

AGRICULTURE VICTORIA



Varroa mite update

Latest developments on the national response
as of 20 January 2023



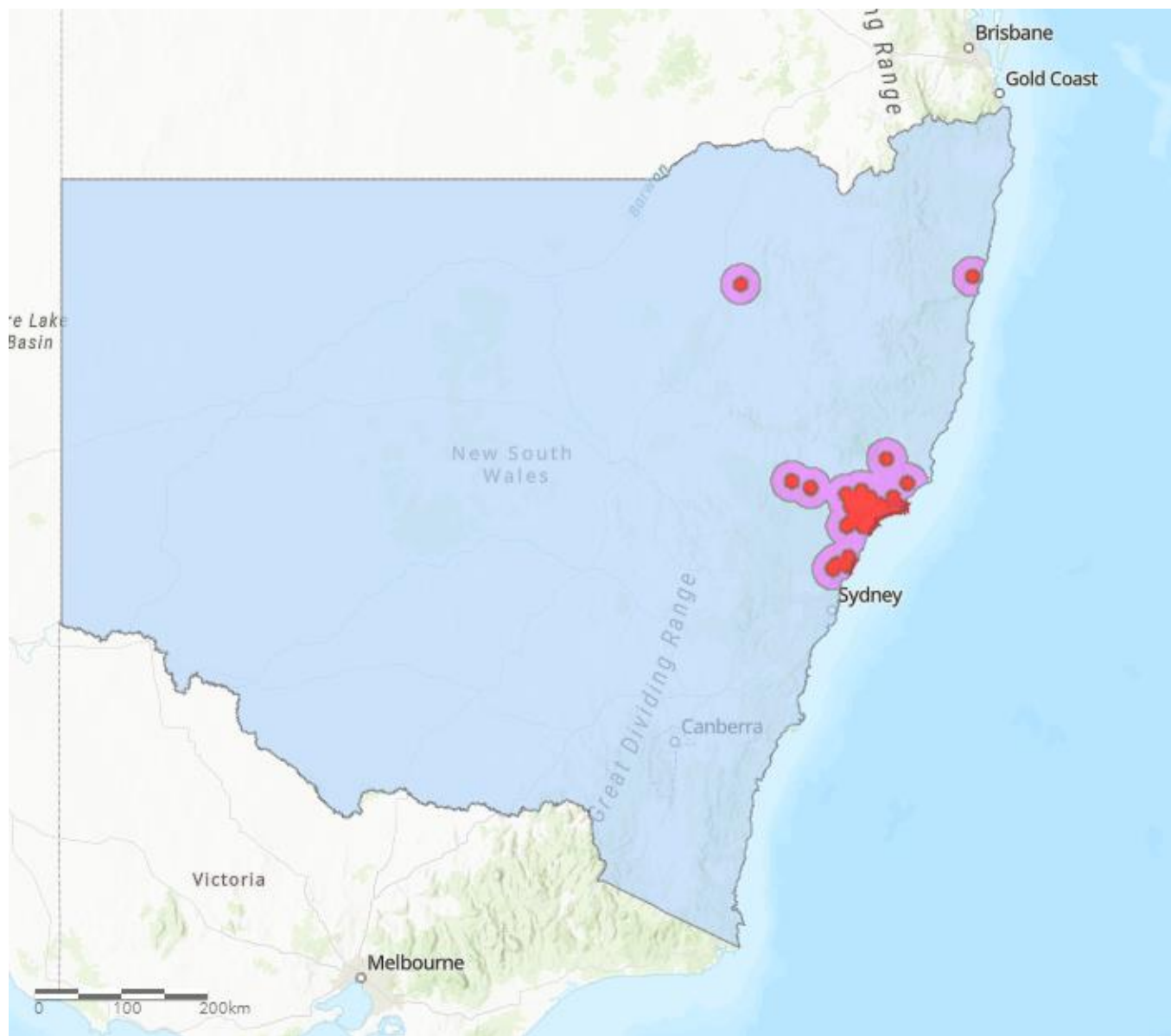
Acknowledgment of Country

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of Country
across the Nations that we live and work on,
and pay our respects to Elders, past and present,
and the diverse cultures that make up
First Nations Peoples.



