



AUSTRALIAN HONEY BEE INDUSTRY COUNCIL INC.

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Monthly News August/September 2020

*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



Canola crop in NSW. Photo credit – Therese Kershaw

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CONTENTS

Page 3	Acknowledging our Friends of AHBIC
Page 4	News from the Chair Trevor Weatherhead
Page 5	Note from CEO Helen Goodall
Page 6	National Varroa Mite Eradication Program update
Page 7	Apimondia update
Page 8	Hear from state/member associations
Page 9	Hive Aid update
Page 10	Publications and Resources
Page 10	Scholarships and Programs
Page 10	General News and Links – Australia
Page 10	ExtensionAUS
Page 11	B-QUAL
Page 12	Friends of AHBIC Voluntary Contribution Form

A special thank you to our ongoing Friends of AHBIC and our recent new Friends of AHBIC!

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 (7)

Australian Honey Products P/L
Baker Beekeeping P/L
Beekeeping Australia P/L
Bega Cheese Limited
Goldfield Honey Australia P/L
Sterling Kershaw & Co
Almond Board of Australia

GOLD (10)

Australian Queen Bee Line P/L
Amateur Beekeepers Assoc. NSW
Browns Bees Australia P/L
Cotton, Allan & Michelle
Hampel, SJ & SM
NSW Apiarist Association
McDonald Honey
Weerona Apiaries
Woolfe, BD & CA
Zadow, IM & MJ

SILVER (22)

Australian Quality Honey (Blue
Hills Honey)
Barnes Apiaries
Bees Neez Apiaries
Brenton, Daryl
Boyd Apiaries P/L
Cooper, Casey
Desert Breeze Honey
Eastburn, Murray & Sandy
Gells' Honey Maryborough
Hooper Honey (Ben Hooper)
Kuyan Apiaries
Le Feuvre, Danny
McDonald, Bob & Eileen
Michie, Robert & Raelene
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 (11)

Australian Honeybee P/L
Clarke, RK & KM
Cunial Beekeeping P/L
Hampson, Terry (Daybreak Apiaries)
Heritage Honey (P. Norris)
Holscher, Luke
Ipswich & West Moreton
Beekeepers
Lutze, Brett & Lynda
Masters, Neil
Mumford, Dave & Wendy
Targett, Stephen

COPPER (23)

AB's Honey
Ballarat Regional Beekeepers
Berry, Jessica
Bayside Beekeepers Assoc.
Clarke, Michael
Cooper, Barry
Frost, Liz
Gustare Honey Australia
Honey in the Garden
Hoskinson, HL & HM
Hum Honey
JBR Bees
Jordan, Corinne
Kennett Apiaries (SA) P/L
MacGibbon, Kevin
Nairn, Mal
Northside Beekeepers Assoc.
Petratos, Aris
Sedgwick, Peter (Honeyworks P/L)
Stokes, Peter
Trigg, Margaret
Weatherhead, Trevor & Marion
Wilson, Luke

OTHER (3)

De Broun, Pauline
Honeylife Australia
Shaw, Robert

NON-PUBLISHED Value (17)

Australian Women in Beekeeping
Australian Virtual Hobby
Beekeepers Conference 2020
Bec's BeeHive Beekeeping
Supplies
BeelInventive (Flow)
Ecrotek
Evans, Trevor & Faye
Faithful, Mark
Gibson, David lee
Gilbert, Martin & Lorraine
Gold Coast Regional Beekeepers
Hampton, Tom
Leemon, Diana
Lewis, Peter
Matsen, Jeff
Naicol Pty Ltd
WA Pure Honey
Watson, Jim

ANONYMOUS (12)

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

Are you supporting AHBIC?

There is still some confusion out there about how to support AHBIC financially. There is the mistaken belief that the honey levy, which is a statutory levy, somehow finds its way to AHBIC. This is not true. AHBIC is funded only by voluntary contributions from beekeepers, honey packers and some others who want to support the work that AHBIC does. I would like to thank those who do support AHBIC financially. You will see a list of them in this newsletter. There are a few who are also financially supporting AHBIC but don't want their name published and we respect this. Thanks also to them.

