



Monthly NEWS

To: The Australian Honey Industry

From: Trevor Weatherhead – Executive Director

March 2017

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

The following list recognises contributions received since 1 April 2016

There are a few other contributors – some wishing to remain anonymous and some not indicating their wishes

AB's Honey
Anderson, Stuart
Australian Organic Honey Company
Ayrleigh Apiaries
Badger Head Bees
Beechworth Honey
Bees Neez Apiaries
Bejo Tasmania P/L
Bluebees Producers
Blue Hills Honey
Bliss, Stephen
Bourke, Lindsay
Bush Honey - (Midgley Family)
Capilano Honey Ltd
Clifford, David
Clifford, Ray
Cooper, Barry
Cooper, Casey
Cotton, Allan & Michelle
Covey Bees
Davey, Robin
Davies Apiaries
Dewar Apiaries

Dewar, Robert
Dyer, Craig
Enslin, Darren
Faithfull, Mark
Gells Honey Maryborough
Glasby, Garry
Gold Coast Amateur Beekeepers
Society
Gold Coast Regional Beekeepers Inc.
Green, Lionel
Gustare Honey Australia
Heritage Honey
Honeylife Australia
Hooper, Ben
Hoskinson, HL & HM
Ipswich/West Moreton
Beekeepers Assoc
Jones, Daniel
Kennett, JL & KA
Klingner, Craig
Le Feuvre, Danny
Masters, Neil & Sharon
MacGibbon, Kevin

Morgan, Trevor
Naicol Pty Ltd
Nairn, Mal
Northside Beekeepers Association Inc.
Panda Honey – honey buyers
Pavy, Rodney & Gail
Pure Bendigo Gold Honey
Rotary Club of Caulfield
Ruge Honey
Shaw, Robert
Squire, Gary
Stokes, Peter
Superbee Honey Factory
Tasmanian Honey Company
Watson, James
Weatherhead, T & M
Weerona Apiaries
Western Honey Supplies Pty Ltd
Williams JW & MA
Zadow, Ian and Mel

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

All rights reserved. This publication is copyright and may not be resold or reproduced in any manner (except excerpts for bona fide study purpose in accordance with the Copyright Act) without the prior consent of the Publisher. Every effort has been made to ensure that this newsletter is free from error or omissions. However, the Publisher, or its respective employees or agents, shall not accept responsibility for injuries, loss or damage occasioned to any person acting or referring from action as a result of the material in this newsletter whether or not such injury, loss or damage is in any way due to any negligent act or omission, breach of duty or default on the part of the Publisher, or its respective employees or agents.

REPORT ON ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS

On 24 November, Lindsay Bourke and I were invited to a roundtable discussion with the House of Representatives Committee on Agriculture and Water Resources. There were other representatives present from Department of Agriculture and Water Resources, CSIRO and Plant Health Australia. The Committee has produced a report called “Safe Keeping” which can be found at http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/House/Standing_Committee_on_Agriculture_and_Water_Resources/Roundtablehoneybees/Report

The six (6) recommendations in the report are:-

Recommendation 1

The Committee recommends that the National Bee Pest Surveillance Program implement, by 30 June 2017, the proposed enhanced Model 3 program, as outlined in the recent review and redesign. The appropriate proportion of funds should be provided by the relevant Commonwealth agencies involved in the program partnership.

Recommendation 2

The Committee recommends that the Australian Government investigate the development of an easy to use smart phone application which may help members of the public to more easily contribute to eradication programs.

Recommendation 3

The Committee recommends that the Australian Government immediately initiate the necessary research and development that will allow the efficiency of the National Bee Pest Surveillance Program to be assessed, with a view to the development of any program refinements, adjustments or modifications. The rigorous statistical analysis of all methodologies should be the highest priority, with particular focus on the effectiveness or optimisation of standard and remote catchboxes. The research and analysis should aim to be completed by June 2018.

