



# Monthly NEWS

To: The Australian Honey Industry

From: Stephen Ware – Executive Director

## November 2010 Update

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

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

**SUPPORT THOSE WHO SUPPORT YOUR INDUSTRY!**

AB's Honey  
Australian Queen Bee Exporters  
Australian Queen Bee Breeders Association  
Australian Honey Products  
Bairnes Apiaries Pty Ltd  
Beechworth Honey Pty Ltd  
Bees Neez Apiaries  
Black, R G & MJ  
Bowman Family  
Brooks, Graham  
Capilano Honey Limited  
Ciphery, C & R  
Clifford, DA & JJ  
Codde, T J  
Cotton, AJ & McDonald, MA  
Craig, Athol  
Dewar Corporation  
Dunlop, PG & RD  
FCAAA  
Gell's Honey  
Goode, TW & MA  
Ipswich & West Moreton Beekeepers Association  
Honey Packers & Marketers Association  
Hoskinson, H L & H M  
Howard, OD  
L'Estrange, Tony  
MacFarlane, R H  
Marchant, R & S

Marti, Rod T/A Gagarra Honey  
McLaren, Jane  
Midgley, John  
Morgan, Trevor  
Nitschke, CJ  
Papworth, F & E  
Park, William F  
Pollination Association of WA  
Pobke, Barry  
Roberts, IJ & JH  
Saxonbee Enterprises  
Smith, C & B  
Spring Gully Foods Pty Ltd  
Stephens, R  
Stevens, Graeme  
Stevens, Howard  
Tasmanian Beekeepers Association - NW Branch  
Tasmanian Crop Pollination Association  
Tasmanian Honey Company  
Thompson, N  
Weatherhead, T & M  
True Blue Honey  
Warral Apiaries Pty Ltd  
Weerona Apiaries  
Wescobee Limited  
Wilson, Col  
Zadow Apiaries

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## UPDATE - AHBIC ACTIVITIES

1. AHBIC has established a “Varroa Treatment & Preparedness Committee and we are pleased to advise the members are : Des Cannon, Peter McDonald, Ian Roberts, Rod Pavy, Trevor Weatherhead, Bill Weiss & Julian Wolfhagen. On behalf of industry we thank them for taking the time to make themselves available to serve on this Committee.
2. On the subject of Varroa the Honey Bee Industry and Pollination Continuity Strategy Australia 2010 is being finalised in the first week of December and will be put out for final comment to Industry. Members of the above Committee will also be consulted to ensure it is relevant and acceptable to Industry.
3. Your Chairman, Lindsay Bourke, Trevor Weatherhead and Dr Denis Anderson attended the Consultative Committee for Emergency Plant Pests (CCEPP) workshop on Friday 29 October 2010. The meeting was held to review the current *Apis cerana* response in Cairns Queensland with the view of putting a recommendation to the National Management Group.
4. Following a meeting of the Primary Industry Standing Committee agreement was reached to continue the eradication in Queensland till 31 March 2011.
5. On the same subject the National Management Group meeting will be held on Monday 29 November 2010 and will consider whether or not the eradication campaign will continue. Your Chairman and Executive Director will be representing Industry. Following the meeting a further teleconference of the AHBIC Executive will be held.
6. Following work prepared by Mr Trevor Weatherhead regarding Copper Naphthenate the AHBIC Executive resolved to approach the APVMA with a request that beekeepers be able to use Copper Naphthenate providing that when boxes were treated they were painted.
7. The Productivity Commission has released its long awaited draft report in respect of Rural Research and Development. The proposal itself is potentially detrimental for the Honey Industry as what is being proposed is that over a ten (10) year period the amount being paid for research by the Commonwealth Government would be reduced so that Industry would receive 50% less in Commonwealth funding. AHBIC is responding to the draft recommendations.
8. AHBIC has been approached again by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in respect of the free trade agreement between Australia and South Korea. Members may recall your Prime Minister visited Seoul and pledged Australia’s support for this agreement and indicated that she hoped Australia’s agreement would take effect on the same day as an agreement with the United States.
9. On the subject of trade the United States has suspended live bee imports and Industry continues to work with the Australian Government to re-open this market.
10. Discussions continue with the Department of Agriculture Fisheries and Forestry in relation to the possibility of raising increased contributions for the purpose of raising additional money for biosecurity.

