



AUSTRALIAN HONEY BEE INDUSTRY COUNCIL

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AUSTRALIAN HONEY INDUSTRY MONTHLY REVIEW

To: The Australian Honey Industry
From Stephen Ware – Executive Director
Re: June 2009 Update

AB's Honey
Australian Honey Products
Beechworth Honey
Bees Neez Apiaries
Capilano Honey Limited
Dewar Apiaries
Honey DownUnder
H L & H M Hoskinson
I N & JE Mills
Pollination Association of WA

Saxonbee Enterprises
Spring Gully Foods Pty Ltd
Stephens, R
Tasmanian Crop Pollination Association
Tasmanian Honey Company
Walkabout Apiaries
T & M Weatherhead
Weerona Apiaries
Wescobee Limited

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

**Does your honey buyer's or queen bee supplier's name appear on this list?
If not, then ask 'why not?'**

SUPPORT THOSE WHO SUPPORT YOUR INDUSTRY!

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The AHBIC Annual General Meeting and Conference will be held on 12 & 13 July 2009 at Rydges Parramatta Hotel. This is to be followed by an AHBIC Executive Meeting on the afternoon of 13 July.

Details of accommodation arrangements are as follows:

Venue: Rydges Parramatta Hotel
116 James Ruse Drive
Rosehill Sydney NSW
Phone: + 61 2 8863 7600
Fax: + 61 2 8863 7601
Email: reservations_parramatta@rydges.com
Web: www.rydges.com

Delegates should make their own travel and accommodation bookings direct. This information is provided early so that delegates may obtain the best airfares.

Rydges has a very competitive rate of \$140 a night. This is an exceptionally good rate for Sydney and is valid for use from the 7/07/09 up until the 14/07/09. Book direct with the hotel
Phone: 1300 857 922 or email reservations_parramatta@rydges.com (be sure to mention that you are attending the Conference).

Rydges has also block booked 30 rooms opposite them at the Waldorf – 02 8837 8000 (these are one bedroom serviced apartments). There is free parking at Rydges as well.

A registration form is attached for your convenience

AUSTRALIAN TAX OFFICE NEWS

Tax Office Measures to help small businesses with short term cashflow problems

The Tax Office recently announced measures to help small businesses (ie businesses with annual turnover of less than \$2 million) that are struggling to pay their tax liabilities as a result of the global financial crisis.

First Measure

For small businesses with a debt outstanding on an activity statement can apply for an interest free payment arrangement with the Tax Office from now until 30 June 2010. The Tax Office will not charge interest for a maximum period of 12 months, provided the payment arrangement is maintained.

Second Measure

Small businesses will also have the opportunity to request a deferral of payment on their next activity statement. Eligible businesses with short term cash flow problems that pay quarterly and annually may be granted a deferral of up to two months, while those who pay monthly are eligible for a deferral of up to one month. The Activity Statements will still need to be lodged on time but no interest will be charged for the period of the deferral.

