wescobee Limited  
Wilson, Col  
Zadow Apiaries

**Thank you to all our beekeeper contributors some of whom have asked to remain anonymous.  
AHBIC appreciates your ongoing support.**

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*The following provides an update of recent activities of AHBIC naturally if you should seek any further clarification please do not hesitate to contact the AHBIC office.*

## UPDATE AHBIC ACTIVITIES

- ***Apis cerana***

In relation to *Apis cerana* Plant Health Australia has now convened the Scientific Advisory Panel to assist in the containment program. It has been a herculean task getting agreement between the Qld Government and the Federal Department of Primary Industry on the funding of the containment strategy. This has been due to a number of factors including the outbreak of Hendra virus. It is hoped that this will be finally concluded in the next couple of days.

- **National Food Plan Submission**

The Australian Honeybee Industry welcomed the opportunity to have input into the development of a National Food Plan.

In responding to the questionnaire industry has sought to tease out issues of importance to the Apiary Industry: A risk-impact analysis clearly points to the industry needing to address two key issues as a matter of priority. These are: first, to ensure that everything possible is being done to protect the industry from an exotic incursion of *Varroa* mite or other serious exotic diseases; and second, to influence governments to ensure that access to native flora resources is not further restricted and hopefully reversed. The latter will require a concentrated effort by industry leaders to influence policy makers on sound, professional and well-presented arguments and will also require the industry to establish its own environmental credentials through the adoption of an EMS.

We emphasised that the industry's challenge on honey is to maintain or enhance its reputation as a supplier of top grade branded honey which is 'clean and green' - and so continue to command a premium on the domestic and international markets. This means being able to differentiate Australian honey by brand. Australia cannot compete on price alone against honey from China and Argentina.

We also noted the current debate in respect of Oil & Gas Exploration/Production has the potential to affect access to resources which the industry needs to maintain production.

- **Biosecurity Advisory Council Submission**

In submitting our submission we suggested that changes should be made to the Deed arrangements to allow for shared cost in respect Emergency Animal Disease/Pest whilst a decision is made as to whether the Pest/Disease is eradicable. This is particularly the case with Bee Pest/Diseases as it may take considerable time for the combatant state to decide if it is possible to eradicate. Further we suggested that the current cost sharing arrangements should be extended for a period after a disease/Pest has been declared endemic to enable a proper containment strategy to be adopted by Industry and Government.

- **Correspondence included:**

The Hon Dr Craig Emerson MP  
Senator the Honourable Joe Ludwig MP  
The Hon Katy Gallagher MLA - ACT  
The Hon K Vatskalis MLA - NT  
The Hon Bryan Green MP - TAS

**Re: Honey Exports to New Zealand**  
**Re: Increase in AQIS Export Charges**  
**Re: Compulsory Registration of Beekeepers**  
**Re: Compulsory Registration of Beekeepers**  
**Re: Compulsory Registration of Beekeepers**

## **APIS CERANA UPDATE**

Advice 101 – 12 August 2011

Detections since Advice 100 are:

IP451 was a nest at Aloomba  
IP452 was a nest at Mareeba  
IP453 was a nest at Aloomba  
IP454 was a swarm at Edmonton  
IP455 was a nest at Mooroolbool  
IP456 was a swarm at Mooroolbool  
IP457 was a swarm at Mt. Sheridan  
IP458 was a nest at Portsmith  
IP459 was a swarm at Fisheries Falls  
IP460 was a swarm at Kanimbla  
IP461 was a swarm at Kanimbla  
IP462 was a nest at Palm Cove

This IP462 was found 13km north of the previous most northern find at Kewarra Beach. It was estimated to be at least 12 months old and has been estimated to have swarmed three (3) times. This is not good news but is not unexpected.

The fourth group of volunteers has completed their time there and the next lot are due to start next week. So far 36 volunteers have helped out at Cairns. We thank those volunteers for giving up their time to do this work in Cairns.

We still need volunteers and a weekly roster is now in place but if you want to stay longer than the week that will be no problems. Bill Weiss is organising rosters and will book accommodation if required. Please contact Bill on: 02 6732 1263 or 0428 669 578 or email to [beeweiss@gmail.com](mailto:beeweiss@gmail.com) if you wish to volunteer.

*Trevor Weatherhead*

## **AUTHORITIES DESTROY BEE HIVE ON SHIP IN DARWIN HARBOUR**

19/08/2011

A foreign bee hive has been discovered and removed from a shipping vessel in Darwin harbour. It's believed the bees were a colony of Giant Honey Bees or *Apis Dorsata* and may have arrived on the ship from Dili in East Timor.

