

"For the advancement of Apiculture"

# *North Eastern Apiarists' Association*

(Victoria)

## 63<sup>rd</sup> Annual Conference

### 5<sup>th</sup> May, 2017



2016 – 2017

Office Bearers of the NEAAV Inc'

President	E. Papworth
Vice Presidents	A. Turnbull
	S. Murphy
Secretary	D. Briggs
Assistant Secretary/Editor	M. McGibbon
Treasurer	R. Whitehead
Executive Councilors	L. Briggs
	R. Horne
	K. McGibbon
	P. McPherson
	S. Murphy
	D. Whitehead
NEAAV Inc Representative to VAA	K. McGibbon
NEAAV Inc' Resources Manager	P. McPherson
NEAAV Inc' Resources Delegates	D. Briggs
	R. Whitehead



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# AGENDA

8am	Arrival – Tea/ Coffee
<b>8:30am</b>	<b>Conference Convenes</b>
	<b>Presidents Welcome</b> Elwyne Papworth Silence for deceased members Receipt and Confirmation of minutes
	<b>Presidents Report -</b> Elwyne Papworth
	<b>Treasurers Report -</b> Rodney Whitehead
9:00	<b>NEAA Resource Report –</b> Philip McPherson NEAAV Resources Manager
<b>9:10</b>	<b>VAA State Resources Report</b> Ken Gell, Chair, VAA Resources Committee
9:20	<b>Leptospermum Plantation Establishment</b> Rob Waddell, Grand Ridge Propagation Nursery
<b>10:00</b>	Morning Tea
<b>10:30</b>	<b>Sustaining growth in honey bee crop pollination and honey production</b> Chair: Trevor Weatherhead – Executive Director, Australian Honey Bee Industry Council Panel: Ian Cane, Trevor Monson, Kevin MacGibbon, Joe Riordan
	<b>General Business – time permitting</b> Motions may be foreshadowed for afternoon general business session
<b>12:pm</b>	<b>Lunch:</b>
<b>1:00</b>	<b>Official welcome and opening of Conference</b> Rural City of Wangaratta Mayor – Ken Clark – Welcome to delegates The Honourable, Tim McCurdy, Member for Ovens Valley – Official Opening
<b>1:45</b>	<b>Medicinal properties of Eucalypt and other honeys</b> Dr Shona Blair – University of NSW
<b>2:45</b>	<b>Election of Office Bearers</b> Chair, Dr Shona Blair
<b>3pm</b>	<b>Afternoon Tea</b>
<b>3:20</b>	<b>Timber harvesting on bee site forage ranges</b> Ian Cane – VAA Resources, Timber Harvesting Delegation
<b>4:10</b>	<b>Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources</b> Joe Riordan - Senior Apiary Inspector, Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources
<b>4:40</b>	<b>General Business</b> Notices of Motions
<b>5:30</b>	<b>Close and farewell - Conference Dinner at Venue from 6:30pm</b>



"For the advancement of Apiculture"

# North Eastern Apiarists' Association

(Victoria)

## Minutes

Of the 62<sup>nd</sup> Annual Conference

Held 7:00pm, 8<sup>th</sup> June, 2016 at the  
Quality Hotel Gateway Wangaratta, Ryley St, Wangaratta

**Present:** The President welcomed visitors and members to the Annual General Meeting. Elwyne explained to the meeting the committee's reasoning for not conducting an Annual Conference in lieu of the VAA conference being held in Wangaratta and the NSWAA conference being held in Albury in the same year.

**Apologies:** A Taylor, C Scott, Paul Griffiths, Fred Keem, Shaun Murphy.

**Deceased members acknowledged:** Mrs Fred Keem, Wilfred Whitehead. A minutes silence was observed for those departed in the previous year.

**Previous Minutes:** Motion; "that the minutes of the 61<sup>st</sup> AGM as published be received"

*Moved: K. MacGibbon,*

*Seconded: A. Turnbull*

*Carried*

**Business Arising:** Nil. Comment [Linton Briggs] that two items mentioned in the minutes of the 61<sup>st</sup> Annual conference have since progressed. The Beekeeping on Public Lands policy has passed into law paving the way for full implementation of this policy and the transition away from clear fell harvesting by VicForests is now almost complete with no further clear fell harvesting on mixed species forests.

