



B-QUAL Australia Pty Ltd

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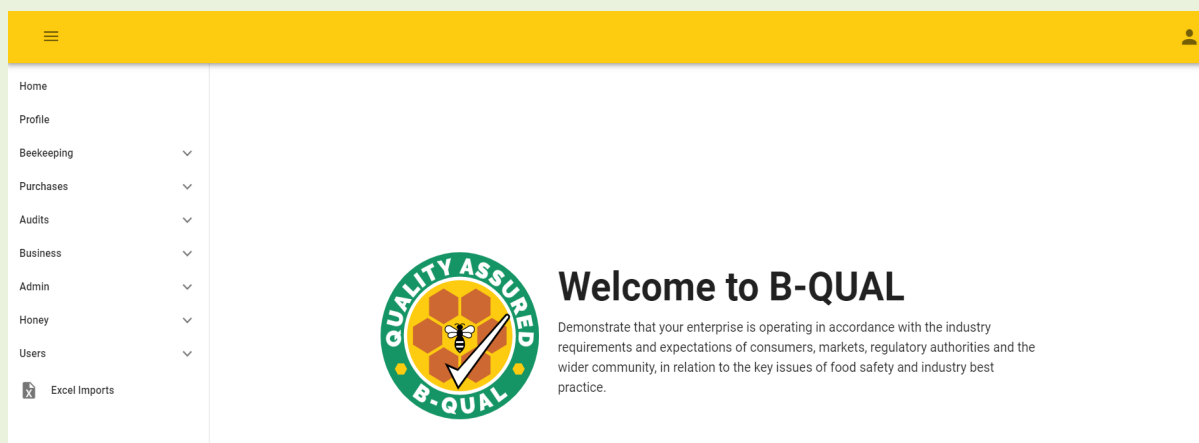
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B-QUAL APP.



We are receiving good feedback from those members who are using the B-QUAL app. However data analytics show that we still have some members that have not logged on for first time or not inputting data.

To log in for the first time, you will need B-QUAL to set you up with an account by sending you an email asking you to set your password. Click on the link in the email to set your password. Once you have set your password, visit bqual@azurewebsites.net and fill in your email and new password. You can also use <https://bqual.app/login> for this.

If you did not receive or answer the initial email please advise our office bqual@ausqual.com.au and we will resend to enable you to set up your account.

The Board Members, Wayne, Trevor, Paul, Rodney and Don along with the admin staff, auditors and all involved at B-QUAL wish every member, their families and staff the very best wishes for the upcoming Festive season. We know this has been another difficult year and we sincerely thank everyone for their support of B-QUAL. We look forward to you all, enjoying a safe, prosperous and successful 2022.

Honey Bee Products report from Dr Liz Barbour.

Congratulations to those of you now committed to recording your B-QUAL honeybee quality control online. Now that you have all been successfully invited, to date there are 43 businesses committed to using the system with 9 merrily entering data. And we would like to thank you for your help to sort out those little glitches that occur when settling in a new system.

We have had a call from the smaller beekeepers for a system for their operations, and this we have provided and B-QUAL has called it B-Trace! Prof Sharon Purchase is working with Don Muir to finalise the manual, so expect B-QUAL Australia to launch it soon.

The change to digital is initially big for any business but, as we keep adding tools, we are aiming for the rewards to soon outweigh this initial tedium.

The first add-on will be an optional honey assurance system linked to the Australian honey library and its database.

The Australian honey library has taken on a speedier pace. Thankfully this is due to a good season, so we should be able to gather a good cross-section of our honeys. Don Muir has been the key person in this drive for B-QUAL, linking with Dr Sandra Garland (University of Tasmania and Tasmanian State funding) being the centre for Tasmania, Jamie Ayton (NSW DPI and the Fire Recovery Funding) for New South Wales, and the CRC for Honey Bee Products in the West. Please keep those samples rolling in.

The importance of the Australian honey library is being demonstrated regularly. Just today I had a chat with Trevor Weatherhead who shared that Australian honeys are being rejected by the EU because of their eucalypt pollen count. It should be amusing (with our landscape of 600 species of eucalypts) but these are the issues we need to defend with this library.

As we go through the process of the testing and analysing, we realise that the important information to come with the sample is:

- Apiary site (sub-biogeographical region so we don't have to know your exact position)
- The year and season
- Your observation of what the dominant flora is that your bees are foraging on

There are many operational things that happen with managing your bees, and will always happen, so all we are hoping is that you give us a sample that has not been heat processed (over 40°C) and with filtering not finer than 100µm.

