



American Foulbrood Pest Management Plan Report to the Inaugural Annual General Meeting of Apiculture New Zealand (Inc)

**29 July 2020
(Wednesday)**

Report prepared by:
Clifton King, National Compliance Manager

American Foulbrood Pest Management Plan AFB PMP



Summary

2019/20 has been a busy year for the Management Agency as we have continued to implement planned changes to prepare the Management Agency to use the additional levy funding available in 2020/21 to deliver better AFB outcomes for beekeepers.

In June 2019 the Management Agency announced that it would ask the Minister for Biosecurity to amend the American Foulbrood Beekeeper Levy following extensive consultation with beekeepers in 2018 and 2019. Ministerial approval for the levy was granted and the government drafted and notified the amended levy order on 16 March 2020.

As part of the amendment government decided that it was appropriate to change how levy years are referred to in the levy order from the year in which the levy was spent to the year in which the levy liability was incurred. This change was questioned by the Management Agency at the time the amendment was drafted, and on subsequent occasions when concerns were raised by beekeepers. MPI provided repeated assurances to both the Management Agency and ApiNZ that the amendment to the levy order was drafted correctly.

The government subsequently notified a second amendment to the levy on 10 July 2020. This amendment changed how levy years were referred to in the levy order back to its original form to clarify confusion that had been raised by some beekeepers.

The new levy is expected to raise an additional \$500,000 in 2020. This will enable the Management Agency to double the number of apiaries inspected by AP2s each year, significantly increase the number of honey samples tested for AFB each year, employ a second Operations Manager, and replace the existing ApiWeb/Apiary Database system.

In preparation for the 2020/21 season the Management Agency developed and published an operational plan that describes the Management Agency's approach to implementing the National American Foulbrood Pest Management Plan. The operational plan was approved by the Minister, and provides beekeepers with clarity on their obligations to eliminate AFB from their beehives, and describes the Management Agency's approach to AFB Recognition Training, monitoring and auditing beekeeper's AFB elimination performance and undertaking enforcement activities.

The Management Agency has recruited a second Operations Manager and two Apiary Coordinators in preparation for the transfer of responsibility for the delivery of operational services fromASUREQuality to the Management Agency from July 2020. This change will provide beekeepers with a dedicated in-house team that has a single focus on eliminating AFB, free from conflicting demands such export certification and auditing risk management premises that potentially impacted ASUREQuality's delivery of their contracted services to the National American Foulbrood Pest Management Plan.

The Management Agency has contracted Smartapps to replace the ApiWeb/Apiary Database system with a new fit for purpose system. The Management Agency ran an open tender process coupled with comprehensive bid evaluation to ensure that it contracted with the most suitable vendor to develop the new system. The Management Agency expects that the new system will be ready for use in late January 2021. The ApiWeb/Apiary Database system will be decommissioned at this time.

While 2019/20 has been a year focused on planning and implementing improvements to the National American Foulbrood Pest Management Plan, we have also maintained our focus on implementing the plan:

- 1,336 beekeepers were trained to recognise AFB in the 12 months to 31 December 2019, and
- 1,524 apiaries were inspected by AP2s for AFB.

AP2 inspections resulted in the identification of a further 9 High Risk Beekeeping Operations with a prevalence of AFB greater than 10% of hives at the time of AP2 inspection in addition to the 3 High Risk Beekeeping Operations identified in 2018/19. The Management Agency is inspecting all beehives owned by these beekeepers twice each year, destroying infected hives and assessing the risk of beekeepers' equipment on storage. These enforcement activities are cost recoverable. This approach to enforcement has resulted in dramatic reductions in the prevalence

of AFB in the affected beekeeper's hives, and corresponding reductions in the AFB infection risk for neighbouring beekeepers.

The Management Agency's new team comprised of Tracey Gonzalez, Leonie Elliott-Mason, and Dwayne Hill in addition to Marco Gonzalez, Janette Gwilliam and Clifton King are looking forward to working with beekeepers to make further improvements to the implementation of the National American Foulbrood Pest Management Plan in 2020/21.

Reported Incidence of American Foulbrood, June 2018 to May 2019

2,783 cases (0.32% of hives) of AFB were notified in the 12 months to 31 May 2020. 2,904 cases (0.32% of hives) of AFB were notified in the 12 months to 31 May 2019. These statistics suggest that the level of AFB has remained relatively constant over the past two years.

Beekeeper, Apiary and Hive Numbers

Beekeeper and apiary numbers have continued to grow and there has been a one-off correction in beehive numbers associated with the implementation of the hive levy. As at 1 June 2020 there were 9,745 registered beekeepers, 61,017 apiaries and 879,007 beehives.

