

To Whom It May Concern,
The Senate
Parliament of Australia - The Eradication of the Asian Honey Bee

My husband and I are Beekeepers operating in Parkes in Central New South Wales.

Beekeeping is our only source of income and we have been in this industry since the early 1970's so our present income and our retirement is solely based on the success of our bees. Therefore, it is important, vital, to us that our industry is protected from the infestations of diseases and other pests.

We operate our bees in forests and on the farms of local farmers and also in areas further away eg Eugowra, Young, Tumut, Batemans Bay, Pilliga Scrub, Cowra, Tumbarumba and Bathurst areas to name a few.

Pollination of canola crops is an important benefit that our local farmers get with us putting our hives on their properties. If our hives were not operating healthily the crops would certainly be disadvantaged and yields cut significantly. This would have a definite effect on the financial income of the farmers and also the community effecting the availability and price on the supermarket shelves.

The problems associated with the Asian Honey Bee are many:

- * The main and most devastating effect being the spread of varroa mite' to our European honey bees. The Asian bee is a natural host to this mite which will cause our honey bees to become debilitated and eventually die out thus reducing our honey production severely and pollination capabilities. This is a HUGE threat to the Australian Honey industry
- * Asian Honey bees also carry diseases foreign to Australia
- * They will steal the honey from the hives thus starving our European bees and weakening their honey production and pollination capabilities
- * It is extremely expensive to keep bees and manage them with 'varroa mite'. This would most likely for us, terminate our livelihood as beekeepers. On top of fighting the Small Hive Beetle that is becoming more prolific now and managing other diseases that are already causing problems with our bees in Australia. eg American Foul Brood

The results of the Asian Honey Bee being allowed to have free range in our country is certainly very worrying and makes life very uncertain to our future financially and emotionally.

When we retire who will want to buy our business encumbered with the expenses it would cost to run it with hives with varroa mite - that is a problem to be managed and can't be eradicated. It certainly will reduce the value of our hives and extraction equipment to something quite negligible.

Australia is the only country free from this pest, varroa mite, and that is a privilege and an advantage to the honey and bee industry.

We implore you to do all in your power to eradicate the Asian Bee - don't give up on our industry - bees are a very precious and advantageous livestock commodity to have in our country for agriculture benefits and honey production.

Yours sincerely

Marilynn and Bob Trim (Apriarists)