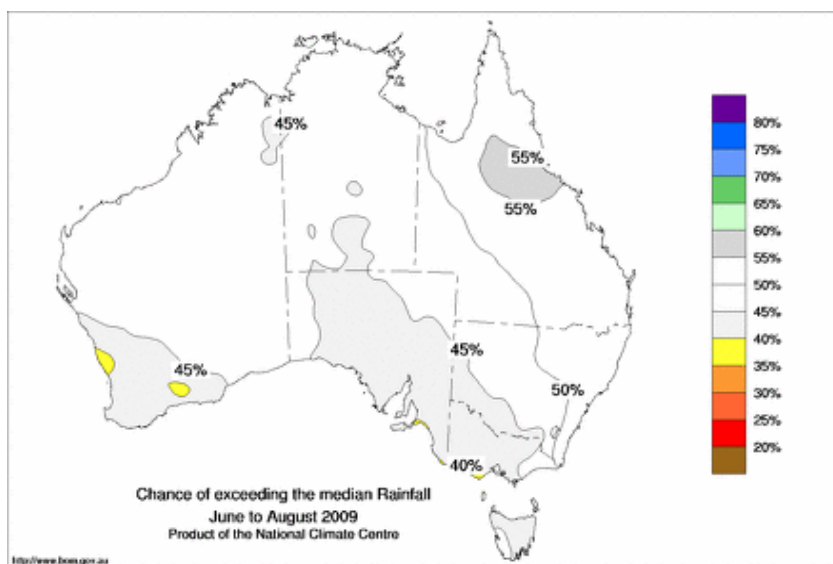
NATIONAL SEASONAL RAINFALL OUTLOOK - PROBABILITIES FOR WINTER 2009

Bureau of Meteorology 26 May 2009

No Strong Shifts in Winter Rainfall Odds

The national outlook for total rainfall over winter (June to August), shows no strong shifts in the odds favouring either wetter or drier conditions. In other words the chances of above normal falls are about the same as the chances of below normal. The exceptions are in a few small patches in the south within which there are moderate shifts in the odds favouring a drier than average season.

The pattern of seasonal rainfall odds across Australia is a result of recent warm conditions in the Indian Ocean and an increasing level of warmth in the Pacific. The influences from these two oceans counteract each other in eastern Queensland and northern NSW: the Indian Ocean pattern promotes wetter conditions while the Pacific biases the climate towards a drier than normal season.



For the June to August period, the chance of exceeding [median rainfall](#) is between 40 and 55% in most parts of the country (see map). This means that for every ten years with ocean patterns like the current, about four or five years are expected to be wetter than average during winter, while about five or six years are expected to be drier.

In a few small patches in WA, SA and Victoria, the chances of a wetter than normal winter drop below 40% indicating an increased risk of dry conditions.

Under the WATL part of the Bureau's website, there is an expanded set of seasonal [rainfall outlook maps and tables](#), including the probabilities of seasonal rainfall exceeding given totals (e.g. 200 mm).

Outlook [confidence](#) is related to how consistently the Pacific and Indian Oceans affect Australian rainfall. During winter, history shows this influence to be moderately consistent across much of Queensland, the NT, NSW and Victoria, but generally weakly consistent elsewhere across the country, reaching moderate only in patches (see [background information](#)).

Recent trends in Pacific climate patterns and the latest outputs from computer models indicate an increased risk of an El Niño developing during winter and spring. The SOI is approximately -11 for the 30 days ending 23 May. For routine updates and comprehensive discussion on any developments please see the [ENSO Wrap-Up](#).

POLLINATION AUSTRALIA UPDATE

Pollination Australia Alliance

As agreed at our last meeting in Sydney on 10 March, we have been working towards formalisation of the Pollination Australia alliance. "Pollination Australia" has now been successfully registered as a Business Name in South Australia, with an associated ABN: 19 769 901 897 and TFN: 896 749 474. A bank account has been opened and the first payment from L'Oreal Paris has been received into this account. A proposed constitution will be circulated to members for consideration later this week. Once lodged this establish Pollination Australia as an incorporated association in South Australia, registered with ASIC for Australia-wide trading.

Pollination R&D Program

The draft Five Year Pollination R&D plan was recently presented to the RIRDC Board. Once agreed with HAL and finalised, hard copies of the plan will be distributed and available to Pollination Australia members. The plan will then set the guide for future R&D activities. Funding contributions to the Pollination R&D program for 2009/10 are in the process of being confirmed by both HAL and RIRDC, with an expected total funding base of around \$380,000 for the coming year. Once final figures are confirmed, this too will be circulated to members.

The R&D plan also includes requirements for the composition and establishment of a Pollination R&D Advisory Committee (currently operating as an interim committee). Pollination Australia will then be able to formally nominate representatives for this committee to oversee the R&D program going forward. Three pollination R&D projects have been contracted to date:

1. Simulation Exercise for Pollination Industries (with Plant Health Australia)

This project is now well underway, with the first workshop held in Melbourne last Wednesday, 10th June. This exercise brought together representatives from state and federal government, spanning both animal and plant sectors, in addition to representatives from PHA, AHA and industry. A Varroa incursion was simulated, to explore the current mechanisms for managing such an incursion. The day highlighted potential gaps in the current management system, which were constructively and positively explored by all parties present. This workshop focussed purely on an eradication phase in response to a Varroa incursion. A second workshop is tentatively scheduled for 19th August to explore long-term management strategies.

2. Future Surveillance Needs for Bee Biosecurity (with CSIRO)

A workshop will be held in Canberra on 16 June with key stakeholders from industry, CSIRO, DAFF and state Departments of Agriculture. The aim of the workshop is to discuss and assess options for on-going surveillance for bee pest and disease incursions, and assess the potential costs and benefits associated with each.

