



Queen Producers

Honey Bee Corner Apiaries

David & Catherine
Braithwaite

P.O. Box 423,
10 Rutters Ridge,
Oberon, NSW 2787

Ph/Fax: (02) 6336 0405

~~Mobile: 0408 869 985~~

Reg: No: B2039



Honey Producers

Saturday 26th March 2010

Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committees on Rural Affairs and Transport
Asian Bee Inquiry

My name is David Braithwaite I am 48 years old. I decided to become a commercial beekeeper in 1977 when I was 14 years old.

It has been said beekeeping requires a 15 year apprenticeship to gain a full understanding of honeybees and their relationship with the environment. I did not feel I had a full understanding of honeybees till I was 27 years old despite working for another beekeeper and investing everything emotionally and financially towards owning my own beehives.

Currently my wife and I operate 400 hives and a commercial queen rearing operation in the central west of N.S.W. In a typical year that can result in 30 tonnes of honey and 4500 queen bees sold to other beekeepers for their hives.

We have commenced paid pollination for almond pollination at Boundary Bend in Victoria in July-August of each year. The demand for hives on almonds is immense 350,000 hives by 2015 and a crop value of 700 million dollars by 2015. Without European honeybees cross pollinating almond flowers, there are no almonds.

We believe that beekeeping is a wonderful business activity because it can be carried out in large regional towns or the very smallest village in the country. Contributing business activity throughout Australia because every town has a beekeeper.

With the arrival of Asian Bees in Cairns we now have a huge problem confronting us. The Asian Bee can mate with European honeybees and the sperm does not successfully fertilize rendering our queens unable to lay worker bees. This will make the production of queen bees impossible. A productive hive is reliant on having a young queen to produce the abundant worker bees to successfully gather a crop of honey and pollinate fruit, nuts, vegetables, grains and native flora.

Given the traits of the Asian Bee and my understanding of bees we have a significant problem. Asian Bees have no hoarding ability (unlike European Honey Bee) making them have no attachment to their nest so they will easily divide and swarm. Asian Bees have intense robbing abilities so they can rob European Honey Bee hives of all their stored honey leaving them to starve and die. Asian Bees will displace European Honey Bees and infest every possible cavity formerly occupied by native animals.

My wife and I implore you to take action immediately to this incursion of Asian Bee because all beekeepers futures and Australias food security are threatened by inaction.

yours Sincerely.