



AUSTRALIAN HONEY BEE INDUSTRY COUNCIL INC.

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AHBIC Monthly News Nov/Dec 2019

*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 at the end of this newsletter

Devastation and sorrow, thoughts are with our beekeepers who have lost hives and resources in the recent fires



Queensland fires, thanks to Jo Martin from QBA for image of Queensland fires



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2020 AGM DATES

Bee Industry Council of WA	15 May
New South Wales Apiarists Association	21-22 May, Tamworth
Tasmanian Beekeepers Association	29-30 May, Venue TBC
South Australian Apiarists Association	11-12 June, Berri Hotel, Riverland
Queensland Beekeepers Association	11-13 June, Venue TBC
Victorian Apiarists Association	2-4 July, Bendigo
Australian Queen Bee Breeders Association	
Honey Packers and Marketers Association	
National Council of Crop Pollination Associations	
Australian Honey Bee Industry Council	VAA, 5 July, Bendigo

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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 (3)

Hive & Wellness Australia Pty Ltd
Beechworth Honey Enterprises P/L
When Bee Foundation

GOLD PLUS (3)

Baker Beekeeping Pty Ltd
Australian Honey Products P/L
Sterling Kershaw & Co

GOLD (7)

Amateur Beekeepers Assoc. NSW
Cotton, Allan & Michelle
Hampel, SJ & SM
NSW Apiarist Association
Weerona Apiaries
Woolfe, BD & CA
Zadow, IM & MJ

SILVER (22)

Australian Quality Honey (Blue Hills Honey)
Bees Neez Apiaries
Boyd Apiaries Pty Ltd
Cairns District Beekeeping Assoc
Cooper, Casey
Davies Apiaries
Eastburn, Murray & Sandy
Gells' Honey Maryborough
Hampson, Terry (Daybreak Apiaries)
Hooper Honey (Ben Hooper)
Kuyan Apiaries
Le Feuvre, Danny
McDonald, Bob & Eileen
McDonald, Peter & Michelle
Mitchie, Robert & Raelene
Pavy, Rod
Porter, ML & DJ
R. Stephens Apiaries
Ruge Honey
Victorian Recreational Beekeepers Association
Warral Apiaries P/L
Victorian Recreational Beekeepers Association

BRONZE (11)

Barnes Apiaries Pty Ltd
Clarke, RK & KM
Cunial Beekeeping Pty Ltd
Heritage Honey (P. Norris)
Holscher, Luke
Ipswich & West Moreton Beekeepers
Lutze, B&L
Masters, Neil
Mumford, Dave & Wendy
Targett, Stephen
Walkabout Apiaries

COPPER (24)

AB's Honey
Ascot Veterinary Group
Ballarat Regional Beekeepers
Bee Scientifics (Jody Gerds)
Berry, Jessica
Bayside Beekeepers Assoc.
Clifford, David
Cooper, Barry
Frost, Liz
Gold Coast Amateur Beekeepers Society
Gustare Honey Australia
Hoskinson, HL & HM
Jordan, Corinne
Kennett Apiaries (SA) Pty Ltd
MacGibbon, Kevin
Nairn, Mal
Northside Beekeepers Assoc.
Petratos, Aris
Redpath's Beekeeping Supplies
Sedgwick, Peter (Honeyworks P/L)
Stokes, Peter
Trigg, Margaret
Weatherhead, Trevor & Marion
Westlands Honey Beverley WA

OTHER (3)

Davey, Robin
Honeylife Australia
Shaw, Robert

NON-PUBLISHED Value (16)

Australian Women in Beekeeping
Bec's BeeHive Beekeeping Supplies
BeelInventive (Flow)
Ecrotek
Faithful, Mark
Gilbert, Martin & Lorraine
Geelong Beekeepers Club
Gold Coast Regional Beekeepers
Hibberd, GL & HK, HSH Apiary
Leemon, Diana
Lewis, Peter
Matsen, Jeff
Moggill Honey
Naicol Pty Ltd
WA Pure Honey
Watson, Jim

ANONYMOUS (13)

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 [Sarah.Paradice](mailto:Sarah.Paradice@ahbic.org.au).

NOTE FROM CHAIR, PETER McDONALD

Many events have been happening in the past month.

Drought continues in large areas throughout Australia.

Fires have been occurring and will continue to occur throughout the summer period.

Honey Bee industry people have been banding together in different areas to assist each other in whatever way they can. Be it through contributing financially through programs such as [Hive Aid](#), sharing sites to put bees onto floral resources, sharing plant and equipment to recover from losses or just providing the support required both now and into the future to look after each other's welfare, especially the mental health of those impacted greatest. This support must continue past the immediate events as for some of the impacted people the full depth of loss may not be felt until much later as the forests take their time to recover.

Through all this activity normal operations must continue through all facets of our industry:

- Honey must be produced where possible and marketed and sold widely as Australia produces the best honey in the world.
- Pollination services must still be provided as so much of agriculture now rely on us to continue to provide quality Australia produce.
- Queens must still be produced as we have the healthiest honey bee population in the world.
- Equipment must be continued to be bought and paid for to support our supplier groups.
- Advocacy to governments for programs and services must continue as all our successes to date have been through continued and sustained advocacy.
- Management of programs already in place such as Biosecurity, Research, levy collections etc. must continue to ensure their effective and efficient delivery, and
- Planning for future events must continue.

One such future event is the 4th Australian Bee Congress. After the success of last years congress, AHBIC has decided to have another and it will be held in 2022 in NSW. Further details will be forthcoming. So start getting excited and start planning for an event that will celebrate 200 years of the Honey Bee in Australia.

With all these activities, each and every person involved in the Honey Bee industry, especially those in voluntary leadership positions, are working their hearts out to achieve not just their own personal business goals but also the aspirations for the wider Honey Bee community. I thank you all for your efforts.

A special and very big thank you to the team at Hive and Wellness for their outstanding work in getting the [Hive Aid](#) program in place with us. It is very appreciated.

Lastly, be safe, look out for your colleagues and we wish you well for the Christmas period.



NOTE FROM CEO, SARAH PARADICE

Recent months have been nothing short of horrific for our beekeepers and the agricultural industry at large with the recent fires, many of which are still burning and threatening hives and resources. Our thoughts are with all those affected by the crisis. We have dedicated a segment to the fires next in this newsletter and, along with Hive and Wellness and Rural Aid, have launched a new AHBIC endorsed fundraising campaign to provide specific help to our beekeepers. There are also some links to where beekeepers can find Government assistance so if you need help, please use these resources.

November and December have also been a busy month for meetings and other developments.

Memorandum of Understanding

Lindsay Bourke as Chair of the Tasmanian Beekeepers Association (TBA) has been in negotiations with Sustainable Timber Tasmania (STT) for the last two years or so. They have been working towards a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to recognise that both forestry and beekeeping industries are crucial for the Tasmanian economy and both can and do benefit from the resources and opportunities created by Tasmania's forests. The MOU will ensure the ongoing protection and provide maximum practical access to Leatherwood trees for beekeepers on STT managed land. The Australian Honey Bee Industry Council is also a signatory to the MOU which was signed in Tasmania on 9th November and was attended by Guy Barnett MP, Minister for Primary Industries and Water, STT CEO Steve Whiteley, TBA President Lindsay Bourke and me as CEO of AHBIC. The MOU can be found [here](#)

Tasmania is leading the nation with this collaborative initiative; it is an important achievement and acknowledges a great deal of hard work by STT and TBA. It showcases what can be achieved in other States of Australia when forestry and beekeeping industries work together for mutually beneficial, sustainable outcomes. I encourage other states to use this MOU as a blueprint where possible, it's a fantastic outcome and well done to TBA and STT! There was plenty of media around this, links below to some. Everyone was kitted up, including the cameraman! Thanks to Lindsay and Yeonsoon Bourke for hosting the event at one of their bee sites.

