



B-QUAL Australia Pty Ltd ABN: 37 096 945 694

## **B-QUAL NEWS**

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### *From the Chairman, Wayne Fuller*

Greetings,

Are you worried about adulterated honey and how this affects the general public's perception of our industry and the flow on of sales?

Simple - become B-QUAL accredited and encourage other beekeepers you know. Being accredited allows your customers to have confidence in the product they are buying is pure Australian honey.

In Australia we produce a premium product but as our beekeeping lives keep us busy sometimes it is easy to forget the importance of marketing both our industry and products. The easy way to do this is by proudly displaying our B-QUAL logo. Also encourage your colleagues, other club members or any other beekeepers you know to join as this will bring many benefits to both the industry and yourselves.

Thank you to all our present members who had the foresight to join and congratulations to all our new members –your decision will only enhance your business for the future.

One beekeeper I know didn't bother to count their supers until becoming accredited with B-QUAL. Only then they realised they were losing 25-35 supers per load (a handy ute load)! Steps were then taken to stop the loss and all the proof needed for insurance claims was able to be provided by the B-QUAL record keeping. This is one example which shows how a few minutes of record keeping can actually save you money and help with better informed decision making.

Thank you for being part of BQUAL and happy bee-keeping.

## B-QUAL NEWS

We are pleased to see continuing applications to join B-QUAL being received by our office from beekeepers in all states especially Western Australia, NSW and Queensland. We have received to date this financial year some 88 new application enquiries.

If you are still uncertain of the process, give Laina a ring at the B-QUAL office toll free 1800 630 890 who will give you a good rundown on the process and steps you will need to take and a fee structure applicable to your enterprise.

The Board in conjunction with the B-QUAL Program Managers, have completed a review and update of the Approved Supplier Manual. The Manual is now undergoing graphic layout improvements and will be in print shortly giving members a more readable and durable long lasting manual. Many thanks to Rachel and the team at Aus-Qual who have put a lot of effort into the graphic and presentation layout.

We draw members attention to the current crisis facing our industry including adulterated honey allegations and the Aussie Farms activists group. As the industry QA and Food Safety program administrators, we intend to become more involved and work closely with AHBIC and other agencies to represent our member's best interest. We would welcome any input, concerns or ideas you may have to assist us in combating these threats.

Email [bqual@ausqual.com.au](mailto:bqual@ausqual.com.au). We need all sections of the industry to work closely together and develop logical, strong intelligent counter arguments to these threats and allegations. B-QUAL as a national organization is well suited to be fully involved in industry discussions on your behalf. Should you or your enterprise become a target of the Aussie Farms activist group, we strongly recommend that you follow the National Farmers Federation guidelines and the 3 point action plan they outline at [www.nff.org.au](http://www.nff.org.au)

We have added additional biosecurity questions to the B-QUAL certification examination and all B-QUAL certified operators are now expected to have a good understanding of the requirements of the Biosecurity Code of Practice, particularly in relation to AFB testing and management.

The Victorian government through the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions, has announced some changes to the current State legislation to be presented to Parliament to allow Victoria to support our industry and formally adopt the Biosecurity Code of Practice. If the changes are supported we believe they will become effective 16 April 2019.

The Victorian Department of Agriculture, Energy & Resources Agriculture and Rural have advised they received a large number of bounced emails from a recent mail out. They have asked if Victorian beekeepers could update their details at the Beekeeper Registrar - phone: 1800 356 761, fax: 03 5430 4505 or by mail: Beekeeper Registrar, PO Box 2500, Bendigo Delivery Centre, Victoria, 3554 as a matter of urgency.

The B-QUAL Board, staff and members pass on sincere condolences to Murray Arkadieff and the entire Arkadieff family. Murray's wife, Helen, sadly passed away in the UK just after Christmas while visiting her family. Helen passed away on January 2 after a tragic accident leaving behind her husband Murray and two sons Sammy 5, and Jimmy 3.

Murray works with his father Len and mother Mary in their family business.  
The Arkadieff family have been members of B-QUAL since 2006.

Our thoughts are with you all at this sad time.



## B-QUAL Partnerships.

### Honeypack Pty Ltd. BQ-715.

Three years ago, a small group of people formed ABC Honey Group. Subsidiaries within this group now include the Australian Beekeepers Cooperative Limited, ABC Honey Pty Ltd (sales and marketing) and Honeypack Pty Ltd (honey packing plant).



