



Monthly NEWS

To: The Australian Honey Industry

From: Stephen Ware – Executive Director

August 2010 Update

AHBIC acknowledges the **beekeeper suppliers** who contribute via their packer/queen bee supplier to AHBIC. We urge beekeepers to support those Packers/Queen bee breeders who contribute to AHBIC.

**DOES YOUR HONEY BUYER(S) OR QUEENBEE SUPPLIER'S NAME APPEAR ON THIS LIST?
IF NOT, THEN ASK 'WHY NOT?' AHBIC WORKS FOR YOU!**

SUPPORT THOSE WHO SUPPORT YOUR INDUSTRY!

AB's Honey

Australian Queen Bee Exporters

Australian Queen Bee Breeders Association

Australian Honey Products

Bees Neez Apiaries

Bowman Family

Capilano Honey Limited

Dewar Apiaries

FCAAA

Gell's Honey

Honey Packers & Marketers Association

Hoskinson, H L & H M

Morgan, Trevor

Papworth, F & E

Pollination Association of WA

Pobke, Barry

Saxonbee Enterprises

Spring Gully Foods Pty Ltd

Stephens, R

Stevens, Graeme

Tasmanian Crop Pollination Association

Tasmanian Honey Company

Weatherhead, T & M

True Blue Honey

Weerona Apiaries

Wescobee Limited

Wilson, Col

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

AUSTRALIAN PLAGUE LOCUST SITUATION - AUGUST 2010

Australian Plague Locust (*Chortoicetes terminifera*)

Widespread swarm formation occurred in New South Wales, northern South Australia, northern Victoria and Southwest Queensland during early April after the fledging of the major nymph infestation during March. There were three generations of population increase over 2009-2010 as a result of widespread heavy rainfall and favourable habitat conditions in inland areas. Despite intensive control of nymphs of the third generation in New South Wales, eggs laid in autumn will produce a further generation of high density nymphs next spring.

Inter-agency meetings are continuing to plan and coordinate the response to the anticipated spring populations in New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia and Victoria. State agencies and industry groups are conducting landholder information meetings in areas likely to be affected. Information to assist landholders prepare for and implement locust control continues to be developed and is being provided through APLC and state agency websites, industry group newsletters and discussions at landholder meetings.

Migration to the south during April brought many swarms into the Murray Valley and Northeast regions of South Australia, Northwest and North Central Victoria and the southern Riverina in New South Wales. High density autumn egg laying followed immigration into these regions, and also occurred in other regions of New South Wales and Victoria. There were many reports of damage to autumn fodder, vegetable, canola and cereal crops. Swarm activity and densities declined during May and June, but sporadic egg laying continued in parts of Victoria and the Riverina throughout May. **The outlook is for a serious widespread nymph infestation in New South Wales, northern Victoria and eastern South Australia during spring, with some localised high density hatchings in Southwest Queensland also possible.** The plague situation, where numerous regions across several member states are affected by high densities of locusts, could continue during spring and summer if there is a high level of nymphal survival in spring.

In New South Wales swarms affected the Western, Darling, Central West, Lachlan, Riverina, Hume and Central North Livestock Health and Pest Authority (LHPA) areas during April and May. Migrations during April and May. Hatching of eggs will commence in late August in northern areas, during September in the Central West, Lachlan and Western LHPA areas and from the end of September in the Riverina.