AHBIC does work on behalf of the whole industry. A lot of beekeepers who do not financially support AHBIC benefit and some even ask AHBIC to do work on their behalf. Some issues that come to mind are those wanting foreign workers and those challenging the New Zealand effort to trademark manuka.

Most State Associations are in the same boat where beekeepers benefit from their work but many are not members. The recent work that has been done to make sure that beekeepers and those associated with the almond pollination were able to get hives in and out of almonds is a classic example of how beekeepers benefitted by the work of the national working group, in particular the work done by the State Associations. Some beekeepers complained to AHBIC that they were not receiving information about border permits and when asked if they were a member of their State Association they said no as they did not want to pay the membership fees. The membership fees are a small price to pay for the amount of work that was done on their behalf to get their hives in and out of almond pollination.

So how about becoming a Friend of AHBIC and make a financial contribution and also join up with your State Association.

As you read this most hives will now have come out of the almonds. Another successful year of pollination. So when you are munching on an almond think of the bees that made this possible. The national working group to assist in the movement of bees in and out of almond pollination has met 8 times and has been a very good initiative. It has allowed all parties i.e. beekeepers, State Associations, Government officers and brokers to come together. Thank you to all those involved and in particular Brett Harrison, from the Victorian Department, for making this possible.

After the bush fires and the drought conditions, beekeepers were concerned that they may not be able to get their hives up to strength to be able to pollinate the almonds. With support by way of sugar and protein supplements supplied by the various State Governments and the skill and tenacity of the beekeepers, the hive strength was acceptable. The number of hives required was down about 5% but this is an excellent result when you look back at the hardships the beekeepers endured.

Despite a few hiccups with Government changing permit criteria overnight, the movement of the hives across the State borders went well. The two border crossings between New South Wales and Victoria that were used, Tooleybuc and Euston, were negotiated without incident due to prior conversations with the staff involved.

With the border restrictions that have been put in place due to Covid-19, the State Associations have been doing an excellent job in making sure that beekeepers are able to move across the borders. From the Federal perspective the Agriculture Minister has been charged with developing a national agricultural policy for the movement of farmers and workers across State borders. AHBIC has been in contact with the Minister on this issue and hopefully a national policy will come out of this.

Michael Clarke has prepared a document on the response to the bush fires. It can be seen at https://www.agrifutures.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/20-057_digital.pdf and a summary at <https://www.agrifutures.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/20-063.pdf> This has been sent to Minister Littleproud and a meeting will be held with the Minister this coming week.

So finally, I would urge you to become a Friend of AHBIC and contribute financially if you are not already doing so.



NOTE FROM CEO, Helen Goodall

How quickly the landscape changes. When I look at the newsletter cover photos from a few months ago and then the one on this cover, the landscape is looking hugely different in some regions. While there has been rain in many areas providing good spring crops, the impact of the bush fires and the losses still require action to be taken to rebuild the honey bee industry. AHBIC is advocating on a national level, with the support of the state associations working with state governments. Over the coming weeks it expected there will be some media coverage. You can view an interview with Trevor Weatherhead by [clicking here](#). There is also an news article with [SA Country Hour](#).

AHBIC does invest 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 honey bee industry. You can find an update in this newsletter from our Chair, Trevor Weatherhead on the National Varroa Mite Eradication Program, keeping you informed of the work that happens often behind the scenes to keep Australia free of Varroa Mite. You can also find a [communiqué](#) from the National Management Group (NMG) for the Eradication of Varroa jacobsoni.

AHBIC is campaigning to stop the use of imported beeswax. We ask that you help spread the word. Australian beeswax is pure and needs to stay that way. Buy only Australian beeswax to protect our industry and use only Australian beeswax for your own wellbeing. The full article can be found [here](#).

Recently AHBIC has meet and written to the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade reaffirming our position of having a zero tariff on honey export into the European Union (EU) and the United Kingdom (UK). Currently there is a 17.3% tariff on honey exported. When production in Australia returns to average conditions, there will more Australian honey available for exports and the EU and UK will become important markets.

