

Detection of the notifiable honeybee disease American Foulbrood (AFB) on Kangaroo Island

This document provides important advice to apiarists regarding the detection of AFB on Kangaroo Island (KI) on 18 May 2020, including:

- Background information
- Assistance sought from the public and apiarists
- Contact information

Background information

Kangaroo Island

Kangaroo Island is a declared reservation for the European honeybee subspecies *Apis mellifera ligustica* (commonly known as the Ligurian or Italian honeybee), and it is an offence to introduce honeybees onto the Island.

Additionally, it is an offence to introduce honeybee products, hive materials, equipment and/or appliances onto the Island.

American Foulbrood

American Foulbrood (AFB) is a highly infectious disease of honeybees caused by the bacterium *Paenibacillus larvae*. It causes significant economic losses; weakening and eventually killing affected hives, it is also easily spread to neighboring hives and apiaries by equipment, the apiarist and honeybees.

Whilst present in Australia (and detected from time to time in mainland South Australia), KI has to date remained free from any established presence of the disease.

AFB was detected during routine testing of a sample of KI honey in mid-May 2020. Biosecurity SA is now conducting an initial delimiting survey of the KI honeybee population in an effort to contain and eradicate the disease.

To help ensure success, Biosecurity SA (BSA) requires assistance from all Islanders.

Assistance sought from the public and apiarists

How everyone can help

Honey consumption

Honeybee products (including honey) remain safe to consume⁽¹⁾, so continue to support KI apiarists by purchasing and enjoying only KI honeybee products.

Introductions onto KI

Do not introduce onto KI the following:

- **Honeybees** - including honeybees, package bees, queens, queen cells, and brood
- **Honeybee products** - including honey, wax, pollen, propolis, and royal jelly
- **Honeybee hive material** - including hives, and hive components
- **Honeybee appliances** - including hive tools, protective equipment, smokers, brushes, extractors and associated plant, honey containers, hive feeders, equipment for queen rearing/ shipping, etc.
- **Products containing honeybee products** - including human food, medicinal honey and bee feed

Exposing honeybee products

Do not expose honeybee products. This includes:

- rinsing residual honey from honey containers down sink before disposal in council rubbish/by burial
- not feeding honey/pollen to bees, birds or mammals.

Reporting potential breaches to Biosecurity SA

Report any of the following to BSA using **Form 1**:

- introductions of mainland honeybees, honeybee products, honeybee hive material, or appliances
- exposure of honey/pollen (including bee/ bird/ mammal feeding stations containing honey/ pollen)
- neglected/ abandoned hives or hive material
- feral colonies.

How apiarists can help

Inspections, record keeping, reporting and hive management

At the next opportunity⁽²⁾, inspect all hives for notifiable pests and diseases. If suspected, seek assistance regarding notifiable pests and diseases, including by using the following reference material, or contacting BSA using **Form 1**:

- reference material is available at:
 - https://pir.sa.gov.au/biosecurity/animal_health/bees/hive_management and searching for *Notifiable honeybee pests and diseases*
 - <https://beeaware.org.au/pests/> and searching for *Established pests*, including American Foulbrood (AFB), European Foulbrood (EFB), and Small Hive Beetle (SHB); and *Exotic pests*, including Varroa mites and Tropilaelaps mites

⁽¹⁾ Normal precautions with regard to the consumption of honeybee products should be followed, e.g. follow medical practitioners' advice regarding feeding of honey to infants under 12 months, consumption of raw honey and products containing pollen if allergic to pollen, and consumption of honey if diabetic.

⁽²⁾ Whilst it not mandatory to re-inspect hives at this time, it is mandatory apiarists inspect their hives often enough to detect and manage notifiable pests and diseases, and to prevent hive death, exposure and spread. Additionally it is mandatory to notify BSA if notifiable pests or diseases are suspected or detected, and to keep records of specified biosecurity related management practices.