- Media release from Minister Barnett: [Agreement to bee the answer for leatherwood access](#)
- [Memorandum of understanding to allow Tasmanian beekeepers greater access to forest resources](#), The Advocate News by Emily Jarvie, 10 Nov
- [Agreement to bee the answer for leatherwood access](#), Tasmanian Government, 15 November
- [Leatherwood MOU](#), Tasmanian Times by Chief Editor TT, 29 November 2019



Image source: STT

And while we are talking about Lindsay and Yeonsoon Bourke, they were also fortunate to catch up with Senator the Hon Bridget McKenzie when she officially announced to deliver on the Liberal National Party election commitment of \$1.5 million of funding to fund activities to support the Australian honey bee industry and promote the crucial role honey bees play in pollination and supporting food production. See media release here: [Making a buzz about bees](#)

With the support of this grant, Agrifutures will work with the AHBIC and state associations to develop resources and raise awareness among professional beekeepers, recreational beekeepers and the public, about what they can do to help protect our honey bee pollinators. See Agrifutures news post: [Minister McKenzie making a buzz about bees](#) AHBIC will be developing a submission for Agrifutures consideration with deadlines for submission as 6th January with a presentation to the Agrifutures Honey Bee and Pollination panel on 4th February.



[Pollination industry buzzing over \\$1.5 million AgriFutures grant announcement](#), The Advocate by Emily Jarvie, 20 November 2019

Plant Health Australia Meetings

November was a busy month for Plant Health Australia (PHA) meetings. Trevor Weatherhead (AHBIC disease and quarantine committee chair), Peter McDonald and I met with PHA to continue with the National Bee Biosecurity Program review. This review process will also involve consultation with BBO's and SAG's as part of stakeholder engagement. The review will be completed in time for contract renewals to be in place for BBO's by end of June 2020.

On the 19th November, PHA held the 28th Plant Industry Forum followed by their AGM. The PHA 2019 Annual Report can be found [here](#) and I encourage you to read it. For those who produce >1,500kg of honey pa and pay levies, this is where your biosecurity levy money is managed; the team at PHA work hard on behalf of our industry. The following day PHA held the APPRD Parties Meeting followed by their 6th Members Forum. On Wednesday 21st November, Peter McDonald and Trevor Weatherhead joined in attending the National Bee Biosecurity Program steering committee meeting followed by the National Bee Pest Surveillance Program Steering Committee meeting.

Don't forget to complete PHA's 2019 bee survey which closes on 31st December. We'd love as many people as possible to participate! The results of the 2018 survey are now available online: [2018 Bee Health Survey results](#). There are some great videos to watch capturing survey highlights. The Bee Health Survey 2018 was designed to provide a snapshot of bee health in the Australian honey bee industry, focusing on issues such as pests and diseases and pollination. The survey examined the level of biosecurity awareness amongst Australian beekeepers, including knowledge of pest and disease symptoms, and the Australian Honey Bee Industry Biosecurity Code of Practice. Importantly, the results will help to decide where education and awareness activities are needed to keep Australia's bees as healthy as they can be. Thanks to Kath DeBoer and the team at PHA for all their hard work to get this completed.



Click to complete the [2019 honey bee health survey](#)

I also attended the National Biosecurity Forum which was held in Canberra on 27th November and covered a wide range of interesting topics. Senator the Hon Bridget McKenzie addressed the forum and announced the launch of a new committee, Biosecurity Futures, to provide industry intelligence, advice and ideas on biosecurity matters directly to government. See media release: [Building biosecurity cooperation](#). Minister McKenzie noted in her speech that she had learnt a great deal in the last 6 months since being appointed to the position of Minister for Agriculture about biosecurity risks such as Varroa and African Swine Fever (AFS) so it was good to be mentioned and know it is on her radar. The Minister and participants at the Forum also signed the National Biosecurity Statement which was drafted by Government and environmental/industry groups to set out Australia's vision and goals, clear roles and responsibilities, priorities and principles for managing biosecurity risk. The statement can be found here: [National Biosecurity Statement](#).

Throughout the agenda there were interesting segments on other agricultural industries but where the honey bee industry could learn or take heart that issues faced are similar to ours:

- There were panel sessions with interesting presenters but timing was tight so there was only time to hear from each panellist for 3-5 mins then time for 1-2 questions. Benjamin Wash from Fresh Care spoke, a horticultural industry owned, not-for-profit, on-farm assurance program – see link to their website [here](#)
- A segment on supply chain approach to managing integrity profiled the eNVD app for grain-fed beef supply chain. Two presenters from Coles highlighted the eNVD app which is apparently working well in the grain-fed beef supply chain: click [here](#) for more information. The app can work off-line or on-line, given cattle producers may not have internet access at the cattle yards where cattle are loaded onto trucks – similar internet issues faced by beekeepers when working remotely.
- A segment on Indigenous Staff and Community Contributions to Biosecurity in Northern Australia by Wayne See Kee noted Indigenous preference for managing the landscape including use of frequent cool burns and the importance of making the most of Indigenous people to manage biosecurity risks in Torres Strait where people are allowed to move freely without passports. Currently about 30 Indigenous people are successfully working as biosecurity officers in Torres Strait.
- A segment on Climate impacts on established and exotic biosecurity pests and diseases highlighted points confirming that climate change is occurring, the science indicates as such (Mark Howden, Australian National University Climate Change Institute). Ian Thompson's (Chief Environmental Biosecurity Officer) primary concern is that a pest/disease that is not on our radar will arrive and may behave entirely differently in Australia than it does overseas so management will be difficult. Sally Box, Threatened Species Commissioner, Department of the Environment and Energy outlined that climate change will change the ecosystem, some native species/pests/disease will thrive while others will not.
- A segment on National Priority List of Exotic Environmental Pests and Diseases – Ian Thompson and Jess Evans updated the audience on the National Priority list and the process that was followed to arrive at the list. The list is not designed to be static. Some obvious biosecurity risks missed the cut but were definitely assessed as part of the process. Link to list here: [Priority List](#) The link also outlines the process followed to arrive at the list.



Lastly, it's been a busy year marked by challenges beyond comprehension for many of our beekeepers, but we hope you can find some downtime to enjoy a peaceful Christmas break with your family and friends and re-charge the batteries.

We wish you all the very the best over these challenging times and very much look forward to working with you all in 2020.



Recent meetings attended by CEO and/or AHBIC Executive

- 6th Nov – Meeting with TBA, Sustainable Timber Tasmania re MOU, Launceston
- 6th Nov – Ian Cane and Stephen Targett to present submissions to Government, Sydney
- 10th Nov – Meeting with Minister Barnett, Lindsay Bourke & TBA, STT, media for MOU, Launceston
- 11th Nov – meeting with National Residue Survey to meet new head of NRS section
- 11th – 17th Nov – National Pollinator Week
- 13th Nov – face to face NBBP review committee meeting
- 19-20th Nov - PHA Member Meetings, Canberra
- 21st Nov – PHA face to face - NBBP and NBPSP steering committee meetings
- 27th Nov - Dept of Ag. 2019 NBC National Biosecurity Forum, Canberra

Upcoming meetings for CEO and/or AHBIC Executive

- Date TBC – meeting with Responsible Wood, PEFC re resource security and forest certification, likely March to coincide with AFPA quarterly meetings and Responsible Wood board meeting
- 11th Dec - EPPRD training for Sarah Paradice and new Qld/Vic BBO's
- 12th Dec – teleconference with Qld Biosecurity for update on AHB in Port of Townsville

DROUGHT, FIRES AND EFFECT ON BEEKEEPERS

As we are all too aware, large fires have been burning across Australia causing devastation, primarily NSW and Qld. Many hives have been lost and we are yet to establish the total wash-up - obtaining numbers is still difficult with access to sites closed in some areas due to road closures. Emergency services including police have a duty of care to safeguard the public and that includes beekeepers. Roads are closed for good reasons. Police have the authority to detain anyone who ignores road closed signs due to a natural disaster such as fires. This includes beekeepers who ignore road closed signs and enter the danger area as advised recently by NSWAA in an email distribution: [here](#) Please adhere to these warnings for your own safety.

Extensive floral resources have been lost and the impact will be felt for decades to come. This will have a serious effect on the livelihoods of some of our beekeepers and our thoughts go out to those affected. The knock-on effects will also be a reduction in honey production and levies collected. This in turn will impact our research and development programs and other programs supported by levies such as biosecurity (Plant Health Australia) and National Residue Survey (Department of Agriculture).

