



Queensland Beekeepers' Association

Weekly Varroa Mite Update – 22nd September 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.

Update 22st September 2023

Bee 123 data to program start date of 13th July 2022 to current day:

Total beekeepers reporting results	1191
Total Hives checked	20786
Total hives reported	100026
Total No. of Recreational Beekeeper Surveys:	588
Total No. of Commercial Beekeeper Surveys:	598
Mites found or suspected	0

Bee 123 data Spring Blitz Surveillance Program 1st September to current day:

Total beekeepers reporting results	113
Total Hives checked	1798
Total hives reported	11523
Total No. of Recreational Beekeeper Surveys:	65
Total No. of Commercial Beekeeper Surveys:	48
Mites found or suspected	0

If you have missed the announcement on transition to management, please click on the link below to read the statement from the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry.

<https://www.agriculture.gov.au/about/news/stay-informed/communiques/varroa-destructor-19-sept-2023>

Biosecurity Queensland and QBA Update 22nd September 2023

QBA Weekly Update – 22/09/2023

- As of 14 September 2023, there were 277 premises which have had bees infested with varroa mite.
- The Consultative Committee on Emergency Plant Pests (CCEPP) (the technical advisory committee) continues to meet regularly as the response progresses.

- The National Management Group (NMG) met on 19 September 2023 and agreed that eradication of *Varroa destructor* (varroa mite) is no longer feasible based on technical grounds.
- The NMG acknowledged the significant and sustained efforts of the New South Wales (NSW) Government and impacted industries over the eradication response phase since June 2022 and the contribution of both government and industry representatives in guiding response activities.
- The national response will now enter a transition to management phase. The scope of the transition to management phase will be to:
 - ensure an orderly stand-down of emergency response operational activities in NSW and Victoria
 - slow the spread of *Varroa destructor*
 - build industry resilience to the pest
 - provide management options including Integrated Pest Management (IPM) recommendations and chemical control options, and
 - support pollination security.
- While a revised response plan (including transition to management activities) is being developed by the CCEPP and agreed to by the NMG, NSW will operate under an interim strategy to limit the impacts and slow the spread of varroa mite.
- Varroa mite remains a key threat to Australia's honey and honey bee pollination plant industries, and it is important that government and industry continue to work together to manage this pest.
- The NMG will meet again in the coming weeks to consider further technical advice from the CCEPP on options for the ongoing management of varroa mite in Australia.
- A revised response plan (including transition to management activities) is currently being developed by the CCEPP. Until a revised plan is approved by the NMG, NSW will operate under an interim strategy. NSW strategy [Varroa mite emergency response \(nsw.gov.au\)](https://www.nsw.gov.au/industry/agriculture/beekeeping/varroa-mite-emergency-response)
- On 31 August 2023, Biosecurity Queensland staff treated and removed an Asian honey bee colony at a transport facility in Gatton in the Lockyer Valley. The recently formed nest was intact prior to treatment and subsequently tested negative for external and internal parasites. A thorough tracing investigation concluded that the consignment had come from Innisfail within the Asian honey bee known infested area and genetic analysis of the bees has confirmed that they are related to the Cairns population.

What this means for Queensland

- Biosecurity Queensland has put a pause on issuing Biosecurity Instrument Permits for varroa mite carriers into Qld.
- This pause will remain in place whilst Biosecurity Queensland in consultation with industry establish protocols of how Qld will move forward in a transition to management.
- Next week there is a meeting in Canberra of national groups to discuss this transition to management and how this will affect the beekeeping community nationally.
- It is more important than ever that Qld Beekeepers continue looking at their hives, testing and reporting the results.

- Please subscribe to the Biosecurity alert system and social media sites to keep up to date with an ever-evolving situation.
- Biosecurity Queensland also acknowledges the sustained effort of the NSW Government and industry participants in the response since July 2022.

Bee 123 QLD Surveillance Dashboard Map 22nd September 2023

The maps below illustrate 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 on the first map represent negative surveillance results from **1191** varroa mite surveillance activities reported to the Bee 123 portal since the 13th of July 2022.

The blue dots on the second map represent negative surveillance results from 113 varroa mite surveillance activities reported to the Bee 123 portal since the 1st of September 2023

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.

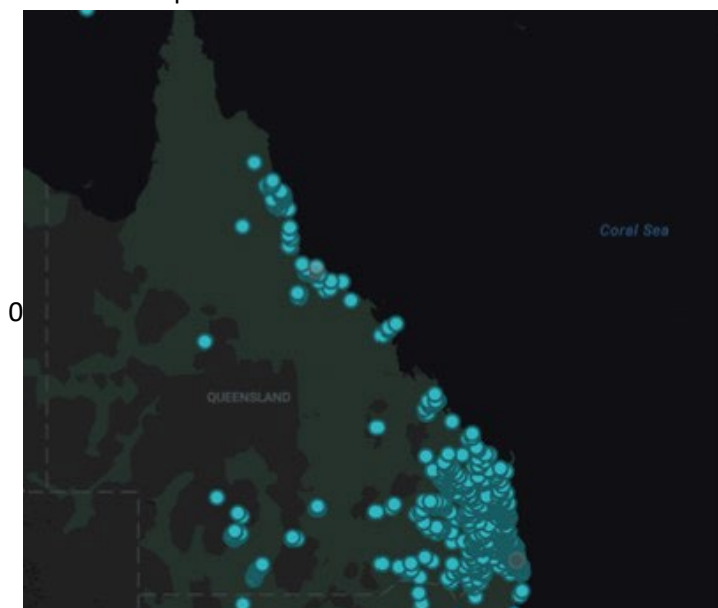


Figure 1 - Bee 123 Surveillance Reports – 22nd September 2023

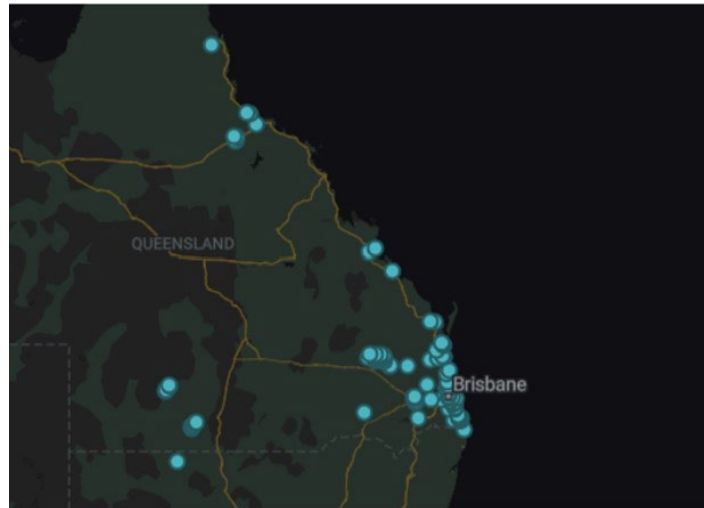


Figure 2 - Bee 123 Surveillance Reports 1st September - 22st September 2023

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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