**Confirmation of minutes:** Motion; "that the minutes be confirmed"

*Moved: L. Briggs,*

*Seconded: K. MacGibbon*

*Carried*

**Presidents Report:** Motion "that the Presidents report be received"

*Moved: L. Briggs,*

*Seconded: P. McPherson*

*Carried*

**Treasurers Report:** Motion "that the Treasurers report be received and that accounts due be paid"

*Moved: K MacGibbon,*

*Seconded: J McMonigle*

*Carried*

### **Election of Office Bearers:**

All Executive Committee positions were declared vacant and nominations for all positions were called as follows;

Position	Nominated	Nominator	Seconded
President	E. Papworth	L. Briggs	K. MacGibbon
Vice President	S. Murphy	L. Briggs	D. Whitehead
2 <sup>nd</sup> vice President	P. MacPherson (declined) A. Turnbull	E. Papworth M. MacGibbon	E. Papworth
Secretary	D. Briggs	D. Whitehead	P. McPherson
Assist' Secretary	M. MacGibbon	E. Papworth	K. MacGibbon
Treasurer	R. Whitehead	F. Papworth	K. MacGibbon
Committee Member	D. Whitehead	E Papworth	P. McPherson

Committee Member	K. MacGibbon	P. McPherson	R. Horne
Committee Member	L. Briggs	J McMonigle	D. Briggs
Committee Member	R. Horne	D. Whitehead	A. Turnbull
Committee Member	P. McPherson	R. Whitehead	F. Papworth
Resources Manager	Philip McPherson	E. Papworth	K. MacGibbon
Resources delegates	D. Briggs	E. Papworth	P. McPherson
	R. Whitehead	E. Papworth	P. McPherson

Declaration of NEAA Resources delegate to the VAA; Kevin MacGibbon.

Deputy Resource delegates to the VAA; David Briggs and Don Whitehead

All nominations were carried and nominees declared duly elected.

**NEAA proposed constitutional amendments:** as advised to the membership, the proposed amendments were explained as follows, and the motion was put;

That in the interests of accuracy and consistency the NEAA Constitution be amended as follows:

- 1) Section 2a (Objects) be amended to read;
  - a) 'To provide a means whereby the apiarists of the area may be represented through a common organisation for the welfare of *its members* and the industry.'
  
- 2) Section 5e (management) be amended to read:
  - a) 'The Annual General Meeting may transact special business of which notice is given in accordance with these rules.'
  
- 3) Section 5p (management) be amended to read;
  - a) 'The Council shall hold at least two (2) committee and two (2) general meetings through the year, and the time and place of such meetings shall be appointed by the Secretary and President and notified to each member at least (7) days in advance.'

*Moved: Linton Briggs*

*Seconded: Kevin MacGibbon*

*Carried*

**General and deferred Business:**

**Linton Briggs** – Suggested that in tomorrow's program (VAA Conference) the discussion on the direction the VAA is taking with VicForests was an important opportunity for all members to become familiar with this process. The 'rank and file' of the VAA must be consulted and feedback sought.

**Elwyne Papworth** – related to the meeting, part of the journey we have travelled with VicForests and the importance of last year's NEAA Conference in conveying to VicForests the perspective and depth of beekeeper concerns towards clear fell harvesting. She also noted that we still have a long way to go as far as restoration of bee sites lost to past harvesting and regeneration practices.

Meeting closed 7:30pm

# North-Eastern Apiarists' Association Inc' of Victoria. 63<sup>rd</sup> Annual Conference.

Venue: "Gateway Hotel and Convention Centre" 29. Riley Street.  
Wangaratta. Victoria. 3677.

## President's Report.

Last year the Victorian Apiarist's Association Inc', held their Annual Conference in June in Wangaratta at the "Gateway Hotel and Convention Centre," so to avoid the holding of two Annual Conference's close together in Wangaratta, the NEAA Inc' held a short Annual General Meeting on the first evening of the VAA Inc' Conference, where such things as minutes of 62<sup>nd</sup> Annual Conference Confirmation, Financial Statement and Election of 2016-17 Executive Council and NEAA Inc' President were dealt with.

The North-East's Philip and Kath McPherson were the VAA Inc' appointed Host and Hostess for Conference attendee's, and Tracy Whitehead organised a Bus Trip around the region and the City of Wangaratta Shopping spree. Thank you to our NEAA Inc' people.

August 18<sup>th</sup> 2016, the NEAA Inc' Executive met in Mansfield with Department for Environment , Land, Water and Planning [DELWP], land managers then went into the Toombullup Forest to inspect a multi species trial coupe being thinned using age selection, basal area size retention

Time will tell if what has been done of assistance to the Apiary industry into the future.

After that inspection we travelled to the Strathbogie Ranges, where we were shown proposed second trial thinning in that forest this one is over a current Bee Site, which when the managers were told, it seemed to not mean too much.

The viewing of the both places, opened areas of question of the whole process and the value to the Apiary industry in the future.

Since then, both coupes have been harvested according to a Single tree Selection method. On reports to hand, it is possible that the area has been over cut.

More consultation has been under taken by the NEAA Inc' Resources and DELWP Land Managers. The result is that a Harvesting Prescription Work Shop/Inspection Tour has been organised for May 4<sup>th</sup> 2017, there is a need to get a prescription for harvesting right in the beginning.

During September a group of North-East members volunteered and worked for a Day at the VAA Inc' industry promotion at the Royal Melbourne Show, a long day for those who went down. Moss MacGibbon packed the VAA Inc' labelled Honey sold at the Show, she was also one of the appointed day by day Managers of the display, the show was a financial success for the VAA Inc', the display itself, took out 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the Grand Pavilion.