Jess Berry at [Hive and Wellness](#) has worked hard with [Rural Aid](#) and AHBIC to establish a fund [Hive Aid](#) which will be used to help beekeepers affected by the fires and drought. This is the AHBIC endorsed fund for beekeepers and the aim will be to ensure its perpetuity for future disasters as well as the one beekeepers are currently facing. As many fundraisers emerge, we encourage the use of Hive Aid as the AHBIC endorsed fund and to double check the integrity of other campaigns in light of concerns that some may not be for the benefit of beekeepers. Please also feel free to use this banner with the link to Hive Aid donation page on your websites, letterhead, email signature blocks and promote as widely as possible amongst your networks.



Beekeepers who need assistance are encouraged to register with Rural Aid here: [Register with Rural Aid](#) All registrations will be treated in confidence.

Donate to Hive Aid here: [Donate now](#)

Links to sources of assistance can be found below:

National

[FarmHub](#) - FarmHub connects Australian farmers to a range of helpful services and support. Farmers can now access even more information in one central location, with regional Climate Guides and a new training directory live on FarmHub. FarmHub is a Commonwealth Government initiative delivered by the National Farmers' Federation. Launched in January this year, FarmHub is the first national directory of support and assistance measures for farmers. It helps farmers navigate the complex maze of government and private sector support programs, to reduce stress at an incredibly stressful time.

[Drought loans](#) - Help to prepare for, manage through, and recover from drought, Regional Investment Corporation

State: New South Wales

Primary Producers Assistance Guide for Beekeepers in NSW Rural Resilience Program

The NSW DPI Rural Resilience Program has staff across NSW and can provide support by way of referrals, liaising with other services and delivering initiatives tailored to a particular need. They work closely with other partners such as the NSW Rural Assistance Authority, Rural Financial Counsellors, the Rural Adversity Mental Health Program (RAMHP) and the Local Lands Services.

Extensive list of assistance with contact details [here](#)

[Rural-Resilience Program](#)

[NSW Disaster assistance](#)



State: Queensland

[Queensland natural disaster assistance](#)

[Queensland bushfire relief](#)

Health and Wellbeing

- Kids Helpline Tel. 1800 551 800 telephone counselling service 24 hours, seven days a week
- Community Mental Health Line Tel. 1800 011 511
- Mensline Australia Tel. 1300 789, 24 hours a day, 7-day telephone counselling for men
- Beyondblue information line. Tel. 1300 224 636
- Lifeline Tel. 131114
- Australian Red Cross - the Red Cross provides personal support during a disaster and an outreach service to affected households. Contact 1800 660 066 or (02) 49413200 in the Hunter area

News items

Media coverage has been extensive but please see links below about a few:

- [Beekeepers traumatised and counselled after hearing animals screaming in pain after bushfires](#), ABC Mid North Coast by Kerrin Thomas , Michael Cavanagh and Kim Honan, 20 November 2019



- [This is how most bushfires in Australia start, and how we know](#), Lightning is a common ignition source, but the majority of fires are linked to people. ABC News - Science by Nick Kilvert, 20 November 2019
- [It's just a drop in the big bucket': Farmers' lukewarm response to government bushfire assistance](#), ABC Mid North Coast by Luisa Rubbo, 25th November 2019
- NSW Rural Fire Service - Total fire bans and use of smokers in NSW – see point 11 in the link: [Schedule of Standard Exemptions to Total Fire Bans](#)
- [Mid North Coast fires impact on bees, macadamias and blueberries](#), Macquarie Port News by Liz Langdale, 27 November 2019
- [Bees lost in bushfires, suffering in smoke](#), The Northern Daily Leader by Carolyn Millet, 15 December

Photos

Thanks to Therese Kershaw for providing these images of NSW South Coast fires.



Thanks to Jo Martin from QBA for providing these images of Queensland fires:



Some confronting images reported on [Capilano's Facebook Page](#) below and were taken by Daryl Brenton, professional beekeeper and Capilano honey supplier who is based in the Mid North Coast of NSW.



STATE ASSOCIATION UPDATES

QBA Update by Jo Martin

The past few months have been a busy time for the Management Committee of the QBA. There have been a number of issues that we have been working tirelessly on to resolve. A new challenge to the industry became apparent in mid-August, when we were advised of Native Title determination and claim issues that will have an impact on apiarists' access to National Parks in Queensland prior to our 2024 scheduled lock out. Below I have summarised the activity of the QBA over the past quarter.

National Park access post 2024

On the 1st of August QBA representatives Rob Dewar and Jo Martin met with Leeanne Enoch, Queensland's Minister for Environment and Science to discuss her intentions to provide Beekeepers with continuation of access to National Parks past the 2024 lockout deadline. The meeting has provided the QBA with an optimistic outlook that the situation may be resolved prior to the 31st of December 2024. The Minister advised that she would commit to a proposal on the continuation of access to National Parks that would be presented to the Queensland Cabinet for consideration. The Minister has asked Queensland Parks & Wildlife Service (QPWS) and QBA to work on the submission together in an effort to find a number of proposals which are agreeable by both parties that can be presented within the submission to cabinet. QBA has been working with Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service and expect the work load to increase in coming months as the submission is finalised.

Native Title and National Parks

On the 15th of August QBA met with QPWS to start preliminary work on the Ministers Submission to Cabinet, during this preplanning meeting QPWS advised industry of an emerging issue that will see beekeepers unable to access sites within National Parks due to Native Title Determinations and future Claims for Native Title. This came as a major shock to industry as for the past decade we had been reassured by QPWS that there would be no issues with access to apiary sites where Native Title exists.

In the following week, QPWS provided QBA with a full break down of sites within Qld National Parks and the Native Title status to each individual site. After carefully examining the data it became apparent that 987 out of a total 1180 sites have access issues relating to Native Title. Furthermore, 345 sites were in Native Title Determination areas and sites currently under permit would be unable to be renewed until a negotiated agreement could be reached between the traditional land owners and the industry. As we understand these negotiations often take some time to reach a final agreement, thus adding significant strain and stress to our drought ravaged industry.

Once we had a full understanding of this complex situation, QBA immediately communicated the issue with our members and reassured them we were seeking legal advice and representation to allow us to investigate solutions to this issue. QBA has since appointed legal representation and we continue to work closely with them. We are hopeful of a Government funded resolution however remain cautious that there may be some financial impact to the QBA in order to negotiate access to Native Title areas. In the coming week we expect to schedule a meeting with a number of Government agencies to obtain a better understanding of the Governments intentions to assist industry with this problem.

Apis cerana/Varroa jacobsoni detection – Townsville, Qld

QBA has been involved in a number of regular teleconferences with AHBIC and Biosecurity Queensland to stay abreast of operational updates within the National Varroa Mite Eradication Program currently underway in Townsville, Qld.

The National Varroa Mite Eradication Program detected the presence of Asian honey bee wings near the port of Townsville in late October. We have been advised during a recent teleconference that surveillance has increased within the 2km zone of the port and the field staff on the ground, have been all over the port as well as the neighbouring suburbs of South Townsville and Railway Estate since the wings were confirmed as being from the Asian honey bee. Locals have been encouraged as a matter of urgency to check their backyards for bees, nests and swarms and report any findings to Biosecurity Queensland on 13 25 23.

QBA continues to work closely with the team from the National Varroa Mite Eradication Program to ensure information and updates are circulated with beekeepers across the state. We expect to hold another teleconference update with AHBIC and BQ in the coming weeks.

Queensland Drought and Fires

The past month has proved to be an exceptionally challenging time for many beekeepers across Queensland. Our hopes of spring rains, were quickly diminished by smoke filled skies across much of the state, unfortunately the long-range forecast doesn't look promising for future rain events during the 2020 Summer period.

Many areas of native forest already bearing the brunt from the lack of rainfall have suffered devastating, long-lasting effects from the outbreak of recent bushfires. From Central Queensland to the border of Queensland/New South Wales, uncontrolled bushfires have taken a toll on the industry. We believe only a small volume of the total land tenure sites available to beekeepers have been ravaged by fire, a greater concern is that should many areas of Queensland fail to receive rainfall in coming months more fires will break out increasing the already dwindling supply of natural forage for bees.

