



AUSTRALIAN HONEY BEE INDUSTRY COUNCIL INC.

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Monthly News August 2021

Enjoy reading this newsletter and learning about our work on behalf of your honey bee industry?
If you haven't already become a Friend of AHBIC, we welcome you coming on board to help us!

CONTRIBUTE HERE

Or use the form on the last page

Supporting Australia's national beekeeping industry that supports you



Photo Credit – Ruge Honey, Hives arriving for Almond pollination

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AUSTRALIAN HONEYBEE INDUSTRY COUNCIL INC



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The Australian Honey Bee Industry Council (AHBIC)
is the peak industry body for the Australian beekeeping industry
working for all within our industry including
honey producers, honey packers, pollinators, queen bee breeders, equipment manufacturers/suppliers

The following list recognises contributions received for the last 12 months.
A number of generous contributors wish to remain anonymous. We encourage beekeepers to support those
packers, queen bee breeders, equipment manufacturers/suppliers who contribute to AHBIC.
Thank you to all our contributors & supporters. AHBIC appreciates your generous & ongoing support.

Friends of AHBIC – Voluntary Contributions

PLATINUM PLUS (0)

PLATINUM (2)

Beechworth Honey Enterprises P/L
Hive & Wellness Australia P/L

GOLD PLUS (10)

Almond Board of Australia
Australian Honey Products P/L
Baker Beekeeping P/L
Beekeeping Australia P/L
Bega Cheese Limited
Goldfield Honey Australia P/L
Lauberts, Ugis
New South Wales Apiarists
Association
Sterling Kershaw & Co
Woolworths

GOLD (11)

Australian Queen Bee Line P/L
Amateur Beekeepers Assoc. NSW
Browns Bees Australia P/L
Cotton, Allan & Michelle
Hampel, SJ & SM
Jack Bricknell
McDonald Honey
Mid Western Fresh Honey
Riverina Beekeeping Supplies P/L
Weerona Apiaries
Woolfe, BD & CA
Zadow, IM & MJ

SILVER (25)

Australian Manuka Honey
Association Ltd
Australian Quality Honey (Blue
Hills Honey)
Barnes Apiaries
Bees Neez Apiaries
Boyd Apiaries P/L
Cooper, Casey
Desert Breeze Honey
Eastburn, Murray & Sandy

ECROTEK

Gells' Honey Maryborough
Hooper Honey (Ben Hooper)
Kuyan Apiaries
Le Feuvre, Danny
Manukalife Pty Ltd
McDonald, Eileen & Bob
Michie, Robert & Raelene
Nuplas P/L
Pavy, Rod
Porter, ML & DJ
R. Stephens Apiaries
Ruge Honey
South Australian Apiarists
Association
Victorian Recreational Beekeepers
Association
Warral Apiaries P/L
Wilson, Colin

BRONZE (14)

Archibald Honey P/L
Arkadiieff, Murray
Australian Honeybee P/L
Clarke, RK & KM
Cunial Beekeeping P/L
G&A Apiaries
Hampson, Terry (Daybreak Apiaries)
Heritage Honey (P. Norris)
Holscher, Luke
Ipswich & West Moreton
Beekeepers
Lutze, Brett & Lynda
Masters, Neil & Sharon
Targett, Stephen
The House of Honey

COPPER (30)

AB's Honey
Australian Honey.com
Ballarat Regional Beekeepers
Bee all Natural
Bayside Beekeepers Assoc.
Carpenter, Ian
Clarke, Michael
Cooper, Barry
De Jong, Wim
Frost, Liz
Godman, Phil
Griffin, Vic
Gustare Honey Australia P/L
Honey in the Garden
Hoskinson, HL & HM
Hum Honey
JBR Bees
Jordan, Corinne
Kennett Apiaries (SA) P/L
Mew, Peter
Moran, Jessica
Nairn, Mal
Nobbs, Courtney
Northside Beekeepers Assoc.
Petratos, Aris
Sedgwick, Peter (Honeyworks P/L)
Stokes, Peter
Trigg, Margaret
Weatherhead, Trevor & Marion
Wilson, Luke