B-Qual has been a very influential factor in the daily operations of Honeypack and also the Cooperative. Cooperative members are encouraged to journey towards B-QUAL accreditation. It was essential that Honeypack gain B-QUAL certification in its operational infancy. As all three companies grew, the importance of B-QUAL became apparent.

B-QUAL not only incorporates beekeeper's legal requirements but the Australian Honey Industry standards. It's the aim of everyone in the honey industry that Australia fosters healthy and strong beekeeping practices. A strong beekeeping community supports programs that help grow and promote pure Australian honey. B-QUAL is the perfect example of a program that seeks to promote high beekeeping standards, accountability for packing plants and traceability for all honey products. When the B-QUAL program is followed closely, consumers can have full confidence in the honey they choose to purchase.

The ABC Honey Group is working with other industry groups to develop a certified Australian label to set our Australian product apart from other honeys across the world. The B-QUAL program is in the unique position to complement such a label. When product labels show both the B-QUAL logo and Australian True to Label certification, consumer expectations for high standards in all areas of the honey process (from apiary to packing) are completely satisfied.

It may seem at present that there is no financial advantage to being B-QUAL accredited but there are great opportunities in the future to distinguish pure Australian honey in the marketplace. The B-QUAL program not only promotes quality, accountability and industry standards, but being part of B-QUAL is another way to stand out from the crowd.



*Glenda Holowaty*  
Administration Manager  
ABC Honey Group. Qld.

*Glenda pictured with Australian Beekeepers Cooperative Limited General Manager Dick Symes.*

# The Australian Honey Bee Industry Biosecurity Code of Practice

By James Sheehan

BBO Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development Western Australia.



The Western Australian (WA) bee industry has a long rich narrative and a diverse base of commercial, semi commercial and amateurs, all playing important but different role in industry, community and economy. Diversity brings with it a wealth of views, experience and information but it often exposes individuals and industry to unacceptable practices and difficulty when trying to establish consistent underpinning biosecurity practices.

Good biosecurity practice in bee keeping is nothing new, but we in W.A. live in an area relative free of many of the serious pest and disease that impact on bee keeper's nationally and internationally. Naturally this can invoke a level of complacency and blissful ignorance into some apiary practices. If we are not actively looking for the next nasty little critter to arrive in W. A., chances are it will be too late before we recognise it and it becomes endemic. As bee keepers and industry facilitators, awareness, vigilance and preparedness must be our primary responsibility to ensure our routine surveillance provides the platform for early detection.

Before we can address changing bee keeper behaviours we must first establish what the behaviours we want to see them adopt. Ok that's the easy bit, pull out 'The Australian Honey Bee Industry Biosecurity Code of Practice. (the CODE)' Job done.... If it were only that simple! There is a natural resistance to change and as leaders and professionals in the industry we must understand this process and find way to better communicate and engage individually and broadly. People usually change their practices for multiple reasons. What might surprise you is that it is not always driven by expert advice, scientific consensus, logic or fear of compliance.

When considering engaging bee keepers individually and as group with the CODE we must give thought to their intrinsic and extrinsic values. Given our industry diversity there is not a one size fits all approach. Why am I saying this!! You ask? - Isn't this my job, the short answer is 'yes,' but for this to work effectively it has to be EVERY beekeeper's job. Compliance with the code, mandatory or not will set a new industry norm and one of the greatest drivers in the broad application of practice, is the power of social comparison.

Quality Assurance systems, state legislation, requirements imposed by honey packers all have a place but the most empowering change come when bee keepers see value for themselves, everyone undertaking the same practice and understand their actions are an important part of the much broader apiary and horticultural industry

Get a copy of the CODE today and play your part in the future of our industry

<http://www.planthealthaustralia.com.au/national-programs/national-bee-biosecurity-program/>

State by State breakdown of enquiries for B-QUAL membership for financial year 2018 – 2019 to date. Many of these enquiries are now progressing towards first audits.

WA	NSW	QLD	SA	VIC	TAS	ACT	TOTAL
24	21	20	9	8	5	1	88

We urge all current B-QUAL members to talk to their industry associates and spread the word and encourage them to apply.

An application form is attached to the last page of the newsletter, for anyone wishing to pass onto a contact.

## *“I can’t imagine my day without B-Qual!”*



Hi, I’m Glenda and I have the privilege of being a hobbyist beekeeper’s wife, mum of four rapidly growing “Drones” and the Administration Manager of three bee- related organisations: the Australian Beekeepers Cooperative Limited, ABC Honey Pty Ltd and Honeypack Pty Ltd.