## APIS CERANA UPDATE

### Advice 82– 5 November, 2010

Finds for the past three (3) weeks up to Friday 5 November are:

IP253 was a swarm at Bentley Park

IP254 was a nest at Gordonvale

IP255 was a swarm in a letter box at Edmonton

IP256 was a swarm in a bar-b-que hood at Edmonton

IP257 was a nest at Edmonton

IP258 was a nest at Bentley Park

IP259 was a nest at Lake Eacham

IP260 was a nest at Mt. Peter

IP261 was a nest at Deeral

IP262 was a nest at Edge Hill

IP263 was a nest at Mt. Sheridan

IP264 was a nest at Mt. Sheridan

IP265 was a nest at north Cairns

IP266 was a nest at Portsmith

IP267 was a nest at Goldsborough

IP268 was a swarm at Aeroglen

IP269 was a nest at north Cairns

IP270 was a nest at Edmonton

IP271 was a nest at Portsmith

IP272 was a nest at Edmonton

IP273 was a swarm at the Cairns airport

IP274 was a nest at Gordonvale

IP275 was a nest at Goldsborough

IP276 was a nest at Gordonvale

IP277 was a nest at Flying Fish Point

IP278 was a swarm at Gordonvale

IP279 was a nest at Gordonvale

IP280 was a swarm at Aeroglen

There are several sites at which there is beelining activity taking place.

IP277 was about 7 kilometres out of the current RA but within a loci where two others have been found previously. They were Goondi (6 kms outside the RA) and Waugh Pocket (just inside the RA). There are extra traps being placed and extra surveillance is being carried out in this area.

The dog has arrived and is having his skills re-honed.

Lindsay Bourke (AHBIC Chairman) and I attended a Consultative Committee on Emergency Plant Pests (CCEPP) which has taken over from the Consultative Committee on Asian Honey Bees (CCAHB) in Canberra on Friday 29 October. The change of Committee is because the responsibility within the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF) has passed from the animal section to the plant section.

This meeting was to make recommendations to the National Management Group (NMG) which then makes recommendations to the Primary Industries Ministerial Council (PIMC) regarding funding of the eradication program. Funding is in place till 31 December this year and a new

agreement will need to be put in place for funding after that date. We are hopeful that an agreement will be forthcoming. If no funding is in place, then the eradication program will lapse. This is not a situation that I believe is best for the future.

### **Advice 83– 12 November 2010**

Finds for the past week up to Friday 12 November are:

IP281 was a nest at Portsmith

IP282 was a swarm at Wrights Creek

IP283 was a swarm at Earlville

IP284 was a nest at Aloomba

IP285 was a swarm at Gordonvale

IP286 was a nest at Machans Beach

IP287 was a nest at Goldsborough

IP288 was a nest at Deeral

There is a story to IP285. There was a nest in a pole that was being watched and enquiries were being made to see about removing the nest. As some poles are heritage listed, work was not to commence until permission was gained. Whilst watching the nest, the bees came out and landed in a school. This was called a swarm. On examination of the original nest, it was found that there were no bees left and the green ants were having a great time.

It would seem that technically it wasn't a swarm but a nest that was absconding because of the green ants attacking it. Makes you wonder how many other swarms are actually nests that are absconding because of predation by green ants? Normally when we think of a swarm, we assume there is a parent nest to find. Maybe that is not always the case.

There are several sites at which there is beelining activity taking place.

Beekeepers had a field day at Mareeba and learnt how the surveillance techniques work. They also had a tour of the lab facilities at Redden Street.

### ***Trevor Weatherhead***

## **WESCOBEE HONEY TAKES OUT TOP AGRIBUSINESS HONOUR IN THE 2010 WA INDUSTRY AND EXPORT AWARDS**

*Friday 22 October 2010*

**Wescobee's** CEO, Eduard Planken, is thrilled to announce Wescobee has won the Agribusiness Export Award category of the 2010 Western Australian Industry and Export Awards program.

This prestigious award, coordinated by the Department of Commerce, is in its 22nd year and seeks to recognise and honour the "best of the best" of Western Australian export businesses. As winners, Wescobee automatically progresses to the 48<sup>th</sup> National Industry and Export awards to be held on 1 December 2010 in NSW.

Wescobee wants to take this opportunity to sincerely thank its loyal customers and suppliers for their support over the past year(s).

