

Biosecurity and GIA Focus Group meeting March 2023

Member Update

MPI Biosecurity surveillance program

MPI has recently written articles for the NZ Beekeeper Journal to remind beekeepers in high-risk zones that beekeeper inspections are important for MPI's biosecurity surveillance program. Articles were run in the December 2022 Journal and in the April 2023 Journal. MPI have also given presentations at beekeeping club meetings to remind member that it is important to let MPI inspect their hives.

Cyclone Gabrielle

ApiNZ has been monitoring the impact of Cyclone Gabrielle on beekeepers and has secured government funding for beekeepers to address biosecurity and bee health risks for hives located in affected areas. ApiNZ have estimated that about 5,000 hives have been lost, with access to at least as many also being lost. MPI has released advice on how to deal with honey that was contaminated by flood waters.

COLOSS 2022

The COLOSS survey has been run in New Zealand since 2015 and has seen a trend of increasing loss rates every year. While losses levelled off in 2022, they have levelled off at the highest level ever recorded (13.5 percent). The top four causes of losses are queen problems, suspected starvation, wasps and varroa. The first three are hovering around the same level each year. In contrast, varroa losses keep increasing every year, increasing to 6.4 percent of hives going into last winter in 2022 being lost due to varroa.

Plant Biosecurity Council

The plant biosecurity council is the GIA group for the plant sector. Members include NZ Forest Owners Association, Summerfruit NZ, NZ Plant Producers Incorporated, Kiwifruit Vine Health, Onions NZ, NZ Winegrowers, NZ Apples & Pears, NZ Avocado, Horticulture NZ, Seed and Grain Readiness & Response, Tomatoes NZ, Citrus NZ, and Potatoes NZ. ApiNZ was asked to speak to the group at their December 2022 to give them an update on the bee sector.