October 2<sup>nd</sup> 2017, the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual NEAA Inc' Field Day was held for the 4<sup>th</sup> time at Swanpool, where over 60 person's, eager to learn the art of Beekeeping, spent the day taking part in hive manipulation, methods of introducing queens, how and when to take honey off, recognise disease, how to assemble hive material and being able to purchase any and all hive components required to help them keep their hives from Redpath's Bee Goods.

The ladies of the Swanpool hall committee, as usual, provided the days refreshments.

The Whitehead family supplied a load of bees for the day, the NEAA Inc' Field day Committee worked the prepare the venue for the event. As a result in part, there are some thing like 4 or 5 new Beekeeping groups having been formed within the North-East region and into New South Wales. The next NEAA Inc' field day will be Sunday the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2017 at Swanpool.

.../2.

November 2<sup>nd</sup> the NEAA Inc' held an Information/Discussion evening following an informal Dinner at the Hibernian Hotel in Beechworth for new comers to Beekeeping who reside in and around the area. More than 20 people attended, the theme for the session was, understanding Supersedure, how to hive Swarms and information on possible available flora for the coming season where attendees live. This forum evolved by request from attendees at the Swanpool Field Day indicating a need for an interaction with the experienced beekeepers other than Field Day events.

The NEAA Inc' usually hold their Ordinary Meetings at the Pinsent Hotel in Wangaratta, meet five times on a week day plus Annual Conference, but not including the holding of Field days or Inspection tours.

Monday 6<sup>th</sup> March the NEAA Inc' held an afternoon/evening meeting, at the Discovery Centre, courtesy of Beechworth Honey, in Beechworth.

After lunch in the venue, an ordinary meeting took place, at 6.pm, a group of small beekeepers, [aprox 14], joined the North-East and Jodie Goldsworthy for Dinner followed by an informal discussion/information evening. Jodie indicated that her venue was available for industry use, to further the beekeeping industry into the future.

Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> March the NEAA Inc' held an Autumn Pack Down Day at load of Philip McPherson bees on site at Beechworth

More than 20 people joined the North-East, dressed to work, firstly being shown how, when, why and what to do, then being given a free hand to work a hive on their own while being supervised from the distance.

The day was hailed as the best hands on experience possible to be given small beekeepers trying to lean the right way to look after hive, feed-back was excellent..

Philip, was in the USA when the exercise was under taken, we hope there aren't to many surprises for him when he "opens" his hives up ready for the next season.

I would like to thank the NEAA Inc' Executive, a group of industry dedicated friends, freely giving of their time to help retain and maintain the age old craft of beekeeping, passing on knowledge, being available to assist at call, taking part in congenial, non -confrontational meetings and events makes the Chairman's time, very easy.

I have enjoyed my two years as your NEAA Inc' President.

Thank you.

Elwyne Papworth

**Please Note:**

Copies of the *Public Land Apiculture (Beekeeping) Policy* and *Public Land Apiculture (Beekeeping) Standard Operating Procedure* can be downloaded from the following website;

<http://agriculture.vic.gov.au/agriculture/livestock/honey-bees/public-land-apiary-bee-sites>



# Treasurers' Report

## North Eastern Apiarists Association of Victoria Inc.

Statement of Income and Expenditure for Year ended 31st March

**2017**

<b>Income</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>
Subscriptions, Raffle, Conference fees and Memberships	3952.50	1,044.00
NEAA Beechworth meeting and dinner		550.00
Interest Term deposit	670.90	
Interest Cheque account	22.49	10.67
Late Memberships	52.50	268.00
Donation		479.00
Beekeepers October Workshop & Subscriptions	5760.46	3245.00
2017/18 Membership		25.00
Book sales		108.00
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>10758.85</b>	<b>5729.67</b>
<b>Expenses</b>	<b>.</b>	<b>./</b>
Consumer Affairs	53.00	228.70
Conference and Meetings	2286.00	1620.00
Honorarium	500.00	500.00
Bank Charges	101.00	96.00
VAA Affiliation Un-presented Chq Year 2014/15	66.00	132.00
Rollover of Interest in Fixed Deposit	670.90	
Postage and Stationary		
Beekeeping Workshop	1815.00	1710.00
Website	1369.50	
Insurance	605.43	600.21
Money Transferred to Term Deposit		3000.00
DSE Field Day		100.00
Beekeeping Oct Workshop		1710.00
Unpresented Chq	560.00	550.00
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>8026.83</b>	<b>7986.91</b>
<b>Balance Business Account S3</b>		
<b>2016 Balance</b>	2752.32	5484.34
<b>2017 Income</b>	5729.67	5729.67
<b>Sub Total</b>	13511.17	11214.01

<i>Less Expenses</i>	<b>8026.83</b>	<b>7986.91</b>
	5484.34	3227.10

### **WAW Statement at 31st March 2017**

<b>WAW Business Cheque Account</b>	<b>5484.34</b>	<b>3227.10</b>
WAW Fixed Term Deposit	11786.85	12411.57
WAW Fixed Term Deposit	2671.59	5739.80
<b>Total WAW Accounts</b>	19942.78	21378.47

# Presenter Biographies:

## **Shona Blair**

Dr Shona Blair is a microbiologist who has been investigating the medicinal properties of honey for over 15 years, and in 2004 she was awarded her PhD from the University of Sydney (Faculty of Science) for her thesis: *The therapeutic potential of honey*.