OTHER (7)

Copier, Aaron
De Broun, Pauline
Drake, Liam
Kassebaum Christopher
Honeylife Australia
Rasmussen, Ivan
Shaw, Robert

NON-PUBLISHED Value (26)

Australian Virtual Hobby
Beekeepers Conference 2020
Bec's BeeHive Beekeeping
Supplies
Brenton, Daryl
Evans, Trevor & Faye
Faithfull, Mark
Geelong Beekeepers
Gibson, David lee
Gilbert, Martin & Lorraine
Gold Coast Regional Beekeepers
Gold Amateur Beekeeping Society
Honey Australia P/L
Hampton, Tom
Hivekeepers
Lewis, Peter
Matsen, Jeff
McCormick Jenny
Moggill Honey
Mumford, Dave & Wendy
Naicol P/L
Sorensen, Glen & Trevor
Southern Truck Centre
Tabulam Real Honey
The Tasmanian Honey Company
WA Pure Honey
Watson, Jim

Did you expect your name to
be listed here?
Please check your emails for a
message from AHBIC inviting
you to renew your
contribution (AHBIC emails
often end up in spam) or feel
free to email [Helen Goodall](mailto:Helen.Goodall@ahbic.org.au).

NEWS FROM THE CHAIR, Trevor Weatherhead AM



1. As I write this most hives will have been removed from the almond pollination. Another successful year. The National Working Group that met regularly to make sure that beekeepers were able to get their hives in and out of the almonds without having to quarantine has functioned well. It consists of representatives from the State beekeeping associations, AHBIC, State Department representatives, Almond Board of Australia and brokers.

I would like to thank all those who participated in the working group. A good example of how our industry can achieve things when we all work together.

I am sure that those beekeepers who took hives to the almonds would say thanks to those who put in the effort to make sure that all went well.

2. With the Proof of Freedom stage being achieved in the National Varroa Mite Eradication Program (NVMEP) it meant that collecting and examination of rainbow bee eater pellets would not be carried out anymore. As explained further in this newsletter this is a very valuable tool in checking for the presence of Asian bees who may be carrying Varroa.

AHBIC consulted with Plant Health Australia (PHA) about whether a variation to the contract with the Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (QDAF) was possible so that the collection and examination of rainbow bee eater pellets could continue as part of the National Bee Pest Surveillance Program (NBPSPP). I am pleased to report that this has been achieved and as well as the collection and examination of the pellets there will also be ballooning to check for the presence of Asian bee drones.

AHBIC thanks PHA and QDAF for making this work.

3. There are a lot of reports around about how our beekeeping industry is aging. Is this the case?

In the rounds of conferences that I was able to attend it was pleasing to see the number of younger beekeepers present. I wonder if the way statistics are collected do not really reflect the current age of our industry. Think about it. If there is a father and sons/s beekeeping operation usually the age of the beekeeper is the father. So naturally the figures show up an older population. The question is how do we collect data that also reflects these situations where the business will be carried on by the son/s?

4. A report has gone out to the AHBIC Council members and secretaries of the AHBIC member bodies on consultation on the "Final Report of the Independent Review of the Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Regulatory System in Australia". Steve Targett and I took part. Unfortunately only two (2) reps from AHBIC were allowed. We raised several issues which will need to be followed up on. The correct use and labelling of chemicals is a continuing task that AHBIC has to undertake.



NOTE FROM CEO, Helen Goodall

AHBIC invests considerable resources into managing the levy income on behalf of industry to fund honey bee research, biosecurity and honey residue testing. Biosecurity is one of the priorities for AHBIC and we continue to work at a national level to protect the Australian honey bee industry. So much of the work happens behind the scenes and we often do not see the results. However, please see an update from the Chair, Trevor Weatherhead on the National Varroa Mite Eradication Program on page 6. Biosecurity is everyone's responsibility, so please be reminded that the Biosecurity Beekeepers online course is a free course for all beekeepers. The Biosecurity Beekeepers course is delivered by Plant Health Australia through funding from state and territory governments and AHBIC.