Apiarist Andrew Shugg was called by the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service to identify the bees. He says he was extremely worried about the prospect of the foreign bees establishing themselves in Australia.

"I was quite shocked actually...it's not the sort of phone call I want to get, but I'm very happy that everything went well," he said. "We got a big lift like a cherry picker and an industrial vacuum cleaner and we smoked them to calm them down and I got the big vacuum cleaner and sucked them all up.

"We lost probably about 20, but we went through what we had after we killed all the rest that were in the vacuum cleaner and we managed to find the queen, so that hive will no longer exist."

## **THE RIRDC 2012 RURAL WOMEN'S AWARD**

*Nominations open 1 August 2011 and close 15 October 2011*

### **Who can enter?**

The Award is open to all women involved in primary industries and resource development. Don't be shy about entering yourself, many people do and we encourage you to. You can also nominate someone provided you have their written consent. You don't need formal qualifications to enter.

### **What is the RIRDC rural Women's Award?**

The RIRDC Rural Women's Award is Australia's pre-eminent Award that recognises and encourages rural women's contribution to primary industries, resource development and rural Australia. While the Award acknowledges past achievements, it is focused on the future and provides rural women with financial and practical support to implement their visions for primary industries and rural Australia, and to enhance their leadership and representative capacities.

The Award provides an amazing opportunity to further your own professional development, to make a tangible difference and to inspire others. You could become one of the seven state and territory winners and go on to become the Australian winner.

But the Award is much more than just winning a title. It is a life changing experience that will open up a positive and powerful network of like-minded women across the country who are passionate about primary industries and rural Australia.

The Award is a RIRDC initiative in partnership with relevant state and territory agencies who manage the Award at a state and territory level. National partners are the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry and the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government. National sponsors are ABC Radio, Rural Press Ltd and Westpac Banking Corporation.

For more information and application form go to: [www.rirdc.gov.au](http://www.rirdc.gov.au)

## **NEW RIRDC BOARD DIRECTORS ANNOUNCED**

*19 August 2011*

The Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation (RIRDC) has announced its new Board Directors.

Mr Sam Archer, Dr Michael Guerin, Ms Alana Johnson and Dr Len Stephens are the four new Directors on the nine person RIRDC Board. The new Board Directors will take their positions immediately and each will serve three year terms.

RIRDC Managing Director, Craig Burns said the four new Directors bring a diverse range of skills and experience to the RIRDC Board.

"RIRDC plays an important role in the development and support of rural Australia and the new Board Directors bring an impressive and diverse set of skills and experience that will provide strong guidance and expert governance to the organisation," Mr Burns said.

Sam Archer manages a mixed farming enterprise based on livestock, cereal production and native

pastures at Gundagai, NSW. Mr Archer was awarded an Australian Nuffield Farming Scholarship in 2008, and travelled throughout the Americas, Europe and India researching private sector funded environmental stewardship schemes broadly based around carbon, water and biodiversity. Mr Archer holds a commerce degree and an Honours Degree majoring in Anthropology.

Dr Michael Guerin was the Chief Operating Officer at Elders Limited (2009 – 2010) and also served as its Managing Director of Rural Services (2008). Dr Guerin was the Managing Director of the Australia & New Zealand (ANZ) Banking Group's Pacific Division (2005 – 2008) and also served as the Managing Director of ANZ's Regional and Rural Banking arm. He also served as a Director of Rural Bank Limited (2009 – 2010).

Alana Johnson is a national and international rural consultant and a partner in a cattle breeding and agro-forestry enterprise in north east Victoria. Ms Johnson has a social science background and is currently a Doctoral candidate and sessional lecturer at Monash University. Ms Johnson is a graduate of the Australian Rural Leadership Program and the Australian Institute of Company Directors. Ms Johnson is past president of the Foundation for Australian Agricultural Women and a founding member of Australian Women in Agriculture. Ms Johnson was the RIRDC Rural Women's Award Victorian Winner and National runner-up in 2010.

Dr Len Stephens (AICD, Dip Agr Sci, BVSc, MSc, PhD) is currently the Managing Director of the Seafood CRC. Dr Stephens has also been a Company Director for Dairy Australia (2007 - 2010) and was a Principal at Global Innovation Options Management Consultancy (2007). Mr Stephens served as Chairman of Australian Wool Exchange's Industry Standards Advisory Committee (2007), was Chief Executive Officer of Australian Wool Innovation (2003 - 2006) and was a General Manager at Meat & Livestock Australia (1996 - 2003).