Throughout her research career Shona has been involved in projects looking at many aspects of the medicinal properties of honey. Some of these include studies of its antimicrobial activity against antibiotic-resistant germs, its wound healing properties and a survey of hundreds of Australian honeys for antimicrobial activity. She has also been involved in research investigating the effects of honey on human gut health, and is currently engaged with a project looking for more sources for medically active Australian *Leptospermum* (aka “jelly bush”, or “Australian manuka”) honey.

Shona has connected with the Australian honey industry since her student days, and she has actively worked to raise awareness of the importance of honey bees and beekeeping. She held the role of inaugural CEO of the When Bee Foundation (2013-2015), which was established to raise awareness of the importance of honey bees for food security. In 2013 she joined the Executive Council of the NSW Apiarists’ Association Inc. and in this volunteer position she works with commercial beekeepers to help tackle some of the issues they face. Shona currently works at the University of Technology Sydney, as the General Manager of the itthree institute (an infectious diseases research institute).

Shona continues to focus on the numerous and complex challenges that the Australian beekeeping industry is facing, and on finding ways to alleviate the impact of these on bees, beekeepers and food security. She also has an ongoing involvement in research into the medicinal activity of honey, and in working to increase the use of honey in clinical settings to help fight the problems caused by antibiotic resistance and super-bugs.

## **Rob Waddell**

Rob and Kristy Waddell established Grand Ridge Propagation nursery about 15 years ago and now specialise in native tube stock and hiko production, as well as a tree planting service. The nursery is located at Seaview, which is 16km south of Warragul in the West Gippsland region of Victoria.

Rob’s interest in bioactive *Leptospermum* began two years ago when he was approached by a local apiarist to grow *Leptospermum scoparium* seedlings. This request has led to extensive research with the aim of determining the potential for high value honey production in south eastern Australia. Nectar has been collected from over 40 specimens of several species and was tested at the University of the Sunshine Coast by the Honey Lab team. This testing has identified plants with high levels of bioactivity which will and have been used for seedling production. The aim of Grand Ridge Propagation’s *Leptospermum* breeding program is to provide high testing seedlings from a range of species, giving the potential to produce bioactive honey over a period of up to five or more months a year, in a range of climatic and soil conditions. Utilising many years of revegetation and windbreak experience, Rob is working with many apiarists and landholders to establish site specific options for plantation establishment.

In addition to the plant nursery, Rob and Kristy also have stud sheep, cattle, horses and more recently, a couple of bee hives on their 120 acre property.

# INTO THE FUTURE – SUSTAINING GROWTH IN A HONEY PRODUCTION AND HONEY BEE CROP POLLINATION INDUSTRY

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## *Issues Discussion Paper*

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### 1. PREAMBLE

- 1.1. On Friday, 5<sup>th</sup> of May 2017, the NEAA Annual Conference agenda will feature a panel discussion about how the Victorian beekeeping industry may negotiate its way through some potentially difficult operational times ahead.
- 1.2. About 180,000 honey bee colonies are now needed each season by almond growers to efficiently service honey bee pollination requirements in south eastern Australia, (S.A, Victoria, NSW). Victorian beekeepers provide about 65,000 of this number.
- 1.3. Hive numbers currently registered with the Victorian Department of Agriculture total 105,000. This number may understate the actual number of honey bee colonies operated by Victorian beekeepers.
- 1.4. Current Victorian almond plantings represent about 64% of the national total. In 2016, 19798Ha were serviced by 118,000 honey bee colonies, about 50,000 of this number provided by Victorian beekeepers. Nationally, about 250,000 colonies were deployed in 2016 for almond pollination services. Over the next five years, most projected Australian almond industry expansion will occur in NSW. Up to 500,000 colonies for the delivery of pollination services throughout all eastern states each season will become progressively required.
- 1.5. Looking five years ahead, there is an expectation that Victorian beekeepers will continue to expand respective operations in response to rising demand for crop pollination services throughout south eastern Australia, perhaps 50,000 additional colonies or more in total.
- 1.6. Season to season maintenance of viable commercial Victorian apiaries for crop pollination services and honey production depends on the availability of, and security of access to sufficient floral resources that in the main sporadically present on public and freehold land throughout eastern Australia from time to time.
- 1.7. Capacity for public and freehold land to viably absorb the exponential expected increase in honey bee colony numbers on licensed public land and private freehold land bee sites, is expected to become increasingly problematic, more so in adverse seasons affected by climate and poor overall eucalypt species buddings.
- 1.8. Commensurate with increasing overall colony stocking rates on licensed public land and private treaty freehold land bee sites, Victorian honey production is expected to continue to decline.