3. Pollination Aware: Its Importance to Australia (with Dr Rob Keogh, Strategen)

A third project is in the process of being contracted; this will undertake development of a pollination manual that provides a central point of information about pollination requirements for some 60 different crops, including all HAL commodities and a range of grains products. The manual is intended to serve as a resource for subsequent use in a number of other projects and exercises aimed at optimal delivery of national pollination requirements, and options for their most effective maintenance in the event of incursion of bee pests or diseases.

Proposed Changes to the Emergency Plant Pest Response Deed (EPPRD)

At a recent meeting of PHA members, there was general support for the inclusion of bee pests affecting pollination-reliant industries in the EPPRD. This is an important change for pollination dependent industries, as it will mean that an incursion affecting honeybees will trigger a response under the Plant Deed, rather than the Animal Deed, as is currently the case. As a result, "Affected" pollination dependent industries will then be included in the consultation and decision making process and cost sharing for a response and other benefits like owner reimbursement will be applicable. Pollination reliant industries will also be involved in the categorisation process for each pest affecting honeybees, which will then determine "Affected" parties and the relevant cost sharing arrangements for each individual pest incursion. It is anticipated that a formal proposal will be put to PHA members at the next EPPRD Signatories meeting in October. The relevance and importance of this proposed change was also recognised and reinforced at the Simulation Workshop described above.

Julie Haslett - Interim Secretary
15 June 2009

APIS CERANA INCURSION

The regular phone hook-up took place today with QBA President Rodney Ruge, joining in from Adelaide, and myself. Since the Advice 46 there have been two (2) more finds.

IP28 was found on 1 June in a shed at Mooroolooloolo. The nest, upon examination, turned out to be a drone layer or laying worker. This nest may have been the source of the swarm, IP25, which was very close by, and contained an unusually high number of drones. The nest was destroyed.

Then on 5 June, at Mooroolooloolo, sweep netting resulted in the finding of a nest, IP29. The nest entrance was located about 1 metre up in a weep hole in the bricks of a house. The nest has been destroyed. The chances of retrieval of this nest are not very high due to its location.

Since then no more cerana have been found.

The other activities for the fortnight consist of checking sugar feeding stations. Only mellifera is being found on these stations.

The soya flour has been received from Warren Jones and to date no bees, other than some Trigona, have been working it. It is still being trialled and detailed records have been kept of the inspections of the feeding stations.

There has been no activity at Goldsborough Valley for about 10 days. This area continues to be monitored. At this stage there is no reason for concern as you will recall that IP's 18 & 19 had activity in a similar vein and they were eventually found.

Weather in Cairns is getting cold for the locals. The minimum this week was 16 degrees. Maximums are up around 28.

We await the outcome of the meeting of CEO's, both state and federal, to see what will happen re funding next financial year.

The next phone hook-up is scheduled for Friday 26 June. So the next Advice will be issued after that phone hook-up unless there are some unforeseen developments in the meantime.

Trevor Weatherhead - 12 June 2009

EXPORT MATTERS

Export Matters- Beeswax and bee by-products to the European Union, progress towards new regulation for the export honey industry and changes in AQIS.

I would like to touch on two issues that will have an impact on exports of honey and bee products. These are the listing of establishments sending bee by-products to the European Union and the proposed Export Control (Honey and Bee Product) Orders.

The European Commission will be reviewing Regulation 1774/2002/EC in the near future. This regulation covers animal by-products, including bee by-products. The Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS) has received preliminary advice that the Commission will request a list of all establishments producing animal by-products that are eligible for export to the European Union (EU), including establishments exporting bee by-products.

AQIS will maintain a formal list of all apiary by-product establishments that want access to the EU and will send this list to the Commission. I have already contacted known exporters of by-products by email or telephone and thank everyone that has responded. However, the response was less than I expected and therefore I urge everyone that wants to be eligible to send bee by-products to the EU in the future to contact me. There is no cost linked to this listing.

Certain markets require regulatory control of honey by the exporting country and therefore AQIS has been developing a set of Export Control (Honey and Bee Product) Orders in consultation with the honeybee industry. These Orders will sit under the *Export Control Act 1982* and are necessary for market access to the EU, Canada and some other destinations. These Orders will only apply for honey and bee products intended for export and will have no impact on honey for the Australian market. The object of both AQIS and the industry has been to meet the requirements of overseas markets with as little cost to the industry as possible.