<https://beeaware.org.au/training/>

Following several news articles reporting deaths of bee colonies in New Zealand and the cause of death not being identified, AHBIC was quick to contact the Head of Biosecurity, Andrew Tongue at the Department of Agriculture, Water and Environment. We outlined our concerns and requested immediate action as it was a potential biosecurity risk to our beekeeping industry in Australia. There have been several updates and as of the 16 August 2021 Andrew Tongue has confirmed: *the most recent discussions with New Zealand's Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) was that the recent colony losses were varroa and pesticide-related; there is no indication of a new or emerging threat. When MPI receives notification of significant losses, these are investigated to a point of diagnosis. MPI also conducts routine surveillance and research as part of their ongoing biosecurity activities.*

As is well known the Australian Manuka Honey Association (AMHA) is currently in a legal battle with New Zealand to maintain the right for Australia to continue to use the term 'manuka'. AHBIC have kept updated on the situation and supported the AMHA as required. For your information the most recent occurrence is the Manuka Honey Appellation Society (MHAS) in New Zealand has appealed the Intellectual Property granted to an individual beekeeper in Australia for use of the word 'manuka'. This now requires the individual beekeeper to fight this appeal. Further updates will be provided on how this can be supported.

Save the date
4th Australian Bee Congress
8-11 June 2022
Rosehill Racecourse
Sydney NSW 2142
Australia
Sponsorship and Trade Exhibition
Prospectus being launched soon



The 4th Australian Bee Congress - Celebrating Honey Bees At the heart of a healthy Australia

The AHBIC Congress sub-committee is working hard on planning for the 4th Australian Bee Congress. There have been some delays due to the current COVID restrictions.

In September we will be able to announce the launch date of the Sponsorship and Trade Exhibition Prospectus.

WE DID IT

Australia is one of the few places in the world to successfully eradicate the Varroa mite. The National Management Group (NMG) has declared that the *Varroa jacobsoni* incursion in Townsville has been eradicated and we are now free of this pest in Townsville.

My mind goes back to May 2016 when I received a call from the Federal Department of Agriculture asking if I could go down to the quarantine office at Eagle Farm in Brisbane to look at combs from an Asian bee nest that had been found in a container rack in the port of Townsville and had been identified as also having *Varroa jacobsoni* on the bees.

Examining the comb I could see that it was old and, as the container had been there for about 2 years, it was obvious it could be up to 2 years old.

As AHBIC is the signatory to the Emergency Plant Pest Response Deed (EPPRD) we were part of the Consultative Committee on Emergency Plant Pest (CCEPP) which met to consider the response to the incursion. An eradication plan was developed and put in place. This incursion was officially declared to be eradicated by the NMG on 1 July 2020.

Whilst the eradication program for the 2016 incursion was being enacted, there were two other separate incursions from unrelated Asian bees found at the port of Townsville and these also had *Varroa jacobsoni* on the bees. These were in May 2019 and April 2020. Examination of the comb showed that these had not been there for long before they were discovered.



Photo: DAWE 2016 nest

An eradication plan was put in place for the May 2019 incursion and then extended to account for the April 2020 incursion.

In August 2021 these two incursions were declared eradicated.

Over the five years that the eradication plans were in place the major reason for the successful eradication of the Varroa mite was the dedication of the staff that were part of the eradication program. From the manager down to those out walking the streets looking for bees, they all put in the hard yards and industry says thank you for your efforts and professionalism.

Over the time there were many other factors that also led to the successful eradication.