Prof. Daniela Stehlik remains the RIRDC Board Chair. The four new RIRDC Board Directors join three re-appointed Directors - Mr Alexander Campbell AM, Ms Roseanne Healy and Dr Merylyn Sleigh.

## **CHEQUES ARE IMPORTANT FOR FARMERS**

*1 August 2011*

Cheques are an important tool for farmers and people living in rural areas. This is the basis of the Victorian Farmers Federation's (VFF) submission to the Australian Payment Clearing Association (APCA) who are engaging in a public consultation on the issue.

VFF President Andrew Broad said cheques continued to play an important role in Victoria's rural economy.

"In response to the APCA's call for submissions on the ongoing use of cheques the VFF consulted our members. The overwhelming feedback we received is that cheques remain a very important part of doing business in rural areas," Mr Broad said.

"Although there has been an increase in the use of phone and internet banking, there are still many cases where cheques are the best, or sometimes the only option, for payment. For example, cheques are still the best way to pay casual staff and shearers."

"Our regional economy is different from the economies of major cities across a range of areas. Where people are starting to use 'paypass' or 'paywave' swipe card technology in Melbourne, there are still many rural areas where this is impractical."

“The VFF’s submission also pointed out the importance of cheques for meeting governance requirements in community organisations such as the VFF or Country Womens’ Association. When two signatures are required it is easier to have a physical cheque, rather than trying to coordinate alternative payment methods.”

“The APCA has made it clear that they are not looking to remove cheques, but are investigating a future transition to other forms of payment,” Mr Broad concluded.

### **APIECOTECH 2012 - BELGRADE SERBIA – 18/19 FEBRUARY 2012**

We are expecting you in Serbia, the beekeeping kingdom of South-East Europe! Serbia is a country with the least polluted soil in Europe, an ideal climate for beekeeping and above average educated beekeepers. Serbia is a country of acacia forests, sunflower fields and endless forest meadows. Serbian acacia and sunflower honey has been present on market stalls all around the Europe for a long time.

Serbia welcomes you with the motto: Quality at a low price! The host of the Symposium, the Serbian Federation of Beekeeping Organization, has made an effort to make your stay in Serbia enjoyable by transforming it to a vacation and organizing it at attractive prices, with maximum hospitality, the highest level of services and good time in the most famous South-Eastern Europe city to have a good time – Belgrade!

You will have the opportunity to explore the rich Serbian cuisine, which is a mixture of Eastern and Western cuisine, famous throughout the world. Therefore do not miss Serbian evening, dinner that we have carefully organized for your full enjoyment. A number of exclusive restaurants in Belgrade situated on the Danube and Sava rivers will leave you breathless, both day and night, with its ambience and high level of service at very low prices.

This Apimondia Symposium will be organised together with Serbian Beekeeping Fair (ApiExpo) which is visited each year by 6-8 thousand beekeepers from all around the region. The Blue Hall of the exclusive congress centre Sava Centar, has 3700 seats, and we assure you that all of them will be occupied!

***Dr. Med. Rodoljub Živadinović,***

President of the Serbian Federation of Beekeeping Organizations

President of the Local Organising Committee

[www.apiecotech2012.com](http://www.apiecotech2012.com)

### **FOOD REGULATIONS & LABELLING STANDARDS CONFERENCE**

*9-10 November 2011, Sydney Harbour Marriott*

This year’s Food Regulations & Labelling Standards conference will provide an overview of current direction for Food regulations and labelling standards. Now celebrating its 13th year, this event continually provides the best platform to discuss and debate the most current issues in the food regulations and labelling sector.

This specialised industry forum will equip you with key methods to adapt to developing technologies, consumer groups and consumer demands, as well as the ongoing changes in government policy. The agenda also provides great insight towards the working group, with speakers from manufacturers to retailers, discussing their issues and providing case studies to communicate regulatory issues from their perspective. For more information go to: [www.inform.com.au/foodregulations](http://www.inform.com.au/foodregulations)

# SPRING CROP & STOCK REPORT



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## NEW SOUTH WALES

Season - Prospects for coming season are beginning to look better in the South of the State with rain last week which will help Canola, which was stressing in the central parts of the inland. Rain will help the prospects of curse. There was some patchy bud on Mugga Ironbark which could give a little honey now. I understand River red Gum is budded in some areas of the river country, however some beekeepers are concerned it may run to growth again this year if we get hot weather.

The North of the State has some very dry areas with limited Canola crops.

Stringy Bark, in patches, allowed some bees to winter very well. Some beekeepers shifted to Qld and worked some winter ironbark (Bluetop and Caley's) which is getting towards the end of its flowering. It gave some honey to good bees, however cold weather interrupted the flow during June – July.

