

Future Development of the Australian Honey Bee Industry

Submission

➤ ***Current and future prospects***

I have been involved with the apiary industry all of my life. My father started in bees more than half a century ago. Apiculture has been and still is a great way of life but as our natural resource i.e. native flora declines, caused by dieback, insect attack and droughts, suitable locations to site apiaries becomes more difficult each season. Land tenure changes on public lands also cause many areas to be off limits to beekeeping. Government policy in NSW with regard to beekeeping in conserved lands at present is probably some of the most acceptable in Australia. Other states have excessive restrictions and even sunset clauses. Rising transport and compliance legislation costs are an ever increasing burden to our industry.

➤ ***Role in agriculture and forestry***

Agriculture and horticulture require our industry to remain viable or the impact on food production caused by lack of pollination will be catastrophic. Approximately every third mouthful of food eaten is pollinated by honey bees. To maintain bee hives in suitable condition to pollinate crops when required our industry needs suitable areas to build hives i.e. breeding areas. These are primarily forested lands of public tenure.

➤ ***Biosecurity issues***

I have been involved with Animal Health Australia Emergency Animal Disease training and applaud both State and Federal Government for trying to prepare industry for potential pest incursion. When a suspected incursion occurs government agencies need to take the report seriously unlike the recent suspected Apis Cerana incursion in Cairns. Otherwise, why bother with biosecurity at all?

➤ ***Trade issues***

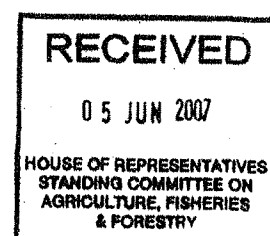
If Australia has to allow imports of honey, then they should be of the same or higher quality than that of the locally produced product.

➤ ***Impact of land management and bushfires***

In recent years it seems wildfires are becoming more frequent and severe. If this phenomenon continues the forested lands will be that badly damaged that they will be no use to apiculture for many years or even decades.

➤ ***Research and development needs of the industry***

Research within the apiary industry is extremely minimal at present, due mainly to our inability to fund the large costs of many research projects. Maybe in future apiculture could combine resources with horticulture for a mutual benefit. There is also a great need to train and retain researchers and entomologists to service the apiary industry into the future.



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