The honey testing system presently established is to undertake the seven CODEX tests, High Performance Thin Layer Chromatography and a pollen count, and now we will be working to include a eucalypt pollen count.

You will have the choice of testing your honey within the B-QUAL system. In the new year, an additional database will be added into B-QUAL that will show you a selection of testing laboratories, generate a label for your sample and store your test results directly from the laboratory.

Together with the B-QUAL traceability, this basic testing will be able to give you the marketing power to provide assurance on:

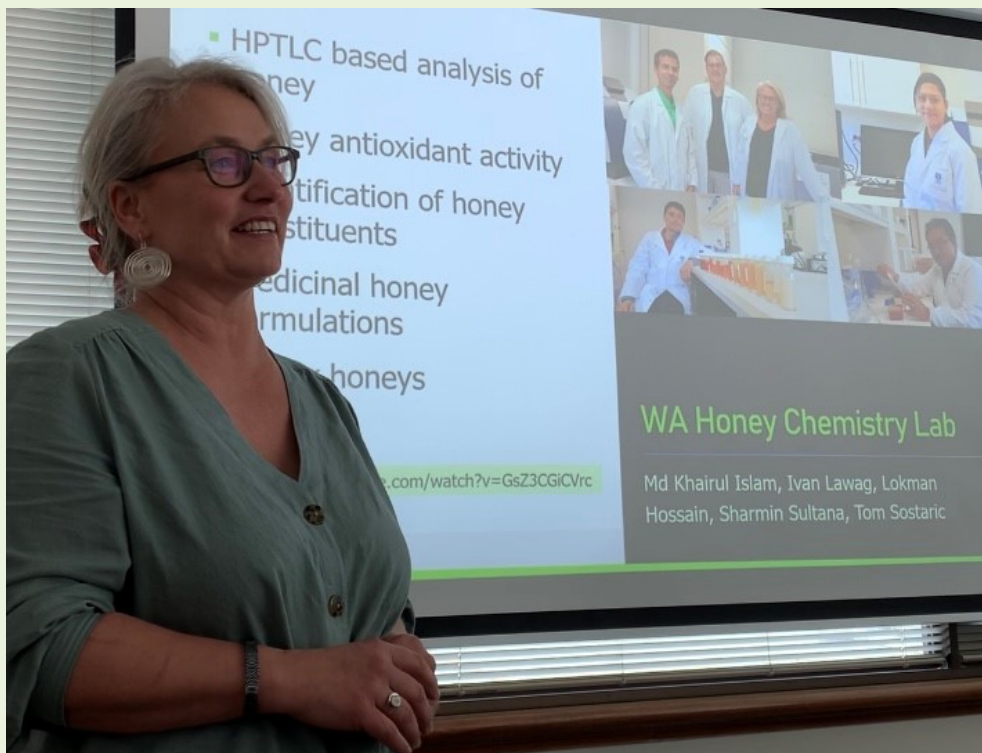
- Authentic honey
- Australian
- Raw honey
- Tierra (provenance)
- And over time (as the database builds), mono-floral

Only two other tests are required to include antibacterial and antioxidant bioactivity. And there is the exciting opportunity soon to come for anti-fungal and prebiotic with the work of Prof Dee Carter and Dr Nural Cokcetin. As Australia has so much bioactive flora, this will always be a focus for our honeys.

The next add-on we are currently developing is an apiary site decision support tool. The idea is to bring scattered information together into one tool together with your apiary site B-QUAL notes on site performance. A/Prof Bryan Boruff has been building the Australian melliferous floral database (within B-QUAL to help you accurately identify your flora) and this will be used as a basis. In a geographical information format, the system will let you interrogate flora flowering times, last burn scar event, rainfall and any other information we can gather that will help your decision to use the site or not.

So please hang in there. There is an amazing team working hard to deliver tools to help you in these changing times. Thanks for your support.

Dr Liz Barbour
CEO, CRC for Honey Bee Products



A/Prof Connie Locher presenting the HPTLC work of her team to BICWA.

CRCHBP presents to BICWA breakfast meeting.



CRC for Honey Bee Products marketing team from UWA presenting to BICWA members how they can use the B-QUAL system in their marketing. Kim Feddema presenting, Professor Sharon Purchase watching on and Dr Liudmila Tarabashkina on the other side. (photo Liz Barbour)

B-QUAL App Notice:

Due to a glitch which occurred during some improvement and maintenance work on our new app some members received a message containing CARs notices or reminders of Audits already completed.