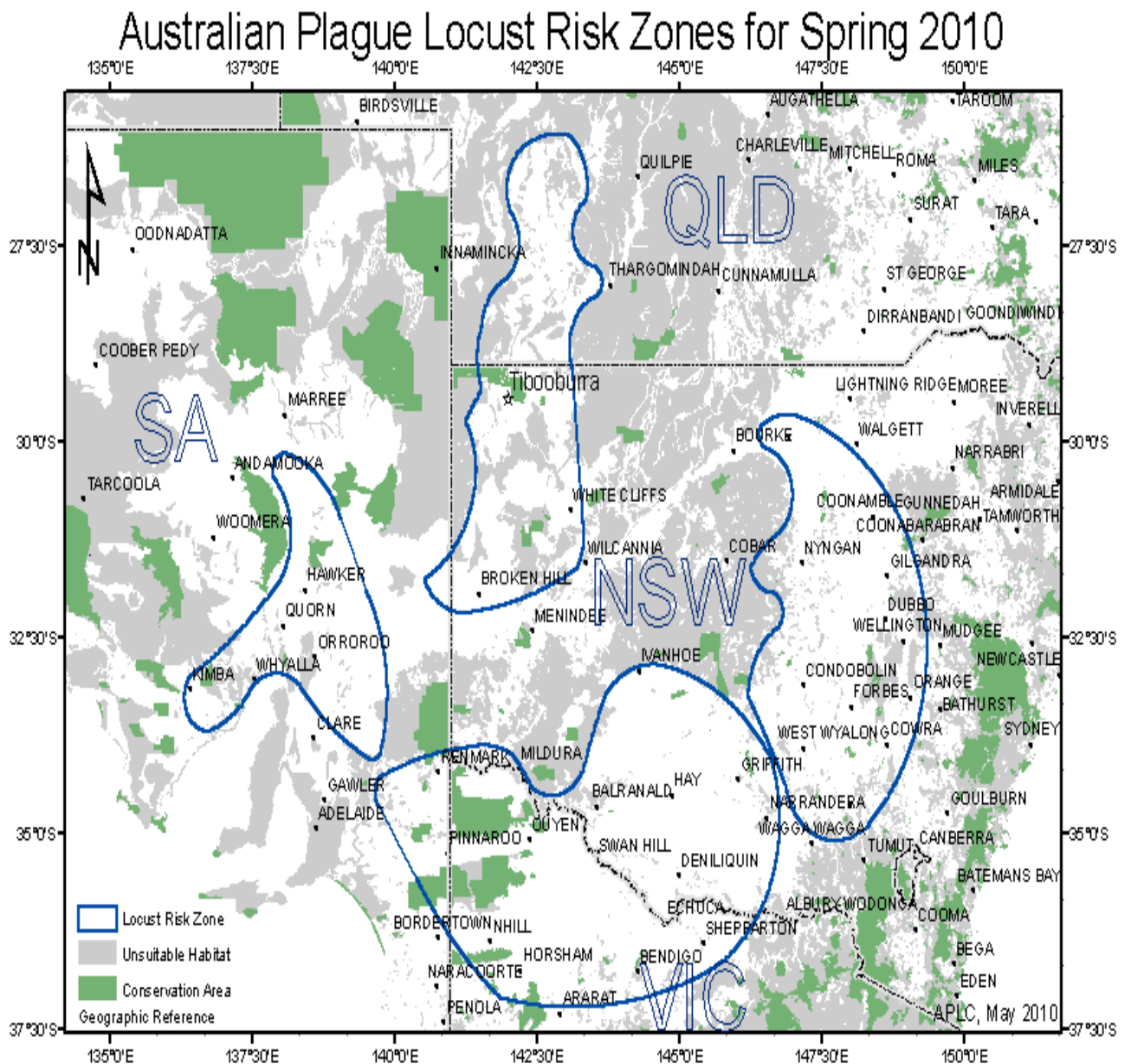
In South Australia southward migration from the Far North region of that state and from western New South Wales during the first week of April resulted in increased swarm activity in the southern Flinders Ranges area and throughout the Murray Valley region. Swarm activity and sporadic egg laying continued during May and June in some locations. Spring hatchings will commence in mid-September in the Hawker area and from the end of September in the Murray Valley.

Adult locust population levels continued to increase in northern Victoria during April. Migrations from New South Wales and within Victoria resulted in egg laying by swarms Mallee and Wimmera districts of the Northwest and in areas along the Murray River from Swan Hill to Echuca. Swarms were reported in the Bendigo and Shepparton districts of North Central Victoria and as far south as Horsham and Maryborough in western Victoria. Spring hatchings will commence at the end of September in Northwest Victoria, through to mid-October in areas south of Echuca and late October in the Horsham area.

The table of forecast development dates below is given as a guide to the expected emergence of nymphs in spring, but hatching will be distributed over a period of several weeks and timing will vary depending on local conditions and temperatures in late winter and early spring. The table has been modified to reflect temperatures recorded over the last decade rather than long-term averages, with the expectation that spring 2010 temperatures are likely to exceed 20th Century averages by approximately one degree.