- 1.9. The NEAA is advised that the VAA Inc' executive council, concerned that whereas colony stocking rates on licensed bee sites in public land state forests and national parks will in all probability continue to increase, perceptions by Government Agencies of adverse ecological impacts on native forest systems may lead to the statutory regulation of maximum permissible colony stocking rates for Category 1 and Category 2 licensed bee sites.
- 1.10. The NEAA is advised that the VAA Inc' has resolved to seek the opinion of members and the wider industry about whether in view of the circumstances described at 1.9, the industry should pro-actively seek the adoption of a voluntary code of practice that includes limiting the stocking of licensed public land bee sites to a maximum of 300 colonies for each occasional occupancy.
- 1.11. The NEAA panel discussion on the 5<sup>th</sup> of May next, will provide an opportunity to tease out the detail of this idea, including the increased pressure it would generate for the placement of apiaries on freehold property adjoining public land.
- 1.12. Endemic Varroa destructor in Australia may be just around the corner, to exert more pressure on beekeeping per sae, and the delivery of efficient honey bee crop pollination services in particular, at least until adjustments to husbandry evolve.
- 1.13. This paper seeks to identify at least some of the issues and through discussion in public forum, identify possible strategic ways forward for consideration by all members of the industry. Ultimately the subject matters have national implications that will require the engagement and collaboration of all stakeholders – beekeepers, and growers of honey bee dependent crops, their respective industry organisations, processors, HIA, Commonwealth and State Governments and so on, for the best outcomes to be achieved.
- 1.14. The panel discussion of the 5<sup>th</sup> of May will be structured in such a way that outcomes of each issue discussed can be collated and published for the benefit of and consideration by a much wider audience.

## **THE MEDICINAL PROPERTIES OF HONEY**

### **Honey has a long history of medicinal use**

- Humans have used honey for its healing properties for thousands of years
  - Some of the earliest rock art, found in such diverse places as Africa, Australia, Bhutan, India, Spain and Sri Lanka depicts the collection of honey (a.k.a. honey hunting)
  - Many diverse cultures have used honey as a medicine - the Chinese, Greeks, Romans, Arabs, Indians, Aztecs and Indigenous Australians are just some of the peoples who believed in the therapeutic benefits of honey
  - In many cultures there was often an overlap between magic, religion and medicine - honey and/or bees were held as sacred in numerous religions for at least some stage throughout their history, if not constantly
- Examples include prehistoric religions, ancient Egyptian cults, Aryan Veda (later Hinduism), ancient Israeli (later Judaism), Persian sects, Buddhism, Greek cults, Roman cults, Confucianism, Taoism, Shinto, Christianity, Islam and Sikhism
- Many sacred texts, such as the Bible, Qur'an and Torah, specifically mention the medicinal use of honey
- The ancient Egyptians were arguably the first large-scale beekeepers (rather than honey hunters)
- They produced thousands of tonnes of honey every year, moving their hives up and down the Nile on barges to follow the seasonal nectar flows
- Their medical practices were sophisticated and often effective, and they included honey in over 500 of their 900 prescriptions
- The ailments treated with honey were as diverse as the cultures that used it
- Insect bites, burns, diseases of the gastric and respiratory systems, sexually transmitted diseases, eye infections and war wounds were all treated with honey
- One of the most common medicinal uses of honey was as a wound dressing

So make sure you eat Australian honey – it can come straight from a beekeeper, supermarket or health food shop, just check that it's 100% Australian so you know that it is 100% pure and natural.

### **Not all honeys are the same...**

Throughout history honey has been used for its healing powers, for example, Aristotle prescribed it for a variety of ailments. However, it was not just any old honey for any old thing. He specified the region and season for the collection of medicinal honey. Aristotle knew that the floral source of a honey would affect the level of its germ-killing activity (although it is unlikely that he would have phrased it that way himself!).

A common misconception is that honey is a standard product. However, the taste, colour and antimicrobial (i.e. germ-killing) activity of honey will vary greatly, depending on which flowers the bees visit to collect the nectar they turn into honey.

All honeys possess some level of antimicrobial activity, but some are up to 100 times more effective than others.



Despite a history of use in medicine that is almost as long as the history of the human race itself, honey was often dismissed as “alternative” and without basis as a therapeutic agent by modern medicos.

However, due to the increasing number of scientific studies showing the effectiveness of honey as a wound dressing, and with our increasing understanding how it works, honey is gaining recognition as an effective medicine in modern wound care.