You have been previously advised that in July 2020 the Biosecurity Beekeepers online [course](#) became available as a free course for all beekeepers. The course has also been recently updated. The Biosecurity Beekeepers course is delivered by Plant Health Australia through funding from state and territory governments and AHBIC. Feedback received from course registrants has been very positive:

“ I found everything I was expecting in this course and more”

“Thank you, a fantastic resource and refresher”

“I thought this course was terrific for me, as I’m just starting out I only have 2 hives. It covered everything to get me on my way and the importance of disease and how to manage a variety of issues I will be revisiting this information for sure as there seems to be a lot more involved than throwing bees in a box for a jar of honey”

“A very logically and well set out course which covered in enough detail the most relevant pests and diseases likely or possibly to be found in the hive, with clear directions for reporting such pests and diseases”

“What a great, simple course on honeybee biosecurity”

Despite the COVID-19 challenges it was great to see a successful almond pollination season. As COVID-19 restrictions continue, please remember to visit our [website](#) for any updates or contact your state associations. AHBIC has recently submitted a submission to government to include beekeepers in a National Code for Agricultural workers movement through COVID – 19 restrictions.

NATIONAL VARROA MITE ERADICATION PROGRAM UPDATE

Trevor Weatherhead AM Chair

The National Varroa Mite Eradication Program (NVMEP) is currently running in Townsville. The first Varroa jacobsoni were detected in Townsville in 2016, a response plan was enacted and this has now been declared eradicated.

The second find was in 2019 at the port of Townsville and a response plan enacted. This incursion was not genetically related to the 2016 incursion and is the subject of a current eradication program.

There was third find in 2020 at the port of Townsville and this was not genetically related to either the 2016 or 2019 incursions. As there was already a response plan in place for the 2019 incursion, that response plan was modified to encompass the 2020 incursion and this has now been approved by the National Management Group (NMG).

Since the initial finds in the 2019 and 2020 incursions no further Varroa have been detected nor have any Asian bee (Apis cerana java genotype) nests. As we know the Asian bee is the natural host for the Varroa mite.

The revised program is now in the proof of freedom stage. If there are no more detections, the proof of freedom stage will be declared on 30 April 2021. The program will then be wound up by 30 June 2021.

The current program consist of floral sweeping, aerial pheromone trapping, catch box assessments, bee lining, managed hive surveillance, investigating public reports of suspected Asian bees and examining rainbow bee eater pellets for the presence of wings. As an example of how much work is being carried out, there have been, from May 2019 to 14 May 2020, over 63,000 rainbow bee-eater pellets collected by the program and examined by an entomologist.

We have been fortunate in the last two incursion that they have been detected at the port before they were able to establish other nests in Townsville.

The Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment is undertaking a review of pathways for the Asian bee and Varroa jacobsoni entering Townsville port, to identify any potential areas that could be strengthened to further prevent Asian bee incursions. Once the document is prepared it will be available to industry and other parties for comment.

We thank the Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries staff in Townsville for their dedicated work putting in carrying out the NVMEP.



APIMONDIA UPDATE

Jodie Goldsworthy Oceania President

The global pandemic for beekeepers

It is hard to believe that it is almost 12 months since the Apimondia Congress was held in Montreal, Canada. The last 9 months have been impacted, distracted and dominated globally by the Covid 19 pandemic. Beekeepers from around the world have had their normal daily rhythms and patterns completely altered firstly by the health emergency, then resulting lockdowns, and now economic losses and crises. Thankfully though beekeepers have been allowed to go about the business of tending their hives with beekeeping recognised globally as an essential service and one that importantly underpins the agriculture and food supply system.

Despite beekeepers being able to work individual stories from beekeeping friends and colleagues around the world though are varied. Some people have relocated to less populated safer areas because they do not wish to catch the virus because the health system in their country is too underdeveloped to cope with the pandemic.

The personal stories of hardship and loss is heartbreaking in countries where healthcare is not free. Stories of massive hospital bills in the millions of dollars in the US for people who have been admitted to hospital after having lost their job, to realise that their employer paid health insurance is no longer in place, is really difficult to comprehend coming from a country like Australia where healthcare is free.

My greatest fears though are for our beekeeping friends and colleagues in developing countries. It does feel as though these countries have been abandoned to deal with the pandemic problem alone with completely inadequate resources to do so. In this context it has been difficult for the Apimondia network to continue as normal but despite this it has still been an active period for Apimondia. Global connections and networks have become moral support networks as beekeepers reach out to check in with one another from different countries around the world. This human connection is so important.