Recommendation 4

The Committee recommends that the Australian Government complete the analysis of pest bee risk ratings for the Australian ports that do not have such ratings. The assessment should include airports, and it should also include pre-embarkation inspections and processes at various ports. The assessment should be completed by the end of 2017 and a copy of the completed assessment provided to the Committee.

Recommendation 5

The Committee recommends that the Australian Government undertake a detailed analysis of the smuggling of bees into Australia. The analysis should include, but not be limited to, the total number of incidents, the percentage of incidents where pests were discovered, the potential for further incursions, and how to prevent, detect or combat such incidents. A copy of the analysis should be provided to the Committee upon completion.

Recommendation 6

The Committee recommends that the Australian Government, in conjunction with domestic and possibly international industry partners, initiate research and development into selective breeding of honey bees that are resistant to pests and diseases that may have a detrimental effect on the Australian honey bee industry.

We await the Government’s reply to the above recommendations.



Consultative Committee on Emergency Plant Pests Communiqué

Suspect varroa mite in New South Wales

28 February 2017

On 28 December 2016 an amateur beekeeper in Queensland submitted a photograph found on social media to the Exotic Plant Pest Hotline of a European honey bee with what looked like suspect varroa mite. Later on the 28 December 2016 following pursuit by the amateur beekeeper, New South Wales Department of Primary Industries (NSW DPI) received a report containing the photographs and took measures to respond. These exotic mites are parasites of European honey bees and are one of Australia's top 40 priority plant pests.

As soon as the report was received NSW sought advice from experts in NSW, Queensland and industry who examined the photographs and agreed that the suspect mite was bigger than the normal size of varroa mite. Experts subsequently confirmed that the image is of the bee scutellum (a part of the bee's anatomy) rather than a varroa mite.

To rule out the potential presence of varroa mite, NSW commenced further response activities as follows:

- Authorised bee inspectors trained in bee investigative work were dispatched on Friday 30 December 2016, with field samples taken for diagnosis. All samples were negative for varroa mites.
- Floral sweeps were conducted, with no varroa mites detected.
- Chemical (Bayvarol) strips and sticky mat traps were placed around all hives within 2.5 km of the garden in which the photographs were taken. All the sticky traps and mats were examined and no varroa mites were detected.
-

The photographs were taken by a resident of Rutherford, NSW and submitted to the Exotic Plant Pest Hotline by the amateur beekeeper in Queensland who became concerned after seeing the photographs. The amateur beekeeper that responded and submitted the photographs is commended for their actions. The suspected incident was a valuable learning exercise in the notification of suspected exotic plant pests that has resulted in improvements to the Exotic Plant Pest Hotline being identified and addressed.

On 16 January 2017, NSW proved that this was not a case of varroa mite and announced that the investigation had ceased.

Any unusual plant pest should be reported immediately to the relevant state or territory agriculture agency through the Exotic Plant Pest Hotline (1800 084 881). Early reporting increases the chance of effective control and eradication.

MINISTERIAL AWARD FOR SCIENCE AND INNOVATION



Postdoctoral researcher in the [School of Life and Environmental Sciences](#), [Dr Emily Remnant](#) has been awarded the top honour at the Australian Government's [2017 Science and Innovation Awards for Young People in Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry](#).

Dr Remnant received the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Award, as well as the industry category award sponsored by the Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation (RIRDC). Her awards are accompanied by \$44,000 to use towards her ground-breaking work.

The aim is to make our bees more resilient to viruses. Colony collapse is a striking issue around the world, and one of the causes involves viruses carried by the parasitic *Varroa destructor* mite. Although we don't have the mite in Australia yet, it's only a matter of time. "Most strategies to avoid colony collapse focus on removing mites, but if the viruses are actually the main culprits that are causing colony death, I wondered if there was a way to specifically reduce virus levels in bees," said molecular geneticist, Dr Emily Remnant.

Emily receiving her award from Assistant Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources Senator Anne Ruston. Photo: Senator Ruston's office

Immunising bees with a symbiotic bacterium that is found in almost half of all insects, *Wolbachia pipientis*, may work to stave off the devastating impacts of the viruses.