### **Honey has powerful germ-killing properties**

Certain honeys have powerful activity against the microbes (germs) that cause infection, even against “super bugs” like Golden Staph, and this antibacterial activity of honey is due to:

- **High sugar content** (about 80%) - All of the sugar molecules in honey bind so tightly to any water molecules present that the water is not available for the germs to use, so the honey is too “dry” for them to grow
- **Acidity** - Typical pH ranges from 3.2 to 4.5, which is too low for the growth of most germs
- **Hydrogen peroxide** - When bees are making honey they add a variety of things to the nectar, and one of these is an enzyme called glucose oxidase
  - When activated, this enzyme produces hydrogen peroxide (like bleach), and this is toxic to microbes, but at levels low enough to be harmless to our skin
- **Floral factors** - Healing properties vary, depending on which flowers are a source of nectar for the bees, and the amount of hydrogen peroxide produced by different honeys varies greatly
  - Some honeys have exceptional antimicrobial activity that is due to their floral source and more than hydrogen peroxide - the most famous example is certain *Leptospermum* honeys from New Zealand and Australia (colloquially known as manuka or jelly bush)

### **Which medicinal honey should you use?**

Generally speaking, honeys that have not been exposed to long periods of high heat are more active. Heat (and long-term exposure to light in clear jars) can destroy the enzyme responsible for the production of hydrogen peroxide—the main factor behind the antibacterial properties of most honeys (see above).

If honey is to be used as a wound dressing, it should be one with a high level of antimicrobial activity, and it should be sterile. The best way to ensure this is to check that the honey wound care product either has a CE mark or it is registered with the Australian Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) as a wound-care product. If there is an AUST L number visible on the packaging, then it is registered.

Always consult medical professionals for the treatment of any serious wounds.

### **Finding more liquid gold**

We already know that a handful of Australian *Leptospermum* honeys have similar levels of antimicrobial (that is, germ-killing) activity to NZ manuka, but many of the other 80 plus Australian varieties have not been tested. So our research team is running a nationwide study looking for more sources of this honey, sometimes referred to as “jelly bush” or “Australian manuka”.

To find out more about the study, including how beekeepers can become involved, visit:

<http://ozhoneyproject.wordpress.com/>

## Honey helps wounds to heal

There are numerous reports of the successful use of honey in modern medicine, and these include the treatment of;

- Super-bug infected wounds
- Golden Staph infections
- Burns and infected surgical wounds
- Ulcers and pressure sores
- Traumatic injuries and chronic wounds
- Meningococcal lesions
- Side effects from radiotherapy

Honey has various properties that help wounds to heal, and these include:

- Maintaining a moist environment (which is essential for good healing)
- Powerful antimicrobial activity – while being non-toxic to human cells
- Promotion of healthy tissue regrowth
- Anti-inflammatory activity
- Reduction of scarring
- Prevention of bandages and other coverings from sticking to wound beds
- Reduction of wound smell

## Honey and gut health

Some very exciting preliminary research is indicating that eating honey may be good for your gut health. The different bacteria in our lower intestines play a crucial role in our gut health, and we are beginning to understand just how important they are for our overall health as well.

Lab tests are showing that Australian honey from various native species of flora increases the number of “good bacteria” but not “bad bacteria” from the gut.

## Key challenges for beekeeping in Australia

- Commercial beekeeping is essential for the agricultural sector, due to the pollination services provided by honey bees, for more than a third of our crops. ○ However, commercial beekeeping is declining while horticultural industries needing pollination services are growing
- Issues around access to essential floral resources, as well as commercial uncertainty and biosecurity threats, are responsible for the declining beekeeping industry.
- Our managed honey bees depend on access to flowering native vegetation to gather nectar and pollen to breed and increase their colony size for the purpose of honey production and commercial pollination.
- Around 70-80% of the commercial honey produced in Australia comes from native eucalypt forests.
  - However, most eucalypts do not flower (and therefore produce pollen and nectar) annually. Some have a 2-3 year flowering cycle, and others much longer – with some species flowering only once every 10-12 years.
  - These flowering events are further affected by extreme weather conditions (heat waves, floods, drought, etc.) as well as bush fires (both controlled and uncontrolled).
- Beekeepers also need to move their “livestock” many hundreds of kilometres during the year to follow nectar flows (for the building up of their colonies and honey production) or to provide pollination services. ○ The uncertainty around flowering events means that commercial beekeepers need permits to access multiple sites at any point in time as many will not be yielding at any given point in time
- For beekeepers, the issue of access to floral resources is twofold:
  - Firstly, eucalypts and other native flowering species are being lost (because of urbanisation, forestry pine plantations, dieback, firewood harvesting, land clearing, bushfires, etc.).
  - Also, crown land managers have restricted beekeeper access to native vegetation areas.