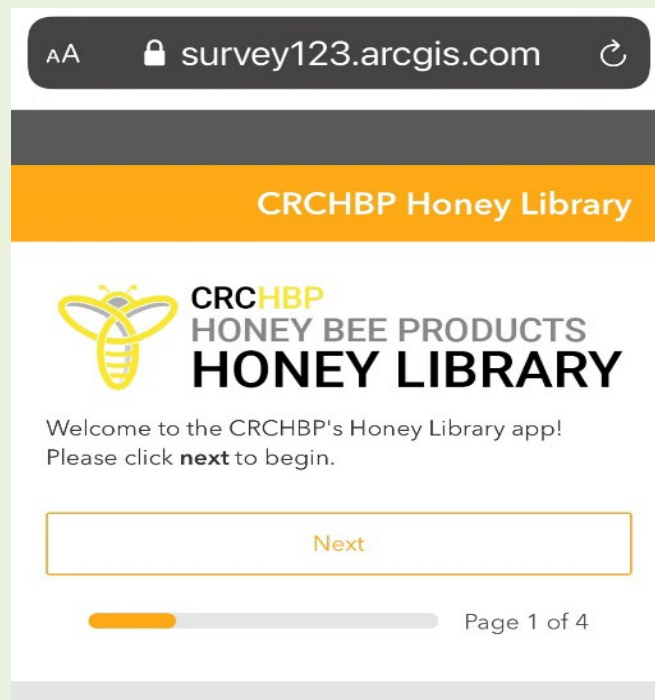
Please ignore all messages; they require no further action on your behalf. I would also assure you that the messages or references to CARs and other are not on your Audit files and are purely an internal mechanical problem in one area of the app and will have no impact in any way on your app, audit files or records.

We apologise for the anxiety or worry this may have caused and assure you we are working to improve the app and your experience in using it.

Many thanks for your understanding.

HONEY SAMPLES REQUIRED FOR AUSTRALIAN HONEY LIBRARY

WE NEED SAMPLES NOW



It is important that we receive as many samples Australia wide as we can in the next 3-4 months

When samples are collected please use the app to log your collection data, this will enable us to build our library and consolidate honey chemistry to biogeographical regions.

We have an easy to use collection app, it is not frightening but there are 4 pages to the app which asks for collection information. As mentioned a lot of effort has gone into specifying the amount of data we required to complete the testing regimes, data and chemical analytics, and biogeographical information for the library.

Secure cloud storage and full privacy protocols for the databases are now in place for the proper secure handling and storage of the data the library collecting and testing will produce.

Samples will be collected in 400ml jars.

How to register

Easiest way is to go to our website www.bqual.com.au or email B-QUAL at bqual@ausqual.com.au. It is important to remember that strict privacy protocols are in place to protect your privacy, and sample collection in no way is a judge of your honey or beekeeping practices.

We Supply

- Shortly after your acceptance to collect you will receive the requested 400ml jars.
- A return pre paid and addressed Australian Post bag (*so no postage expense to you*)
- Hard copy instructions
- If you wish to contribute more than 2 varieties we are happy to supply extra so specify how many jars you need.

What will happen to your samples?

- Analysis will include 7 CODEX tests
- The signature for the flora in each region will be determined.
- Palynology or pollen count will be undertaken on a sub set of samples.
- A portion of your sample will be long termed stored by B-QUAL
- When tested your results will be emailed to you.

Industry Harmonisation moving ahead.

A meeting of States Biosecurity and apiary officers was held late October initiated by NSW Department of Primary Industries.

In summary there was general support for looking at options to increase the integrity of bee movements around Australia in the long-term acknowledging that to do this will require a move away from unverified certification of loads under the current system and therefore a likely increase in cost to industry for direct government certification of bee movements. This would be a major change across Australia.

It was noted that at present, certified entry requirements only exist for SA and Vic. However, NSW requires Code compliance for all registered beekeepers and a Compliance Arrangement or Third-Party system may be advantageous in renewing registration and in accessing floral resources on public lands. It may also be a way of meeting the general biosecurity obligation in QLD.

It was also acknowledged that there may be challenges to building the regulatory framework that will support a government administered Compliance Arrangement and complimentary Third-Party Certification Assurance programs (e.g. B-Qual) and that both would need to prove less expensive to businesses than direct government certification of individual loads. Currently that would not be the case so changes are required.

It was proposed that a smaller group of regulators meet to discuss the mechanics of building a regulatory framework that will effectively support a trial of this system, and to deliver a proposal that AHBIC can put to its members to seek formal support.