Coastal regions have some prospects for coming months. Inland areas have patches of Narrowleaf and Broadleaf Ironbark budded, however needs rain leading up to flowering.

Stocks - Honey stocks held by most beekeepers are very low, to non-existent and some packers have limited stocks.

Prices - Prices should hold up, however supermarket pressures are increasing and it will be interesting to see where prices will be by Christmas.

If packers drop prices they may find they will not receive much honey, as overall production may be slightly below recent years averages.

*Bill Weiss*

## QUEENSLAND

The winter period has not seen heavy honey production, perhaps due to prolonged dry periods and quite cool conditions. Yapunyah yielded a modest crop for most honey producers who ventured to the Channel Country. Yapunyah will be followed by Inland Bloodwood and then if temperatures permit Bimble Box.

At the time of writing bees have been shifted to Macadamia Nut orchards and also to pollinate Avocados. A few Queensland beekeepers moved south to Almond pollination. Once the pollination period is concluded beekeepers are very concerned as to what they will work for honey flows. Prospects are few and far between. Grey ironbark budding is very disappointing. Narrow Leaved Ironbark is a virtual non-event in the north. There remains some hope for Brush Box, it is far too early to call but the trees have just the right amount of stress on them at the moment.

It has been suggested that QLD beekeepers may have to venture south into NSW to work Canola and other potential crops. Not a positive way to start the new season. Traditionally August and September are

dry months in Queensland and as a result we wait for the September storms and summer rain to see if prospects improve.

Stock on hand is limited with most honey being delivered to packers as soon as it is extracted.

*Bill Winner*

## **SOUTH AUSTRALIA**

The Almond season relatively short this year only three weeks.

Immediate prospects White Mallee & Ground Flora in Riverland area.

Blue Gum does not look promising in the southern part of the State but okay in the North.

*Ian Roberts*

## **TASMANIA**

A very cold & wet winter for Tasmania.

Bees in good condition – sugar feed started August 1 – some hives are hungry – some have good stores.

Good flowering of Goss in Northern Tasmania. The best pollen for bees.

*Ian Stephens*

## **VICTORIA**

The winter months of May & June were fairly dry with generally, only enough rain to get by on, then similar weather into July.

This changed from mid-July onwards with heavy rains in Gippsland causing floods in many of the eastern rivers.

Mid-August has seen general rains all over the State with the drier north-west and northern regions also getting good rains.

The Desert Banksia (*B. ornata*), although late in starting to flower has yielded both honey and good breeding conditions, with bees wintered in the Big Desert coming through winter in good condition.

The north-west Mallee has had Wild Turnip flowering all through winter. There have also been large areas of Canola sown in the Mallee, with many crops starting to flower from early July onwards.

White Mallee (*Euc. gracilis*) has been flowering through the winter, though only on the larger trees in the open and around the edges, and will last well into the spring.

Tea Tree (*Leptospermum laevigatum* var. *minus*) is carrying the best budding for some years, starting to flower now and could yield some honey during the next 6-8 weeks.



Almond pollination is well underway and should finish before the end of August.

Elsewhere the August rains have helped Canola and it is flowering over a large area of cropping across northern Victoria and the southern Riverina of NSW.

Box-Iron Bark Region -Yellow Gum (*Euc. leucoxylon*) has flowered through the winter and should last for some time into the spring. It could yield some honey.

All Wattles and other spring flowering shrubs are heavily budded and will flower well, with Golden Wattle already breaking bud. All ground flora weeds have struck well. Spring breeding conditions should be very good with Canola and Paterson's Curse potentials for spring honey.

Future – Red Gum (*Euc. camaldulensis*) is carrying a patchy budding along the Murray River, with some good budding in some areas.

Red Gum along the Murrumbidgee, the creeks and Anna-branches in the southern Riverina is also carrying a reasonable crop of buds.

The spring and summer prospects are not as good as was hoped, but with care, there is the potential to produce some surplus honey.

## **WESTERN AUSTRALIA**

Winter in Northern areas has been very slow and coastal country very poor. South coast areas quite good. Canola has started and many are moving to this crop to get bees breeding while some will get a honey crop.

Spring crops are varied with some prospects of White Gum and possible Goldfields honey flow.

All round a slow start to season with only average prospects.

*Rod Pavy*

## **UPCOMING MEETINGS**

The next AHBIC Executive meeting will be held in Melbourne on 31 October 2011

The Food Safety & Residue Committee will meet in Brisbane on 15 September 2011 and the B-QUAL Board will also meet in Brisbane on 16 September 2011.