

Do you keep bees or are you interested in keeping bees?

If you either keep bees or are interested in becoming a beekeeper, there are some important points below to consider.

1. Registration

You must be registered with your state department.

In Victoria, if you own one or more bee hives you must be a registered beekeeper. This is a condition under the *Livestock Disease Control Act 1994*.

Registration online is free if you own 1-5 hives, \$30 for 6-50 hives and \$0.60 per hive for 51+ hives.

Registration can be made online at: www.agriculture.vic.gov.au or call 136 186.

2. Legislation

There are rules and regulations for keeping bees.

Bees are classified as livestock and in Victoria are governed by the *Livestock Disease Control Act 1994*. Bees must therefore be kept in accordance with this Act.

Victoria also has an *Apiary Code of Practice* that is mandatory to adhere to. The *Apiary Code of Practice* sets out the parameters for use of land for apiary in all parts of Victoria. Every beekeeper must comply with this Code.

3. Australian Honey Bee Industry Biosecurity Code of Practice

There is also an 'Australian Honey Bee Industry Biosecurity Code of Practice' that must be implemented in your apiary.

This code has been developed in consultation with beekeepers to provide a clear framework

for beekeepers to engage in best practice biosecurity.

You can find the 'Biosecurity Code of Practice' at: www.honeybee.org.au

4. Diseases and Pests

There are many endemic diseases and pests such as American Foulbrood (AFB), European Foulbrood, Small Hive Beetle, Chalkbrood and Nosema that all beekeepers need to be aware of.

Under the 'Honey Bee Biosecurity Code of Practice' beekeepers must regularly inspect their hives for diseases and pests.

American Foulbrood (AFB) is a notifiable disease under the *Livestock Disease Control Act 1994*. If you have or suspect having American Foulbrood (AFB) in your hive(s) you must notify Agriculture Victoria apiary officers (contact details below).

In addition you must also look for exotic diseases such as Varroa mites.

If you are suspicious of an exotic disease or pest such as Varroa mite please contact the **Plant Health Australia Pest Plant Hotline on 1800 084 881** or an Agriculture Victoria Apiary Officer immediately.



AFB infected brood cell showing perforated cell cap

5. Join a Beekeeping Club

It highly recommended beekeepers join a local beekeeper organisation such as a club or association in their local area. You can learn from experienced beekeepers and gain valuable beekeeping advice.

For beekeeping clubs and associations please contact the Victorian Apiarist Association (VAA) on (03) 5446 1455 or via: www.vicbeekeepers.com.au

If you have any questions or wish to find out more information please contact the Agriculture Victoria Apiary Officers listed below.

CONTACTS

Joe Riordan – Senior Apiary Officer

Rutherglen

Phone: 0417 348 457

joe.riordan@ecodev.vic.gov.au

Daniel Martin - Leading Apiary Officer
Bendigo

Phone: 0428 752 449

daniel.martin@ecodev.vic.gov.au

Jessica Hartland - Bee Biosecurity Officer
Swan Hill

Phone: 0447 245 558

jessica.hartland@ecodev.vic.gov.au



FURTHER INFORMATION

Agriculture Victoria Honey Bee website

This website contains information on registration, disease and bee biosecurity.

www.agriculture.vic.gov.au/agriculture/livestock/honey-bees

Plant Health Australia Bee Aware website

This website contains useful information on pest and diseases of honeybees, best practice biosecurity, pollination information and many more helpful resources.

www.beeaware.org.au

Australian Honey Bee Industry (AHBIC) website

This website contains bee industry information.

www.honeybee.org.au

Australian Beekeeping Guide

This document can be downloaded free or purchased through RIRDC and is an excellent resource for beekeepers.

www.rirdc.infoservices.com.au/items/14-098

Plant Health Exotic Plant and Pest Hotline

1800 081 881