

## Standards Focus Group May 2019 Meeting Summary

The Standards Focus Group met in May 2019 and covered a full agenda of key topics for our sector. These included:

- Discussion on the application of the **Manuka honey definition** in the domestic market, noting ApiNZ's submission in support of extending the definition to domestic sales.
- An update on MPI's **Food Safety Law Reform Act** implementation project which is seeking to make the legislation easier to understand, for people to be able to find information and to clarify the links between each level of legislation.
- **Tutin** education campaign needs to get underway before the end of the year and include clubs and hubs visits around the country, targeting new beekeepers.
- **The Traceability working group** updated areas of priority including how to address the challenges companies and beekeepers faced in regard to traceability, harvest declarations and the information flow through the process. This includes developing a working example of recording and tracing honey through the processing chain. The working group is looking at how we can ensure strong traceability in a way that is simple and clear for beekeepers in understanding what is required and the value of traceability.
- **Reducing compliance costs** – the Group raised concerns around increasing cost of compliance and is looking at options to reduce compliance costs including remote verification under the Food Act and the need for two verification audits on export premises, especially for compliant premises.
- An update on the **honey sampling project** which falls under the Industry/Government Manuka Honey Science Group, with input and suggestions from the Focus Group. The outcome is to produce guidance about best practice to control about best practice to control variation and mixing and the difference factors that may affect the final product.
- Issues relating to **market access**, including: potential changes post BREXIT which has now been pushed out to October, an update on submission for access to Mexico and Vietnam.
- **PA reporting** including an update on sampling and testing.
- **Diastase activity in honey** – agreed that we need to bring the different work streams on this into the Focus Group and collate and review to determine next steps including where further investigation is needed to show if this is geographical or beekeeper specific.
- **C4 Sugars update** - two work streams going forward – building on previous research done in the past and undertaking further research including a better understanding around the chemistry between HMF/MGO/DHA interactions.
- An update on the **International Symposium on Bee Products in Malta** was provided and it was noted that heat treatment (labelling of pasteurised honey), glyphosate in honey and honey authenticity were all topics of discussion.

### Actions

1. Follow up with MPI on progress with the domestic definition for the Manuka Honey.
2. Identify clubs and hubs for tutin education campaign.
3. Develop working example of traceability for discussion at next meeting.
4. Investigate existing compliance and audit verification costs
5. Working group to review diastase research and report at next meeting
6. Proposal for C4 sugar project to be written up and discussed at next meeting.