At the same time:

- inspect and manage hive strength to prevent hive death, exposure and potential spread of pests and diseases (i.e. ensure hives are queen-right, have brood and at least 4 F/D frames of bees, are bee-proof - except for manufactured entrances, and have sufficient bees, pollen and honey for winter)
- record all specified biosecurity related management practices undertaken, including notifiable disease inspections, results, notification and management, AFB honey test source hives, management of weak/ dead hives, and hive movements. Further information and example records are available at:
 - https://pir.sa.gov.au/biosecurity/animal_health/bees/hive_management and searching for *Determination of the information required and the manner and form of records to be made by beekeepers*, and *Example biosecurity records*
- manage hives to prevent hive death, exposure and potential spread, including:
 - making bee-proof and removing to bee-proof storage/destroying by burning and burial
 - seeking assistance from BSA using **Form 1**
- report to BSA using **Form 1** any hives affected/ suspected affected with notifiable honeybee pests or diseases (including AFB, EFB, exotic mites), or SHB; none of which are known to be established on KI.

Working with BSA

To successfully contain and eradicate the disease, BSA is relying on the assistance of all KI apiarists, including doing the right thing, and assisting in inspecting their hives if contacted as part of the delimiting survey.

Contacting BSA/submitting samples

Normal requirements continue to apply with respect to:

- all apiarists needing to notify BSA by the quickest practicable means if they detect/suspect a notifiable honeybee pest or disease (as above, in relation to this response KI apiarists can use **Form 1**)
- apiarists with 20 or more hives needing to submit a honey sample test result at registration.

Additionally, BSA is encouraging KI apiarists (as at 18 May 2020) to:

- contact BSA using **Form 1** if they detect/suspect SHB and/or seek assistance with inspecting or managing their hives (note that BSA will be prioritising inspections based on risk and hive location)
- not submit samples (excluding those required above) without first speaking to a BSA Apiary Inspector.

Contact information

If you require further information, please contact:

Michael Stedman - Biosecurity SA

pirsa.ruralchemicals@sa.gov.au (in the first instance, using **Form 1**)

08 8429 0872 or 0408 812 698

Form 1. Reporting honeybee information from members of the public and apiarists to Biosecurity SA.

Name and address (+ HIC if registered):		Phone No.:	Best time to ring
		Email:	
Complete below if member of the public or apiarist			
I wish to report - tick box(s):	Details - incl. date noted, description, location(s) (incl. GPS/ map), and name of property owner (if known)		No. pages if incl. extra info/ maps
<input type="checkbox"/> introduction of honeybees, bee products, bee hive material, etc.			<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> exposed honeybee products/ hive components			<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> neglected/ abandoned hives/ hive material			<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> feral colonies (eg. in tree/ compost bin)			<input type="checkbox"/>
Plus complete below only if apiarist No. Hives: _ _ _ _ HIC: _ _ _ _			
I wish to: - tick box(s):	Details - incl. dates available for BSA assistance, date(s) inspected/ detected, description, location (incl. GPS/ map), and name of property owner		No. pages if incl. extra info/ maps
<input type="checkbox"/> seek assistance with inspection for notifiable pests/ diseases			<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> seek assistance with neglected/ dead out hives			<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> report hives affected/ suspected affected with: - tick box(s)	AFB <input type="checkbox"/> EFB <input type="checkbox"/> Nosema <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Ligurian ⁽¹⁾ <input type="checkbox"/> SHB <input type="checkbox"/> Mites <input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Plus complete below only if wishing to register honeybees No. Hives: _ _ _ _			
	Details - incl. location(s) (incl. GPS/ map), and name of property owner		No. pages if incl. extra info/ maps
<input type="checkbox"/> I have hives and wish to register			<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>(Send Registration Form and any payments to postal/ email address on Registration Form)</i>			

⁽¹⁾ Non-Ligurian bees are honeybees that don't appear to have typical Ligurian characteristics (eg. 'leather brown' coloured banding + docile behaviour).

Please submit this form by emailing, texting or dropping off using the details below:

Street Address: Biosecurity SA Shop 7, The Mall, 56 Dauncey St KINGSCOTE SA 5223	Telephone hotline: 0408 812 698 Email: pirsaruralchemicals@sa.gov.au
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