In January Apimondia released its updated Statement on Honey Fraud which was communicated to all member organisations for distribution to beekeepers at that time. A copy of the statement is available at https://www.apimondia.com/docs/apimondia_statement_on_honey_fraud_v_2.pdf

Despite the pandemic, honey fraud continues to have a negative impact on beekeepers globally and remains a strong focus of Apimondia. The US Pharmacopeia has now released a new draft standard for honey for the US which was informed through this statement.

Bees are a help - In March Dr Jeff Pettis sent a letter to all member organisations which I have copied below for beekeepers to read. It is a nice reminder of how lucky we are and how helpful our bees can be in times like these.

30 March 2020

Dear fellow beekeepers and friends,

I felt compelled to write to you when I was out visiting my bees today and realized how lucky we all are to have bees in our lives. First, I hope you and your family are safe in these trying times. I was working my bees today here in Salisbury, Maryland USA where the sun was shining and a whole field of wild mustard was in bloom. I was inspired by the bees and their determined nature to go about the work of nectar and pollen collection as the world around us is gripped in fear and isolation. How lucky we are to work with bees. Bees take us outside ourselves and give us a connection to the outside world. A chance to appreciate nature in the blooming plants and the rainfall that brings nourishment and life. When we are all going a little crazy with social distancing and isolation; bees bring us hope. Most jurisdictions recognize that bees are a vital part of agriculture and are allowing beekeepers to visit their hives even as they impose strict rules on most outside activities. Use this freedom to visit your hives as you can.

I do hope that each of you is practicing social distancing. It is the single most important thing we can do as individuals to curb the effects of this virus. I also know that many of us will suffer losses of family members and friends during the coming months. To me the saddest part of this is not the loss of life itself but the inability to grieve together as loved ones are lost. This is where bees can help. Bees allow you a chance to get away and reflect. Seek some solitude and at the

same time hope, in the determined purpose that we see in the bees as they collect pollen and nectar for an uncertain future. Yes they hoard; as a safeguard against drought or the coming of winter. This survival instinct is honed by local adaptation, to anticipate shortfalls, and try to ensure colony survival. We can learn from this.

So please take care of your family and loved ones. Take care of your bees and visit them often; if not for their needs, for your own sanity. It has never been more true; the bees don't need us, we need bees. Be thankful for all that we share in common and I hope to see many of you in Ufa, Russia in 2021 as the world returns to a new normal.

Warm regards

Jeff Pettis

Apimondia President

World Bee Day had to be converted to a small virtual event in May as a result of travel restrictions and lock downs. Despite this the day still received due focus and attention within FAO and the United Nations which is testimony to the good work of the Secretariat in Rome.

HEAR FROM STATE ASSOCIATIONS AND MEMBERS

Amateur Beekeeping Association (ABA) NSW, Vice President Sheila Stokes

The ABA continues to see a steady increase in membership, in spite of the fact that most of our clubs have been unable to hold physical meetings for over 5 months. The association supports our 29 affiliated clubs with online tools and educational materials, which have enabled many clubs to successfully run online sessions with their members. A key component of this program is the development of a network of club biosecurity officers who can deliver the current advice on bee pests and diseases to members at the local level.

NSW Apiarists Association (NSWAA), President Stephen Targett

Almond pollination has finished. A few hives are yet to leave the orchards and given the border crossing issues overall it went very smooth. Thanks to Vic DPI arranging a weekly teleconference for all industry players.

There was one serious biosecurity incident in the Griffith area. DPI is pursuing this via the biosecurity regulations.

The southern part of NSW has received good rain and prospects look good through to Christmas. Hopefully in Oct we will find out if we were successful with our Bushfire recovery grant application.

With the mild winter the pest load on crops is already high and canola has already been sprayed for aphids in some areas. Hives have already been killed by chemical sprays. We recommend that all beekeepers use BeeConnect when their hives are on farmland.

The single desk for all public land sites will be fully functional this week. This is a great step forward. Thanks go to the state government, NSW DPI and in particular Nick Geoghegan.