After the agreement to the eradication plan in 2016, AHBIC organised and paid for beekeeper volunteers to go to Townsville to help out with the program. Initially the main emphasis for the volunteers was to train the local beekeepers in how to conduct sugar shakes, alcohol washes and drone uncapping to check for Varroa. Thanks to those volunteers for their work. Also there were bottom boards put on hives that allowed for sticky mats to be put in when the acaricides strips were put in the hive and the volunteers were able to do this work. As it had been reasoned from the beginning that *Varroa jacobsoni* would probably not be reproducing on the honey bees the same way as *Varroa destructor* does, then it was vital that local hives be tested on a regular basis. The experience from Papua New Guinea was that it took up to 20 years before *Varroa jacobsoni* learnt how to reproduce on honey bees. So no destruction of hives was carried out but monitoring was vital. There was no movement of hives allowed out of the Townsville City Council area.



Photo: Author Teaching local beekeepers how to use the sugar shake method of mite detection

Whilst getting out and looking at flowering plants for Asian bees, the host of the Varroa, was to the forefront, the response from the communication with the public was a crucial role in finding the nests of the Asian bees, particularly in the 2016 incursion. The majority of nests found subsequent to the 2016 incursion were from reports from the public.

Many different tools were used. The main one was the gathering of regurgitated pellets from the rainbow bee eater bird, *Merops ornatus*. This method had been developed in 1998 by Dr. Glen Bellis from Darwin when we had the Asian bee incursion in Darwin. It proved crucial in detecting the April 2020 incursion when undigested wings of the Asian bees were found in the collected pellets and alerted staff to the presence of Asian bees that had not been seen out foraging on flow



Photo: Peter Bray Rainbow bee eater bird

Putting up a helium balloon with queen bee pheromone attached attracted drones of Asian bees. This was developed from work by Dr. Ros Gloag in Cairns.

Beelining also played a vital role. This had been developed in the 1990's from the initial work by the late Dr. David Banks, Barbara Waterhouse and Judy Grimshaw. This method was refined during the unsuccessful eradication attempt on the Asian bees in the Cairns area starting around 2010.

I estimate that around \$5 million was spent on the three incursions.

Over the 5 years the affected parties have been:-

- Almond Board of Australia
- Apple and Pear Australia
- Australian Lychee Growers Association
- Australian Macadamia Society
- Australian Mango Industry Association
- Australian Melon Association
- AUSVEG
- Avocados Australia
- Canned Fruit Industry Council of Australia
- Cherry Growers of Australia
- Grain Producers Australia
- Raspberries and Blackberries Australia
- Strawberries Australia
- Summerfruit Australia
- All State Governments
- Federal Government



Photo: Author Using helium balloon to attract Asian bee drones

AHBIC thanks the contribution of these industries to the eradication program.

So overall a successful eradication program. Work is being carried out to look at the pathways of Asian bees coming into Townsville so that incursions of the Asian bee, particularly when it is carrying the Varroa mite, can be prevented.

Trevor Weatherhead AM

APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR TO THE AGRIFUTURES - Honey Bee and Pollination Advisory Panel

It is with great pleasure that I can advise that Associate Professor Ben Oldroyd has been appointed as Chair of the Honey Bee and Pollination Advisory Panel at AgriFutures to replace Dr. Doug Somerville.

Ben is currently overseas but will be back soon to take up the position. In the meantime, as most are in lockdown, Ben will be able to join the virtual meetings that the Panel conducts.



Ben has been associated with the beekeeping industry for a long time. I first met Ben at the Hawkesbury Agricultural College back in 1982 when I was doing a queen bee AI course there and Ben was doing his PhD.

Ben spent time working for the Victorian State Government Agriculture Department but most would know him for his work at Sydney University. Here his love for genetics meant he was able to help our industry in doing DNA work on the various Asian bee incursions we had in north Queensland.

Ben would be familiar to many beekeepers due to his presentations at various beekeeping conferences over the years on a variety of topics. His uncanny ability to make complex subjects, such as genetics, easy to follow, interesting and always with a touch of humour was appreciated by all who heard him.

