



NSW APIARISTS' ASSOCIATION INC.

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NSWAA Response to Asian bee Inquiry

The decision to declare the Asian bee endemic must be overturned. The decision did not take into account the horrific costs to the community of the loss of managed honey bees in food security, the environmental costs of lost nectar feeding species and the risk and cost to public in removing and destroying swarms.

It has been estimated that the pollination value of honey bees to the Australian food producers is around 4 billion dollars.

If the eradication of Asian bees is not resumed, then the food security of Australia is in jeopardy.

Beekeepers cannot maintain hives in areas where Asian bees are present as they breed up to saturation point of the resources within the region, consuming all nectar and pollen resources. Beekeepers have no option, but to withdraw from areas occupied by Asian bees.

In a recent study of the Solomon Islands, Nick Annand, Department of Industry & Investment, New South Wales found that managed honey bees declined from 2,000 hives to 5 hives during the period it took Asian bees to spread throughout the Islands (approximately 5 years).

Asian bees are prolific breeders, issuing 8-10 swarms per year. These swarms settle in inconvenient places, such as mail boxes, under eaves of buildings and many places causing public nuisance and health risks.

Terry Ryan, in a paper presented to "Australian Honey Bee Industry" estimated that costs of public health could be \$800,000/million persons and additionally public risk up to \$300,000/million people. If the Asian bee were to spread further south then these costs would be ongoing and increasing as the years go by.

The environmental impacts of Asian bees will have profound effect on nectar feeding animals (such as flying foxes, nectar feeding parrots and birds, and native bees and insects). Because of the prolific swarming tendencies of Asian bees and the small size of the swarms, many small natural hollows would be taken up.

Management of honey bees against Asian bees is not possible as Asian bees take up all the resources in the area, the drones of Asian bees will mate with queens from managed bees, however the queens are rendered sterile.

The only option for beekeepers if Asian bees become established in an area is to withdraw from the region.

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