Map of locust risk zones for spring 2010

This map identifies key risk zones for anticipated locust control activity during spring 2010. The zones are based on observations and reports of high density autumn egg laying, swarm activity during autumn and habitats suitable for egg laying. Some localised high density spring hatching is also likely in areas outside these zones.



Forecast development dates for indicative locations during spring 2010				
Location - NSW	Egg laying	Hatching	Mid-instar	Fledging
Brewarrina-Bourke	24 April	22 August	7 September	30 September
Tibooburra-Wanaaring	24 April	21 August	8 September	2 October
Broken Hill-Wilcannia	24 April	3 September	21 September	13 October
Ivanhoe-Hillston	16 April	8 September	26 September	17 October
Nyngan-Tottenham	24 April	9 September	24 September	16 October
Tullamore-Condobolin	16 April	27 September	12 October	1 November
Dubbo-Peak Hill	16 April	27 September	12 October	1 November
Parkes-Cowra	16 April	1 October	15 October	10 November
Forbes-West Wyalong	16 April	4 October	18 October	6 November
Hay-Balranald	16 April	26 September	11 October	31 October
Wagga-Cootamundra	16 April	18 October	1 November	26 November
Narrandera-Griffith	16 April	5 October	19 October	6 November
Jerilderie-Deniliquin	16 April	9 October	23 October	11 November
Location - Victoria	Egg laying	Hatching	Mid-instar	Fledging
Mildura-Ouyen	16 April	25 September	10 October	31 October
Swan Hill-Boort	16 April	6 October	19 October	10 November
Echuca-Bendigo	16 April	14 October	27 October	15 November
Shepparton-Tungamah	16 April	10 October	29 October	22 November
Nhill-Warracknabeal	16 April	16 October	1 November	19 November
Horsham-Stawell	16 April	21 October	3 November	22 November

Forecast development dates for indicative locations during spring 2010				
Location - NSW	Egg laying	Hatching	Mid-instar	Fledging
Location - SA	Egg laying	Hatching	Mid-instar	Fledging
Marree-Lyndhurst	16 April	16 August	27 August	20 September
Andamooka-Roxby	16 April	18 August	30 August	24 September
Hawker-Orroroo	16 April	18 September	3 October	24 October
Port Augusta-Quorn	16 April	8 September	26 September	17 October
Renmark-Morgan	16 April	26 September	10 October	24 October
Pinnaroo-Karoonda	16 April	28 September	12 October	6 November
Keith-Bordertown	16 April	21 October	2 November	22 November
Kimba-Cowell	16 April	30 September	15 October	5 November
Location - QLD	Egg laying	Hatching	Mid-instar	Fledging
Thargomindah	16 April	17 August	1 September	26 September

Forecast dates are based on development models for known or possible egg laying by adult populations and assume sufficient soil moisture for development after diapause. Dates are estimated using one degree above long-term average maximum temperatures, consistent with temperatures experienced over the last ten years and are therefore more likely to reflect the actual spring 2010 temperatures.

Dates indicate the start of the majority of the population entering the life stage. Actual egg laying occurred over an extended period and hatchings could extend for several weeks around the nominated dates. Egg development rate is sensitive to temperature variation in late winter and early spring and early hatchings have occurred in recent years. This table will be updated regularly as actual recorded temperatures become available. Please check this web page for updated forecast dates from mid-August.

MEETINGS PLANNED ACROSS NSW AS FARMERS URGED TO JOIN FIGHT AGAINST LOCUSTS

Media Release - 17 August 2010

Minister for Primary Industries, Steve Whan, today called on the State's farmers to join the State Government in its spring offensive against plague locusts. "Our success minimising the impact of this plague hinges on strong support from farmers and landholders," Minister Whan said.

"That's why community meetings will be held from Warialda, Moree and Walgett in the north-west through to Jerilderie, Narrandera and Rankins Springs in the Riverina. "Farmers are our frontline in this battle – a lot of effort is going into making sure they are in the best position when locusts begin to hatch. "Between now and mid-September about 50 meetings will be held across the State and more are being planned. "Co-ordinated by Livestock Health and Pest Authorities (LHPA), these meetings will brief farmers on the situation we face here in NSW and their role in our co-ordinated response."