At the time of writing this, we have received a small reprieve in conditions allowing firefighters and landholders to gain the upper hand on many fire fronts. Our heartfelt thanks go to the many volunteers and state agencies doing their best to control fires burning across the state.

As for impacted beekeepers, we are beginning to receive initial reports that a few 'loads' of bees have been lost to fire, with the majority of our members who have lost hives being members of both QBA and NSWAA. Over the past week we've also heard from many members who've had to battle fires burning close to apiary sites and do everything in their power to relocate the colonies to safety.

In light of the recent fires there have been many comments made about the 'mismanagement' of our Native forests, we too share this concern with our members. QBA will be partaking in discussions with the Queensland Department of Environment and Science to raise our concerns about the maintenance of fire trails/tracks and the management of fuel loads with the department, whilst reinforcing the great contributions by our industry to help lighten the load for park rangers on the ground. We believe the department is already aware of our concerns, however we will continue to push this issue with them.

Lastly, more than 2/3 of Queensland has now been drought declared, forcing beekeepers to investigate alternative options to keep bees alive during the prolonged period of drought we find ourselves in. The same story is playing out across most of the industry, with majority of our colleagues forced to travel greater distances just to keep their bees alive, and cart additional water to areas already depleted of natural water sources.

NSWAA Update by Stephen Targett

Fires and strong winds have been the normal in NSW the last two months. With the drought continuing across the whole state the fires have been horrific. Hundreds of hives have been burnt or damaged. The fires have been so hot it is doubtful that a lot of burnt trees will ever recover to be viable nectar producers again. The main area affected was the northern half of the state.

After an interview with ABC Port Macquarie NSWAA has been inundated with offers of places to put bees. This has been a welcome and an amazing response by the generous people of NSW.

Late November dry storms caused fires north of Batemans Bay. While still being assessed I believe several hundred hives were lost. More resource lost for many years.

NSWAA through our branches are collating the number of beekeepers affected, number of hives destroyed, number of hives damaged and the number of public land bee sites that have been burnt out. NSWAA will use those figures to lobby state government to allow temporary access of bees into unburnt National Parks.

Planning is underway for our annual conference in May 2020. Early registration will be half price to encourage beekeepers to attend. We intend to have a Beyond Blue stand at the conference. It has been an extremely hard season for our members with many losing hives and/or resources.

NSWAA made a submission to the Federal government inquiry ' \$100 billion agriculture by 2030'. We have requests to government to meet with the Forestry and National Parks ministers. We did meet with the shadow minister for the environment, the Hon Kate Washington MP.

At our November meeting we agreed to sponsor a Biosecurity document. This will be a document detailing what beekeepers can expect of DPI staff when dealing with biosecurity and public safety matters relating to bees.

Honey production is well below average. Looking forward there is no major honey flow in sight.

BICWA & WAFarmers Beekeepers Section Update

Combined Chairman/President Report – Brendon Fewster, Stephen Fewster

The busy bee season is in full swing and the honey flow looks promising in our region. Although our Chair and Directors were busy, we have been successful to arrange important meetings to follow up on Industry concerns.

A meeting has been held with the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD), Gerard Leddin to discuss the option to revisit the Biosecurity Officers/BBO role and abilities. BICWA is invited to present suggestions and further discussion.

The Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) for Honey Bee Products offered a mentoring meeting for its students and commercial beekeepers. It was a positive meeting with valuable outcomes for both sides.

A joint meeting was held with BICWA, WAFarmers Beekeepers Section and the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions - Jason Foster and Stefan de Haan. The industry would like to see more firebreaks in high valued areas such as the Northern Sandplain. The Department respects this view but can't support due to resources, funds and objections from other stakeholders and organisations such as the Conservation Council. However, Jason Foster offered a trial for a nominated area to practise a different fire management regime (new

fire breaks/maintenance of existing breaks). Further discussions will be held early January 2020. The industry appreciates this offer.

Currently beekeepers require permission (called an 'apiary authority') to use sites on land administered by the DBCA. They also require a clearing permit from the DWER to clear or maintain a small area on each site to place hives. We feel this is excessive and unnecessary and wish to request an exemption under Schedule 6 – Clearing for which a clearing permit is not required. DBCA has provided a letter of support.

With the current review of the Environmental Protection Act we will request that an addition to Schedule 6 be made to exempt Apiarists from needing to apply for clearing permits from DWER as this is already carried out by DBCA upon application for a permit. Submissions close on the 28 January 2020. To make a submission, or for more information, see the following link: <https://consult.dwer.wa.gov.au/strategic-policy/envirom-protection-act-amendments-consultation/>

DWER is also developing four initiatives for improving vegetation management in WA and has developed a Native Vegetation in WA – Issues Paper, which is open for public comments. Consultation closes on the 10th February 2020. To make a submission, or for more information, see the following link: <https://dwer.wa.gov.au/consultation/nativeveg>

Please note BICWA does not hold a December meeting.

WAFarmers and BICWA wish everyone a happ-bee Festive Season and best wishes for the coming New Year.

SUBMISSION TO FEDERAL GOVERNMENT INQUIRY: \$100 billion agriculture by 2030

Ian Cane, Chair of AHBIC Resource committee and the Stephen Targett, President of NSWAA both provided submissions to the Federal Governments Inquiry '\$100 billion Agriculture by 2030'. They were both invited to present in person and have provided the following snapshot of what they presented on behalf of industry:

House of Representatives Standing Committee on Agriculture and Water Resources. Growing Australian Agriculture to \$100 billion by 2030. The Committee is certainly aware that honey bees will be a significant component of achieving \$100 billion by 2030.

STATEMENT

The Australian Honey Bee Industry Council is the peak industry body for Australia. Honey Bees are vitally important to the food production and therefore food security of the nation. The Australian Honey Bee Industry Council acknowledges the United Nations forecasts for world food requirement and also Rabobank's forecasts for an increase in demand for honey bee pollination worldwide. The current Australian Honey Bee Industry Council strategic plan's No. 1 issue is around resources. Part A of that is the policies of the various states, some of which are not favourable, and Part B is resource security—adequate floral resources on every bee site within Australia.

The bee keeping industry is very heavily dependent on the public land estate for honey production and, very importantly, for beehive health prior to and after servicing many pollination-dependent food crops. In 2007 there was a parliamentary inquiry and a subsequent report published, More Than honey. That acknowledged at that time that the failure or partial failure of the honey bee industry would put at risk billions of dollars' worth of crops in Australia. One of the key recommendations was to secure floral resources into the future for the Australian honey bee industry.

RESOURCE ACCESS POLICY

- Policies to access the Public Land Estate is different in various States, Victoria compared to Queensland.
- Queensland and the loss of National Park bee sites.
- Research as to the overall impact from commercial managed honey bees is benign.
- If you don't have increased access to National Parks we are not going to reach \$100 billion. Certainly in a State like Queensland.

POLLINATION DEPENDENT INDUSTRIES SUPPORT

- Evidence from the Almond Industry on how important honey bees are.
- Previously we had a briefing with the CEO of the Almond Board about supporting AHBIC wherever possible. (Great to hear the actual results.)
- No bees equals no almonds, this was well understood by the Committee.

VARROA

- Varroa will change the whole market. At the moment there are a lot of people with crops who either understock what the DPI recommend they should have in their orchard, because they're relying on the feral beehives around them to assist with the pollination, or don't stock at all. When we get varroa those people are not going to have a crop for one or two years, which is going to significantly hurt.
- It will be a lot harder to keep the bees healthy in that environment post-varroa than now, our Public Land Estate will be critical in this process.
- We have received great support from Government Agencies, we now have increased our port hive surveillance numbers and upgraded the technology, so we've got cameras and motion sensors in place.

IMPORTS

- They can import honey for about \$2.50 per kilo, landed here in Australia. We're receiving around \$5.00, \$5.20 per kilo at the moment. If we didn't have imported honey coming in at that price—we don't have a problem if it's real, unadulterated honey coming in. It's a global world, and we trade on the global markets. Honey should be exactly the same. It's the adulteration that's the issue.