The development of these Orders is progressing and AQIS will be releasing an exposure draft package, which will explain the need for the Orders, the approach we have taken and a draft of the new Orders. Everyone can provide comment on this exposure draft.

On a final note, AQIS is changing. AQIS will become part of a Biosecurity statutory authority and will no longer be a Division of the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry. The new authority will join AQIS with Biosecurity Australia and parts of Product Integrity, Plant and Animal Health Division, plus other areas with related responsibilities. The new body will have as one of its aims the provision of a seamless service for our export clients, covering animal health, food safety and market access.

I will remain as your contact for all policy issues relating to the export of honey, therefore please contact me, if you require further explanation of the information above. Contact your regional AQIS officer for general assistance in getting your product overseas.

Fay Stenhouse

Residue Section

Animal Products Market Access Branch

Email: fay.stenhouse@aqis.gov.au

Ph. (02) 6272 5965

HONEY MAY HOLD KEY TO BEATING HOSPITAL SUPERBUG

AAP - 17 June 2009

Australian researchers have identified a type of bacteria-blasting honey capable of taking on the superbugs that have infected the nation's hospitals.

It's well known that honey has anti-bacterial properties but scientists from the University of Sydney say a particular type derived from native tea tree is especially potent.

They believe it could offer a solution to the growing resistance of bacteria, such as the superbug known as MRSA, to conventional antibiotics.

"Most bacteria that cause infections in hospitals are resistant to at least one antibiotic and there is an urgent need for new ways to treat and control surface infections," says Associate Professor Dee Carter, of the university's School of Molecular and Microbial Biosciences.

"But bugs that are resistant to a huge variety of antibiotics are not resistant to honey ... we've never seen an organism that has any kind of intrinsic resistance."

Dr Carter, working alongside Dr Shona Blair, tested honey produced by bees that fed on *Leptospermum*, commonly known as tea tree. She said the honey worked against bacteria in a number of ways.

It was a bad growth environment for bacteria because it was mildly acidic with high sugar levels. It also contained a precursor chemical to hydroperoxide and the molecule methylglyoxal, both toxic to bacterial cells.

The honey appeared to have properties, not yet understood, which prevented bacteria from developing a resistance despite tests designed to induce such a response.

In particular, staphylococcus bacteria - such as MRSA or methicillin-resistant staphylococcus aureus - were "very sensitive" to the honey and seemed to suffer "multi-system failures," Dr Carter said.

"Our research is the first to clearly show these honey-based products could, in many cases, replace antibiotic creams on wounds and equipment such as catheters," she said.

"Using honey as an intermediate treatment could also prolong the life of antibiotics."

Medicinal applications involving honey, such as impregnated bandages, have been developed but Dr Carter said they were not yet widely used in hospitals.

"People think, 'Honey? That's a bit of a joke'," she said.

"If it had more of a chemical (sounding name) ... it would probably get better acceptance. "But it's not just a homemade recipe; it's got scientific validation behind it."

The research is published online in the European Journal of Clinical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases.

RIRDC BEE SURVEILLANCE WORKSHOP

16 June 2009

The Workshop was attended by sixteen and chaired by Simon Barry from CSIRO Mathematical and Information Science Section.

The following State Government apiary staff attended: Doug Somerville and Nicholas Annand, NSW Hamish Lamb QLD, Joe Riordan Victoria, Michael Stedman South Australia, Chairman of AHBIC Lindsay Bourke, Dr Denis Anderson CSIRO, other CSIRO scientists, Iain East from DAFF, Dr David Dall from RIRDC and consultants involved in this RIRDC funded project .

The workshop was held to consider future and current surveillance needs for Honey Bee Biosecurity, every participant contributed to the discussions.

The annual benefit of mite exclusion to Australia's plant industries is between 43.5 million and 102.2 million dollar.

The workshop discussed existing programs as follows:

As part of AQIS International vessel clearance, masters en route to Australia are required to report any detection of bees to AQIS who respond to any report and instruct that bees are to be destroyed before arriving at an Australian port.

Border inspections by AQIS also include cargo inspections and wharf surveillance working closely with port workers to ensure bee sightings are reported.