Minister Whan said meetings will also be an opportunity for farmers and landholders to seek out information and ask questions of LHPA rangers. "The LHPAs have co-ordinated these meetings at a local level to deliver localised information," he said. "This includes predicted hatching dates, insecticide pick-up locations and contact details for reporting locust sightings. "Finding locusts early will be crucial to the success of the campaign to minimise the impact of locusts in what is expected to be the State's worst locust plague in 30 years."

The State Government has allocated \$18.5 million to help NSW battle the pest.

A complete list of Plague Locusts Information Meetings is available at:
www.lhpa.org.au/pests/locusts or www.agriculture.nsw.gov.au/locusts

AUSTRALIA TO FIGHT NZ APPLE IMPORT RULING

ABC News 10 August 2010

The Federal Government has vowed to fight the international decision to import apples from New Zealand.

The World Trade Organisation (WTO) says the exclusion restricts trade and there is not sufficient scientific backup to warrant crop loss concerns. The WTO lifted the 90-year ban in May, reigniting Australian farmers' fears of the devastating disease Fireblight crossing the Tasman.

Agriculture Minister Tony Burke says Australia has legitimate concerns.

"There's good opportunities for Australia, but none of that's worth compromising our biosecurity status," he said.

Pip Fruit New Zealand spokesman Peter Bevan says he is putting his faith in the WTO. "We've always argued there's an opportunity to grow the market rather than pinch Australia's share of it," he said.

The market's estimated worth to New Zealand is up to \$100 million annually.

APIS CERANA UPDATE

Advice 75– 22 July 2010

Finds, all within the RA, for the past fortnight up to Thursday 22 July are:

IP136 was a nest at Gordonvale
IP137 was a nest at Redlynch
IP138 was a swarm at Earlville
IP139 was a swarm at Manoora, a Cairns suburb
IP140 was a nest at Bentley Park
IP141 was a swarm at Portsmith
IP142 was a nest at Bentley Park
IP143 was a nest at Gordonvale
IP144 was a nest at Fishery Falls
IP145 was a swarm at Mt. Sheridan
IP146 was a nest at Aloomba
IP147 was a swarm at Edmonton
IP148 was a nest at Freshwater
IP149 was a swarm at Gordonvale
IP150 was a nest at Yungaburra
IP151 was a swarm at Gordonvale
IP152 was a nest at Gordonvale

Surveillance at Townsville and Innisfail has shown no cerana which is good news. The Townsville surveillance is a proactive one because the point has been raised, and now answered, as to whether cerana has gone further south.

The weather has been windy and overcast but the crews have been very successful in their beelining despite the weather.

The Cairns Show is on today and tomorrow and there will be a presence at the Show to engage the public. The public have been very helpful in this surveillance and eradication campaign.

Advice 76– 7 August, 2010

Finds, all within the RA, for the past fortnight up to Friday 6 August are:

IP153 was a swarm at Redlynch
IP154 was a nest at Bentley Park
IP155 was a nest at East Trinity
IP156 was a swarm at Gordonvale
IP157 was a nest at the Cairns Esplanade
IP158 was a swarm at Trinity Beach
IP159 was a swarm at Lake Placid, a Cairns suburb
IP160 was a nest at East Trinity
IP161 was a nest at East Trinity

IP162 was a nest at East Trinity

IP163 was a nest at Yarrabah

IP164 was a nest at Redbank, which is between Cairns City and Gordonvale

IP165 was a swarm at Bentley Park

IP166 was a swarm at Edmonton

Presently there are several areas within the RA where foraging bees have been found and these are being bee lined.

Sweeping outside the RA in Innisfail and Townsville has not shown up any cerana.

Community engagement at public events is still taking place and the public still are a beneficial source of information. A presentation to the Queensland Education Department Groundsman and Janitor meeting was well worthwhile with a positive find coming from contact after the presentation.

The bee eater roosts continue to be monitored with collection of the pellets. There have been no positives from these pellets in recent collections.

Advice 77– 21 August 2010

Finds, all within the RA, for the past fortnight up to Friday 20 August are:

IP167 was a nest at Gordonvale

IP168 was a nest at Mt. Peter

IP169 was a nest at Glen Allyn (not far from Lake Eacham)

IP170 was a nest at Edmonton

IP 171 was a nest at Gordonvale

IP172 was a nest at Yarrabah

IP173 was a nest at Gordonvale

IP174 was a nest at Gordonvale

IP175 was a swarm at Portsmouth

IP176 was a nest at Aloomba

IP177 was a nest at Goldsborough

IP178 was a nest at Bentley Park

Presently there are several areas within the RA where foraging bees have been found and these are being bee lined.