***Without secure access to floral resources, the potential of the honey bee industry to grow to meet the demands for crop pollination is severely compromised***

# DELWP Apiary Licence Reform Project – Report for North Eastern Apiarists’ Association Inc.

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*Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) 28 April 2017*

## **Progress report**

Implementation of DELWP’s new apiary licence system has been progressing steadily, following legislative amendments to provide ten-year bee site licences in 2016. The amending legislation came into effect on 1 December 2016 and DELWP has continued work towards introduction of the new bee site licences.

Implementation has been a staged process and most of the milestones have now been achieved. More recently, the schedule of fees for the new category one and category two licences was gazetted, by publication in the *Victorian Government Gazette*, formalising the fees payable for bee site licences.

The last major piece of work involves a redesign to the DELWP licence data system, to accommodate the two new licence categories. Unfortunately, the upgrade to the data system has taken longer than expected and has not been completed as yet. Until the data system becomes fully operational, the DELWP Transaction Centre will not be able to issue invoices for the new licences.

## **Invoices**

DELWP now anticipates that invoices for licences will be issued later in May.

In the meantime, apiarists can continue to use their existing bee sites, pending the issue of new licences.

Note that most new licences will have a commencement date of 1 January 2017. Apiarists who hold category two licences (formerly “permanent” licences), that have been paid up to 30 June 2017, will be invoiced separately for a 1 July 2017 payment. No apiarists will be “out of pocket” or billed twice for the period 1 January 2017 to 30 June 2017.

Where no response on preferred payment options has been received, annual payment will be the default option set for invoicing.

DELWP regrets the delay in issuing the new bee site licences and thanks apiarists for their continuing patience during these final stages of implementation.

## **New liaison group for engagement with apiarists**

Work is underway to transition the Buzz Steering Committee to a new liaison group for engagement with apiarists. The Buzz Steering Committee has now retired and beekeeper members of the Committee are sincerely thanked for their valuable contribution to the development of the 2013 Apiculture policy and standard operating procedures. Buzz Committee members – Bob McDonald, Gavin Jamieson, Linton Briggs and Ian Cane – continued to meet during the implementation of the new policy and their ongoing assistance is greatly appreciated by the department.

Draft terms of reference for a new liaison group have been circulated for comment to the executives of the Victorian Apiarists’ Association and Victorian Farmers Federation – Beekeeper Branch. DELWP is now reviewing the feedback received and will consult further with the industry.

*Janette Hodgson, Land Management Policy Division, Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning*

Dear Beekeeper,

## **THE AUSTRALIAN HONEY BEE INDUSTRY BIOSECURITY CODE OF PRACTICE**

Every beekeeper has a crucial role to play in protecting the honey bee industry by remaining alert to, and preventing the spread of a range of both established and exotic pests and diseases.

The honey bee industry, represented by the Australian Honey Bee Industry Council and Plant Health Australia, together with the Australian, State and Territory Governments have developed the National Bee Biosecurity Program (the Program) and the Australian Honey Bee Industry Biosecurity Code of Practice (the Code). The Program and Code were endorsed by the honey bee industry in July 2016.

The purpose of the program is to promote beekeeping best management practices in Australia through the establishment of a mandatory Code of Practice for beekeepers.

The Code is based on the principles of good biosecurity and aims to provide a clear framework for Australian beekeepers to engage in best-practice biosecurity procedures.

The Code describes the outcomes a beekeeper needs to achieve for good pest and disease management. It is not a manual on how to keep bees; the Code tells beekeepers what they must achieve but how they achieve it will be up to the individual and will be influenced by their own situation.

The standards set in the Code are activities that all beekeepers should already be undertaking to minimise the impact of pests and diseases on their own hives and those of their fellow beekeepers.

Victoria already has legislation that applies to beekeepers and the practice of beekeeping. The Code does not replace this legislation but complements it. Some parts of the Code apply to all beekeepers; others apply only to beekeepers with 50 or more hives. It is your responsibility to familiarise yourself with the requirements that relate to you.

To enforce the mandatory Code, and to help ensure that beekeepers are following appropriate biosecurity practices, the Program has appointed a Victorian Bee Biosecurity Officer (BBO). The BBO is responsible for undertaking a range of activities, such as inspections, education and training for beekeepers, as well as assisting in the event of an incursion of an exotic pest or disease.

For more information regarding the Program and the Code visit

[www.honeybee.org.au/programs/code-of-practice-and-national-bee-biosecurity-program](http://www.honeybee.org.au/programs/code-of-practice-and-national-bee-biosecurity-program)

If you have any queries in relation to the Code please contact your Bee Biosecurity Officer or Apiary Officer.