Northern Australia Quarantine Strategy focuses on pests and diseases with potential to enter Australia including Apis species and the mites they may carry that are a threat to Australian beekeeping.

The National Sentinel Hive Program was established in 2000 and currently sites monitor 26 ports in Australia.

Bait hives have been established round high risk ports in Tasmania, South Australia, Victoria, Queensland and New South Wales.

The program also monitors pheromone baited log traps for Asian honeybees in Darwin, Gove, Cairns and Brisbane and there are plans to be install them in some Tasmanian ports.

In 2007 Queensland surveyed 43 apiaries for external parasites using miticides strips and sticky paper, none were found.

Victoria and NSW have several beekeepers undertaking sugar shaking.

Interstate movement also require health certificate.

Detector Dogs that can detect honeybees are used at airports and the mail exchange. The research staff involved in this project will be addressing all the concerns and options to determine future bee Biosecurity arrangements.

The workshop looked at a pathway analysis for the introduction of exotic bees and associated parasite they carry, only one component of this large project to help government and industry make decisions about present and future protection arrangements such as industry wide monitoring, remote detection, bee free zones and the role of the Honeybee Quarantine Station.

From July, Animal Health Australia will take over the management of the National Sentinel Hive program from DAFF.

Bruce White

NEWS FROM THE AUSTRALIAN QUEEN BEE BREEDING PROGRAM

The Australian Queen Bee Breeding Program (AQBBP) is run by the Australian Queen Bee Breeding Group (AQBBG). It is a program which has 15 lines of superior donated stock which has been replicated in a closed breeding program. The lines are all inseminated with pooled semen. According to the work carried out by Laidlaw and Page, this program should be able to be replicated at least 15 times before any effects of inbreeding are seen. It is possible to introduce new genetic material at any time.

There has been one successful sale of evaluated queens from the program in early 2008 and also some overwintered stock has been sold in late 2008.

The AQBBP has been grateful to the technical expertise supplied by Dr. Ben Oldroyd and Peter Oxley. Their willingness to provide information has been much appreciated.

The first replications were carried with 10 queens from each line being produced by Instrumental Insemination and then field tested by Neil Bingley and Wayne Sawdy. The best from each line was sent back for replication and subsequent sale.

A second round of insemination was carried out and these queens have also been evaluated.

Currently there is a third round of insemination being carried out. In spring, there will be daughters raised from these queens for evaluation. This is a new way of evaluating the queen lines and doing subsequent reproduction. The AQBBP is grateful to Peter Oxley for giving us the methodology for this evaluation method. Peter had developed this after a trip to Europe looking at breeding programs there.

The sale of evaluated queens has been slow mainly due to the fact that these queens are usually 12 months old and, as such, the beekeeper, who purchased the queen, only has about 6 months in which to do anything with that queen. The main demand is for young queens that have the ability to last at least two seasons.

To this end, the AQBBG has decided that it would be able to carry out insemination of queens with pooled semen and make these available as untested queens. It is possible for a beekeeper or queen bee breeder to order a specific line and it could even be the case that a choice could be made to inseminate from only one line instead of pooled semen.

Data is available from the previous evaluations which show production figures and this is available to anyone who is looking at ordering an inseminated queen. This data may help you choose which line or lines you would like to use in your operation.

If this was done then the genetics would be able to be spread around the industry and the beekeepers would be able to capture the benefits of the program.

So if you, or someone you know, want to buy young inseminated queen bees, let me know and an order can be placed for that queen. It is anticipated that prosecution of these queens will occur in spring.

HBRDC Research Results

There is some interesting research by Peter Oxley, Dr. Ben Oldroyd and Gladys Ho titled Development of Two Markers for Hygienic Behaviour of Honeybees. It can be found at <https://rirdc.infoservices.com.au/downloads/08-092.pdf>

Part of the research is an assessment of Joe Horner's mating system. It makes for interesting reading. Whilst a lot of the genetics is well above the average beekeepers head, there is plenty of other information to digest.

Trevor Weatherhead - 21 June 2009

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

AUSTRALIAN QUEEN BEE BREEDING GROUP INC.

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Australian Queen Bee Breeding Group will be held on Thursday evening 9 July, 2009 at the Rydges Parramatta Hotel, 116 James Ruse Drive, Rosehill NSW. It is planned to have the AGM at the cessation of business of the New South Wales Apiarists Association afternoon session. So check with either Bruce White or Trevor Weatherhead for the actual venue for the AGM. The agenda and financial papers will be available at the AGM.