## TEMPORARY SUSPENSION OF BEE IMPORTS INTO USA

We have been informed that effective immediately, USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (USDA, APHIS) has placed a temporary suspension on imports of honeybees (*Apis mellifera*) from Australia, pending further Agency investigation into regulatory actions. APHIS is removing Australia from the list of approved regions for the importation of adult honeybees (*Apis mellifera*). Please be aware that all shipments of adult honeybees from Australia that arrive at a U.S. port of entry will be rejected. Shipments will be destroyed or re-exported at the importer's expense. Please pass this information onto anyone else who may be interested or affected by this action.

Please note that we have been actively trying to prevent this outcome but unfortunately without success, however we intend to pursue the matter further in an effort to resume exports of Australian honeybees to the US. I will advise you of any changes as they occur.

Regards

Robert Heard B.V.Sc  
Manager  
Avian, Bees & Biologicals  
Animal Biosecurity Branch  
Biosecurity Services Group

Ph 02 6272 4836

Fax 02 6272 3399

Email: [robert.heard@biosecurity.gov.au](mailto:robert.heard@biosecurity.gov.au)

Website: [www.biosecurityaustralia.gov.au](http://www.biosecurityaustralia.gov.au)

## NEW REQUIREMENTS FOR THE IMPORTATION OF QUEENS INTO TASMANIA

Further to our earlier biosecurity advisory of 24 September 2010 the requirements for the importation of queen bees have been revised. A set of requirements put in place on 22 September 2010 were found not to adequately address the risk of small hive beetle and were amended on 20 October 2010.

The new amended requirements are:

Queen bees and escort bees may be imported provided that:

- they are in new queen cages in which ventilation holes meet the following requirements:
  - holes, including holes in mesh, are no larger than 2 mm x 2 mm;
- or
  - any slot longer than 2 mm is no wider than 1 mm; and
  - the queen cage is inspected by the beekeeper prior to loading the queen and escort bees and found to be free of Small Hive Beetle (*Aethina tumida*); and

- the queen and escort bees are hand caught; and
- the bees are inspected by the beekeeper at the time they are placed in the queen cages and found to be free of any evidence of Small Hive Beetle; and
- once filled the queen cage is stored away from bee hives; and
- the queen bee breeder has an active management program to control Small Hive Beetle; and
- on arrival in Tasmania the queen cage is to be inspected by the beekeeper for Small Hive Beetle prior to placement in the hive. If there is any evidence of Small Hive Beetle the consignment is to be sealed in a plastic bag and an Inspector notified.

The requirements and the certification form for queen bees can be found on the [DPIPWE website](#)

Barry Calderbank  
 Communications  
 Biosecurity and Product Integrity  
 DPIPWE Hobart  
 Ph (03) 6233 6519 or Mobile: 0407 858 293

## **TURKISH BEES ON STRIKE - HONEY HARVEST PLUMMETS BY 50 PERCENT**

25 October 2010

*Courtesy: TODAY'S ZAMAN – Istanbul, TURKEY*

The harvest of natural Kaçkar honey, which is produced in Rize's Kaçkar Mountains, has plunged by nearly 50 percent this year, despite an increase of 40 percent in the number of beehives, General Manager of Topuy Kaçkar Remzi Özbay has said.

In a written statement on Sunday Özbay said the drop in the quantity was dramatic, despite the proper climate conditions and the abundance of flowers in the region, and blamed the deterioration of the natural balance ensued by the over-exploitation of pesticides in agricultural production. "The bees are on a veritable strike, so to say," he noted in the statement.

**The general manager warned that some producers in the region have already started offering to the market fake "Kaçkar" honey, which is produced with dextrose, with price tags between TL 50-150, opening door to extremely high "undeserved revenues."**

The top manager of Topuy Kaçkar, which has been producing organic honey in the region for a decade, said the company had been getting six tons of honey from a thousand combs in a year on average, but that this amount has fallen to three tons.

"I am receiving daily reports from beekeepers. Bees are strong, flowers are plentiful and the weather conditions are fit. We were expecting to see a very good season. When we opened the combs when the harvesting time arrived, we were stunned to see that the amount of honey was much less than what should have been. It had gone down even though it should have increased. We started growing curious about why the bees were sulking. Then we realized that all apiarists were witnessing sharp drops in their harvests," said Özbay.

The manager says his company had to suspend export deals with new customers from five countries and deliver half of the previously left orders of their customers at best.

