



Queensland Beekeepers' Association

Weekly Varroa Mite Update – Week Ending 17th February 2023

The detection of *Varroa destructor* in Newcastle on the 22nd 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 17 February 2023

Bee 123 data to date:

Total beekeepers reporting results	446
Total Hives checked	4133
Total hives reported	17138
Total No. of Recreational Beekeeper Surveys:	305
Total No. of Commercial Beekeeper Surveys:	137
Mites found or suspected	0

Biosecurity Queensland and QBA weekly update 17 February 2023

Varroa Mite Prevention and Preparedness Program

New biosecurity zone for Queensland

- Queensland has established a new [varroa mite biosecurity zone](#) to protect our honey industry from the threat of varroa mite (*Varroa destructor*) coming into the state.
- Beekeepers located in the New South Wales (NSW) General Emergency Zone ('Blue zone') will need to apply for a permit to move bees, beehives, used beekeeping equipment or bee products (including unprocessed honey) into Queensland. Applications from other varroa mite emergency zones (i.e. Eradication and Surveillance Zones) within NSW will not be accepted at this time.
- Entry from states or territories declared free of varroa mite will be allowed without a permit, providing all hives are secured in a manner that prevents bees from escaping while in transit.
- 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:

- Gold Coast Regional Beekeepers at Nerang on the 18th February 2023
- Ipswich and West Moreton Beekeepers Association Meeting 7th March 2023

Biosecurity Instrument Permit applications completed

- | | |
|--------------------------|----|
| ○ Approved | 76 |
| ○ In progress | 16 |
| ○ Not approved/available | 5 |
| ○ Total completed | 55 |

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 17 February 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 446 varroa mite surveillance activities reported to the Bee 123 portal since the 13th 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 – 9 February 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.

Past Events:

The recording of AHVIC'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 11th 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](#).