



The Tasmanian Honey Company

25 March 2011

Submission to the Senate Enquiry into the Asian Honeybee Incursion

Honourable Senators,

I wish to thank you for your service to the community and in particular, for your commitment to this enquiry.

Established 30 years ago, we are a major honey value adder and exporter, with turnover between \$1m and \$2m annually. We have customers in every Australian state and in fifteen countries across Asia, Europe and the United States. We employ 18 staff and are the largest private sector employer in the town in which we are located.

Our raw, wild leatherwood honey in our flagship metal can is one of Tasmania's most instantly recognisable and iconic products. We have worked hard to remain innovative and relevant despite the challenges of primary production. As well as our pure honey range, we produce honey based confectionary and skincare products and provide vital pollination services to Tasmanian farmers. A recent achievement, shared with five other honey businesses, is the formation of the Tasmanian Active Honey Group; a private company established with the aim of jointly furthering the development of the Tasmanian active (i.e. medicinal) honey sector. This has required a significant level of investment and risk for each of the businesses concerned.

Should the Government fail to eradicate the Asian honeybee, all of our achievements thus far will have been in vain, as the devastating yield reductions and increased production costs will place significant constraints on our business and may ultimately result in its closure. Already, the high Australian dollar, skills shortages, unpredictable weather and difficult economic conditions globally, are making it very difficult for us to run a viable business.

The benefits of funding an eradication program will significantly outweigh the cost of doing so. The beekeeping and horticultural industries enjoy a high degree of community support and interest, and I believe that the expenditure could easily be justified and defended by the Government, despite the current budget constraints.

Again, thank you for your participation in this enquiry.

Yours sincerely,

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