

Manuka honey industry and MPI science collaboration meeting

Date: 1 February, 2018

Location: MPI, Pastoral House, Wellington

Participants:

Industry: Tony Wright, ApiNZ Board director; Karin Kos, Chief Executive, ApiNZ; John Rawcliffe, UMFHA; Young Mee Yoon, Honey New Zealand and Standards Focus Group; Sunil Pinnamaneni, Laboratory Manager, Mānuka Health; Jane Calvert, Watson & Son, Ian Fletcher, NZ Beekeeping Inc

MPI: Steve Hathaway, Director Biosecurity Science, Food Science and Risk Assessment; Claire McDonald, Senior Adviser; Suzanne Keeling, Senior Adviser.

Purpose of meeting

To establish an industry / MPI science collaboration group and work programme

Agenda: Proposed short-term objectives

- Develop a ToR and agree the core Group from industry and MPI. It is expected the core team will co-opt expertise from outside of the group as necessary.
- Establish the objectives of the collaborative work plan
- Develop a narrative on criteria that govern a sufficiency of evidence for use of science in a regulatory setting, and the design and reporting of such science
- Identify an initial programme of likely work, subject to technical resources and funding
- Discuss monitoring of the performance of the definition post-implementation e.g. data required, means of collection and QA, sources of variability (regional effects, seasonality etc.), data management system
- Develop a high level (joint) communications plan

Agenda: Proposed medium term objectives

- Implement medium term projects
 - An industry priority being stability protocols for current and possible future markers
 - An MPI priority being sampling methods and processes for testing honey
- Improve effectiveness and efficiency of current tests where scientifically justified
- Explore alternative technologies (particularly NMR) to best define the NZ native honeys
- Jointly influence offshore research so that it contributes materially to regulatory application in NZ
- Design and potentially establish a national sample reference library.

Key outcomes of the Meeting

1. Draft purpose statement

Ensure that government and New Zealand industry work collaboratively and effectively on science aspects of the regulatory mānuka honey definition and associated scientific issues for the advantage of New Zealand and the honey export industry.

2. Draft Terms of Reference completed

3. Participants.

The Meeting agreed:

- Participants needed to be appropriate for a science working group and participation will change according to the work of the day
- Participants will include a core team which will draw on the expertise of others as required. The core team will include the MPI science team and industry experts
- Industry recognised that there needs to be a process whereby other industry members can provide input and participation

4. Initial proposals for prioritisation:

- Develop an agreed description of monofloral and multifloral honey using appropriate science inputs and context (industry and MPI)
- Operational research project to establish sampling protocols and guidelines (MPI lead)
- Stability of markers (industry lead)
- Developing framework to monitor implementation of the definition (MPI and industry)

5. Funding and resourcing

Preliminary discussions on funding sources and availability of experts, recognising that the work programme needs to be realistic in these terms

6. Communications plan:

- An approach was agreed whereby key outcomes and messaging from the group will be provided to all stakeholders
- Likely stakeholders include industry, science community, other New Zealand Government agencies.

Priority short-term actions

- MPI – develop draft Terms of Reference (ToR)
- ApiNZ – establish industry representation
- MPI/ApiNZ – arrange next meeting (mid February)