Ben was presented with the Goodacre Memorial Award at the 2018 3rd Australian Bee Congress held on the Gold Coast.

AHBIC looks forward to working with Ben. AHBIC also thanks Dr. Diana Leemon who took on the role of Acting Chair during the time the Chair position was vacant and did an excellent job.

Trevor Weatherhead AM



HEAR FROM OUR MEMBER – Bee Industry Council of Western Australia

After a short break in July, the new beekeeping season is well underway with an excellent wildflower honey flow in the North. With so much canola in the ground and growing well, the bees will be building up strong for a great season ahead.

In July, the BICWA board met, finalising the Draft Constitution allowing three different memberships - Beekeeper members, Alliance Partners and Friends of BICWA. The Draft Constitution is getting checked at the moment by our legal advisor, before we start consulting our member organisations for feedback. We expect this to happen in September/October. We have also decided to build subcommittees within the BICWA structure for a more efficient and professional organisation moving forward. See below our new operational structure with contact details. Thank you to all board members and advisors for their fantastic team effort.

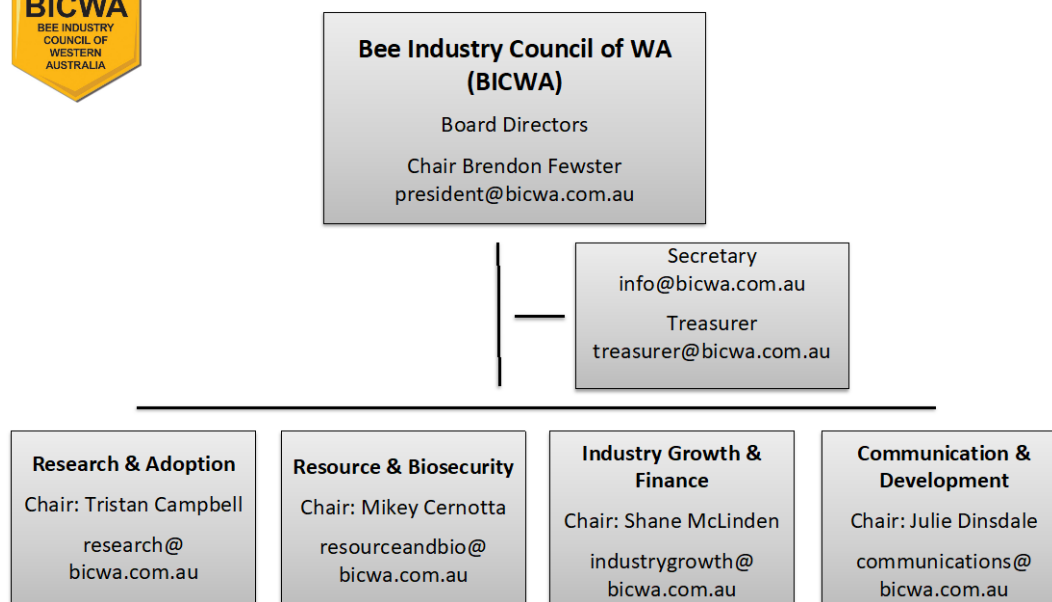
BICWA met with DPIRD in August to discuss industry needs and possible funding options for an additional Biosecurity Officer doing prevention, control and compliance work. At the moment, WA receives a 0.3 FTE supported through the honey levy paid to Plant Health Australia, another 1.7 FTE is financed by DPIRD. We continue to liaise with stakeholders and Government agencies and check the possibility to engage an Industry BBO.

DBCA has invited BICWA to discuss next seasons (2022/23) prescribed fire plan. The BICWA board will start liaising with its members for input and locations of concerns. We appreciate DBCAs invite and look forward for a positive outcome.

Until next month – stay calm and keep working!