"My lab work involves injecting honey bee eggs with the bacteria and rearing the eggs to the pupal stage. I then inject the bee pupae with the viruses and compare the level of viruses in bees that are positive for my immunising bacteria, to bees that do not have the bacteria present. To make comparisons, I extract RNA from the bees and use a quantitative *reverse transcription* polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR) method."

Injecting honey bee eggs is not as simple as it sounds.

"I need to use highly specialised equipment, including a pressurised micro-injector and capillary needle puller."

"Preventative measures to avoid colony deaths could be worth up to \$6 billion to fruit and vegetable production across Australia,"

Information courtesy of the University of Sydney

AHBIC AGM PLUS SAAA CONFERENCE

The AHBIC AGM will be held at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Adelaide on 8 July, 2017. The South Australian Apiarists Association (SAAA) Conference will be held on the preceding two days i.e. 6 & 7 July. Details for the Crowne Plaza are:-

Crowne Plaza Hotel
16 Hindmarsh Square
ADELAIDE SA 5000

https://www.ihg.com/crowneplaza/hotels/us/en/adelaide-sa/adlch/hoteldetail/events-facilities?cm_mmc=bingMaps-_-CP-_-AUS-_-ADLCH#scmisc=nav_events-facilities_cp

AHBIC delegates are encouraged to attend the SAAA conference so as they can see what happens in South Australia and South Australian beekeepers can talk to delegates to find out what happens in the delegate's State. Registration for AHBIC delegates this year will be via the SAAA registration form

Observers are welcome at the AHBIC AGM and the SAAA Conference registration form for that will be available in the AHBIC newsletter in coming months.

Accommodation bookings can be made online at - <https://aws.passkey.com/go/d0e65fa6>
If you have problems, contact the SAAA acting Secretary, Kylie Pitt at secretary@saaa.org.au
ph: 0419 982 102.

WORLDWIDE RECALL OF EPIPENS

There has been a worldwide recall of Epipens. See the newspaper article at <http://www.theage.com.au/national/health/australian-patients-urged-to-return-their-epipens-because-of-worldwide-recall-20170321-gv30j4.html>

NEW ZEALAND CONFERENCE 2017

I have received an invitation for Australian beekeepers to attend the New Zealand beekeepers conference from 9 – 11 July, 2017 at Rotorua.

The conference website is <http://apicultureconference2017.co.nz/>

HONEY EXPORTS TO SAUDI ARABIA

Still no word on this market. It is very frustrating for those who have previously exported to Saudi Arabia. This is one market we would not wish to lose.

LIVE BEE EXPORTS TO THE USA

Again still no word on this market.

AGM

Annual conferences for 2017, in chronological order, as I currently have them are:-

WA Farmers Federation – Beekeeping Section	12 May - Perth
New South Wales Apiarists Association	18 & 19 May - Ballina
Tasmanian Beekeepers Association	26 & 27 May - Hobart
Victorian Apiarists Association	7 & 8 June - Warrnambool
Honey Packers and Marketers Association of Aust.	23 June
Queensland Beekeepers Association	29 June – 1 July - Gympie
South Australian Apiarists Association	6 & 7 July- Adelaide
Australian Honey Bee Industry Council	8 July - Adelaide
National Council of Crop Pollination Associations	TBA
Australian Queen Bee Breeders Association	TBA

NEW CHEMICAL REGISTRATIONS

Application no.: 109154
Product name: Macro Protect Alpha 100 Insecticide
Active constituent/s: 100 g/L alpha-cypermethrin
Applicant name: Macrofert Australia Pty Ltd
Applicant ACN: 166 370 976
Summary of variation: To change the distinguishing product name and the name that appears on the label from 'RAVENSDOWN UNIALPHACYPER 100 INSECTICIDE' to 'MACRO PROTECT ALPHA 100 INSECTICIDE'
Date of variation: 10 January 2017
Product registration no.: 56888
Label approval no.: 56888/109154

