



Proposal for the American Foulbrood Beekeeper Levy for 2023/24 to remain the same as for 2022/23

Executive Summary

1. There were 19 submitters, including one submitter who provided a letter.
2. Most submitters (95%) supported the proposal for the rate of levy to remain the same.
3. 18 submitters agreed with the proposal, and reasons given included:
 - funds are being used well
 - current levy is reasonable and could be increased further
 - increasing the levy would be too hard in these tough financial times
 - increasing the levy would discourage registration.
4. Amongst the submitters in agreement with the proposal, some also expressed concerns:
 - current levy discourages registration for people with one or two hives
 - AFB is not being controlled
 - funds are not being used well.
5. One submitter did not support the proposal and reasons included:
 - lack of budget detail and clarity
 - consultation process was inadequate
 - ApiNZ had not addressed the issues raised in previous consultations.

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A. Consultation Process

The Management Agency for the American Foulbrood Pest Management Plan (the Agency) invited submissions from beekeepers to seek their views about a proposal for the American Foulbrood (AFB) Beekeeper Levy to remain the same.

Beekeepers were invited to make submissions by:

- responding to consultation questions using the SurveyMonkey online submission tool, or
- sending a submission by email or post mail to the Agency.

The period to make submissions was two weeks and opened on 23 September 2022 and closed on Sunday 9 October 2022.

B. The Consultation Questions

The Consultation Document contained four questions.

1. Please tick any of the following that apply to you (tick as many as apply).

Respondents were asked to select as many answers as applicable from four provided checkboxes and one textbox labelled 'Other (please specify)'. The four checkboxes were: DECA holder; non-DECA holder; Māori business; or not applicable.

2. How many hives do you own?

Respondents were asked to select an answer from one of eight provided checkboxes.

3. Do you agree that the rate of levy for 2023/24 should remain the same at \$1.70 (\$1.96 including GST) per bee colony and \$40 (\$46 including GST) per beekeeper?

Respondents were asked to choose from one of five responses which were set on a Likert scale¹: strongly disagree; disagree; neither agree or disagree; agree; or strongly agree.

4. Do you have any comments on the proposal that the rate of levy should remain the same?

This was an open-ended question inviting comment.

¹ The scale is known as a Likert scale. Likert scales are often used in survey research in which people express attitudes or other responses in terms of ordinal-level categories (e.g., agree, disagree, etc) that are ranked along a continuum (Neuman, W.L., 2006, 'Social Research Methods, Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches', p.207).

C. Method

Beekeepers and other stakeholders were invited to respond to the consultation questions using the SurveyMonkey online survey platform.² Beekeepers could provide their responses through SurveyMonkey, or by emailing or posting their response.

The responses to the first two consultation questions were analysed using SurveyMonkey software, which calculated the number and percentage of respondents that chose each of the respective answer options. The text responses to the third consultation question were summarised by the researcher.

The analysis of submissions, and the reported findings, are solely the work of the researchers. The researchers are contracted by the Management Agency to provide research and policy services.

D. Previous national consultations

The number of submissions received for this 2023/24 levy rate consultation is lower than the number received in the previous year for the 2022/23 levy rate consultation, as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Number of responses to national consultations

Year	Survey	number submitters
2022	Proposal for the American Foulbrood Beekeeper Levy for 2023/24 to remain the same as for 2022/23	19
2021	Proposal to set the AFB Levy for 2022/23	86
2020	Proposal to set the AFB Levy for 2021/22	104
2019	Proposal to Replace the AFB Apiary and Beekeeper Levy with a Hive and Beekeeper Levy	466
2018	Proposal to increase the AFB Apiary and Beekeeper Levy	828

E. Respondents

There were 19 submitters:

- 18 made an on-line submission using the SurveyMonkey submission tool, and
- one sent a letter.

Most submitters owned ten or fewer hives, and this group of beekeepers makes up 80% of all beekeepers nationally, as shown in Table 2. None of the submitters owned more than 250 hives.

² The SurveyMonkey platform helps design, send, collect, and analyse responses to surveys.

Table 2: Number and percentage of on-line submitters, and number and percentage of beekeepers nationally, by number of hives owned

number of hives	number submitters	% submitters	number beekeepers nationally	% beekeepers nationally
1-10	14	74%	7749	80%
11-250	4	21%	1563	10%
251-1001 plus	0	0	484	10%
Not stated	1	5%	-	-
Total	19	100%*	9796	100%*

*Percentages rounded up

F. Findings

1. Do you agree that the rate of levy for 2023/24 should remain the same at \$1.70 (\$1.96 including GST) per bee colony and \$40 (\$46 including GST) per beekeeper?

Most submitters (95%) supported the proposal for the rate of levy to remain the same. Eighteen of the submitters answered this question using the Likert scale choices in Survey Monkey and the responses are shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Do you agree that the rate of levy for 2023/24 should remain the same?

Expressed Submitter Preferences+	number of answers	% answers
Strongly agree	10	56%
Agree	8	44%
Neither agree or disagree	0	0%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly disagree	0	0%
Total	18	100%**

**Percentages rounded

+ for submitters using the SurveyMonkey online submission tool

2. What comments were made?

Ten submitters provided comments, including one letter submitter

Comments have been analysed to show the views of two groups of respondents - those that agreed with the proposal, and the single letter submission that did not agree with the proposal.

2a. Views of submitters who agreed with the proposal

Nine of the 18 submitters who strongly agreed or agreed with the proposal, provided comments.

Three submitters expressed support for the current levy rate. Reasons for supporting the current levy rate were:

- funds are being used well.
- current levy rate is reasonable and could be increased further.

Three submitters indicated that the levy had some drawbacks, but the rate should still remain the same. Drawbacks of the levy were:

- levy discourages people from becoming beekeepers
- increasing the levy rate would be too hard in these tough financial times
- increasing the levy rate would discourage registration.

Although they supported the proposal, two submitters indicated that the levy should reduce for some or all beekeepers. Reasons the levy should reduce were:

- current levy rate discourages registration for people with one or two hives
- AFB is not being controlled
- funds are not being used well.

Three submitters made suggestions:

- focus on beekeeper education
- focus on community support and creation of a union
- focus on restrictions and control.

2b. Views of submitter who disagreed with the proposal

One submitter did not support the proposal and provided comments. The reasons the submitter did not support the proposal are summarised in the following.

- Lack of budget detail and clarity makes prevents beekeepers from making an informed decision about whether the levy is adequate and reasonable. The following budget items were queried:
 - no breakdown of bulk costs provided (e.g., the cost of inspecting apiaries and the cost of honey surveillance should be depicted as separate amounts)
 - proposed budget and audited financial accounts do not correlate with each other
 - consultation documents and budgets do not correlate with each other

- cost savings associated with implementation of HiveHub are not apparent in the budget (HiveHub appears to cost more than Apiweb despite fewer colonies registered)
 - ApiNZ is testing 500 fewer honey samples than stated in the proposed 2022/23 budget. This reduction is not reflected in reduced levies.
- Consultation process was inadequate and risks being a box-ticking exercise. There was insufficient information to make an informed decision about the proposal and insufficient time to respond.
- ApiNZ has not addressed the issues raised in previous consultations, including budget queries and insufficient time to respond to surveys.

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