Operational Structure 08.2021



BICWA member organisations:
Western Australian Apirists' Society (WAAS)
The Western Australian Bee Association (WABA)
WA Farmers Beekeepers (WA F Beekeepers)

Contact: info@bicwa.com.au
BICWA, PO Box 556, Belmont WA 6984

SCHOLARSHIPS

- [Applications open](#) for Women's Leadership Development: Horticulture Sector. Scholarships grants are co-funded by Hort Innovation and Women & Leadership Australia.

PUBLICATIONS AND RESOURCES

- AgriFutures Australia provides access to a wide range of publications designed to help inform decisions made by Australian rural industries, and to contribute to policy debate on rural issues of national and international significance. Please click [here](#) for recent publications for the honey bee and pollination industry. Including:
 - [Fungicides-and-bees-in-canola](#)
 - [Fungicides-and-bees-in-almonds](#)
 - [Progressing-implementation-of-genetic-selection-in-australian-honey-bees](#)
- Farmers, researchers and businesses can now see levy funded research from all the Research and Development Corporations in one location. Please visit growAG.com

EXTENSIONAUS

- Ensure you make the most of these informative [extensionaus -professional beekeepers](#) resources.

EXPORT UPDATES

- Market Access advice 2021-10: European Union (EU): Dairy, fish, honey and edible non-prescribed goods: Extension period for new export certification. The European Union has extended the deadline for transition to their new export certification for edible products from 21 August 2021 to 15 January 2022. Please click [here](#) for further information.
- Notification Revision of the Specifications and Standards for Foods, Food Additives, Etc. under the Food Sanitation Act (Revision of agricultural chemical residue standards) for [Japan](#)
- Packaging of honey bees for export to Monaco [Bees honey breeder | Monaco | Micor \(agriculture.gov.au\)](#)



ARE YOU A BEEKEEPER IMPACTED BY DROUGHT, BUSHFIRE AND FLOOD
The following support is available nationally through Hive Aid - funded by Rural Aid:

1 x \$500 country card (pre-paid Visa card) Financial assistance to pay or pre-pay bills to the value of \$1000

HOW TO REGISTER

All impacted beekeepers, listed as primary producers, are encouraged to register for assistance via:

<https://faa.ruralaid.org.au/farmer-registration>

When registering for assistance, please ensure you indicate you are a beekeeper. All applications are treated with strict confidentiality by Rural Aid.

B-QUAL

Make sure you sign up to B-QUAL – an important quality assurance system! Click [here](#) for more information.



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for quality
and hygiene



www.bqual.com.au

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Friends of AHBIC Voluntary Contribution

Please, help us help you and our industry!

Please complete this form and return by email to finance@honeybee.org.au or PO Box 42 Jamison Centre, Macquarie ACT 2614

Friend Category	Investment	Friend Category	Investment
Platinum Plus	\$60,000 & above	Silver	\$1,000 - \$1,999
Platinum	\$20,000 - \$59,999	Bronze	\$500 - \$999
Gold Plus	\$5,000 - \$19,999	Copper	\$100 - \$499
Gold	\$2,000 - \$4,999	Other	\$0 - \$99

Contribution Details

Name:

Address:

.....State.....Postcode.....

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

Phone: Date:

Payment Method

Amount: \$.....

1. EFT Deposit (preferred payment method)

Account Name: Australian Honey Bee Industry Council Inc

Bank: Bendigo Bank

BSB: 633 000

Account No: 150 976 405

Reference: Please include your NAME as the reference

2. CHEQUE: Please post cheque with this form to PO Box 42 Jamison Centre Macquarie ACT 2614

3. CREDIT CARD: Online at <https://honeybee.org.au/friends-of-ahbic-voluntary-contribution/>

Please circle YES/NO to the following:

1. The AHBIC newsletter lists contributors

i. Publish your name YES / NO

ii. Publish the contribution amount YES / NO

2. I would like to receive a copy of the monthly newsletter YES / NO

Your contribution is gratefully appreciated, thank you