



B-QUAL Australia Pty Ltd

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B-QUAL Australia Pty Ltd P.O. Box 3403 Tingalpa Dc Qld 4173

Ph. +61 7 3361 9200 Fax: + 61 7 3361 9222

TOLL FREE: 1800 630 890

email. bqual@ausqual.com.au

www.bqual.com.au

Some parts of the Industry take another bashing!

All too often it seems we have to make another announcement of setbacks. With floods, bushfires, Covid19 and more floods the bad news lately just seems to never end and has had a terrible effect on our industry and members personally.

Unfortunately many beekeepers in SE Queensland, Northern and Mid NSW have had to contend with devastating floods, although too early to gain any meaningful hive loss figures we know from initial discussions it is going to be substantial. One of our members has estimated his losses at over 600 hives a sad state of affairs.

Once again all those effected are in our thoughts and we all wish and hope that the future is going to be a lot brighter. We offer you all our support.

A B-QUAL member had just taken his new truck in for a service at a Northern NSW dealership just before floods hit, although the dealer put the truck on the hoist to keep it safe, the only problem was that the flood water went entirely over the garage roof! To make matters worse he has been told by Isuzu that it will be March 2023 before a new truck is available



B-TRACE Australia



The B-QUAL board have made the decision to introduce a lower level desk only audit system for small enterprise operations for beekeepers with 100 hives or less or maximum honey sales of 6000kgs per annum.

This new venture has come about by requests from various State bodies and industry stakeholders as a means of improving both the industry image, biosecurity and importantly give provenance and traceability to consumers.

The system is based on a newly developed app to assist apiarists to better record their operational records and members must complete an annual online desk audit. The audit also involves completing the BOLT course. Participants will also have to upload verifiable evidence, photos, invoices etc, of some aspects of their operations.

B-TRACE is specifically aimed at small producers as they start their way towards hopefully full B-QUAL membership.

With Governments and organisations such as Australian Farmers Markets Association covering in excess of 300 markets in Australia, B-TRACE is going to provide another step in the process to give our industry the advantage to showcase that our products are produced to high audited and certified standards from the highly accredited B-QUAL standards down to small producers also having an audited level encompassing those Biosecurity and food handling issues and traceability to give our consumers confidence in our products that is being more and more requested. We produce worlds best products now we have to show the general public that we have the industry means to guarantee our claims.

If you know a small operator with less than 100 hives suggest he look up www.btrace.com.au and join online. Remember some of these small operators one day may be large players in the industry and to have them committed to a QA program early in their careers can only help B-QUAL and the industry in the long run.

The launch date of the B-TRACE website is **Monday 21st March 2022.**

The launch will be followed up with wide industry marketing to State Associations, large Beekeeping Clubs and press.

We acknowledge the assistance and co-operation of the CRCHBP, Dr Liz Barbour and University of WA, Professor Sharon Purchase in the development of the management app and input into the B-TRACE program.

Honey collection and Chemical Library.

Our grant program is well into the final stages we thank everyone who has submitted honey samples and I am pleased to announce that over the last 2 months sample collection has really kicked up a notch and we are now receiving samples that are starting to produce chemistry pattern results that we were hoping for. If all proceeds as current then I expect we will be able to report a very satisfactory and successful grant result. We are now getting verifiable results from the samples due to multiples of dominant species.

The HPTLC testing is now commencing and is already showing some good bioactivity levels in some honeys, more to come on that as testing continues.

CMV FARMS APRIAISTS WEEKEND

STRONG HIVES AND PERFECT CONDITIONS PAY OFF

Harvest at CMV Farms may have only just started, but it's already evident that the near perfect pollination conditions and strong hives from last year are paying off! Spring conditions for almonds in the main, were very mild and favorable, although it was very unfortunate that many growers suffered under some stormy weather occurrences during the late spring and early summer months. Those more fortunate missed the storms, but in some cases by no more than 100 meters, which is very typical of these weather events.



The start of harvest at CMV Farms

CMV Farms recently caught up with their apiarists. It was a great opportunity to touch base on the year ahead and put into context the learnings from our collaboration with BQUAL and the other associations we are involved in. It was encouraging to hear that even after a relatively dry spring, most of our pollination partners had a fare to average year.

As indicated, almonds, generally speaking look to be in good shape production wise. However, with large crops and carry over in the US, pricing has continued to face pressure. Let's hope the good work completed at pollination contributes positively against what may turn out to be a soft market.

The team at CMV Farms wish everyone good luck for the year ahead. We hope that the good seasons continue and we can all prosper.



South Australian Apiarists weekend with CMV Farms

CMV Group have been a very supportive sponsor of B-QUAL and we appreciated their support and input on various matters for over 3 years. CMV is also a large and respected supporter and sponsor of the South Australian Apiary industry. On behalf of all industry and apiarists groups we respectfully acknowledge our grateful appreciation to CMV Group for their industry support.....*editor*.



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WHO IS B-TRACE PROGRAM FOR?

Intended for small semi commercial and recreational beekeepers who:

- Manage or own total hive holding of 100 hives or less, and production/sales of less than 6,000 kg per year
- Buy in honey bee products less than 6,000 kg per year
- Typically sell to:
 - › Farmers Markets
 - › Direct to consumers
 - › Food stalls
 - › Boutique shops, such as Bakeries, Fruit and Vegetable, Delicatessens, Restaurants and similar
 - › Or, any other outlets



Visit WWW.btrace.com.au after March 21st 2022 for further details .

Email: admin@btrace.com.au

B-SPATIAL..... Apiary site decision tool.