Application no.: 107951
Product name: Sinon Chlorpyrifos 500 EC Insecticide
Active constituent/s: 500 g/L chlorpyrifos (an anti-cholinesterase compound)
Applicant name: Sinon Australia Pty Limited
Applicant ACN: 102 741 024
Summary of use: For use on fruit, vegetables, oilseeds, cotton, cereals, pasture, turf and other situations to control various insect pests
Date of registration: 6 February 2017
Product registration no.: 83310
Label approval no.: 83310/107951

Application no.: 106190
Active constituent/s: Spinetoram
Applicant name: Dow Agrosiences Australia Limited
Applicant ACN: 003 771 659
Summary of use: For use in agricultural chemical products
Date of approval: 15 February 2017
Approval no.: 82604

CATEGORISATION

We are still awaiting the outcome of the Board meeting that was to consider the categorisation of *Varroa destructor*.

LEVY RETURNS ONLINE

For those beekeepers and packers who pay the honey levy directly to the Department, do you know you can now do this online? By doing your return and payment online it will save on collection costs and thus make more money available for the purposes the levy is intended for.

It is crucial that the beekeeping industry maximises the collection of this levy as it pays for research, the Contingency Fund, PHA to run our Contingency Fund and the National Residue Survey.

BEE HIVE AND HONEY THEFTS IN NEW ZEALAND

There is a report on ABC Rural of bee hive and honey thefts in New Zealand. See <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-03-15/manuka-honey-demand-driving-rise-bee-related-crime-new-zealand/8357484>

The lead paragraph says *“New Zealand's bees are being stolen and traded by organised crime syndicates seeking to profit from skyrocketing honey prices thanks to surging demand in China, police and beekeepers say.”*

Hopefully this is not a sign of things to come in Australia.

Reports out of New Zealand say the manuka crop is well down this year and many who have recently come into the industry with dollar signs in their eyes may be at risk of going under. So there is not necessarily “gold in them there bushes”.

BEE HIVES AT PARLIAMENT HOUSE

Australian Parliament House (APH) will soon play a part in improving local biodiversity in the National Capital, with the installation of beehives in the native landscape.

The beehive initiative follows other national and international institutions with resident beehives including the Scottish Parliament, the White House, the parliaments of Western Australia and Queensland and Government House in Canberra. There are historical links to bees and APH, as beehives were kept in the gardens of Old Parliament House in 1976, managed by the then Member for Holt, William Yates.

For a description of the bees at old Parliament House see <http://www.nationalcapital.gov.au/attachments/article/232/roses-tennis-democracy-2014-web.pdf> and go to page 39.

CYCLONE AND FLOODS IN QUEENSLAND AND NORTHERN NEW SOUTH WALES

This past week has been a torrid time for people from North Queensland to northern New South Wales.

At this time I have not heard of any bee hives loses but I would imagine, with the intensity of the cyclone and the amount of water around in south east Queensland and northern New South Wales, there would have been hives lost.

For those in north Queensland the main problem following a cyclone is that the trees have been stripped of leaves and, whilst the bee hives may have survived, there is a lack of flora for the bees to work for anything up to 12 to 18 months.

B-QUAL AND NEW DIRECTORS

B-QUAL has recently undergone a major review with the purpose of getting more beekeepers QA accredited. It is important that our industry does have suitable QA qualifications as the packers are often required by their customers to have their suppliers QA accredited.

So if you are not QA certified go the B-QUAL website www.bqual.com.au and see how the program has been made more user friendly.

Barry Pobke, who is the current Chairman of the B-QUAL Board, has indicated that after many years in that position and on the Board he is hanging up his boots at the next AGM in October. He will also be not available to serve as a Board member. One of the current Board members has indicated a willingness to take on the Chairman's role but there will need to be another Director appointed and ideally a second person as well.