He recalled a saying -- which is often attributed to Albert Einstein -- that goes if the bee disappears from the surface of the earth, man would have no more than four years to survive, and asked entomologists to focus on this issue.

A similar dire situation occurred three years ago when sizable honeybee populations in many parts of the world disappeared in a strange and unprecedented way, all of a sudden and without a trace. Scientist received this incident as a heads-up and conducted studies as to the possible causes of this extraordinary and mysterious situation, which they termed "colony collapse disorder."

Honeybees are a major contributor to the pollination of hundreds of fruit and vegetable crops besides thousands of flower species worldwide, meaning that without bees, humanity would no longer be able to produce these crops, since cultivating them without natural means of pollination is extremely difficult and costly. From a broader perspective, a change in the natural balance will lead to the extinction of certain vegetable and fruit species that will trigger a butterfly effect and lead to the eventual destruction of nature.

Scientists have so far attempted to explain such unprecedented behaviour among bees with three major postulations. The first cause to blame is global warming, which fuels the proliferation of pathogens such as mites, viruses and fungi to the detriment of bee populations. Besides, drastic changes in weather hurt bees, which have for millions of years been accustomed to consistent weather patterns. Another explanation asserts the overuse of pesticides and herbicides, which honeybees ingest during their pollination rounds, is to blame. The final theory is that the rise in atmospheric electromagnetic radiation levels, a by-product of the increasing usage of cell phones and wireless communication towers, is a major factor. Cell phone radiation interferes with bees' ability to navigate through the air.

## **WORK WANTED**

I have several years of experience in beekeeping and would accept seasonal work on an apiary in Australia. Whom should I contact? How do I get this job? First I need a job for this, provided it is easier to get visa.

I have a lot of experience and knowledge in working with bees. Successful beekeepers from their 120 hives, helping beginners in beekeeping and learn and work with bees. I'm sure it'd be excellent fare in Australia. I am a physicist to teach physics at school. Beekeeping is my favourite occupation, and I'd like to be a professional I do beekeeping. This is my country very difficult. Therefore I would like to use my knowledge of bees using in Australia. Poor knowledge of English will not affect my work. With the work I'd learned the language better.

Marin Marinic [marinicmarin@gmail.com](mailto:marinicmarin@gmail.com)  
Sombor, Srbija, Europe

## **BAYER CROPSCIENCE ACQUIRES PRODUCT FOR CONTROL OF VARROA MITES**

### ***Bayer CropScience acquires green bee health product from Exosect***

Exosect - leading provider of Intelligent Pest Management solutions - has announced the recent acquisition of its unique product for the control of Varroa mites in honey bees by Bayer CropScience.

The acquisition was made for an undisclosed figure and gives Bayer CropScience worldwide rights to sell the product\* and to further develop a portfolio of bee health products for the control of mites (including Varroa mites and tracheal mites) using Exosect's platform technology, Entostat\*.

Martin Brown, Exosect's Managing Director comments, "After 5 years of research, we are delighted to have developed a product for this incredibly important sector and we believe that Bayer is very well placed to bring the product to market". Brown continues, "Our platform technology, Entostat powder, has such huge potential in all sectors of pest control that despite our interest in the bee health sector we are unable to give the launch of this product the resource that it deserves. We are now able to use the substantial funds generated from this acquisition to continue to bring further exciting products through from our extensive product development pipeline".

This acquisition closely follows a recent round of investment secured by Exosect of over £2.25m and highlights the interest the company is generating in its technology pipeline.

"Bayer is aware of its responsibility as a producer both of crop protection products and of bee health products", said Dr. Franz-Josef Placke, Head of Development at Bayer CropScience. "Therefore, we are investing in research and development to provide beekeepers with sustainable solutions to improve the health of their bees and beehives."

### ***Background information***

\*The product, developed by Exosect Ltd., is for the efficient and cost effective control of Varroa mites in honey bees. It is based on Entostat powder, Exosect's patented platform technology and the active ingredient thymol. The Entostat™ powder, which is derived from a natural 'food grade' wax, develops an electrostatic charge, even through very slight movement. When placed in contact with bees, the powder adheres to them and can be passed from one bee to another through direct contact. The technology means that only minute quantities of thymol are required, which reduces the potential for thymol residues in honey crops.

