

DEPARTMENT OF
PRIMARY INDUSTRY, FISHERIES AND MINES

Our file ref: K2006/0059

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Mr Bill Pender
Inquiry into the Australian Honeybee Industry
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Submission No:	29
Date Received:	31-5-07
Secretary:	<i>[Signature]</i>

Dear Mr Pender

I refer to your letter dated 22 March 2007 and your email to the Northern Territory Apiary Officer.

A meeting between the Northern Territory beekeepers and the major melon growers (major users of pollination services) was held in Katherine on 12 May 2007. Departmental officers attended to provide technical advice.

There was a resolution that the high biosecurity status of Northern Territory bees should be protected as the Northern Territory is free of the major endemic disease (American foulbrood, European foulbrood and small hive beetle). This outcome is due to minimal importation of bees in recent years due to lack of demand for more bees.

There was agreement that the high health status should be maintained by the banning of the importation of bees and used non-sterilised equipment except for package bees from Western Australia, based on health status substantiated by testing of honey with a post entry inspection by an inspector. The current condition for entry enables introduction based on inspection of hives. There is no confidence that inspection provides the necessary protection for a variety of reasons. A review is planned in three years.

The current demand for pollination services can be met by the Northern Territory beekeepers. As there is anticipated growth in melon growing, the beekeepers intend to expand the population of honey bees. There is therefore planned growth of the Territory bee industry in response to anticipated demand. The melon industry is currently worth about \$24M. I attach an information sheet relating to a questionnaire for pollination services.

As the major beekeeper is retiring, he has sold his bees to melon growers. Beekeeping expertise will be employed or provided on a contract basis to maintain the hives. While there is aging of the beekeeper workforce, demand is the necessary motivator for new business or workers.

Other than melons and other cucurbits there is no other demand or anticipated demand for pollination services.

Yours sincerely

[Signature]
John Carroll
Chief Executive Officer

[Signature] May 2007



Northern Territory Government

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION HELD BY THE COMMITTEE

ATTACHMENT TO SUBMISSION NO. 29

ATTACHMENT:

Report on the Pollination services Survey sent to growers during September 2006.