So if you are interested in becoming a B-QUAL Director please contact Trevor Weatherhead at ahbic@honeybee.org.au with an outline of your qualifications or phone 07 5467 2265

CROP POLLINATION ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE AND AGM

I have received the following information about the upcoming Crop Pollination Association conference and AGM:-

Crop Pollination AGM/Conference.

Date: Tuesday 16th May 2017

Venue: Ballina Island Motor Inn.

1 Ronan Place, Ballina NSW 2478

See: www.aussiepollination.com.au

For further information contact the Secretary Eric Whitby at ericwhitby2@bigpond.com

HAIR SPACING KEEPS HONEY BEES CLEAN DURING POLLINATION

The American Bee Journal has put out this interesting piece of research.

With honey bee colony health wavering and researchers trying to find technological ways of pollinating plants in the future, a new Georgia Tech study has looked at [how the insects do their job and manage to stay clean](#).

According to the study, a honey bee can carry up to 30 percent of its body weight in pollen because of the strategic spacing of its nearly three million hairs. The hairs cover the insect's eyes and entire body in various densities that allow efficient cleaning and transport.

The research found that the gap between each eye hair is approximately the same size as a grain of dandelion pollen, which is typically collected by bees. This keeps the pollen suspended above the eye and allows the forelegs to comb through and collect the particles. The legs are much hairier and the hair is very densely packed -- five times denser than the hair on the eyes. This helps the legs collect as much pollen as possible with each swipe. Once the forelegs are sufficiently scrubbed and cleaned by the other legs and the mouth, they return to the eyes and continue the process until the eyes are free of pollen.

The Georgia Tech team tethered bees and used high speed cameras to create the first quantified study of the honey bee cleaning process. They watched as the insects were able to remove up to 15,000 particles from their bodies in three minutes.

"Without these hairs and their specialized spacing, it would be almost impossible for a honey bee to stay clean," said Guillermo Amador, who led the study while pursuing his doctoral degree at Georgia Tech in mechanical engineering.

This was evident when Amador and the team created a robotic honey bee leg to swipe pollen-covered eyes. When they covered the leg with wax, the smooth, hairless leg gathered four times less pollen. The high-speed videos also revealed something else.

"Bees have a preprogrammed cleaning routine that doesn't vary," said Marguerite Matherne, a Ph.D. student in the George W. Woodruff School of Mechanical Engineering. "Even if they're not very dirty in the first place, bees always swipe their eyes a dozen times, six times per leg. The first swipe is the most efficient, and they never have to brush the same area of the eye twice."

The research also found that pollenkitt, the sticky, viscous fluid found on the surface of pollen grains, is essential. When the fluid was removed from pollen during experiments, bees accumulated half as much

"If we can start learning from natural pollinators, maybe we can create artificial pollinators to take stress off of bees," said David Hu, a professor in the Woodruff School of Mechanical Engineering and School of Biological Sciences. "Our findings may also be used to create mechanical designs that help keep micro and nanostructured surfaces clean."

The study, "Honey bee hairs and pollenkitt are essential for pollen capture and removal," is published in the journal Bioinspiration and Biomimetics.



MEDIA STATEMENT

Friday 17 March 2017

NEW HONEY BEE RESEARCH CENTRE TO CREATE A BUZZ

A new Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) led by The University of Western Australia will provide a much-needed boost to Australia's valuable, but largely untapped honey bee products, by bringing together both industry and academic expertise from across Australia.

Dr Liz Barbour, from UWA's Office of Research Enterprise, said the CRC for Honey Bee Products would resolve current industry problems that limited the value and expansion of the Australian honey bee products industry. Products include honey, beeswax, pollen, royal jelly, venom and honey bee export.

"At present, honey bee product value is estimated at \$125 million," Dr Barbour said.

"What is often overlooked is that 44 of our food crops wholly or in part rely on honey bee pollination which adds an additional farm gate value of \$6.5 billion. With the new Australian focus of fine food export, healthy bees are an essential ingredient for success."