\*Entostat powder is the platform technology for Exosect's entire range of products. Derived from a natural 'food grade' wax which is sustainably harvested from palm trees, Entostat powder acts as a delivery system for a wide range of chemistry. As the name suggests "Entostat" powder exhibits electrostatic properties. Even through very slight movement, it develops an electrostatic charge. Insects similarly develop an electrostatic charge as they fly through air or walk across physical surfaces. When placed in contact with insects, the powder adheres to them and can be passed from one insect to another through direct contact. This platform enables the use of very low doses of natural or synthetic active ingredients (ai) which helps reduce the use of ai in a wide range of sectors.

For more information visit [www.exosect.com](http://www.exosect.com)



## **ADULT PLAGUE LOCUSTS AND SWARMS**

*NSW Industry & Investment NEW Fact Sheet - November 2010*

In what is predicted to be the worst plague locust outbreak in at least 30 years, locust swarms are inevitable this season.

Initial adult populations are likely from November, depending on temperatures and weather conditions.

NSW's \$18.5 million control campaign continues to target young locusts – while they are grounded and unable to fly and as they group together in thick bands.

This is the most effective time to control locusts and by strategically targeting young locusts we reduce population levels, swarm potential and minimise damage to crops and pastures.

### ***Reporting swarms***

As with locust hatchings, it is critical that landholders monitor swarm activity on their property and report any sightings to their local LHPA.

Favourable seasonal conditions have the potential to lead to multiple generations this season. If eggs are laid by adults in coming weeks they may hatch from mid-December and into January, producing a second generation of adults.

Reporting of swarms assists I&I NSW and the LHPA monitor swarm movements and, importantly, identify where egg laying is likely to take place and where to expect 2nd generation hatchings.

Latest information on swarm activity is also critical for ongoing control measures, targeting adult locusts themselves or future generation hatchings.

### ***Controlling swarms***

NSW's control efforts target young locusts – while they are grounded and unable to fly and as they group together in thick bands.

This normally occurs 2-3 weeks after peak hatching and is the most effective and efficient time to control locusts to minimise damage to crops and pastures.

Swarms are much more mobile and more difficult to treat. A swarm is also significantly less dense than banding, young locusts, and can contain 90% less locusts. This means control measures are less targeted and more chemical is required.

Large numbers of adult locusts may be treated when they are 'roosting', by spraying early in the morning or at dusk. While this is less effective, adult control measures can reduce population levels and minimise subsequent generations. Speak to your local LHPA about treatment and insecticide options for controlling adult locusts.

Aerial control of swarming adults is not a preferred option and is only used if locusts reach levels which justify the cost and when safety and environmental requirements can be met.

### ***Swarm damage***

The locust can be a devastating pest to agriculture, causing significant damage to both crops and pastures. Adult locusts in particular are highly mobile and can move through green crops and pastures very quickly. Locusts can migrate up to 600 km or more in a single night, infesting areas up to 50 km<sup>2</sup>. A swarm, covering 1 km<sup>2</sup>, could contain anything from 4 million to over 50 million individual locusts.

Spring swarms can potentially cause damage to winter cereal crops. As cereal crops ripen, locusts may continue to cause serious crop damage from head lopping, as they chew through the last green tissue (node) on the stem just below the head.

Emerging summer field crops, such as cotton, are also very susceptible to swarm damage.

Adult locusts can also cause serious damage to pastures in a short amount of time. A swarm covering one kilometre can eat up to 10 tonnes of vegetation per day.

Locust contaminated grain may also have to be cleaned to meet harvest receival standards.

### ***Driving through locust swarms***

Motorists travelling through locust swarms should take the following precautions:

- Be aware that visibility may be reduced if travelling through a swarm.
- Ensure their windscreen wiper tank is full and carry a rag to wipe off excess insects if necessary.
- Lights may also need cleaning.
- Check your front grille, which may require cleaning, to avoid blockage of air inlets.
- It may be advisable to fix a mesh insect screen to the front of the vehicle.
- Slow down gradually when driving through swarms and use headlights if necessary to alert oncoming traffic. Be aware that other drivers may have difficulty seeing you.
- Monitor the temperature gauge for signs of overheating.

### ***Plague locust control for the home gardener and nursery areas***

Plague locusts may impact on towns as well as rural areas. As a result, many home owners are concerned about potential damage to gardens and houses, as well as effects on pets.

### **More information**

Locust reporting, insecticide and enquires - contact your local Livestock Health and Pest Authority

General information – see the I&I NSW locust website