The CRC for Honey Bee Products is producing a Decision Tool for apiary sites – it is to be called **B-Spatial** and will be made available to B-QUAL members

The CRCHBP and A/PROFESSOR Bryan Boruff appreciate that you need layers of information to make a decision on whether an apiary site is worth considering or not, and it comes from multiple places that takes some finding and can also be expensive adding to overall corporate costs. So Professor Bryan Boruff and his team are collating this together in one web-based app to help you. As a member of B-QUAL, your site information and notes will download into this app, and you can sit at your computer and explore each site for your possible annual plan.

The system will bring together:

- Flora within the sub-biogeographical area – which you can edit back to the species that apply to your site
- Flowering range of each species
- Value of the flora to bee health – based on pollen nutrition and nectar production
- Burn scars going back in time
- Areas of vegetation that are regarded as native
- A/Prof Boruff and his team are trying to get logging data which will be included

Initially the following data may NOT be available in B-Spatial until further meaningful data can be gained.

- Burn notices
- Land usage
- Mean temperature
- Total rainfall

This is just another example of the ongoing association with CRCHBP and University of WA and A/Prof Bryan Boruff that B-QUAL and its members are benefiting from.

B-QUAL app and B-Spatial both have substantial benefits to members that can offer real cost savings to enterprises in both time and real dollar cost savings.

We will notify all B-QUAL members via email when B-Spatial is available for use.

Much of what we have achieved this year has been made possible by the ongoing support of our sponsors.

Please support those who support us.



STERITECH Protecting the bee industry from disease & pests

Since Steritech emerged in Melbourne in the 1970s as a pioneer for gamma irradiation processing, Steritech has paved the way for sterilisation and decontamination processing and is now regarded as a global leader. Steritech has been treating bee equipment infected with AFB for many years.

When it comes to maintenance of bee equipment, all beekeepers agree that replacing contaminated hives can be a very costly exercise. There have been many techniques tried and tested over the years, in an attempt to find the ultimate solution to control disease and insect contamination. Out of all the different techniques tried treatment with irradiation stands alone in offering the most effective method of eliminating pathogens, disease and insects from contaminated equipment.

Treatment with Irradiation eliminates:

- American Foulbrood
- European Foulbrood
- Nosema Apis
- Nosema Ceranae
- Ascospaera Apis
- Small Hive Beetle

Each of Steritech's Irradiation facilities are unique in their design, but the required outcome is still the same. Please visit the website at www.steritech.com.au and under Industries you will see the option for Beekeeping.

How to prepare Bee Equipment for Irradiation:

Hives must be free of Honey, Bees, & Hive Beetle and their Larvae.

- All hives must be sealed (bagged/wrapped/plastic under and on top/inside bee carton)
- Steritech Bee Cartons are available for purchase at the Wetherill Park plant. The Steritech Beekeeping page on the website provides you with great information on irradiation of bee equipment and you can download the Bee Equipment Irradiation Forms, which will provide you with information about preparing your equipment for each of Steritech's locations.

For enquiries about AFB the preparation of infected bee equipment, Steritech can be contacted at the following plant addresses.

treatment and



Dandenong and Wetherill Park plants can process up to a triple stack of beehives. (max weight 25kg)



STERITECH VIC (Dandenong)

Ray Bryden
Vic Sales Executive
Telephone: (03) 8726 5566
Fax No: (03) 9701 3158
Email: sterivic@steritech.com.au

STERITECH NSW (Wetherill Park)

John Irwin
NSW General Manager
Telephone: (02) 8785 4400
Fax No: (02) 9604 4396
Email: sterinsw@steritech.com.au

STERITECH QLD (Narangba)

Glenn Robertson
QLD General Manager
Telephone: (07) 3385 8400
Fax No: (07) 3293 1544
Email: steriqld@steritech.com.au

STERITECH VIC (Merrifield)

Barry Cox
Plant Manager
Telephone: (03) 8726 5523
Fax No: (03) 9701 3158
Email: bcox@steritech.com.au

Free genetic testing for Australian bee breeders.

Plan Bee, the National Honey Bee Genetic Improvement Program has announced that it will be offering free genetic testing to all Australian bee breeders who are interested in learning more about their genetic lines.



Commencing early 2022, interested breeders who are already collecting data, or are interested in collecting data for trait selection (such as honey production or disease resistance) will be able to submit samples to the national program and in return receive a report which outlines key genetic information on their stock which can provide valuable insights on the genetic health of their hives.

Key information provided will include how closely related an individual hive is to others and more importantly, whether stock is showing any signs of inbreeding. If caught early, inbreeding can be managed out of the population before it becomes a major issue.

According to Nadine Chapman, Plan Bee project lead, beekeepers who submit samples for genetic

testing are not only learning more about their stock but also helping improve the entire beekeeping industry.

“The more data we can collect on the genetics of our national bee stock the closer we come to be able to develop a national database” Ms Chapman said.

“Ongoing genetic testing means we will be able to develop accurate Estimated Breeding Values (EBVs) for the queen breeding industry. EBVs, more commonly used in the red meat and dairy industries, is a measure of genetic merit for specific traits.

One of the key outcomes of Plan Bee will be the ability for bee breeders to use EBVs for their stock. By using EBVs, beekeepers can purchase queens which are more likely to exhibit specific traits such as low aggressiveness, high honey production or resistance to disease.

For breeders, they will be able to prove the strength of specific genetic lines, boosting the value of superior queens. Overall, by adopting modern genetic practices, the value of the queen bee breeding and beekeeping industries will increase.

The program is supported by the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment (DAWE) as part of its Rural Research and Development for Profit program.

To further assist in the collection of data, the Plan Bee team will be organising farm visits in early 2022, to help collect samples. Any breeder interested in participating in this program should contact Nadine Chapman:

nadine.chapman@sydney.edu.au.

Source: Australian Tree Crop Feb/Mar 2022,

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