One thing that is coming to the fore now is the skills of the surveillance teams. They are now very skilled at beelining and can find nest within a day or so. Occasionally there are some that present a bigger challenge but they do win in the end.

The weather is fine some times and showery others. Not typical of the north for this time of the year.

The dog handler position has closed and applicants are being assessed.

Trevor Weatherhead

AHBIC PROFILE – TREVOR WEATHERHEAD

If you have turned on the TV or radio in the past month, chances are you would have tuned into AHBIC Executive Committee Member Trevor Weatherhead spreading the word about his favourite subject – bees and honey.

With Queensland's annual *Ekka* drawing to a close and record crowds visiting the popular Honey Court, which is hosted by the Queensland Beekeepers' Association (QBA), Trevor has been busy giving interviews on honey, bees and pollination for shows such as radio's *Country Hour*. Trevor, who is in his second term as QBA President, has been involved in the organization of the Honey Court since 1979. However, much of the accolades for the success of the *Ekka's* Honey Court must go to wife, Marion, who has finally stepped down after running the stand so professionally for the past 11 years.

Always maximizing his opportunities to advertise the benefits of honey, Trevor was a guest recently on cricket legend Matthew Hayden's new TV show *Home Ground*. The six-part series televised on the Lifestyle Channel combines cooking and garden makeovers turning Matthew Hayden's backyard in Kingaroy, Queensland into a mini farm bursting with fresh produce and a couple of beehives.

On the show, Hayden visits Trevor and Marion's honey farm, Weather-Bee Apiaries at Peak Crossing, south west of Brisbane, to learn about the production of honey and how it is extracted. Hayden takes a jar of the extracted honey back to Kingaroy to be used as the "prime ingredient" in his recipe *Honey Pork with Bok Choy* – excellent publicity for the honey industry!

While Trevor, in partnership with Marion, produced 25 tonne of honey last year, their main business is Queen Bee Breeding. Sales of their Italian Queens go to beekeepers throughout Queensland, NSW and Victoria.

However, many consider Trevor's main contribution to the honey industry is his tireless efforts in preventing the greatest pest threat to the honeybee, Varroa Mites, from entering Australia. As Chair of the Queensland Quarantine Committee, with his band of volunteers, he is involved in the surveillance and eradication of the Asian honey bee (*Apis cerana*) in Cairns and the continual liaison between industry and the DPI. There are visits to Cairns and fortnightly telephone hook-ups at which the latest developments are discussed and the information relayed to industry via industry newsletters etc. The publicity generated by the Asian bee incursions in Cairns has been ongoing and Trevor continues to give many radio and newspaper interviews on the subject.

Surprisingly, Trevor still finds time to play a bit of weekend golf – after he has worked his way through Marion's to-do list of chores!

FOOD SECURITY PLAN ESSENTIAL FOR THE NATIONAL INTEREST

Courtesy "The Drum Unleashed" 27 July 2010 Senator Christine Milne, Deputy Leader of the Australian Greens

As TV programs from Masterchef to Food Safari show, we Australians love our food. But many of us, including our governments, are complacent about where it is grown and who produces it.

While people discuss the threat of obesity in the suburbs and in the seat of power, nobody talks about the threat of global food scarcity. No one in Government seems worried about where the

world will source its food or the consequences of shortages. Few are concerned about land being bought by overseas interests, about farmers being driven from the land by low farm gate prices and trade rules which discriminate against Australian growers. In fact, the Labor government in its 2010-11 budget cut programmes for natural resource management and land stewardship in the face of climate change and peak oil.

The reality should be very different. The world has embarked on a dangerous era of food insecurity and imperialism which will fuel conflict and famine if it is ignored. Australia is not immune. Land and water should be treated as strategic resources by us as they are by many in the world. The Greens want Australia's food producing land secured in terms of ecological sustainability and ownership, and the men and women on the land appropriately rewarded for producing food.

