



## Queensland Beekeepers' Association

### Weekly Varroa Mite Update – Week Ending 2/12/2022

The detection of *Varroa destructor* in Newcastle on the 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2022 has created much anxiety within the Australian beekeeping industry. In an effort to streamline our communications to our members the QBA will now offer weekly updates to our members and affiliate clubs giving insight into our current areas of focus.

We actively encourage all beekeepers to undertake varroa mite surveillance activities on managed hives and report the results (including negative results) to the Bee 123 portal. For more information on the Bee 123 portal please click [here](#).

### Weekly Update 2 December 2022

#### Bee 123 data to date:

Total beekeepers reporting results	390
Total Hives checked	3581
Total hives reported	14262
Total No. of Recreational Beekeeper Surveys:	274
Total No. of Commercial Beekeeper Surveys:	112
<b>Mites found or suspected</b>	<b>0</b>

#### Biosecurity Queensland weekly update 2 December 2022

- A new report 'Varroa destructor in beehives: Queensland area of surveillance – Biometry analysis' has been completed by DAF. The aim of the study presented in this report was to assess whether Queensland has performed sufficient testing to declare itself free from *V. destructor*. The report confirms that more sampling is required for Queensland to make a declaration of freedom of *V. destructor* with the required 95% level of confidence.

DAF met with the QBA on Thursday 24 November to discuss what level of surveillance is required to support area of freedom from varroa mite for Queensland. DAF will continue to work closely with industry to promote the need for more surveillance and reporting of results into Bee123.

- The Qld Bee Biosecurity Officer (BBO) attended the following meetings:
  - QBA Brisbane Branch meeting on 25 November 2022, and had 20 attendees
  - QBA Stanley Rivers Branch meeting at Caboolture on 26 November 2022
- The BBO will be attending the Valley Bees Community Group Field Day at Gympie Landcare on 3 December 2022.
- Bayside Beekeepers are launching their community surveillance project on 8 January 2023 at a Field Day at DAF's Research Facility. The project will distribute hive surveillance kits to members to undertake varroa mite checks and report their results. Biosecurity Queensland are supporting this initiative.

- **Biosecurity Instrument Permit Applications**

Permit statistics total as at 29/11/2022

In progress	7
Approved	32
Not approved	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>

- All premises inspected found to be compliant.
- Six Requests for information
- All responded to and resolved

### **Bee 123 QLD Surveillance Dashboard Map 2 December 2022**

The map below illustrates the current distribution of varroa mite surveillance activities reported to the Bee 123 portal. The QBA and DAF urge all beekeepers across Queensland to complete varroa mite surveillance activities immediately and report their results (including negative results) to the portal.

The blue dots represent negative surveillance results from 390 varroa mite surveillance activities reported to the Bee 123 portal since the 13<sup>th</sup> of July.



*Figure 1 - Bee 123 Surveillance Reports – 2/12/2022*

As a part of the response plan to varroa, each state government are required to provide a declaration of Area of Freedom from varroa mite (95% confidence that Queensland is free from varroa mite).

In order for a declaration of area of freedom to be made, a state jurisdiction must provide evidence of negative surveillance data collected from industry and government. To date, Queensland surveillance results fall drastically short of the 95% target necessary to declare area of freedom.

Since the detection of *varroa destructor* in June this year, movement control orders have largely prohibited the once 'free' movement of honey bees and their related by products across much of the east coast of Australia. Although movement controls are necessary to keep other states free from the mite, border closures have presented significant challenges not only for migratory beekeepers, but for anyone attempting to resource managed hives for pollination, placement of hives onto floral resource and securing queens & breeder queens to replace ageing queen bees for the season ahead.

In short, the state government must see a significant increase in varroa mite surveillance activities in order to declare area of freedom. In order to reach the 95% confidence level, industry and government surveillance activities must increase as a matter of immediate priority.

Should Queensland fail to meet the target of 95% confidence in freedom from the mite, other jurisdictions may place additional control measures on honey bees, queens and other varroa mite carriers leaving Queensland for southern states. In short, although in the future Queensland may allow the movement of bees from other states under a border control permit system, other states may place movement controls that prohibit any bees from moving south unless the state can prove area of freedom.

Varroa mite surveillance and the reporting of the surveillance is a practice that is here to stay especially whilst an active response and eradication program is in place.

Every beekeeper across the country has a biosecurity obligation to the greater industry, your fellow beekeepers and ultimately our precious honey bees that are depending on us to protect the future health and prosperity of the sector. Please, where possible, complete and report your varroa mite surveillance as a matter of priority.

Please report all surveillance activities to the Bee 123 portal. Click [here](#) to learn more.

## **AHBIC**

AHBIC is seeking further expressions of interest from beekeepers willing to volunteer to assist with control operations for the current Varroa biosecurity emergency.

Volunteer beekeepers have been a vital part of the varroa response, and their assistance is greatly appreciated.

Volunteers are not paid for their time, but travel, food and accommodation will be provided, and travel and food costs will be reimbursed.

Operations are currently being carried out at Narrabri, Coffs Harbour and the Hunter region. Volunteers are invited to select their preferred destination, but won't necessarily be deployed to their chosen location.

Please note that volunteers must be members of an AHBIC member body, so please do not share this form publicly.

Beekeepers must register their interest on the on-line form. Click [here](#) to download the on-line form.

### **Past Events:**

- QBA Wide Bay Branch Meeting 19/11/2022 presentation provided by Biosecurity Queensland. Jo Martin QBA Secretary attended this meeting.

- QBA Toowoomba Branch Meeting 19/11/2022 presentation provided by Biosecurity Queensland. Jacob Stevens QBA President attended this meeting.
- QBA Brisbane Branch Meeting 25/11/2022 presentation provided by Biosecurity Queensland with Jo Martin in attendance to represent the QBA Management Committee.
- QBA Stanley Rivers Branch Meeting 26/11/2022. Presentation from Biosecurity Queensland with Jacob Stevens & Jo Martin attending this meeting.

The recording of AHBIC's online webinar held on 31 August 2022 can now be watched from your computer or electronic device. Please [click here](#) to watch the presentation.

The recording of the Varroa Mite Biosecurity Queensland webinar held on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> October is now available online and ready for beekeepers to watch at their leisure. This webinar covers topics relating to the current situation update in Queensland, reporting your surveillance results to the Bee 123 app, and applying for a permit to move honey supers, equipment for irradiation and the movement of PPE. Please [click here](#) to watch the webinar.

### **QBA Membership:**

The Queensland Beekeepers' Association warmly welcome new members to our organisation. To complete an application for membership please visit <https://members.qbabees.org.au/join-us/>

When completing your application, please nominate your preferred branch of the QBA.

### **Useful Information Links:**

QBA Varroa mite portal - <https://members.qbabees.org.au/QBA-Varroa-Mite-Portal>

DAF Engagement Hub - <https://daf.engagementhub.com.au/varroa-mite>

NSW DPI - <https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/emergencies/biosecurity/current-situation/varroa-mite-emergency-response>

Subscribe to Biosecurity E-Alerts – [Click here](#).