The Australian Beekeepers Cooperative Limited was formed one year ago and its membership has quickly expanded as beekeepers seek fair prices and great support. It’s one of my responsibilities to encourage Cooperative members to obtain their B-Qual accreditation and provide assistance (where possible) along their B-Qual journey. ABC Honey is our retail arm which sells our honey products to shops and the public.

Honeypack Pty Ltd was established three years ago in Brisbane as a small honey packing plant but with big dreams. We now have a special heat room to help decrystallise honey in cooler months and equipment to aerate honey, which is particularly desirable when exporting. We welcome enquiries to pack honey for beekeepers, distributors and for export.

One of my first tasks for Honeypack was to ensure we could obtain B-Qual accreditation as a packing house. Writing Honeypack’s Quality Assurance manual, as per B-Qual directions, helped cement B-Qual principles in every day practice, and ensured Honeypack passed its initial audit.

As daunting as it may first appear, following B-Qual is really about beekeepers putting their practices and observations on record (even if you’re allergic to pens and technology like my hubby beekeeper!). The same applies in Honeypack – where we follow all legislated food safe and B-Qual standards. Part of my job is to ensure we keep excellent and accurate records of all our practices (including B-Qual) so consumers can have absolute confidence in our quality product and in our packing facility.

It is very rewarding to be part of the honey story, encouraging beekeepers in their apiaries and also ensuring our packing plant continues current quality food safe standards. Working alongside the B-Qual program sparked my interest in implementing food safe practices and led me to apply for and receive the Duane Leadbetter Memorial Food Safety Study Award, an Aus Qual scholarship in 2018. I’m looking forward to putting into practice what I learn, not only to benefit Honeypack, but for all our Cooperative beekeeper members, the Australian Bee Industry and even your family when they open a jar of ABC Honey at breakfast.

I’m also grateful for the friendliness and professionalism of the B-Qual auditors and team at B-Qual HQ. (Thanks Laina, Rob & Michael!) They steered me in the right direction and patiently answered my first 100 questions!

Whether at home in our own apiary, or at work, B-Qual is part of my day!

Glenda Holowaty  
Administration Manager  
ABC Honey Group

*We thank Glenda for this unsolicited personal article and her appreciation of B-QUAL and staff assistance.....(editor)*

## Don't be the missing link in the B-QUAL chain!



Help fill this space [JOIN B-QUAL NOW.](#)

Contact B-QUAL office toll free 1800 630 890 or if you want to pay 07 3361 9200

email [bqual@ausqual.com.au](mailto:bqual@ausqual.com.au)

and we will send you all the information.

## Beekeepers must have honey tested annually for American foulbrood

American foulbrood (AFB) is the most widespread and significant bee disease in Australia. Early infections may be difficult to detect visually and laboratory evaluation of honey for AFB spores remains the most sensitive and accurate test for detection of the disease. Laboratory testing may also detect AFB before it has any visible impact on the hive.

The National Code of Practice and, as included in the B-QUAL Approved operating manual, requires commercial beekeepers (50 hives or more) to have an annual, independent test of their apiary for the

disease. This will detect disease present at low levels and will provide a snapshot of the level of AFB in different geographical areas. Monitoring changes in the level of disease over time will also provide some evidence of the effectiveness of this code.

The beekeeper is only required to have one test conducted on a pooled honey sample collected from at least 20% of their hives. More extensive testing, either through a laboratory or by using AFB test kits, is recommended to assist with AFB detection and control.

The code:

### **REQUIREMENT:**

**10.1** This section applies only to beekeepers who manage **50 or more hives**.

**10.2** A beekeeper **must** have their hives independently tested for the presence of American foulbrood at least once in every 12 consecutive months by:

- a) The microbiological examination of a representative, pooled honey sample by an approved laboratory, or
- b) any other method approved by the relevant state or territory authority

**10.3** Where a beekeeper sends honey to a honey packer, the honey sample may be collected by the packer from submitted honey containers and consigned to an approved laboratory.

**10.4** Where a beekeeper does not send honey to a honey packer, the beekeeper **must** submit to an approved laboratory one or more pooled honey samples collectively containing honey from at least 20% of the total number of hives under their management, chosen at random. Samples can be collected during the routine extraction of honey.

**10.5** The beekeeper will be liable for all costs of collection, transportation and testing of honey samples collected for compliance with this Code.