This country needs a food security plan and it needs it now. We must produce food for ourselves and export to help meet global demand or risk having others take from us our capacity to do so because we were too slow to realise what was happening.

It is not enough for the Australian government to keep on talking up free trade and WTO rules. That era effectively ended with the food riots in 2007-2008 as a result of climate change, peak oil, the rush to biofuels and global population growth. Importing countries lost faith in trade rules when food exporting countries like Russia, Argentina and Vietnam limited or banned the export of wheat and rice so as to feed their own people. That left importers with food shortages and riots. At that point realising that the market could not be relied upon to supply food, countries which have outgrown their own land and water resources like China, India, Saudi Arabia, South Korea, Kuwait, United Arab Emirates and Qatar embraced a global land and water acquisition plan. They intend to buy land and water in other countries from which to feed their own people. They will also send their own workers to those countries to produce the food – and if necessary employ security forces to protect it.

Pakistan has offered 400,000 hectares of agricultural land for sale with an agreement to provide a security force to guard the food crops. A Chinese firm has secured rights to 2.8 million hectares of the Congo on which to produce palm oil for cooking and fuel. South Korea has 690,000 hectares in the Sudan for growing wheat which will take water from the Nile and threaten Egypt's food security downstream. Hunger and conflict can only be the result.

Globally it is impossible to find out just how many land acquisition agreements have been signed, how much land has been taken over and in which countries, except that Africa is the biggest target. The World Bank was supposed to release a report in December 2009 but has not done so yet. What is known is that Australia is third on the list of countries being approached for their land in the Asia Pacific. In international foray new rules need to be set to underpin food security. Any foreign investment in food production needs to be a win-win for both the importer and exporter to avoid exploitation that is currently occurring.

In Australia, Chinese interests are looking at buying dairy farms in Tasmania and controlling interests in sugar mills in Queensland. It is impossible to find out how many hectares of Australian farm land have already been bought because the Foreign Investment Review Board does not keep track. How can we plan for food security if we do not even collect relevant information? In a desert nation like Australia, it is madness to sell off the farm and its water or to undervalue the skills of our food growers and researchers. Our children will never forgive us if we become tenant

farmers in our own country. But what recourse do farmers have when they are not valued and cannot make a living and need to sell to exit the farm with dignity?

Government policies like free trade agreements which take no account of environmental laws or wage differences make it impossible for farmers to compete with foreign-grown products no matter how efficient Australian farmers are.

Freeing up previously farmed land on the edge of cities for land developments, 100% tax deductions for managed Investment schemes and carbon sink forests, and competition between farmers and coal miners are driving up land prices and driving out food producers.

The failure of the ACCC to properly assess the impacts of food processor mergers and the failure of national competition policy to increase competition are treated with a shrug of the shoulders. They need to be held to account and an inquiry into National Competition Policy is long overdue.

The supermarket duopoly and the removal of anti price discrimination provisions in the Trade Practices Act drive farm gate prices permanently downwards yet the Productivity Commission cannot find a problem.

Climate change is increasing seasonal rainfall uncertainty and peak oil is driving up fertiliser and transport prices whilst governments reduce support for sustainable agricultural practices and agricultural research and development. Land and Water Australia was abolished at a time when we need it most.

The world needs a whole new trade regime that maximises food production where it can be grown best and which guarantees fair trade in food products and equitable access for all countries. We must not keep going down the road of land grabs to feed those who can afford it at the expense of those billions who cannot.

STUDY OF FOOD GROWERS

We are a group of researchers at the University of Western Sydney and Murdoch University in Western Australia studying various food growing sectors, including your sector, concerning socio-economic, entrepreneurship, environmental and other issues. In the last few years we have conducted studies in Western Australia among marron, olive and grape growers studying these same issues. If you would like, we could send you copies of the full articles that have been published in international journals.

Today, we started a nationwide project to study horticultural and other food growing businesses. We are hoping to involve as many growers in the horticultural and similar sectors as we can possibly reach to study the potential for adding value to farm produce. By 'adding value' we mean for instance, maximising foods / produce, including those that may not necessarily sell as 'premium,' for instance, making jellies, jams, sauces, pickles, and other food products. We are also very interested in studying environmental concerns (e.g., droughts, floods, water concerns, etc.) that may be affecting growers of horticultural operations /farms.