The group will consist of a regulator from NSW, Vic and SA and representation from AHBIC at this stage.

TRACKING HONEY PATHWAYS

from hive site to distribution

Work by the CRC for Honey Bee Products has brought the Australian honey industry quality assurance program into the digital age.

There is a growing appreciation of the importance of honey bees and their contributions to food security, and increasing numbers of beekeepers. Australia needs new tools and systems to ensure we maintain our exemplary bee health and production of quality honey bee products.

B-QUAL, established by the Australian Honey Bee Industry Council in 1999 as a traceability tool, is an independently audited quality assurance program. It provides businesses with product integrity, quality assurance, regulatory compliance, industry best practice, and supports biosecurity, for ease of access to domestic and export markets.

In 2018, there were allegations, subsequently disproven, of adulteration of Australian honey. The episode harmed the industry and highlighted the need for an improved traceability system. The CRC for Honey Bee Product established a partnership with B-QUAL Australia to create a new online system.

'In the past, B-QUAL was paper-based, meaning it was time consuming to interrogate and to trace back into the supply chain,' says Professor Sharon Purchase, the CRC's partnership leader from the University of Western Australia.

As well as tracking honey batches to their origins, the digital system brings many additional benefits. It is a secure platform for business data management, for audit purposes and business benchmarking.

'Australia is vast. Each region is so different. To continuously improve, beekeepers may want to compare their productivity with other beekeepers working in the same region. B-QUAL lets them do this,' says Professor Purchase.

Beekeepers will be able to download data to study apiary site honey yields over time, and to explore climate effects such as temperature and rainfall.

The system can provide insights to the impacts of resource security, such as forest logging, burn intensity and the vegetation recovery rate, which will help with hive placement planning.



CRC HBP
FOR HONEY BEE PRODUCTS





Beekeepers participated in development of B-QUAL, as did AUS-QUAL Pty Ltd, who monitor quality assurance compliance across Australia.

'Digitisation should reduce members costs through less time spent on site audits,' says Mr Don Muir, B-QUAL director.

'The ability to trace Australian honey sources will also inherently increase biosecurity benefits for the industry by way of tracking disease or pest outbreaks through biogeographical regions,' says Mr Muir.

The B-QUAL system will provide an early warning system to detect new incursions of bees from overseas, which could introduce potentially devastating pests and diseases. Australia is free from many exotic pests and viruses, like Varroa mite, Asian honey bee and deformed wing virus. Surveillance is important to ensure any biosecurity incursions are detected and dealt with swiftly to protect the industry.

The B-QUAL system also includes a honey bee flora reference library. By accurately recording flowering history and nectar and pollen production, beekeepers are creating an invaluable resource that will help their business in future.

During consultation on the B-QUAL digitisation, industry representatives suggested that smaller beekeepers would benefit from a digital system that would help with their traceability and beekeeping practices. This led to the creation of B-Trace. The program involves self-auditing, so is cheaper, and records biosecurity observations that are critical for maintaining Australia's bee health.

Membership of B-QUAL has doubled since the formation of the partnership between the CRC for Honey Bee Products and B-QUAL Australia.

The CRC partners are working on extending the B-QUAL system to include a new function that details honey chemistry to capture information on the provenance of honey. This will provide consumers with the assurance that every time they purchase Australian honey, they are getting what they paid for – a unique, high-quality product. It will also provide Australian beekeepers with a competitive advantage as Australian honey is pure, geographically diverse and sourced from healthy bees.



Beekeeping standards



Resource tracking



Biosecurity



Traceability



Benchmarking



Quality product

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Australian Government
Department of Industry, Science,
Energy and Resources

AusIndustry
Cooperative Research
Centres Program

AQBBA tracking their bee deliveries.

AQBBA has been trialling temp/humidity and GPS trackers in queen consignments and this is providing some very interesting data and reducing the stress out of our lives by knowing where the queen bees are instead of being lost in Australian Post land. Senders can tell which building the package is in and the temperature which is updated whenever the package is moved.

This has many uses which are appearing as we find how capable these devices are, as they can be used as a safety device if things go wrong. The actual position can be seen, and for record keeping when sites are attended/inspected. BQUAL would accept these print out records as proof of inspection as the time spent there is recorded and the date. This sort of technology will be of great help to beekeepers who want to embrace it as we are finding acceptance within the queen bee industry..... Richard Sims President AQBBA.

Much of what we have achieved this year has been made possible by the ongoing support of our sponsors.

Please support those who support us.



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