Varroa mite - Background

- Varroa mite (*Varroa destructor*) first detected at Port of Newcastle 22 June 2022
- An emergency response aiming for eradication is underway in NSW
- All states introduced movement restrictions to prevent the spread of Varroa mite
- Victoria ran an Incident Control Centre from June - October utilising our State Quarantine Response Team (SQRT)
- Conducted extensive surveillance at Almond Pollination and on tracing from links to NSW
- Victoria remains Varroa free and has appointed a project team to continue working to keep Victoria safe



**Eradication
Emergency Zone
(EEZ)- 10km
radius around
IP's**

**Surveillance
Emergency Zone
(SEZ)- buffer from
10km to 25km
around IP's**

**General
Emergency Zone
(GEZ)- rest of
NSW**

NSW DPI – Varroa mite emergency
zone map as of 24/01/2023

NSW Blue zone (GEZ) Pest Free status

NSW Department of Primary Industry presents surveillance data based on World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) guidelines with 99.99% confidence that Varroa mite is not present in this area.

National agreement through the Consultative Committee on Emergency Plant Pests (CCEPP) was received 18 January 2023. Blue zone is now considered “Pest Free”.

Agriculture Victoria supports the pest free outcome and continues to undertake risk assessments to inform regulatory approach.

Agriculture Victoria has begun to facilitate regulated movement of bees, hives and other apiary risk vectors between NSW GEZ (blue zone) and Victoria in a staged approach. This movement is harmonised with the intent of Queensland, South Australia and the Australian Capital Territory.

Stage 1 - Victorian registered hives

Entry into Victoria from NSW Blue Zone

- At present this will be the only category of movement permitted to Victoria.
- Movement requests assessed individually – subject to meeting strict permit conditions.
- All applicants are to be registered with Agriculture Victoria.
- Hives must not have spent any time in NSW eradication (red EEZ) or surveillance (purple SEZ) zones .
- Beekeepers must undertake current hive testing regime as implemented in NSW blue zone (GEZ).
- Specified rate of hives – alcohol wash – every 16 weeks.
- Alcohol wash tests recorded in BeeMAX.
- All hive movements from NSW into Victoria – recorded in BeeMAX. Subsequent movements recorded for 12 months
- Commenced processing permit applications 23 January 2023.



Stage 1 continued- Barrier Systems

All hives with NSW contact, must be managed under a strict barrier system for 12 months.

What is a barrier system?

- Barrier systems separate single hives, groups of hives or entire apiaries into separate, distinct units.
- Once the units have been defined, interchange of bees, honey & hive components between the units is prevented.
- Barrier systems were developed as a method of limiting the spread of pests & diseases between hives and apiaries.
 - a) Clear, permanent marking and identification of hives, components & appliances within each sub-unit.
 - b) Procedures (incl. appropriate controls), to prevent non-permitted interchange of hives, components and appliances between sub-units.
 - c) Training and instructions for all employees.
 - d) Documentation to enable the tracing and identification of hive components, honey and honeycomb to identifiable sub-units.



Stage 1 continued - Two types of permits



A one-time (single movement) return to Victoria permit applicable to those beekeepers wishing to return home and likely remain in Victoria for the next 12 months.



A multiple entry permit is applicable to beekeepers who may live along the border or whose business is reliant on regular access to sites in both NSW and Victoria.

Compliance and field surveillance



Agriculture Victoria will be conducting compliance checks on permit holders.

Stage 2 & 3

**By 28 February
2023**

All other registered hives located more than 25km from an infected premises (i.e. in the blue GEZ) will be permitted to enter Victoria with a permit

**By August
2023**

Queens and queen escorts sourced from a location more than 25km from an infected premises (i.e. in the blue GEZ) will be permitted to enter Victoria.

Balancing biosecurity risk, food security and business continuity

- In 2020-21 Victorian apiarists exported 409 tonnes of honey and provided pollination services to canola, other seed crops and horticultural crops (almonds, pome & stone fruits) totally reliant on honey-bees for pollination. Gross Value of Production of almonds for Victoria in 2019-20 was approximately \$527 million
- Many commercial beekeepers rely on access to both NSW & VIC to remain viable. Commercial operators own 70% of all hives in Victoria and play a crucial role in pollination services and Australia's food security
- AgVic aims to support business continuity whilst mitigating biosecurity risk in the most practical way possible

What can you do?



Biosecurity Code of Practice



Bee registered



Report notifiable diseases

Inspect for pests and diseases

OUR GREATEST LINE OF DEFENCE IS EARLY DETECTION



Keep records for 3yrs (see BeeMAX next slide)

1. Date of inspections
2. Strength of hive
3. Any pests or disease found and action taken to manage
4. Hive movement
5. Introduce any additional bees or used hives/components into your apiary
6. Biosecurity related training