For this project we plan to collect data using an online questionnaire. The address or URL link to the questionnaire is: www.surveymonkey.com/s/grower However, dissemination of the online questionnaire may be an issue as we do not have access to any operator/farmer database or

directory, and only relatively few addresses are available on the internet (e.g., farms that are open to the public). **Please note that we do not need to know the contact details of potential recipients**, but we would like to ask for your assistance, if possible, in disseminating the online questionnaire (the URL link) among the members of your association.

This study that focuses on adding value to foods as well as on environmental concerns has potentially many benefits for farmers, horticultural associations, consumers, and society in general. For example, added information could be used by local farmers and cooperatives in their efforts to maximise food production, and / or by government and other agencies to assist the farming community in achieving those objectives. In turn, any assistance could also lead to more food security and more food sources with subsequent benefits for growers and consumers.

We would be happy to share any information with you, for example, in the form of an interim or final report. Please let us know if you would be able to assist us.

Abel D. Alonso, PhD,
Researcher / Lecturer
Office EQ 1.10, School of Management, University of Western Sydney
Locked Bag 1797, Penrith South DC, NSW 1797, AUSTRALIA
Telephone: (02) 9685 9436; Fax: (02) 9685 9593
Email: a.duartealonso@uws.edu.au
Brief profile: http://uws.edu.au/management/som/academic_profiles/doctor_abel_d._alonso/

WORK WANTED

Heather Clay, Chief Executive Officer of the Canadian Honey Council, kindly suggested that I write you to inquire about the possibility of employment as a beekeeper. I seek seasonal employment anytime between November and early May, since I am presently seasonally employed as an interpreter by Parks Canada.

I do have experience as a beekeeper, having learned the craft from my father who runs a commercial operation producing honey and pollination services. Furthermore, I have kept my own hives as a hobbyist in the past, and still assist my father whenever possible.

I am looking for an opportunity in Australia because working in the southern hemisphere during our winter would be an ideal opportunity for me to pursue my interest in beekeeping for the duration of our off-season.

If you wish to arrange for an interview or would like more information please contact me at the above phone number or preferably by e-mail.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Christopher Englehart
2362 Route 132 Greater Lakeburn, New Brunswick, Canada, E1H 1Z4
Tel. : (506) 858-8619
Email: englehar@ualberta.ca



HPMAA Report – August 2010

Trading news – generally sales are tough for all in the grocery business and heavy price cutting is occurring. Overall the grocery industry is not selling any more volume and it can even be argued that consumers are holding back as a result of higher interest rates, the economic situation and the pending Federal elections. Pressure therefore from supermarket groups here, and overseas, for promotions, discounts or product deletions due to down ranging gives great concern to all.

Honey news – there is a mixed situation of supply of honey on hand with packers at present. Some have good stocks, others adequate and a further group living a bit more hand to mouth. From a production perspective on forward crops overall things seem optimistic for the new season although some states need more rain to get a good crop from Christmas onwards.

World market – world bulk honey prices remain under pressure but the shorter supply availability due to unusual weather patterns is assisting in limiting any major price drop. All the same we still see some silly prices coming out of China, India and Vietnam which lowers the market average price.

World market – retail packed honey prices for general Australian honey shows we are getting uncompetitive in the main stream of things in the Middle East or many Asian markets. Specialty niche markets are being pursued by many packers who all look at ways of finding better returns. Specialty honeys like Leatherwood, Jarrah, organic or Australian Manuka/Jelly bush all find their own markets at higher values.

Exports – for the period ending June 2010 the official ABS data showed:

BULK	2009 Ton's	2010 Ton's	Change
Kg	4284	4601	7.4%
\$\$\$	17,036,489	19,554,668	
Repacked			
Kg	3802	2724	-20%
\$\$\$	20,641,268	14,681,112	

The change in volume for value added repackaged honey being exported from Australia is mostly as a result of a 20% rise in the exchange rate which has seen product been withdrawn from markets.

Eduard Planken – *President HPMAA*

THE POLLINATION PROGRAM

Media Release - 16 August 2010

Australian crops at risk from reliance on wild honeybees

An over-reliance on wild honeybees by pollination-responsive crop producers in Australia may compromise the future resilience of our \$30 billion horticulture and agriculture sector.

