



Industry update

Vol. 1 No.5



Contracted projects



RD&E investment July - September 2019



RD&E investment committed from 1 October 2019

Advisory Panel

Dr Doug Somerville (Chair)
Danny Le Feuvre
Sam Malfroy
Dr Diana Leemon

Ashley Zamek
Prof Saul Cunningham
James Kershaw
Annelies McGaw (AgriFutures Australia Manager, Research)

evoke^{AG}. 2020

evoke^{AG}. is returning to the iconic Royal Exhibition Building in Melbourne, Australia on 18-19 February 2020. Our inaugural event was a sell-out and those wishing to attend in 2020 are encouraged to secure their tickets. evokeag.com/#tickets

Project spotlight: Australian honey abuzz with high-value antibacterial activity

Australia has at least seven *Leptospermum* species that produce honey with exceptionally high levels of antibacterial activity, providing the scientific basis to facilitate the entry of Australian honey producers into premium medicinal markets.

That's according to a new report led by University of Technology Sydney Professor Liz Harry, in conjunction with researchers from the University of Sydney and University of the Sunshine Coast.

Funded by the AgriFutures™ Honey Bee & Pollination Program, Professor Harry, Director of the UTS ithree institute, and the collaborative research team tested more than 5000 honey samples and 2000 nectar samples, covering more than 50 species of *Leptospermum*.

Praised for its antibacterial and healing properties, medical-grade honey sourced from *Leptospermum* plants has become a modern treatment for wounds and skin infections.

The latest study found at least seven Australian *Leptospermum* species produced medical-grade honey with exceptionally high antibacterial activity and many other *Leptospermum* species that produced honeys with therapeutically beneficial activity, as well as others that would fall under high-value premium table honeys.

University of Technology Sydney Research Associate Dr Nural Cokcetin said the research pinpointed several Australian regions, such as south-east QLD, northern NSW and western TAS, as 'hot spots' to yield these high value honeys.

"Australia has 84 of the 87 species of *Leptospermum*. Yet before this study, the antimicrobial activity of our *Leptospermum* species was almost unknown, both locally and globally," said Dr Cokcetin.

"The research puts Australian honey producers on the world stage, positioning them as a leading and potentially abundant source of medical grade and high-value *Leptospermum* honey."

The report found that specific chemical components relating to

antibacterial activity of several Australian *Leptospermum* honeys was similar to that of its Manuka counterpart in New Zealand.

It also discovered that appropriate storage conditions of Australian *Leptospermum* honey was vital to reach its full potential, and outlined key differences between anti-fungal and antibacterial traits.

AgriFutures™ Honey Bee & Pollination Manager, Research Annelies McGaw said the latest research was an important step in enhancing the worth and profitability of Australian honey.

"The research provides scientific evidence to support marketing claims that enable Australian honey producers to gain access to premium therapeutic-based markets," said Ms McGaw.

"Its findings are an important tool to help build the sustainability of Australia's beekeeping industry. It also presents a stimulus for diversification of commercial honey production in Australia."

Ms McGaw said the research team had communicated findings extensively and generated significant interest from members in the beekeeping industry, as well as in scientific and medical fields.

"The report shows that Australian honey could play a pivotal role in the clinical prevention and management of health conditions, such as skin and wound infections," said Ms McGaw.

"More broadly, it provides key recommendations to further advance the value of Australian honey and make it easier for beekeepers, consumers and the medical community to understand its importance."

Read more agrifutures.com.au/honey-bee-pollination.

Current projects

Project ID	Project Name	Finish	Principal Investigator	Research Organisation
PRJ-010226	Improving biosecurity resources and better understanding bee health in Australia	30/07/2019	Turner, Rodney	Plant Health Australia Limited
PRJ-010257	Progressing implementation of genetic selection in Australian honey bees	9/10/2019	Banks, Robert	University of New England
PRJ-010825	Probiotic development for bees: analysing gut bacteria in healthy bees	29/02/2020	Nayudu, Murali	University Of Canberra
PRJ-011385	Honey bee and pollination program communications 2018-2020	29/05/2020	Pirie, Justine	Cox Inall Communications
PRJ-010818	Improving the health of hives used in pollination	15/07/2020	Hogendoorn, Katja	The University of Adelaide
PRJ-010815	Investigating factors that influence chalkbrood outbreaks in Australia	30/11/2020	Roberts, John	CSIRO Ecosystem Sciences
PRJ-010879	Increasing the value of Australian honey as a health food	1/08/2021	Cokcetin, Nural	University of Technology, Sydney
PRJ-010987	Participants agreement - CRC for honey bee products	31/12/2021	Barbour (CRC), Liz	CRC for Honey Bee Products Limited
PRJ-010313	Development of honeybee products from a biodiversity hotspot	30/12/2027	Hammer, Kate	University of Western Australia

New partnership to tackle community trust

The Community Trust in Rural Industries Program is a collaborative partnership involving ten RDCs, the National Farmers' Federation (NFF) and the NSW Department of Primary Industries. This initiative is designed to drive impactful, cohesive and consistent responses to the cross-sector community trust challenge.

Community trust relates to the nature of the relationship between industries and the social context in which they operate. Decreasing trust can lead to reduced industry productivity, profitability, and sustainability resulting from increased regulation, limited market access, and disincentives to invest in infrastructure, among other consequences.

Fisheries Research and Development Corporation Managing Director, Dr Patrick Hone, said the days of thinking we just need to better communicate with the community about what we do and how we do it are gone.

“Research shows we need to actively demonstrate that we share the community's values when it comes to topics they care about most. This Program aims to build a common language and collective national narrative across industry sectors around the community trust challenge. It will build on our understanding of best practice approaches to effectively engage with the community about their concerns.”

Over an initial three-year period, community research will be undertaken to provide insights on cross-sector issues and best practice approaches – the first round of results will be delivered in late 2019. Ongoing engagement will be conducted to make research outputs available as an input to food and fibre industries developing their own strategies.

For more information visit agrifutures.com.au/community-trust/

AgriFutures Australia Advisory Panels

AgriFutures Australia is committed to working with industry to deliver the research and development outcomes that meet rural Australia's needs. We work closely with Advisory Panels to decide on research priorities and to make investment decisions each year.

Members of AgriFutures Australia's Advisory Panels are selected following an open call process which involves a competitive skills-based assessment and/or consultation with key industry bodies and stakeholders. The successful applicants are appointed to the respective Advisory Panel by the Managing Director of AgriFutures Australia. Applicants are required to declare any actual or perceived conflict of interest to the AgriFutures Australia Managing Director prior to appointment. Any subsequent conflicts of interest are managed in accordance with the Corporation's Conflict of Interest Policy.

AgriFutures Australia is dedicated to embracing and promoting cultural, age and gender diversity on all of our Advisory Panels. To learn more about AgriFutures Australia Advisory Panels and the members of the Honey Bee and Pollination Program Advisory Panel please visit agrifutures.com.au/advisory-panels