



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

**1 July 2022
(Friday)**

**Report prepared by:
Clifton King, National Compliance Manager**



American Foulbrood Pest Management Plan AFB PMP

Summary

2021/22 has been another busy year for the Management Agency as we have built upon the HiveHub and service delivery improvements made in 2020/21 and consulted with beekeepers on the future of the pest management plan.

I am pleased to report that we have achieved a 38% increase in the number of apiaries inspected from 2,186 in 2020/21 to 3,024 in 2021/22. We have also implemented a new approach to honey surveillance that enables us to confirm which commercial beekeepers are doing a good job of eliminating AFB from their beehives.

Honey surveillance completed in 2021 detected AFB in 5.4% of the samples tested. The positive samples came from 9.3% of the commercial beekeeping operations included in the surveillance programme. These results provide evidence that over 90% of commercial beekeepers that report negligible levels of AFB are making good progress towards eliminating AFB. The Management Agency has thanked these beekeepers for their efforts.

The Management Agency's Operations Managers individually assess each and every AFB notification made by beekeepers to assess the likely source of AFB and prioritise apiaries for inspection. This process combined with apiary inspection results and HiveHubs superior analytic capability provides the Management Agency with the intelligence required to make informed decisions regarding the implementation of the pest management plan.

The annual incidence of AFB for the 12 months to 31 May 2022 was 3,422 cases. This represents 0.46% of colonies, and is a significant increase compared to the 12 months to 31 May 2021 when the annual incidence was 2,525 cases and 0.31% of colonies. Analysis of the change in AFB incidence by beekeeper revealed that for 95.2% of beekeepers there was no change in the incidence of disease¹. Similar numbers of beekeepers reported decreasing and increasing incidence of AFB with 2.4% of beekeepers reported decreasing levels of AFB, and 2.5% of beekeepers reported increasing levels of AFB.

The national annual incidence of disease has increased as beekeepers reporting an increased incidence of disease reported on average an additional 9.5 cases, whereas beekeepers reporting a decreased incidence of disease reported an average decrease of 5.0 cases.

Assessment of the 10 beekeepers reporting the largest increase in AFB incidence revealed that 8 of these beekeeping operations had new ownership, management, or staff cleaning up AFB left by their predecessors. The actions of these 8 beekeepers are responsible for 686 of the 812 additional cases notified by these 10 beekeepers. This suggests that the increase in the national incidence of AFB observed this year is a good thing – as it represents increased identification and destruction of cases of AFB that were always there, but not previously reported.

The Operations Managers have also noticed increased levels of commercial beekeeper motivation to eliminate AFB in response to China's OMAR requirements. Many beekeepers are now motivated to eliminate AFB to ensure that their honey is free of AFB and able to be sold, and they are now making more effort to inspect their beehives for AFB and notify cases.

The Management Agency would like to thank the beekeepers that have engaged in the review of the pest management plan to date. The National American Foulbrood Pest Management Plan is your plan to eliminate AFB and it is vital that you have your say.

The first round of consultation was undertaken in June/July 2021, and the second round was conducted in November/December 2021. The Management Agency is currently finalising the proposal to amend the plan order based upon submissions received in the first and second round of consultation. The third round of consultation on the proposal is planned for August/September 2022.

¹ No change in in the incidence of AFB is defined as the number of cases of AFB notified for 2021/22 is within +/- 1 case of what was notified the previous year.

Reported Incidence of American Foulbrood, June 2021 to May 2022

3,422 cases (0.46% of colonies) of AFB were notified in the 12 months to 31 May 2022. 2,525 cases (0.31% of hives) of AFB were notified in the 12 months to 31 May 2021. See the previous page for an explanation of why the incidence of AFB has increased.

Beekeeper, Apiary and Colony Numbers

Beekeeper and apiary numbers have continued to grow slightly while colony numbers have declined. As of 1 June 2022, there were 10,170 registered beekeepers (up from 10,034 on 1 June 2021), 61,752 apiaries (up from 61,623 on 1 June 2021) and 736,707 colonies (down from 817,321 on 1 June 2021).

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

6,969 (70%) of beekeepers had submitted an ADR by 1 June 2022, down from 7,603 (74%) received by the same time the previous year.

Those beekeepers who had not submitted their ADRs 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 that their Disease Elimination Conformity Agreement would be cancelled if the ADR is not submitted before the deadline. Beekeepers without a DECA that fail to submit an ADR by 1 June are ineligible to apply for a DECA.

2,604 Certificates of Inspection were completed and submitted by 15 December 2022. This represents 63% of non-DECA holders and is similar to the previous year when 2,984 (64%) of non-DECA holders completed a Certificate of Inspection. The Management Agency scheduled default inspections for beekeepers with apiaries in AFB hotspots that defaulted on their 2021 Certificate of Inspection

Disease Elimination Conformity Agreements (DECA)

52% of beekeepers currently hold a Disease Elimination Conformity Agreement.

AFB Recognition Course Training

AFB Recognition Training in 2021 continued to be impacted by COVID-19. 774 participants completed the AFB recognition course and a further 228 participants attended a refresher course.

The Management Agency is currently developing online AFB recognition and refresher courses. These are expected to be available for beekeepers in in spring 2022.

AFB Authorised Person Inspection Activity

3,024 apiaries were inspected in 2021/22 up from 2,186 in 2020/21. 2.6% of hives and 9.3% of apiaries inspected by AP2s were found to have AFB.

Acknowledgement

I would like to thank the Management Agency team of Marco Gonzalez, Dwayne Hill, Janette Gwilliam, Tracey Gonzalez, Leonie Elliot-Mason, and Julia Bell for their continued efforts supporting beekeepers to eliminate AFB. A brief summary of the volume of work completed by the team in 2021/22 is listed as follows:

- 9,356 phone calls made and received
- 10,757 beekeeper support cases closed
- 1,591 new beekeeper registrations
- 1,618 beekeeper deregistration's
- 9,025 new apiary registration reviewed
- 8,568 apiary deregistration's reviewed
- 1,003 beekeepers trained
- 565 DECA's approved
- 1,988 AFB notifications reviewed, and
- 3,024 apiaries inspected

Clifton King

National Compliance Manager

The Management Agency, National American Foulbrood Pest Management Plan