A report released today, *Pollination Aware*, highlights the significant risks associated with relying on incidental pollination and quantifies the likely demand for paid pollination services should anything happen to these escaped European honeybee populations.

Among the most severe threat to agricultural production is that posed by exotic pests and diseases of honeybees, such as the highly destructive Varroa mite.

Australia is one of the last countries to resist a Varroa mite outbreak, which would decimate wild honeybee colonies, in turn devastating producers who rely on them to pollinate their crops.

Pollination Aware consolidates available information and for the first time puts a value on pollination services for 35 different commodity groups, across fruits, vegetables and pastures, by analysing the effect of honeybees on production in these industries.

It's estimated that a staggering 65 per cent of agricultural production in Australia relies on honeybees. Some industries, such as almonds, apples, pears and cherries, rely almost totally on honeybees for fruit and nut production.

The report is a key piece of research from the Pollination Program, a research and development strategy jointly funded by the Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation (RIRDC), Horticulture Australia Limited (HAL) and the Australian Government.

The Pollination Program aims to secure the pollination of Australia's horticultural and agricultural crops into the future on a sustainable and profitable basis. Research and development in this program is primarily aimed at raising awareness to protect pollination in Australia.

Due to the large number of wild European honeybees in Australia, the vital role of pollination is not widely recognised or valued and only a small proportion of agricultural producers manage the process through paid pollination.

Gerald Martin, Chairman of the Pollination R&D Advisory Committee, says gathering current knowledge on pollination and gaining an overview of supply and demand is seen as critical by the scientific community. "Around one in three mouthfuls of food that we eat comes directly or indirectly from pollination," Mr Martin said.

"It is vital that we manage potential risks and determine our future priorities for investment and funding to both maintain - and improve - crop yields and harvest quality," Mr Martin said.

"Australia is fortunate to have a massive population of wild honeybees that pollinate our crops, but if these were decimated by Varroa mite, producers would have limited options in sourcing managed beehives, which would also suffer heavy losses.

“The report also points out that a heavy reliance on this incidental pollination means the yield and quality of produce is often not reaching its potential because plants are not being pollinated at optimal levels – compromising profits.

“*Pollination Aware* provides for the first time an analysis of pollination-responsive crops in this country and outlines how we can protect our valuable agricultural output by developing a larger apiary industry.”

According to the report, Varroa mite could ‘diminish to insignificance’ the contribution from incidental pollination within 5- 10 years.

The study suggests that if pollination by wild European honeybees was eliminated by Varroa mite, almost 480,000 colonies of honeybees would be needed to provide pollination services every September. Peak demand could lift this to 750,000 – far exceeding current apiary capability.

Apiarists would also incur significant costs from the presence of a serious pest or disease to monitor, manage and maintain colony strength. The economic impact when it became established in North America in the 1980s is estimated to be up to US\$14.6 billion.

While the apiary industry’s highest priority is to resist exotic pests and diseases, the report is seen as a first step in addressing both the potential challenges and future opportunities of the pollination industry.

To download or receive a printed copy of the *Pollination Aware* report or one of the 35 crop-specific case studies visit the Pollination page of the RIRDC website (www.rirdc.gov.au)

The Pollination Program is a jointly funded partnership with the Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation (RIRDC), Horticulture Australia Limited (HAL) and the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF). The Pollination Program is managed by RIRDC and aims to secure the pollination of Australia’s horticultural and agricultural crops into the future on a sustainable and profitable basis. Research and development in this program is primarily to raise awareness to protect pollination in Australia.

RIRDC funds for the program are provided by the Honeybee Program, with industry levies matched by funds provided by the Australian Government. Funding from HAL for the program is from the apple and pear, almond, avocado, cherry, vegetable and summerfruit levies and voluntary contributions from the dried prune and melon industries, with matched funds from the Australian Government.

AHBIC FUNDING

Attached is a letter to **all beekeepers** regarding funding. Please pass this letter on to all your members. Please note also that to receive a monthly AHBIC Newsletter via email just send your email address to the AHBIC office: ahbic@honeybee.org.au

At the Executive Meeting held on 9 August 2010 it was also resolved:

“That in future smaller packers that are not part of an agreement to pay monies to AHBIC as a result of their proposed contribution would be set at 0.2cents per kilogram.”