"The low price of most honey bee products from Australia doesn't reflect their unique and pure qualities,"

"Australia, especially Western Australia, has one of the healthiest honey bee populations in the world so no antibiotics or chemicals from bee husbandry contaminate the products. Whilst Australia is surrounded by bee diseases, through our quarantine efforts, the worst (including the sucking mite, Varroa) have not yet reached our shores."

Bee disease is a big threat to Australia's agricultural production.

"If a major bee disease arrived in Australia, there would be a 26 per cent decline in national agricultural production, which equates to a consumer surplus loss of between \$12.4 billion and \$27.2 billion," Dr Barbour said.

Australia currently has 500,000 bee hives but needs 750,000 to qualify for pollination service security. Dr Barbour said the CRC for Honey Bee Products would provide pollination security by increasing the value of the industry to attract and train new professional beekeepers and increase the number of hives.

The marketing success of New Zealand's Manuka honey from a *Leptospermum* species is an approach that will be pursued within this CRC. Whilst New Zealand has one *Leptospermum* species, in Australia we have an additional 80 others. Already Dr Peter Brook's research team from the University of the Sunshine Coast, as part of a larger Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation project, has identified unique Australian Manuka honeys that will be further developed within this CRC. This, together with other Australian endemic flora, opens many opportunities to add value to the honey bee products, and create new hive sites.

"Honey bee product value and production is directly related to the quality and extent of hive sites," Dr Barbour said.

"Through gathering critical data, using GIS (a computer system used to capture and display data) and economic expertise, the CRC will value hive sites for both product quality and impact on bee health." This information will develop a 'bee credit' which in unison with the 'carbon credit' will give new found value to native bush sites and support their conservation.

"New product management systems from site to product, will equip a new era of high value beekeeping," Dr Barbour said.

The CRC will align with Australia's 'clean and green' marketing focus and will be supported by the development of a chain of custody from bush to product that becomes core to the training and education of stakeholders to protect the brand. Documentation of procedures together with nationally approved chemical and anti-microbial property analyses at critical stages will provide assurance of purity and product health activity.

Dr Barbour said honey bee disease-resistance is a complex issue.

"Claims have been made that Australia's honey bee population has little resistance to foreign diseases. If true, any disease invasion would be catastrophic," she said.

"The CRC will develop a research network with the US, China and Europe so that international research identifying bee disease genetic markers can be integrated into the Australian honey bee population. This together with providing bee health resilience will provide a bee disease insurance policy to address this major global threat to the industry."

REGULATION OF AUSTRALIAN AGRICULTURE

The Productivity Commission has just released its report into the Regulation of Australian Agriculture. AHBIC had put in its submission back in February 2016.

The report can be found at

<http://www.pc.gov.au/inquiries/completed/agriculture/report/agriculture.pdf>

VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS FOR 2016-2017 GRATEFULLY RECEIVED

AUSTRALIAN HONEY BEE INDUSTRY COUNCIL INC (AHBIC)

ABN: 63 939 614 424



PO Box 4253
Raceview Qld 4305

Phone: (07) 5467 2265
Email: ahbic@honeybee.org.au

CONTRIBUTION DETAILS

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 indicate **YES** or **NO**

1. Please publicise my name (as a contributor) on the front of the AHBIC Newsletter
2. I would like to receive the AHBIC Annual Report
3. Please acknowledge this voluntary contribution with a receipt (email preferred)

1.	_____
2.	_____
3.	_____

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

CHEQUE \$

DIRECT DEPOSIT: \$.....

**Please return this form to AHBIC - by post or email
so your contribution can be recorded correctly**

When paying by Direct Deposit please -

- ♦ quote your Name as the Reference
- ♦ email your details (as above) to ahbic@honeybee.org.au

Account Name: Australian Honey Bee Industry Council Inc

Bank: Bendigo Bank

BSB: 633 000

Account No: 150 976 405



Thank you for supporting AHBIC to continue supporting your industry at a national level.
It is gratefully appreciated.