Comparison of the beehive numbers reported to the Colony Loss Survey in 2019 with Apiary Database records suggested that the Apiary Database records were overcounting the number of beehives nationally by 10.9%. Further investigation of the discrepancy suggested that the predominant reason for the overcount was double counting of the same beehives on seasonal and permanent apiary sites by a significant number of beekeepers.

Beekeepers have corrected the double counting of beehives on seasonal apiary sites as part of the new Colony Return / Levy collection process and this has resulted in a one-off correction to the number of beehives recorded.

The regional breakdown including reported incidence of AFB is shown in the following table.

All Registered Beekeepers

RegionName	Total Current Apiaries	Total Current Hives	Total Diseased Apiaries	Total Diseased Hives	Overall Apiary Prevalence	Overall Hive Prevalence
Northland	6924	99440	134	271	1.94%	0.27%
Auckland	3917	36065	83	142	2.12%	0.39%
Waikato	8032	137395	136	268	1.69%	0.20%
Bay of Plenty	3531	61940	49	79	1.39%	0.13%
Gisborne	1970	33105	29	153	1.47%	0.46%
Hawke's Bay	4050	60366	80	129	1.98%	0.21%
Taranaki	3132	40887	28	71	0.89%	0.17%
Manawatu-Wanganui	7874	127916	91	140	1.16%	0.11%
Wellington	4497	66503	148	347	3.29%	0.52%
West Coast	1220	12670	32	65	2.62%	0.51%
Canterbury	7470	96036	301	760	4.03%	0.79%
Otago	3251	37375	67	132	2.06%	0.35%
Southland	1092	14297	34	62	3.11%	0.43%
Tasman	1797	22300	41	66	2.28%	0.30%
Nelson	419	2104	9	14	2.15%	0.67%
Marlborough	1819	30249	47	83	2.58%	0.27%
Outside Regions	22	359	1	1	4.55%	0.28%
Totals	61017	879007	1310	2783	2.15%	0.32%

Annual Disease Return (ADR) and Certificate of Inspection (COI) Defaulters

9,975 beekeepers were sent an ADR in April 2020. As at the 1st June 2020, 5,200 (52%) returns had been received. This is down on the 67% achieved in the same period last year. The delay is thought to be associated with beekeepers taking greater care to ensure that their counts of honey bee colonies included in their ADR were correct.

The beekeepers whom have not submitted their ADR's on time were sent reminders before being sent a warning that continued failure to submit an ADR is a breach of their Disease Elimination Conformity Agreement and their Disease Elimination Conformity Agreement will be cancelled if the ADR is not submitted before the deadline.

Certificates of Inspection were sent to 4,548 beekeepers in August 2019. 3,162 (70%) had completed their COI by 19 December 2019. The Management Agency scheduled default inspections for beekeepers that defaulted on both their 2019 ADR and COI.

Disease Elimination Conformity Agreements (DECA)

50% of beekeepers currently hold a Disease Elimination Conformity Agreement. These beekeepers own 93% of hives.

AFB Recognition Course Training

Training beekeepers to recognise AFB is an important focus for the Management Agency. The Management Agency ensures that AFB recognitions and refresher courses are available to all beekeepers throughout the country each year. Currently over 1,300 beekeepers per year take up the opportunity to attend one of almost 100 courses run.

Calendar Year	Courses	Test via Proctor	Participants
2006	15	4	93
2008	88	36	264
2010	59	29	491
2012	39	7	490
2014	59	13	751
2016	65	24	1,127
2018	108	111	1,327
2019	96	127	1,336

AFB Authorised Person Inspection Activity

The Management Agency has continued to increase the number of AP2s nationwide from 37 to 48 with a focus on improving coverage across all regions of the country.

1,524 apiaries were inspected in 2019/20, up from 1,401 in 2018/19. 5.3% of hives and 13.7% of apiaries inspected by AP2s were found to have AFB.

Acknowledgement

I'd like to thank: Marco Gonzalez and Janette Gwilliam for their work managing apiary inspections and the AFB Recognition Training programme; Byron Taylor and the team at AsureQuality for their work maintaining the Apairy Database and processing applications for Disease Elimination Conformity Agreements; and our AFB Recognition Course Trainer and Apiary Inspectors whom are on the front line assisting beekeepers to eliminate AFB. Your efforts and dedication to AFB elimination do make a difference, and I look forward to working with you over the coming year.

Clifton King
National Compliance Manager
The Management Agency, National American Foulbrood Pest Management Plan