RIRDC HONEYBEE RESEARCHERS' FIELD DAY

RIRDC will be hosting a Honeybee Researchers' Field Day on Wednesday 8 July 2009 at the Hawkesbury Campus of the University of Western Sydney.

If you wish to attend this free event there will be a bus available (if needed) primarily for interstate and overseas delegates to the field day. If you would like to book a seat on the bus and order your lunch, could you please contact: Lea Edwards on either phone: 02 6271 4132 or email: lea.edwards@rirdc.gov.au by 5.00pm 2 July 2009.

RIRDC have now advised that following the Field Day there will also be an excursion to the irradiation plant at Wetherill Park starting at 6.00pm.

BEEKEEPERS FEEL THE STING OF TIMBERCORP COLLAPSE

ABC News - 9 June 2009

The Timbercorp collapse is hurting many rural businesses, including beekeepers.

Timbercorp financed vast almond plantations around the New South Wales, Victorian and South Australian borders. But Timbercorp's administrators now say the crops are unprofitable.

Doug Somerville from the NSW Department of Primary Industries says it takes tens-of-thousands of beehives to pollinate the crops each year. But he says this year Timbercorp has not asked beekeepers for their pollination services.

"Timbercorp are the biggest players in the almond industry in Australia and almond trees require honey bees to pollinate the crop," he said. "None of the beekeepers that are involved in the pollination of that crop have been informed that their bees will be required this August.

"So essentially you're going to see a massive shortfall in the almond crop in Australia this year if those bees don't go onto that crop and the beekeepers involved won't get a pollination fee or a service fee either." Mr Somerville says a number of beekeepers are reliant on the annual almond tree pollination.

"A lot of guys in Victoria and NSW and a few in Queensland have come to rely on providing bees, getting bees ready in the autumn for that August pollination job," he said.

"A lot of guys would have forfeited chasing honey flows, or built bees up, or bought bees in to make sure they had the numbers to do the pollination job. "Now all of that's sort of no longer required up to this point in time. They'll have to sustain a loss as a result."

Mr Somerville says the move does not make sense considering the Timbercorp administrators are looking to sell-off assets.

"I don't quite understand the thinking of the whole process. The trees will be watered and kept alive but if they don't set a crop in August, they're not going to yield anything at Christmas to harvest over the summer," he said. "They won't have any cash-flow out of the trees for over 12 months."

PROTECTING NEW ZEALAND HONEY

Otago Daily Times - 2 June 2009

A Dunedin company, Oritain, is developing a honey map of New Zealand in an effort to stop overseas companies branding inferior-quality honey as coming from New Zealand.

There have been claims a British beekeeper has imported Manuka trees to produce a locally grown version of the highly priced New Zealand honey, while a US producer relabeled New Zealand Manuka honey and sold it for six times the price of the genuine product, which sat beside the fake on some US supermarket shelves.

Oritain determined the geochemical profile, or fingerprint, of soil, which can be traced in food or an end product.

The company's operations manager, Mike Darling, said by generating a profile of elements such as soil, it was possible to tell where products such as honey, milk, wine, fruit, wool or meat came from.

By creating a honey map, Mr Darling said the industry had the data to counter false claims of authenticity, such as those made in the US. "This map will provide critical reference data so that any honey sampled anywhere in the world can be compared to what it should look like if it truly came from New Zealand," he said.

Mr Darling said Oritain had much of the data it needed to determine the source of the honey, but would gather thousands more samples. It would also buy and sample New Zealand-branded honey in the US and other markets to verify its country of origin.

Mr Darling said the answer lay in the bees. "Their honey provides deep insights into their flight patterns and provides a unique geochemical fingerprint of the area where it was produced.

"Genuine New Zealand honey is chemically different to honey produced elsewhere."

Provided the reference data was available, Mr Darling said Oritain could also determine if honey from different sources had been mixed.

This was important for honey from plants such as Manuka, which commanded premium prices. The stakes were high.

The Australian honey industry had taken a knock after Chinese honey contaminated with an antibiotic was branded as coming from Australia and distributed in the US.

Mr Darling said honey producers such as Waitaki apiarists Kate White and Peter Irving were already using Oritain to authenticate their honey, while wine and meat producers were also involved.