ADEQUATE FLORAL RESOURCES

- The Industry is heavily dependent on the Public Land Estate for floral resources. (Food for bees)
- Excessive timber harvesting is changing the long-term structure of the forest, it changes the long-term reproductive capacity of those forests. There is really long-term impact—I'm talking decades—when you excessively harvest forests. The industry is not against timber harvesting per se, but the excessive nature of it is probably the single biggest issue up and down the eastern seaboard.
- Victoria has completed a number of trials, focusing on both Industries co-existing.

CHEMICAL USAGE

- Our Public Land Estate will and are a great safe haven from the pesticides and chemical exposure. It provides the healthy environment for our bees plus a healthy food source.
- Cause of mass bee deaths in the USA.
- Varroa mite viruses and certain chemicals appear to be contributing to this issue.

AGRONOMIST TRAINING

- Australia will not reach \$100 billion by 2030 without pollination dependent crops. Impediments to this are that Agronomists are not trained in pollination, bees, and bees and chemicals - 'safe passage of bees through the crop.'

ASIAN HONEY BEE UPDATE

Heightened surveillance continues as part of the National Varroa Mite Eradication Program. We recently had a teleconference with Queensland Biosecurity to obtain an update on activities conducted in November. Queensland Biosecurity meets with QBA and AHBIC monthly to provide updates. No trigger points have been activated in November and heightened surveillance activity within the Port and a 2km surrounding area continues with an increase in communications activities to reflect the recent AHB wing find. There have been no further Asian Honey Bee finds. Activities and the situation over the next month will include:

- Continued heightened surveillance within the port and within a 5km radius
- Move to Proof of Area Freedom
- Predicted dry and hot conditions to require rotational rosters and flexibility
- Drought conditions to further impact floral resources
- Expected increase in public reports due to planned advertising occurring in December
- Possible vessel-based surveillance
- Continued work with Port based stakeholders to create awareness about AHB and varroa mite

Communications activities included:

- Paid advertising in October enhanced in November by stakeholder engagement activities
- Communications activities in November as a result of the October AHB wing detection:
 - 11,441 calling cards, ID cards, brochures and fridge magnets letterboxed to households within a 5km radius of the Townsville port
 - Australia Post mail out to 2,817 households within a 2km radius of the port
 - Four targeted social media posts
 - A media release that appeared in the Townsville Bulletin and social media
 - An email blast to port leaseholders, staff and stakeholders
 - Engagement with the local bee club
- 85 reports of bees from members of the public for the month of November, all European Honey Bee not AHB
- 205 public reports received for program to date (July 1 2019 – present).

Queensland Biosecurity also issued this media release on 7 November.



MEDIA RELEASE

7 November 2019

More Asian honey bees suspected at Townsville Port

Key points:

- Townsville residents are urged to check their properties and report bees, nests or swarms to 13 25 23 following a new discovery of Asian honey bee wings near the Port of Townsville.
- A nest of Asian honey bees carrying varroa mite was destroyed at the port earlier this year.
- Varroa mites could significantly damage the Australian bee industry and agricultural sector, disrupting honey production and pollination services.

Main story:

Biosecurity Queensland is calling on Townsville residents - particularly those living close to the Townsville port - to check their properties for bees following new evidence of Asian honey bee.

The National Varroa Mite Eradication Program in Townsville has again detected the presence of the imported bee pests (*Apis cerana*), this time through laboratory testing of Rainbow bee-eater pellets collected from two sites just outside the port boundary.

The pellets were collected in October in Cannan Street and on Benwell Road.

It follows the discovery of a nest of Asian honey bees that was confirmed to be carrying the destructive varroa mite at the Townsville port in May this year.

Varroa mites could significantly damage the Australian bee industry, disrupting honey production and pollination services. Early detection is vital to eradication and containment efforts.

National Varroa Mite Eradication Program acting manager Robert Stephens said the team had ramped up surveillance activity within a 2km radius of the port in an effort to find the nest the bees had originated from.

"Field staff have been all over the port as well as the neighbouring suburbs of South Townsville and Railway Estate since the wings were confirmed as being from the Asian honey bee," he said.

"But we urgently need people to check their backyards for bees, nests and swarms and report any findings to us on 13 25 23.

"Asian honey bees are a natural host for the varroa mite but are not usually found in Townsville so finding the bee gives officers the best chance of finding the mite."



Rainbow bee-eater birds are a critical link to finding the Asian honey bee and the varroa mite.

"The Rainbow bee-eater eats bees but are unable to digest their wings, which are later regurgitated as a pellet," Mr Stephens said.

"These pellets are collected and examined so any evidence of Asian honey bee can be identified.

"Varroa mite are the size of a pin head and extremely hard to spot so we need to focus on finding the host, the Asian honey bee, first. That's why we're asking Townsville residents to be on the lookout for any unusual bees, nests or swarms and report them to us.

"Like our European honey bee, the Asian honey bee will forage on flowers but are smaller, not as hairy and look darker and glossier. Look for bees clustered into a swarm or nests in small hollows like trees, eaves, letter boxes and compost bins. If you see them, report it."

"Examination of these pellets in the laboratory allows us to determine the species of bees the birds have been feeding on.

Report any possible sightings of Asian honey bees to Biosecurity Queensland on 13 25 23 or online at biosecurity.qld.gov.au

Media: Deborah Rule 0436 916 667



Thanks to Queensland Biosecurity for their ongoing work, vigilance and working closely with industry.

LEVY STATISTICS

AHBIC receives a list of levy payers and a summary of levies paid from the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources. A summary by levy description for 2018-19 is provided below. It is important that if you produce more than 1,500kg per annum of honey that you pay levies; it is compulsory. The levy is currently 4.6 cents per kilogram of honey and funds research and development (R&D), essential biosecurity programs, and national honey residue surveying with [AgriFutures Australia](#), [Plant Health Australia](#) and the [National Residue Survey](#). More information: [What is the national honey levy?](#) [Honey levy and charge](#) Below is the levy statistics report as at 15/11/2019.

Levy / Statistic Report:		2019-20					
Date range:		01/07/2019 - 30/06/2020					
Report extracted:		15/11/2019					
Australian Honey Bee Industry Council							
LEVY STATISTICS SUMMARY							
Commodity	Levy description	Production quantity	Production units	Reporting category	Levy (\$)	Export charge (\$)	Total payable (\$)
Honey	Honey - Domestic - Leviable	4,786,475	kilograms	Levy / Charge	220,019	-	220,178
Honey	Honey - Export - Leviable	62,527	kilograms	Levy / Charge	-	2,876	2,876
Honey	Honey Annual - Leviable	33,996	kilograms	Levy / Charge	1,564	-	1,564
Honey	Honey - Domestic-Other	9,675	kilograms	Statistic	-	-	-
Honey	Honey - Domestic-Purchased/Sold	4,776,800	kilograms	Statistic	-	-	-
Honey	Honey Annual - Purchased/Sold	33,996	kilograms	Statistic	-	-	-
				TOTAL	221,583	2,876	224,618
LEVY STATISTICS BY RETURN PERIOD							
Commodity	Levy description	Production quantity	Production units	Reporting category	Levy (\$)	Export charge (\$)	Total payable (\$)
For Period: July 2019							
For Period: August 2019							
For Period: September 2019							
Honey	Honey - Domestic - Leviable	4,786,475	kilograms	Levy / Charge	220,019	-	220,178
Honey	Honey - Export - Leviable	62,527	kilograms	Levy / Charge	-	2,876	2,876
Honey	Honey - Domestic-Other	9,675	kilograms	Statistic	-	-	-
Honey	Honey - Domestic-Purchased/Sold	4,776,800	kilograms	Statistic	-	-	-
For Period: October 2019							
For Period: November 2019							
For Period: December 2019							
Honey	Honey Annual - Leviable	33,996	kilograms	Levy / Charge	1,564	-	1,564
Honey	Honey Annual - Purchased/Sold	33,996	kilograms	Statistic	-	-	-

2019 HONEY BEE HEALTH SURVEY

As mentioned earlier in the CEO report, a short survey has been developed to find out how healthy Australian honey bees are, and what pests and diseases might be causing problems for beekeepers. The results from the survey will be used to decide what help beekeepers might need to keep their honey bees healthy. It will also provide statistics for use by the industry.

