



## Queensland Beekeepers' Association

### Weekly Varroa Mite Update – Week Ending 3rd March 2023

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 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2023

**Bee 123 data to date:**

Total beekeepers reporting results	482
Total Hives checked	4786
Total hives reported	21255
Total No. of Recreational Beekeeper Surveys:	331
Total No. of Commercial Beekeeper Surveys:	147
<b>Mites found or suspected</b>	<b>0</b>

## Biosecurity Queensland and QBA weekly update 3 March 2023

**New biosecurity zone for Queensland & Temporary Suspension of Movements of live bees into Queensland.**

- Queensland is now a varroa mite [biosecurity zone](#). To move bees, beehives, used beekeeping equipment or bee products (including unprocessed honey) into Queensland from states or territories where varroa mite has been found, you must have a permit issued by the Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries.
- The previous two detections reported due to suspected illegal movement of hives from the NSW Eradication Zone (red zone) remain under investigation by the NSW Department of Primary Industries (NSWDPI).
- Issuance of movement permits for entry of live bees into Queensland is expected to resume in the near future.
- Movement of used bee keeping equipment and supers for extraction and irradiation treatment are still being permitted on a case-by-case basis from the GEZ as risks of transporting varroa mites are mitigated through the conditions specified in the permit, including secure transport and irradiation treatment.

- You can apply online for a [biosecurity instrument permit](#) or by calling the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries Customer Service Centre on 13 25 23.

#### **Queensland Bee Biosecurity Officer will be attending:**

- Ipswich and West Moreton Beekeepers Association meeting 7<sup>th</sup> March 2023
- Bayside Beekeepers Field Day 12<sup>th</sup> March 2023

#### **Biosecurity Instrument Permit applications completed**

○ Approved	81
○ In progress	10
○ Not approved/available	10
○ Total completed	61

#### **Permit condition compliance inspections**

- 3 Inspections undertaken - all found to be compliant
- 1 Investigation into alleged breach completed – Warning Letter issued.

#### **Communications**

- Additional communication material is being prepared to encourage beekeepers to check their hives and report to Bee 123:
- DAF continues to meet with the QBA and industry partners fortnightly to discuss progress with prevention activities to support keeping Queensland free of varroa mite.

#### **Bee 123 QLD Surveillance Dashboard Map 3 March 2023**

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 **482** varroa mite surveillance activities reported to the Bee 123 portal since the 13<sup>th</sup> of July.

Please see the page below to review the current distribution of varroa mite surveillance reports as collated from data collected from the Bee 123 portal.



Figure 1 - Bee 123 Surveillance Reports – 3 March 2023

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.

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.

### **Video Resources:**

The QBA now have a dedicated YouTube channels with multiple playlists offering a dynamic range of subject matter relevant to beekeeping in Queensland. We encourage all members to explore our online video library and recommend members regularly visit our YouTube channel to discover new content from time to time.

If you'd like to visit our YouTube channel, click on the link below.

<https://www.youtube.com/@queenslandbeekeepersassoc>

### **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>

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