CROP & STOCK REPORTS

NEW SOUTH WALES

Spotted Gum on the South Coast has been flowering well although the weather has not allowed bees much flying time. Very cold weather in the Northern Inland has limited White Box gathering. The Coastal regions have had enormous rainfall which will take a few weeks to dry out, so overall, very little honey would have been gathered during the past month.

Many beekeepers are commenting that their hives are very up and down and a lot of bees will require spring ground flora pollen to get them into condition for later honey production.

Most beekeepers would be aware that Timbercorp, the major almond grower in Australia, is in administration and pollination of their orchards was in doubt.

At this point in time, I believe pollination is to go ahead, albeit at a reduced level. Many beekeepers will elect not to go due to Spotted Gum flowerings both in Queensland and South Coast of New South Wales. Those that are considering taking hives are insisting on a minimum of half payment before delivery due to concerns with payments, given the financial position of Timbercorp.

Bill Weiss

QUEENSLAND

Honey producers working Spotted Gum in Queensland report hives are in good condition with good brood nests and pollen stores. Honey is being produced at a steady rate by Queensland Spotted Gum standards. Reports from the Channel Country indicate that where the rains have fallen and the Yapunyah has set bud, bees have been gathering good nectar from the Yapunyah and pollen from ground flora. Cold weather has slowed production as is expected for June/July.

A deluge in the South East has improved prospects for the coming spring and summer. The SOI indicates a dry period ahead. Good sub soil moisture may mean some reasonable yields from coastal species of eucalypts in the new season, trees to watch will be Grey Ironbark, Yellow Stringybark (White Mahogany), Brush Box and Blue Gum. High humidity will result in excessive Small Hive Beetle activity. Beetles were bad in the past season, with many hives lost. Progress is being made with traps and attractants. A lot of interest will be generated on this topic at the State Conferences this year.

Queensland beekeepers are holding very little honey at present, increased prices have been welcomed.

Bill Winner

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

West Coast

Bees are on Diversifolia. Spring prospects are reasonable with Canola.

Northern area

Good early rains. Prospects for Canola and Salvation Jane look good with some patches of blue gum budded again.

South East

Very little Banksia and very little Diversifolia. Stringy Bark was disappointing this year. Bees are sitting quite good awaiting almonds.

Riverland

Not much happening here until almonds begin in a month or so. A lot of citrus has been removed due to lack of water so limited prospects of moving from almonds straight to citrus.

Generally – had reasonable rainfall, as long as it continues (unlike the last few years where it dried up in winter), we have the potential for an average crop of honey.

Wendy Thiele

TASMANIA

Hives are in good condition.

Good rains have fallen over most of the state.

At this stage prospects for ground flora honey looks promising.

Shirley Stephens

VICTORIA

April weather has remained warm and dry until the very welcome autumn break, starting on 23 April and continuing for several days. The rains resulted with from 20mm upward through most of the cropping country across Victoria. There were some very heavy falls in the north eastern Victorian catchments. Gippsland was the only region that missed out.

The rains will promote a good early strike of weeds. Wild Turnip in the north west Mallee, Cape Weed everywhere, and Paterson's Curse in north eastern Victoria and the southern Riverina of NSW.

North West – With the above average day temperatures of late March into April, coupled with the total lack of summer rain in the Mallee, the Yellow Mallee (*Euc. dumosa*) blossom frizzled up within a few days of bud burst.

Western – Brown Stringy Bark (*Euc. baxterii*) flowering has fared a little better with bees breeding well and gaining honey.

South West Plains - The rain and cold weather has finished off the Sugar Gum (*Euc. cladocalyx*), with bees closing down very quickly for winter. Bees generally did well, sustaining a good brood nest well into April and quietly filling with honey.

Foot Hill Country – Manna Gum (*Euc. viminalis*) where flowering, is providing copious quantities of pollen, but very little nectar. Care is needed to ensure that bees don't become short of honey stores.

Kamarooka/Wedderburn Area - Blue Mallee (*Euc. polybractea*) in this district has been yielding a little honey in recent weeks. With the onset of cold weather Blue Mallee can be hard on field bees.

Big/Little Deserts - Desert Banksia (*B. ornata*) there is very little cobbing for a winter flowering; only some pockets along roadsides. In both Deserts, the Banksia has been put under real stress, with many shrubs dying over the summer.