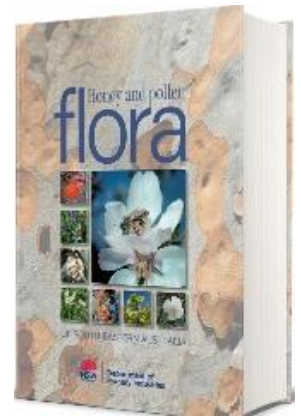
The [Australian Honey Bee Industry Council](#), [Plant Health Australia](#), and [AgriFutures Australia](#) encourage all Australian beekeepers to take part in this survey, which will only take 10-12 minutes to complete. The survey can be found [HERE](#) and closes 31 December 2019. For more information go to the [BeeAware website](#).

Let's get behind this honey bee industry health survey! The response to the 2018 Honey Bee Health Survey was brilliant but let's see if we can do even better. Click [HERE](#) to complete.

EXTENSIONAUS

Ensure you make the most of these informative [ExtensionAUS](#) resources! More have recently been uploaded so please utilise these free resources:

- [“Honey and Pollen Flora of South-Eastern Australia” – read all about it.](#) Congratulations again to Dr Doug Somerville, it's finally complete and what a wonderful achievement! This book focuses on the value of key plants to nectar-feeding animals in Australia with particular emphasis on honey bee nutritional requirements. Want to buy a copy? Honey and Pollen Flora of South-Eastern NSW is now available to purchase, please find link [HERE](#)
- It's getting hot, hot, hot, and so are your bees! Extreme heat can melt beeswax, kill brood or even the entire colony. [Keep your colonies cool](#)
- Screened bottom boards - Varroa has not yet established in Australia. In the advent that it does establish, beekeepers need to be aware of the available control methods. Chemical treatments have several drawbacks. Miticide residues have been reported in honey and bees wax, mites can become immune to the miticides, and their use prevents bees from being selected for natural resistance mechanisms. Screened bottom boards are used for the management and quantification of Varroa mites overseas. Read more about [Screened bottom boards](#)
- [Comb honey production](#)



FOREIGN WORKERS

See recent Media Release: [Securing Australia's future agricultural workforce](#), 11 December 2019

A new National Agricultural Labour Advisory Committee has been tasked with providing the Liberal and Nationals Government advice on how to secure a sustainable agricultural workforce for the future. Minister for Agriculture, Senator Bridget McKenzie, said Australian agriculture had its best years ahead of it, despite current difficulties caused by drought and bushfires. “Workforce needs is one of the top two issues farmers raise with me no matter where I go, from Darwin to Devonport, or what sector they're from,” Minister McKenzie said. “If agriculture is to grow to its full potential we need to make sure farmers have access to a fit-for-purpose workforce—that's the right worker, at the right place, at the right time of the season. A few related news items:

- [Government introduces new visas, employment incentives.](#) The Federal Government has introduced two new skilled provisional visas in a bid to lift the seasonal workforce for horticulture and other industries. Australian Tree Crop, 2 December
- Farmers, including horticulture growers in the Mallee region will have better access to the labour they need this season to harvest their fruit with the Australian Government acting on concerns raised by the community. Read more: [Growing workforce for horticulture in Mallee](#), 18th November 2019 Minister for Agriculture Senator Bridget McKenzie said the Regional Agriculture Migration Package was a practical response to the desperate need in the region for greater access to migrant labour.

While we see the need for access to a skilled workforce for our industry to grow to meet the challenges of increased demands for pollination services and quality Australian Honey, we need to be careful where we allocate AHBIC resources in terms of time and effort to assist industry with this issue. AHBIC sought feedback from you in the October newsletter, regarding the need for access to a skilled workforce. To date, no-one has emailed AHBIC about this issue – please let us know your thoughts so we may target our resources to this issue if need be. We need you to tell us. Below are a few questions we would like everyone to answer with respect to accessing skilled foreign workers. Please feel free to email them to us to help us better understand the scope of the issue and prioritise our efforts accordingly. If you know of another business who also uses, or wants to use foreign workers, please let them know so they can also help inform AHBIC.

Tell us about your experiences. Email Sarah Paradise on: ahbic@honeybee.org.au

Subject: Foreign Workers for the Honey Bee Industry

Please provide the following details:

- How many foreign workers do you employ?
- How many additional foreign workers would you like to employ?
- If you employ foreign workers, what type of visa do you use?
- If you employ foreign workers, what are the costs associated with organising visa's, both the cost of visa's and your time?
- If you employ foreign workers, what problems are you experiencing?
- Please feel free to add any additional comments you think may be useful for AHBIC.

We appreciate the time you take to email us.

GENERAL NEWS AND LINKS – AUSTRALIA

- Beekeepers producing >1,500kg of honey are required to be levies to fund our biosecurity program through Plant Health Australia, our R&D program through Agrifutures and the National Residue Survey (NRS) which tests honey for residues. NRS programs monitor the levels of, and associated risks from, pesticides and veterinary medicine residues and contaminants in Australian food products. The program involves the testing of Australian honey samples for a range of pesticides, veterinary medicines and environmental contaminants, which ensures the Australian honey industry can meet quality assurance and market access requirements for domestic and international markets. Results are now out for 2018-19: click [here](#).
- The House of Representatives Standing Committee on the Environment has announced an inquiry into the efficacy of past and current vegetation and land management policy, practice and legislation and their effect on the intensity and frequency of bushfires and subsequent risk to property, life and the environment. Written submissions are being accepted until Friday 28 February 2019. For more information, the Inquiry website is [here](#). This is your opportunity to provide input to this submission!
- [Australians eat 22 avocados annually but need to consume more with domestic supply set to soar](#). Queensland Country Hour by Laurissa Smith, 9 December
- [As temperatures soar above 40 degrees in WA, one woman has found melted honey leaking out of her chimney](#). Homeowner Gabby Forrester has had bees in her chimney for more than eight years, but she decided to let them be. This week's weather in Geraldton reached 41.5 degrees, causing the honey and honeycomb inside the chimney to melt and leak out of the walls. A beekeeper has removed half of the bee colony, but Ms Forrester is happy for the other half to continue living in the chimney. ABC Mid West and Wheatbelt by Laura Meachim, 4 December 2019
- It's official: [Bureau of Meteorology declares spring 2019 the driest on record](#). Spring 2019 was officially the driest of the Bureau of Meteorology's 120 years of rainfall records. ABC Weather by Kate Doyle, 2 December 2019. Summer is expected to have above-average temperatures for most of Australia and dry conditions are expected to remain for drought-affected areas in the east. Fire conditions are expected to stay until the climate drivers break down late in summer. There is the hope that "normal" conditions will resume late in the season. Read more on the BOM weather forecast: [Summer outlook from Bureau of Meteorology suggests hot, dry times to continue](#).
- Scientists fear Australian insect populations are on the brink of collapse and are calling for the public's help to paint a better picture of the problem so they can develop solutions to help tackle the challenge. [Australian researchers call for help to save our insects](#), CSIRO, 2 December 2019
- [Important pollinators in Australian avocado, macadamia and mango crops](#), Research established that three pollinator groups were found to be consistently important across the three crops – honey bees



and two wild visitors (an Australian stingless bee [Tetragonula carbonaria.] and nose flies [Stomorphina discolor]). Plant and Food Research, 20 November 2019