WA Farmers Beekeeping & Bee Industry Council of Western Australia (BIWCA) Section

WA Farmers

The WA Farmers Bees has been supportive of a new BICWA project to engage with the horticultural, broadacre sectors and especially the private and public land owners of native vegetation landholdings to develop a comprehensive state-wide improved land access and commercial pollination regime. This will be underpinned by a cloud based open and transparent mapping and site trading portal.

The project has applied for a grant from Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) to support entrepreneurs to innovate around highly selective native vegetation types as well as pollination services for the horticultural and broad acre sectors. This will be achieved by building a database of remnant native vegetation and developing an industry pollination strategy. It will help horticulture and wheatbelt farms to improve awareness of the importance of bees to broadacre pollination and the need to protect bees from agricultural chemicals.

Announcements regarding the success of the application will be announced in October.

BICWA , Chair Brendon Fewster

There has been a lot going on in the WA bee world in the last couple of months, with our re-structure in full swing, industry meetings and the grant application as mentioned in the WA Farmers Beekeeper Section Report. Good to have the bees starting a little bit later this spring. Now, spring started for most of us with the canola and coastal bush in flower. Let's hope that's the beginning of a great year.

Two workshops with all Directors, Agricultural Produce Commission and DPIRD were held over the last couple month to define Industry structure changes. I like to thank Trevor Whittington from WA Farmers for going over and above in helping us getting the wheels in motion. His guidance has been invaluable. He brought us in contact with Greg Paust and John Kargotich, who offer their support to realize the changes ahead. We thank them both for their valuable engagement.

We continued the conversation with Department of Biodiversity, Conversation and Attractions and met with Mark Webb and Jason Foster. The development of the new apiary site portal is progressing with the launch expected in December 2020. This will make the site management much more straightforward, processing time faster and provide valuable information on general conditions and historical burn data.

BICWA and WA Farmers started conversations with various groups such as the Noongar Land Enterprise, Volunteer Bushfire Group and Forest Industries WA to discuss joint issues in prescribed burning and a possible holistic approach to native forest management, and gaining access to native vegetation.

It is a great time to be in the bee industry with many significant initiatives and positivity within, and the current honey price and more pollination on offer, the future looks very exciting.

HIVE AID UPDATE

Hive Aid is a drought and bushfire relief campaign aimed specifically at struggling beekeepers. Managed by Rural Aid, one of Australia's largest rural charities. A report from Rural Aid as at 30 July on the Hive Aid program is outlined below. You can donate to Hive Aid [here](#). If you need help, register [here](#).

Aid provided from 17th December 2019 – 30th of July 2020

176 Bee keepers have registered.

Total aid delivered = \$497,091.34

Gift Card x 181 (inclusive of emergency assistance cards- valued from \$200-\$500) = \$90,000

Water requests x 5 = \$1993

\$1,500 Financial Assistance (up to \$1500 or \$1000 x 119) = \$173,873.88

\$1,500 Beekeeper Card x 157 = \$231, 224.46



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:

- Opportunities to improve access to floral resources for beekeepers on public lands [August 2020](#)

SCHOLARSHIPS AND PROGRAMS

- [Applications open](#) for Women's Leadership Development: Horticulture Sector. Scholarships grants are co-funded by Hort Innovation and Women & Leadership Australia.
- AgriFutures is supporting Farmers2Founders and their upcoming [Ideas Program](#). They are sponsoring up to four positions in the program and would love to attract applications from our innovative honey bee levy payers. The Farmers2Founders Ideas Program is designed for primary producers with fresh ideas. Over 12 weeks, the program provides funding, coaching, and more to support producers to work out if your business idea is worth pursuing.
- Nuffield Australian Farming Scholarships [Applications open](#).

GENERAL NEWS AND LINKS – AUSTRALIA

- There is a public consultation process for Country of Origin Labelling information standard 2016. [Have your say](#), submissions closing on 11 September 2020.
- Honey and children's tonsils could hold key to easing post-surgery pain for thousands. Chairperson of the Bee Industry Council of WA (BICWA) Brendon Fewster said having strong scientific evidence to support health claims would be a significant opportunity for the state's beekeepers. Read full article [here](#).
- Release of the Trade Information Service. Save time and hassle in finding importing country requirements and tariff rates for honey. A new digital service, which saves exporters time and effort searching for regulations across multiple sites, was launched on 30 June. It's called the Trade Information Service (TIS) and it enables exporters to quickly access tariff rates, import country requirements and commercial insights for honey in eight markets.