Gippsland – Saw Banksia (*B. serrata*) and other flowering flora finished quickly, but bees are in good heart for winter.

There was some movement of bee hives onto Bloodwood (*Euc. gummifera*) in the far east of Gippsland during late March. Reports that Bloodwood was yielding well, but with a lack of pollen that bees need to be in good strength. With the cold weather the flow could close down quickly.

Caution - There is considerable talk that quite a few Victorian beekeepers are contemplating movement of bee hives to the south coast of NSW onto Spotted Gum (*Euc. maculata*) for this coming winter. Early reports from two NSW beekeepers state that Small Hive Beetle infestations are the worst that they have experienced

Future – Providing our late April rains have follow-up rains through the winter, good spring breeding conditions are now assured. All weeds useful to honey bees will get a good start. Canola crops, on which our beekeeping industry has become more reliant in recent years, will flower well and early in many of our northern regions.

Canola presents some problems for beekeepers with:

- the honey's ability to crystallise (candy) rapidly and very hard - often within the hives,
- the possibility of difficult to control swarming, and sometimes,
- the possibility the risk of insecticide sprays.

However, to many beekeepers in recent years, Canola has become an essential component of spring breeding and honey production. The battle to sustain bee hives over these drier years has been eased by the heavy cropping of Canola.

Box-Iron Bark Belt - Yellow Gum (*Euc. leucoxydon*) has developed a reasonably heavy crop of buds in recent weeks throughout the forest. This crop has set late with the heaviest flowering likely to be during the spring from September onwards and has the potential to give beekeepers some much-needed choice honey. This budding does not extend, to any great degree into western Victoria. Other than the Yellow Gum budding, there is very little Eucalypt budding for the late spring and summer.

There is the possibility of a few small pockets of Yellow Box (*Euc. melliodora*) setting buds. Red Gum (*Euc. camaldulensis*) and Yellow Box flowered very extensively over the whole of Victoria this past summer, and it is very doubtful that there are many places that there are buds for this coming season.

Red Stringy Bark (*Euc. macrorhyncha*) is carrying a huge crop of buds for flowering in late January onwards (2010). This budding is everywhere where Red Stringy grows i.e., north east, Gippsland, foothill country of the Great Dividing Range, on the east-west arm, and the Pyrenees Ranges.

Brown Stringy Bark (*Euc. baxterii*) in western Victoria is also carrying a heavy crop of buds for next autumn flowering.

Grey Box (*Euc. microcarpa*) is a very good possibility for budding well for next autumn. Although Grey Box won't set bud until late November-early December, the trees are very healthy and have been this way for some time. It only needs the right conditions during the next few months to set buds.

Markets – Prices have firmed up again with choice honey, generally, offering from \$3.40 to \$3.50 per kg. The lesser valued grades of honey are in short supply and these prices are moving upwards. Any Bloodwood and/or Spotted Gum honey produced will find a ready sale.

Beekeepers generally, are not carrying large stocks of honey.

Bob McDonald

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Average rains over the last year in remote areas has seen a good crop of honey in South-Eastern, Eastern and North-Eastern areas during late autumn and early winter. Some crops will continue for weeks to come. Banksia has produced some honey closer to the coast.

Good rain at the end of May and again in late June has seen coastal areas budding well and the outlook for late winter and early spring crops is much improved.

Rod Pavy



AUSTRALIAN HONEY BEE INDUSTRY COUNCIL INC.

Annual General Meeting and Conference – 12-13 July 2009

Rydges Parramatta Hotel, 116 James Ruse Drive Rosehill NSW

REGISTRATION FORM

Name: _____

Spouse/Partner Name: _____

I will be attending as:

Voting Delegate Representing

Non Voting Delegate Representing

A Presenter

An Observer

Observers are welcome on both days - however there is a fee for catering

Sunday 12 July \$30.00

Monday 13 July \$30.00

THE ANNUAL DINNER IS TO BE HELD ON SUNDAY 12 JULY 2009

Tickets are \$50.00 per person (Presenters will be admitted gratis)

I will be attending / not attending the Annual Dinner - My guests will be:

I attach a cheque for \$ _____ Please return to the AHBIC office:

PO Box R838 Royal Exchange NSW 1225 – no later than Friday 26 June 2009