- [Global-scale drivers of crop visitor diversity and the historical development of agriculture](#). Recent human history and the deeper evolutionary history of crops and bees appear to be important determinants of flower-visitor diversity at large scales that constrain the levels of visitor diversity that can be influenced by field- and landscape-scale interventions. By Julian Brown and Saul A Cunningham. The Royal Society Publishing, 20 November 2019
- [Bee biosecurity awareness for beekeepers and growers](#), AUSVEG helping raise awareness of our important biosecurity programs delivered with the assistance of Plant Health Australia, 19 November 2019
- [Aussie Farms Inc Charity Revoked](#). The national charity regulator, the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC), has revoked the charity status of Aussie Farms Inc following an investigation, ACNC, 18 November 2019. Federal Member for Maranoa, [David Littleproud has welcomed the decision of the Charities and Not-for-profits Commission to strip Aussie Farms of its charitable status](#). 18 November 2019
- [Family pet in training as detector dog to prevent devastating bee disease American foulbrood](#), Hunter Valley apiarists Sam and Bianca Giggins are waging a personal battle with bee disease American foulbrood (AFB) with the help of a family pet. ABC Newcastle by Anthony Scully, 18 November 2019
- [A farmer in Ali Curung has planted 50 Manuka trees](#), with the hope of producing Northern Territory Manuka honey. ABC NT Country Hour by Daniel Fitzgerald, 14 November 2019
- [TIA PhD student Katharina Schmidt is working on a honey project](#), As New Zealand fights to claim manuka honey as its own, Tasmania is investigating what makes our own leatherwood honey so special. Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture PhD student Katharina Schmidt wants to preserve the value of Tassie's unique leatherwood honey by proving its unique characteristics. The Examiner, 10 October 2019
- The world has fallen in love with New Zealand's liquid gold - mānuka honey. But there are claims the Aussies are trying to plunder our brand, using the word "mānuka" to sell their honey. Aussie beekeepers say they've been using the word for more than a century. Kiwi beekeepers say that "mānuka" is theirs alone - because it's a Māori word. A lucrative industry is at stake. Who will come out on top? SUNDAY investigates, TVNZ, 9 November 2019 Listen [here](#)

MEDIA RELEASES

- [More cash for drought-hit farmers](#). Payments of up to \$3,000 will continue to be available to drought-hit farming families throughout Christmas and the New Year, 16 December 2019
- The Department of Agriculture is expanding the range of cost-recovered import measures that support Australia's biosecurity system. [Cost recovery for a fair and sustainable biosecurity system](#), Department of Agriculture, 11 December 2019
- [Scott Morrison to sack top bureaucrats and dismantle departments in wide-ranging public sector overhaul](#), ABC News by Brett Worthington, 6 December 2019. Federal Government departments will be dismantled, and top leaders will depart as part of a major shake-up of the public sector. Departments will merge and reduce from 18 to 14. Andrew Metcalfe will return to the public service as the new head of the Department of Agriculture, Water and Environment. [Agriculture, water and environment – a positive move for Australia](#). Bringing together the environment and agriculture departments will provide greater synergies to the policies and programs that underpin regional Australia and our agriculture, fisheries and forestry industries, 5 December 2019
- The United Nations has announced that 2020 will be the International Year of Plant Health. Minister for Agriculture Bridget McKenzie said the theme for the year was 'Protecting plants, protecting life'

underlining the need for everyone to understand and take seriously their role in protecting Australia's biosecurity. [World's first International Year of Plant Health](#), 3 December 2019

- [Aussie Agriculture Future Needs to Bee Secure](#). Australia may not have enough bees for the pollination task implied by the NFF's agricultural industry's target of \$100billion in farm gate value by 2030. National Geographic, 26 November 2019
- [Summer outlook from Bureau of Meteorology suggests hot, dry times to continue](#), ABC News/Weather by Kate Doyle
- Hunter Valley apiarists Sam and Bianca Giggins are waging a personal battle with bee disease American foulbrood (AFB) with the help of a family pet. The proprietors of Williams River Honey are training their one-year-old Belgian Malinois pup Missy to detect the disease in their hives. At the annual Total Beekeepers Field Day, in the New South Wales' lower Hunter Valley. [Family pet in training as detector dog to prevent devastating bee disease American foulbrood](#), ABC Newcastle by Anthony Scully, 18 November 2019
- [Grants open export doors to farmers](#), Australian farmers and agricultural producers may get help to tap into dynamic overseas markets through a \$1.5 million grant opportunity supporting stronger trade relationships, 28 November 2019
- The Australian Parliament has passed legislation that brings Australian agricultural exporters one step closer to benefiting from the Peru-Australia Free Trade Agreement, the Indonesia-Australia Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement and the Free Trade Agreement between Australia and Hong Kong. Minister for Agriculture, Senator Bridget McKenzie, said the Bill's passage was a great step forward for Australian agricultural exports, economy, farmers and agricultural communities. [Expanding agricultural exports in the Asia-Pacific](#), 26 November 2019
- The Liberal and Nationals Government is investing \$510,788 in research that could help improve fertilization of Australia's avocados by unlocking more of what we know about pollinators. [\\$510,788 pollinator grant to bear fruit for avo growers](#), 22 November 2019
- [Have your say on the evolution of agricultural levies legislation](#), The Department of Agriculture is streamlining and modernising the legislation underpinning Australia's agricultural levy system to better support agricultural industries. Right now, the department is taking feedback on proposed changes to the legislative framework through [this online survey](#) Department of Agriculture, 22 November 2019
- [Digital drive smooths food export path](#). Australian agricultural and food producers will get an easier path into international markets with digitisation of export processes to lift their global competitiveness, 22 November 2019

GENERAL NEWS AND LINKS – INTERNATIONAL

- [Bee Free! How Growers Can Pollinate with Drones](#), promising new technology using drones to disperse collected pollen. Growing Produce by Christina Herrick, 6 November 2019
- [Artificial Pollination Technology Seeks Entry into the Huge California Almond Market](#). Israeli agritech startup Edete Precision Technologies for Agriculture has successfully completed field trials in almond orchards in Israel using its unique mechanical pollen harvesting and pollination system. The field trials are crucial for advancing the company's planned entry into the huge almond market in California. The trials resulted in a substantially increased yield in Israel. Additionally, Edete has recently tested its technology in Australia and proved its ability to produce high-quality viable pollen. Seed World, 3 December 2019
- [Watch Bees Surf to Safety on Waves They Create](#), When honeybees fall into water, they generate their own ripples, then glide to dry land, a study found, The New York Times by Emma Goldberg, 18 November
- [Power lines may mess with honeybees' behavior and ability to learn](#). The insects might suffer neurological effects from exposure to electromagnetic fields, Science News, 14 November 2019.

BeeConnected

A great media release from Agriculture Victoria about actively using BeeConnected. We encourage all beekeepers to use BeeConnected. We understand there are still some improvements to be made which we will address in 2020.

Media Release

Monday 16 December, 2019 | Media contact: Deb Banks 0447 388 193

Chemical users BeeConnected about pollinator safety

Agriculture Victoria is encouraging chemical users to actively engage in BeeConnected.

BeeConnected is a national database and app that connects registered beekeepers with registered farmers and contractors, enabling two way communication on the location of hives and crop protection activities.

"It's one of a number of tools available to chemical users to help them follow the highest possible safety standards for the benefit of consumers, the environment and especially managing any risks to pollinators," Agriculture Victoria Statewide Specialist Chemicals Steven Field said.

Mr Field said the timing of chemical use can sometimes coincide with when bees are actively foraging for pollen and nectar, particularly in the spring and summer months.

"The risk of chemical use to pollinators is shared between the chemical user and the bee keeper. Chemical users, including aerial operators and ground-based sprayers, have a responsibility to conduct an on-ground inspection of paddocks to determine whether there are bees foraging on flowering plants, or bees in flight before applying chemicals," Mr Field said.

He said commercial and hobby beekeepers should register their hives on BeeConnected, to enable chemical users to easily identify and notify beekeepers when and where they are going to be spraying.

"Chemical users must read and understand the product label, paying specific attention to DO NOT statements that appear under the *Protection of Livestock* section of a chemical label.

"These DO NOT statements are enforceable and constitute an offence* if they are disregarded.

"Spraying early in the morning when bees are less active or spraying on cooler days when bees are less likely to be flying and foraging are further strategies chemical users can adopt."

Mr Field said pollination from honey bees was a critical element of agricultural and horticultural production in Australia, increasing yields and seed production for growers of a variety of different commodities.

"Cooperation between chemical users and beekeepers is critical for the success of industries and survival of bee populations," he said.

The BeeConnected database can be found at <https://beeconnected.org.au>
For more information, visit agriculture.vic.gov.au/agriculture/farm-management/chemicals, or call 136 186.

*see *Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals (Control of Use) Act 1992*

www.agriculture.vic.gov.au



INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF PLANT HEALTH IN 2020

It is International Year of Plant Health next year so please get behind raising awareness of this initiative! See Media Release from Plant Health Australia below.



