

Standards Focus Group June 2021 Meeting Summary

Market access/export issues

MPI has advised that negotiations are proceeding well on the EU/UK Free Trade Agreement. Both sets of negotiations are proceeding well, with the UK wanting to complete negotiations by the end of the year. A new certificate template for the UK will be implemented on 30 June. A new export certificate has successfully been negotiated Saudi Arabia and is now available. Exporters will also need to register with the Saudi Food and Drug Authority (SFDA). New operator restrictions will apply from 1 January 2022 for those exporting to China due to new legislation being implemented in China. Honey is one of 20 groups that these new regulations will apply to.

Mānuka honey definition

It has been three years since the implementation of the definition and five years since data was collected to set up the definition, so MPI has started a review of the definition. The purpose of the review is to ensure that the definition is still fit for purpose. The scope of the review does not include new testing methods or geographic origin. The current timeline for the review is for data to be received by the end of June and to release a report on the re-assessment process at the end of September. If any changes to the definition are recommended there will be a formal consultation process.

Exporter regulatory advice service

MPI is developing a web-based resource that will provide a high-level overview for new exporters. The resource is due to be released in about a month. MPI has also started running monthly webinars to enable people to ask them questions about exporting directly.

Animal products regulatory redesign

MPI is currently reviewing the notices under the Animal Products Act. Twelve notices will be consolidated into one notice and the wording will be standardised and harmonised. Public consultation on the revised notice is expected to start in July or August and will run for six weeks. The notice will be finalised by 1 March 2022 and a transition period is expected for RMPs. Once the notice is finalised, the guidance will also be reviewed.

Review of requirements for exporting packages of bee products weighing 2 kg or less

Consultation has now closed on the review of the requirements for exporting packages of less than two kg. MPI received several submissions and is considering the issues these submissions raised. Any changes to requirements for exporting packages of bee products less than 2 kg will be part of the consultation on the redesigned notice under the Animal Products Act that is mentioned above.

ISO Standards Update

Working group meetings for reviewing the propolis specification have been underway since early 2020. This project includes descriptions for different types of propolis, physical and chemical requirements, hygienic requirements, test methods, packaging, storage, and transportation. A proposal to use pollen count for propolis both for botanical and geographical origin identification was rejected. Interlaboratory proficiency testing is currently being undertaken, with test items including dry matter, loss of drying, total ash, wax content, total phenolic content, total

flavone/flavonol content by AICI3 method, total flavonoids content by polyamide method, phenolic profile, total antioxidant capacity, pollen and pH.

Pyrrolizidine Alkaloids Research

An article about pyrrolizidine alkaloids (PAs) in honey was published in the April 2021 NZ Beekeeper Journal. Information has also been added to the Apiculture NZ website under the beekeeping section. A member of the Catalyst team, who was involved in the research on PAs, will be attending the Apiculture NZ Conference. They will be available at the Apiculture NZ stand during lunch breaks on the first two days to answer questions about the research, supported by Standards Focus Group members.

C4 sugars

C4 sugars continue to disadvantage NZ producers. Research on C4 sugars is part of Te Pitau's (TP) science research program. Te Pitau are currently revisiting how the problem can be addressed. Apiculture NZ will update members once more detail is available.