TIS has been built by Austrade, in collaboration with the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment. We encourage you to test it out by visiting [here](#) selecting a product (honey) and market of interest, and clicking on the 'Laws and Regulations' tile. We hope you find it valuable and welcome suggestions for improvement (there's a feedback function in the site).

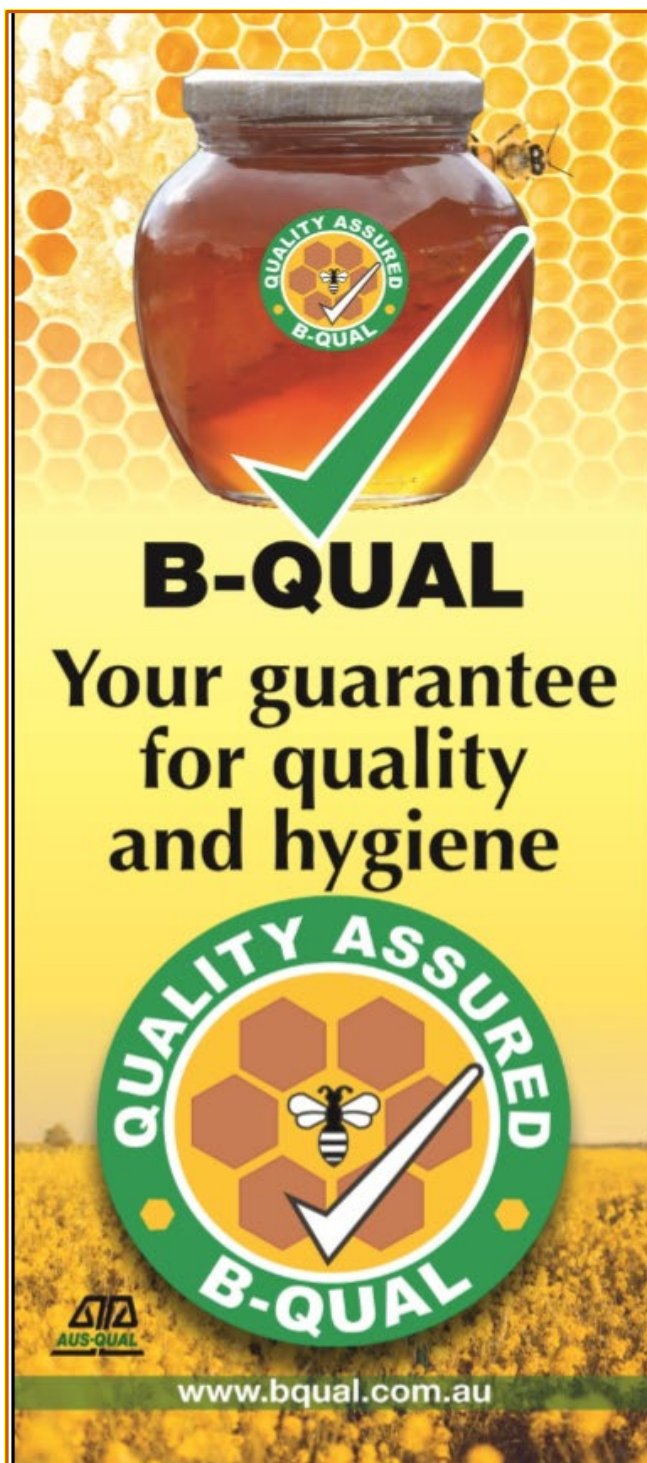
RESEARCH

- [Propolis](#) and its potential against SARS-CoV-2 infection mechanisms and COVID-19 disease. Link to the [clinical trial](#)
- Heritability estimates of the novel trait 'suppressed in ovo virus infection' in honey bees (*Apis mellifera*) www.nature.com

EXTENSIONAUS

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

- How is plan Bee different from previous [breeding-programs](#) ?



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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.