MEDIA RELEASE

Main 02 6215 7700
Email admin@phau.com.au
Level 1,1 Phipps Close Deakin ACT 2600
planthealthaustralia.com.au

20 December 2019

International Year of Plant Health in 2020

Australia will be making the most of the first International Year of Plant Health in 2020 by promoting how much Australians value plants, and how we can best protect them.

Executive Director and CEO of PHA, Greg Fraser, said this is a once in a lifetime opportunity to raise awareness of the importance of protecting plants from pests and diseases.

"Whether it be plants grown as crops, in plantation forests, in backyard gardens or in the natural environment, they are essential to our economy, the environment, our health and wellbeing," he said.

"There are now more plant pests threatening the health of our plants, so it's important to be vigilant.

"PHA has identified some 370 pests and diseases that threaten our plant industries but there are some particularly concerning ones. For example, Australia is making a great effort to keep brown marmorated stink bugs and *Xylella fastidiosa* out of the country.

"Just as important is avoiding moving pests and diseases that we already have here around the country from farm to farm, region to region and into our unique environmental areas."

Mr Fraser encourages everyone who depends on plants to get involved in the celebrations.

"This could be by promoting your plant health champions, injecting the plant health theme into your events or highlighting plant biosecurity practices," he said.

You can visit the website for the celebration of the International Year of Plant Health in Australia planthealthyear.org.au

There you will find out ways to protect plants in Australia, upload stories about people making a difference in plant health and details of events with a plant health theme, and more.

Plant Health Australia, the national coordinator of the government–industry partnership for plant biosecurity, is funded by 39 plant industries and all Australian governments.



INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF
PLANT HEALTH
2020

The International Year of Plant Health for 2020 was launched globally by the Food and Agriculture Organization in Rome on 2 December 2019. Read more at: www.fao.org/plant-health-2020 (the IYPH2020 logo is above and attached).

Media contact: Mandy Gyles, Communication Manager Plant Health Australia
media@phau.com.au (0408) 332 3674



Australian Government
Department of Agriculture

Market Access Advice

European Union: New export certification for honey and other edible apiculture products from 14 December 2019 onwards

Date of issue: 26 November 2019

Date of effect: 14 December 2019

Reference Number: MAA2019-08

Attention:

Industries - Industry Bodies – Australian Food and Grocery Council (AFGC), Australian Honey Bee Industry Council (AHBIC)

Export honey and other apiculture products establishments

Licensed exporters

State regulatory authorities

Department of Agriculture—Central and Regional offices

Purpose

To advise of changes to export certification requirements for honey and other edible apiculture products exported to the European Union (EU). Honey and other edible apiculture products exported to the EU, from 14 December 2019 onwards are required to be accompanied by new export certification.

Summary of key points

Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/628, published 8 April 2019, implements changes to export certificates for honey and other edible apiculture products. Regulation 2019/628 does not implement any new eligibility requirements for Australian honey and edible apiculture products exported to the EU.

The EU has granted a transitional period. Certificates which are completed and signed up to and including 13 December, will be accepted up to 13 March 2020. New certificates will need to be used from 14 December 2019.

The Department of Agriculture is in the process of updating the affected EU certificates in response to the new regulation. The new regulation shall come into force on 14 December 2019. Certificates will be updated systematically, with priority decided based on history of trade.

The department will release a Market Access Advice closer to the implementation date, outlining the certification available to exporters.

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The following English and bilingual certificate templates are affected by Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/628.

Template	Current Certificate Title *	Language
EUHGB	CERTIFICATE FOR IMPORTS OF HONEY, ROYAL JELLY AND OTHER APICULTURE PRODUCTS INTENDED FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION	English
EUHNL	CERTIFICATE FOR IMPORTS OF HONEY, ROYAL JELLY AND OTHER APICULTURE PRODUCTS INTENDED FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION	Dutch
EUHFR	CERTIFICATE FOR IMPORTS OF HONEY, ROYAL JELLY AND OTHER APICULTURE PRODUCTS INTENDED FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION	French
EUHDE	CERTIFICATE FOR IMPORTS OF HONEY, ROYAL JELLY AND OTHER APICULTURE PRODUCTS INTENDED FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION	German
EUHIT	CERTIFICATE FOR IMPORTS OF HONEY, ROYAL JELLY AND OTHER APICULTURE PRODUCTS INTENDED FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION	Italian
EUHPL	CERTIFICATE FOR IMPORTS OF HONEY, ROYAL JELLY AND OTHER APICULTURE PRODUCTS INTENDED FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION	Polish
EUHPT	CERTIFICATE FOR IMPORTS OF HONEY, ROYAL JELLY AND OTHER APICULTURE PRODUCTS INTENDED FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION	Portuguese
EUHES	CERTIFICATE FOR IMPORTS OF HONEY, ROYAL JELLY AND OTHER APICULTURE PRODUCTS INTENDED FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION	Spanish

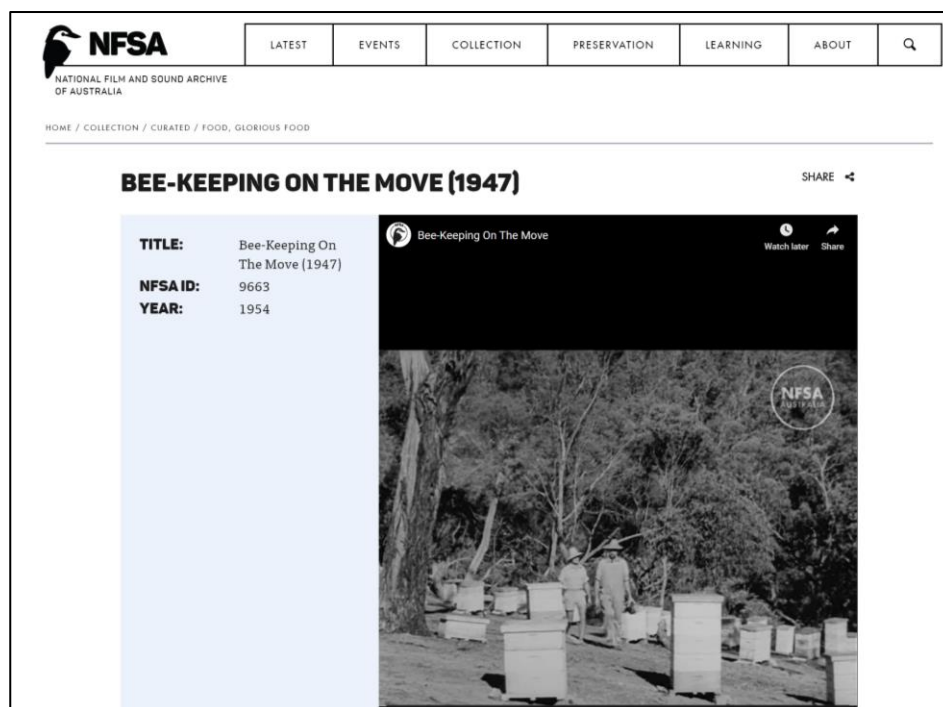
* The new certificates shall be renamed to:

OFFICIAL CERTIFICATE FOR THE ENTRY INTO THE UNION FOR PLACING ON THE MARKET OF HONEY AND OTHER APICULTURE PRODUCTS INTENDED FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION

The template number shall not change. As stated above, this list of certificates will be updated systematically, with priority decided based on history of trade. The English language certificate [EUHGB] shall be available from 14 December 2019.

ANOTHER BLAST FROM THE PAST

Some may be interested in the following YouTube link to [Bee-keeping on the Move](#). Made by The National Film Board 1947 and available via the [National Film and Sound Archive of Australia](#). Thanks Paige McDonald for emailing the link to this wonderful footage.



NEW CHEMICAL REGISTRATIONS

Please see link to the [APVMA website](#) to view all information from the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines (APVMA) Gazette which is published fortnightly and contains:

- details of the registration of agricultural and veterinary chemical products and other approvals granted by the APVMA
- notices as required by the Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals Code (the Agvet Code) and related legislation
- a range of regulatory material issued by the APVMA.

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Friends of AHBIC Voluntary Contribution Form

Supporting Australia's national beekeeping industry with a voluntary contribution

Please complete this form and return by email to ahbic@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/>

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Your contribution is gratefully appreciated, thank you.