

ApiNZ Science and Research Focus Group Meeting

March 2023 Member Update

Australian Scientists visit to NZ

MPI hosted a group of Australian scientists for a week in February 2023 to trial eDNA methods for the detection of varroa in beehives. The group worked with a Chatham Islands beekeeper to bring some bees over to Wellington so that the scientists could track varroa invading hives. The group also visited beekeepers from around the Wellington region. MPI have written an article for the June Beekeeper Journal on the visit.

ApiNZ Membership survey

The group discussed the results of the ApiNZ membership survey that was run in November 2022. The response rate was comparable to last year's survey, which was encouraging. The overall rating for ApiNZ's work was 3.6, down from 3.8 last year. The overall rating for membership benefits was 3.1, down from 3.2 last year. The two biggest issues for the businesses of respondents were hive health and the economics of beekeeping.

The survey contained a new question this year that asked how positive people felt about the future of the industry. Respondents were slightly more positive than negative, with the average rating being 60/100. Respondents acknowledged that the next few years will be hard, but that, in the long term, the future looks good once the current supply and demand imbalance works through. The response to this question is consistent with the responses to a similar question in the annual colony loss survey (COLOSS). The survey also found that hive overstocking is less of an issue for members, while the economics of beekeeping are more of an issue than last year.

Conference speaker topics

Options for topics for the two international speakers at conference, David Tarpey and Peter Neumann were discussed. The topics will be announced once they are finalized. The group also considered options for topics and presenters for the seminars on Thursday afternoon. How science works in NZ: the interface with ApiNZ and what is required to get funding to do research.