Jessica Hartland - Bee Biosecurity Officer  
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Email: [jessica.hartland@ecodev.vic.gov.au](mailto:jessica.hartland@ecodev.vic.gov.au)

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Yours sincerely

Dr Gabrielle Vivian-Smith  
Chief Plant Health Officer, Victoria  
21 / 04 / 2017

# AUSTRALIAN HONEY BEE INDUSTRY COUNCIL INC



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## INCREASE IN THE NATIONAL RESIDUE SURVEY COMPONENT OF THE HONEY LEVY

### Introduction

Currently the honey levy is 4.6 cents per kilogram. It is made up of:-

- 1.5 cents per kilogram (Research and Development component) paid to the Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation for research
- 2.9 cents per kilogram (Emergency Plant Pest Response [EPPR]) paid to Plant Health Australia for the Contingency Fund which funds the National Bee Biosecurity Program and the National Bee Pest Surveillance Program plus other Biosecurity related issues and responses to exotic incursions
- 0.1 cents per kilogram (Plant Health Australia component) paid to Plant Health Australia (PHA) from which the annual membership subscription is paid plus levy collection costs and other allowable projects
- 0.1 cents per kilogram to the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources to run the National Residue Survey (NRS).

The NRS program was put in place so our industry could export honey to the European Union (EU) plus the results are also used to show that Australia is producing honey that is suitable for export to other overseas markets.

In 2009 the composition of the honey levy at that time was changed. The NRS levy was reduced from 0.3 cents per kilogram to 0.1 cents per kilogram and the Emergency Animal Disease Response (EADR) levy was increased from 0.5 cents per kilogram to 0.7 cents per kilogram. See

[http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/cth/num\\_reg\\_es/pilar20093n210o2009666.html](http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/cth/num_reg_es/pilar20093n210o2009666.html)

The reserves in the NRS had been accumulating to a level where it was felt these needed to be reduced and the EADR levy was being increased to allow for a pool of money to be available when an exotic incursion occurred.

It was noted in the Explanatory Statement that the NRS levy would need to be put back to 0.3 cents per kilogram within two (2) years. However, the reserves within the NRS account have been such that the NRS has been able to operate with the levy income plus reducing reserves for a period longer than originally anticipated.

The EADR levy has since been replaced with the EPPR levy held within Plant Health Australia (PHA). Reserves held within EADR managed by Animal Health Australia (AHA) have been transferred to PHA.



## **Proposal**

The Australian Honey Bee Industry Council (AHBIC) Executive has identified that the NRS levy needs to be increased as the reserves are at a level where they will be depleted within a couple of years if not increased. Failure to keep the NRS program in place will mean that Australia can no longer export honey to the EU. The NRS levy needs to be restored to its original level of 0.3 cents per kilogram.

There are two ways of increasing the NRS levy to 0.3 cents per kilogram.

1. Increase the current honey levy from 4.6 cents per kilogram to 4.8 cents per kilogram.
2. Re-arrange the current levy to allow for the increase in the NRS levy but not increase the overall levy. This is the preferred option of the AHBIC Executive.

### **1. Increase the current levy from 4.6 cents per kilogram to 4.8 cents per kilogram**

The AHBIC Executive feel that it would be inappropriate to increase the honey levy at this point in time given a run of poor production seasons. However it is a possible option. The honey levy was increased to 4.6 cents per kilogram back on 1 July 2015 to fund the National Bee Biosecurity Program.

### **2. Re-arrange the current levy to allow for the increase in the NRS levy but not increase the overall levy.**

The AHBIC Executive is proposing in this option that the current EPPR levy of 2.9 cents per kilogram be reduced to 2.7 cents per kilogram and the NRS levy be increased from cents per kilogram to 0.3 cents per kilogram.

This option would reverse the change previously made in 2009.

It is envisaged that the programs, currently funded by the EPPR levy, will continue uninterrupted. There are presently reserves in the EPPR fund which will allow these activities to continue.

In conversations with PHA they have no objection to this proposal and they will continue to deliver the current programs.

The AHBIC Executive believes that the EPPR fund has sufficient reserves to meet the cost of most biosecurity incidents whilst continuing the current programs. If there are insufficient reserves in the EPPR fund to cover the cost of a major incident, there are provisions in the Emergency Plant Pest Response Deed for the Federal Government to underwrite the cost and be paid back through the EPPR levy over a period of time.

Unless we return to above average honey crops in Australia, this will be a temporary solution, and the honey levy will need to be increased at some stage in the future to stop the depletion of reserves in the Contingency Fund.

The AHBIC Executive puts forward these proposals for consideration at upcoming State beekeeping conferences during May, June and July. Those levy paying beekeepers who cannot attend the conferences can make a submission to the AHBIC Executive Director at:-

P.O. Box 4253  
Raceview Q 4305

Or

Email: [ahbic@honeybee.org.au](mailto:ahbic@honeybee.org.au)

The decisions of the State conferences, plus submissions from levy paying beekeepers who could not attend State conferences, will be tabled at the Annual AHBIC Conference on 8 July, 2017. A decision will be taken at the AHBIC Annual Conference for submitting to the Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources.

If you have any questions, please contact the AHBIC Executive Director as per above.

Trevor Weatherhead  
Executive Director  
8 April, 2017