

National Bee Pest Surveillance Program Steering Committee - Meeting 2

National Bee Biosecurity Program Steering Committee - Meeting 9

Communiqué

The 2nd meeting of the National Bee Pest Surveillance Program and the 9th meeting of the National Bee Biosecurity Program Steering Committees were held on Thursday the 30th May in Melbourne. The Committees included representatives from the Commonwealth government, State and Territory governments, Australian Honey Bee Industry Council, Plant Health Australia and Hort Innovation (NBSP only).

Below is a brief description of the items discussed and the major outcomes of the meetings.

National Bee Pest Surveillance Program

Update on surveillance activities

The committee were provided with an update on the surveillance activities performed within the program for 19 pests of concern to the Australian honey bee industry. The committee noted that no exotic pests were detected in the first six months of 2019. The committee acknowledged the challenges of performing surveillance in remote and inaccessible locations and agreed to alternative protocols at remote ports, ensuring the continuation of surveillance operations at these locations.

Review of miticide products

The committee reviewed the miticide products currently available for surveillance of varroa and tropilaelaps mites and noted that the best products used to control and kill these mites are already in use within the program.

Review of the NBSP

The committee noted that the current program will be concluding in 2021. Before setting the framework for a new program for 2021 onwards, the committee agreed to an external review of the program within the next financial year which will cover all operational aspects including management, surveillance operations, and resourcing requirements.

For more information on the National Bee Pest Surveillance Program visit:

planthealthaustralia.com.au/national-programs/national-bee-pest-surveillance-program/

National Bee Biosecurity Program

2018 Bee Health Survey

The committee was presented with the results from the 2018 Bee Health Survey, which examined biosecurity knowledge amongst Australian beekeepers. The committee noted that the survey highlighted specific biosecurity areas, including the identification of established and exotics pests, which required more work, and could be promoted by Bee Biosecurity Officers to increase biosecurity awareness.

Control of American foulbrood

The committee were updated on the progress towards the effective control of American foulbrood in New South Wales. Furthermore, the committee supported consideration of a national approach for the control of American foulbrood as part of the National Bee Biosecurity Program.

Biosecurity for Beekeepers online training course

The committee discussed the *Biosecurity for Beekeepers* online pest and disease training course. The course was developed by Plant Health Australia in consultation with AHBIC to enable beekeepers to meet their training requirements under the Australian Honey Bee Industry Biosecurity Code of Practice. Committee members identified the need to update the course content in the upcoming year, to ensure beekeepers are provided with the latest information on pest and disease management practices. A strategy for updating the *Biosecurity for Beekeepers* course will be developed by Plant Health Australia and presented to the committee at the next program steering committee meeting.

For more information about the *Biosecurity for Beekeepers* course visit:

beeaware.org.au/training/

Harmonisation of import requirements

The committee were provided with an update on the progress towards harmonisation of import requirements for the movement of bees between the state/territory jurisdictions. The first Harmonisation Subcommittee meeting was held in February 2019, where options for improved interstate market access between South Australia, Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland were discussed. A technical working group has been established to draft model import requirements which align with requirements in the Australian Honey Bee Industry Biosecurity Code of Practice. The committee supported continued efforts towards harmonisation of import requirements between the jurisdictions.

Varroa incursion scenario workshop

The final report on Exercise Bee Prepared, a Varroa mite incursion simulation exercise delivered by Plant Health Australia, was presented to the committee. The committee noted the outcomes detailed in this report and agreed to consider relevant outcomes at the next program steering committee meeting.

For more information on Exercise Bee Prepared visit:

planthealthaustralia.com.au/resources/training/simulation-exercises/

National Bee Biosecurity Program Review

The committee were updated on progress towards the review of the National Bee Biosecurity Program. A working group will be formed in the upcoming months to oversee the review process. The review will focus on the scope, management and funding of the program. The committee supported a review of the program, which will ensure delivery of outcomes that are a priority to the Australian honey bee industry.

For more information on the National Bee Biosecurity Program visit:

planthealthaustralia.com.au/national-programs/national-bee-biosecurity-program/