## Where to send samples for honey testing in each state or territory.

### New South Wales

State Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory  
Officer-in-charge  
Courier: Woodbridge Road, Menangle NSW 2568  
Post: Private Mail Bag 4008, Narellan NSW 2567.

### Victoria

Gribbles Veterinary Pathology  
Contact the help desk on 1300 307 190 and select option 3.  
Staff will arrange for a honey test kit to be sent to you with instructions for submissions. Samples can either be posted back in the supplied post pack or dropped off at one of the many Australian Clinical Labs Collection Centres. Please ask for your nearest collection centre when you call.

### South Australia

Annual AFB Honey Test Submission Form  
Apiary Unit  
Primary Industries and Regions SA  
33 Flemington Street  
Glenside SA 5065.

### Western Australia

Animal Health Laboratories DAFWA South Perth  
Locked Bag 4  
Bentley Delivery Centre  
W A 6983.

### Queensland

Call 13 25 23 to arrange for a honey sample advice sheet. Mail the completed honey sample advice sheet with payment and a 100 mL honey sample that represents all the hives to:  
Biosecurity Sciences Laboratory  
Health and Food Science Precinct  
PO Box 156  
Archerfield BC Qld 4108  
OR  
Specimen Receipt (Loading Dock 12)  
Biosecurity Sciences Laboratory  
Health and Food Science Precinct  
39 Kessels Road  
Coopers Plains Qld 4108.

### Tasmania.

Animal Health Laboratory  
165 Westbury Road  
Prospect. Tas. 7250.  
Prior to sending sample, email Karla Williams BBO for a submission form  
[karla.williams@dpiwve.tas.gov.au](mailto:karla.williams@dpiwve.tas.gov.au)

### Northern Territory

All suspect samples should be submitted to your regional Department of Resources (DoR) office for a laboratory diagnosis.

## 1. How to decipher results from an AFB test

Positive results are usually expressed as +1, +2 or +3 with the scores representing the likelihood of visual symptoms of AFB appearing in the hives the honey was collected from. +1 indicates a 56% chance of observing AFB, +2 an 80% chance and +3 a 100% chance.

Note that while a negative result will provide a good indication that there are no AFB spores present in the hives the honey came from, it cannot say this with certainty. Regular brood inspections for signs of AFB should always be a part of your beekeeping practice.

## 2. What to do if you get a positive result.

If the sample you had tested was pooled from several hives and tests positive, you will not know which specific hive or hives from that group is infected. You will then need to go and inspect all of the hives that contributed honey to the sample for symptoms of AFB.

Record your test results in the B-QUAL "Disease Monitoring Record" template Record 03 in Reference Manual 2.4 Records.

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## B-QUAL Training Form

Please complete all parts of this application form and return to:  
**AUS-QUAL Pty Ltd**

**B-QUAL Certification**

PO Box 3403, Tingalpa DC, QLD, 4173  
 Phone: 1800 630 890 (free call) Phone: (07) 3361 9200  
 Fax: (07) 3361 9222 Email: [bqual@ausqual.com.au](mailto:bqual@ausqual.com.au)



Business Name:			
Trading Name:			
ABN:			
Business Operation: (please indicate below)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Honey Producer & Packer	<input type="checkbox"/> Queen Rearing		
<input type="checkbox"/> Honey Producer	<input type="checkbox"/> Comb Honey		
<input type="checkbox"/> Honey Packer	<input type="checkbox"/> Other: (please specify)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Pollination Services			
Contact Person:		Position:	
Phone:		Mobile:	
Email:			
Location Address:			
Town/City:	State:	Postcode:	
Postal Address:			
Town/City:	State:	Postcode:	

Please display our Company Name and Certification Number on the B-QUAL website ([www.bqual.com.au](http://www.bqual.com.au)).

Yes  No

Please display our email address on the B-QUAL website ([www.bqual.com.au](http://www.bqual.com.au)).

Yes  No

### B-QUAL Training Manual

The B-QUAL Training Manual has a cost of \$300.

**Note:** Only one manual is required per enterprise, however there is no limit to the number of manuals you can purchase.

Please indicate the number of Training Manuals required:

An invoice will be supplied by email. Please indicate your preferred payment method below.

Credit Card payments, please contact the AUS-MEAT accounts department on 07 3361 9200.

Cheques made payable to: B-QUAL Australia Pty Ltd

Direct Deposit payments: Westpac Banking Corporation

Account Name: AUS-MEAT Limited

BSB: 034-051

Account No.: 138793

**Note:** Please quote your company name as payment reference.