



NSW DEPARTMENT OF
PRIMARY INDUSTRIES

Honey bee diseases and pests – notification requirements

Agnote DAI-331, First edition, April 2005

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Certain diseases and pests of honey bees are notifiable under the *Apiaries Act 1985*, *Stock Diseases Act 1923* and the *Exotic Diseases of Animals Act 1991*.

There is a requirement under these Acts for beekeepers to notify the presence or suspected presence of diseases and/or pests. Penalties may be imposed for failing to notify of diseases and/or pests.

PURPOSE OF NOTIFICATION

Endemic diseases such as American foulbrood (AFB) and exotic diseases and pests require notification to ensure that the necessary actions are taken to control or eradicate the outbreak, trace the source if possible, and take measures to prevent further spread of the disease or pest.

Endemic pests and diseases such as European foulbrood (EFB), chalk brood (CB) and small hive beetle (SHB) require notification to monitor the level of these pests and diseases, to provide information that assists in health certification for interstate movement of bees and apiary products and for live bee exports. Without this information many exporters would not be able obtain health clearance documentation for queens and packages destined for overseas markets. Importing countries have protocols requiring disease and pest freedom for source apiaries and surrounding areas.

APIARIES ACT 1985

The only disease prescribed under the Apiaries Act is American foulbrood (AFB), a bacterial disease of the brood. It is a notifiable disease and is compensatable under certain circumstances. Beekeepers are required to notify an apiary inspector of the presence or suspected presence of this disease within 24 hours of first detecting or suspecting this disease.

Maximum penalty for failing to notify is \$2,200.



www.dpi.nsw.gov.au

STOCK DISEASES ACT 1923

The following diseases and pests are notifiable under the Stock Diseases Act.

- European foulbrood, (*Melissococcus pluton*), a bacterial disease of the brood.
- Chalkbrood, (*Ascosphaera apis*), a fungal disease of the brood.
- Small hive beetle, (*Aethina tumida*), a pest of the hive.

Beekeepers are required to give written notice to an inspector gazetted under the Stock Diseases Act (which includes apiary inspectors) within 48 hours after first becoming aware that the bees are diseased.

Maximum penalty for failing to notify is \$11,000.

EXOTIC DISEASES OF ANIMALS ACT 1991

The following pests are notifiable under the Exotic Diseases of Animals Act.

- Africanised honey bees (*Apis mellifera scutellata*)
- Asian honey bee (*Apis cerana*)
- Braula fly (Bee louse, *Braula coeca*)
- Dwarf honey bee (*Apis florea*)
- Giant honey bee (*Apis dorsata*)
- Tropilaelaps mite (Asian mite, *Tropilaelaps clareae*)
- Varroa mite (*Varroa destructor*)
- Tracheal mite (Acarine, Acariasis, *Acarapis woodi*)

A person is guilty of an offence if they:

- a) own or are in charge of, or have in their possession or control, a bee or bee product which the person suspects is infected with an exotic disease, or
- b) as a veterinary surgeon or otherwise, are consulted in relation to a bee or bee product which they suspect is infected with an exotic disease,

and do not, as soon as possible after becoming aware of or suspecting that the bee or bee product is infected, report the fact to an inspector by the quickest means of communication available.

Maximum penalty is \$22,000.

If you notice unusual disease symptoms, abnormal behaviour or unexpected deaths in your hive, immediately call your State Apiary Inspector or the Emergency Disease Watch Hotline on **1800 675 888**.

FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information see the NSW Department of Primary Industries internet site:

www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/reader/honeybees

or ring the NSW DPI on (02) 6741 8374 during business hours.

A notification form is available which beekeepers can use to notify the authorities of the presence or suspected presence of notifiable pests and diseases. The form can be downloaded from the above web site.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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NSW Agriculture (2005)

The information contained in this publication is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of writing (April 2005). However, because of advances in knowledge, users are reminded of the need to ensure that information upon which they rely is up-to-date and to check currency of the information with the appropriate officer of NSW Department of Primary Industries or the user's independent adviser.

Agdex 481/658

DISCLAIMER

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