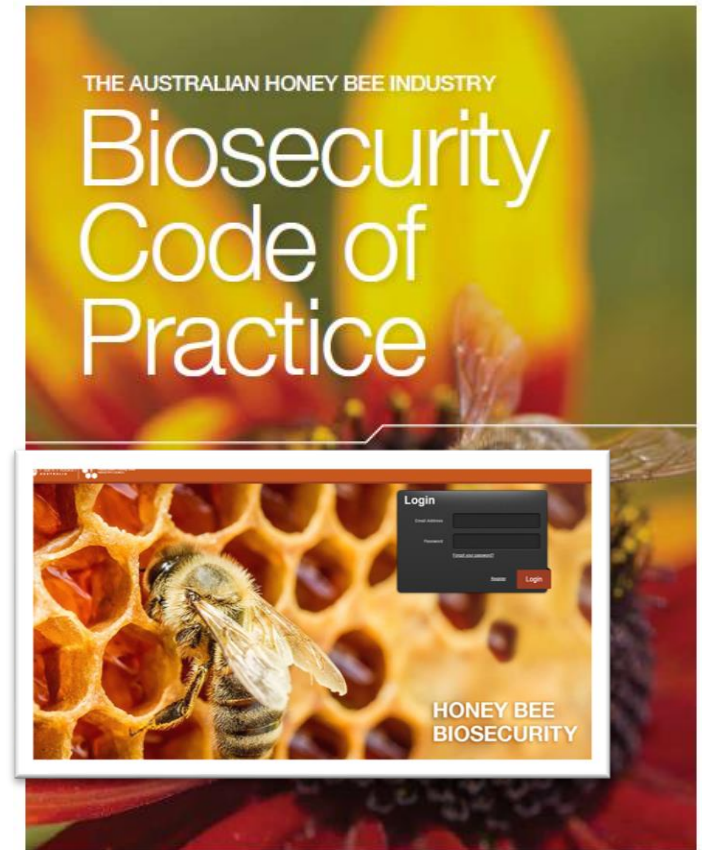
Know your pests and diseases

Complete the free BOLT course

www.beeaware.org.au



Create a barrier management system

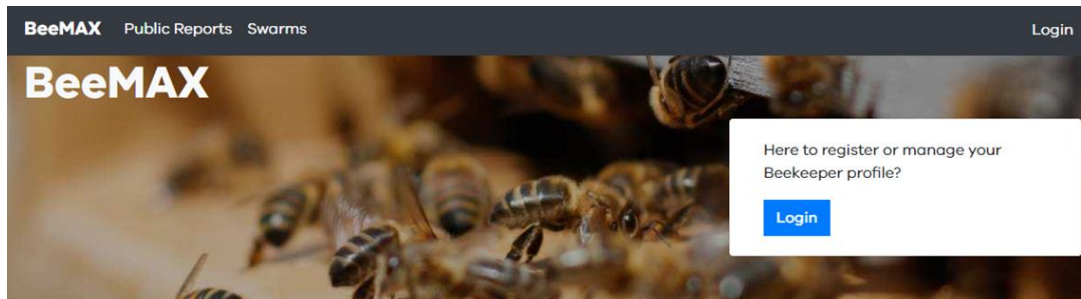


What can you do? continued



Record mite checks and hive movements in BeeMAX online record keeping platform – Victoria's beekeeper registration and surveillance system

bees.agriculture.vic.gov.au
1800 356 761



For assistance call the Bee Registration Helpline on 1800 356 761 between 9.00am and 4.30pm Monday to Friday

Renewing your registration?

Already have a Victorian Beekeeping Brand?

If you have received notification that your beekeeping registration is due for renewal, please click on the link below for instructions on how to complete the renewal process.

[Instructions on how to renew](#)

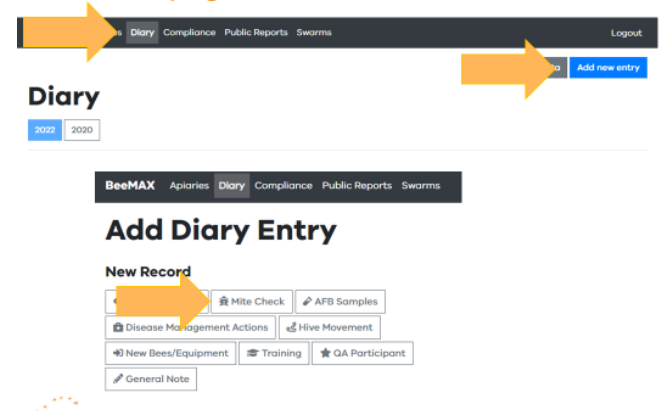
Registering as a new Beekeeper?

Haven't yet got a Victorian Registration. Start here!

Whether you are a new beekeeper wanting to register or have moved here from interstate, the link below will help guide you through the process of registering to be a Victorian beekeeper.

[Instructions on how to register](#)

Record keeping



What can you do? continued

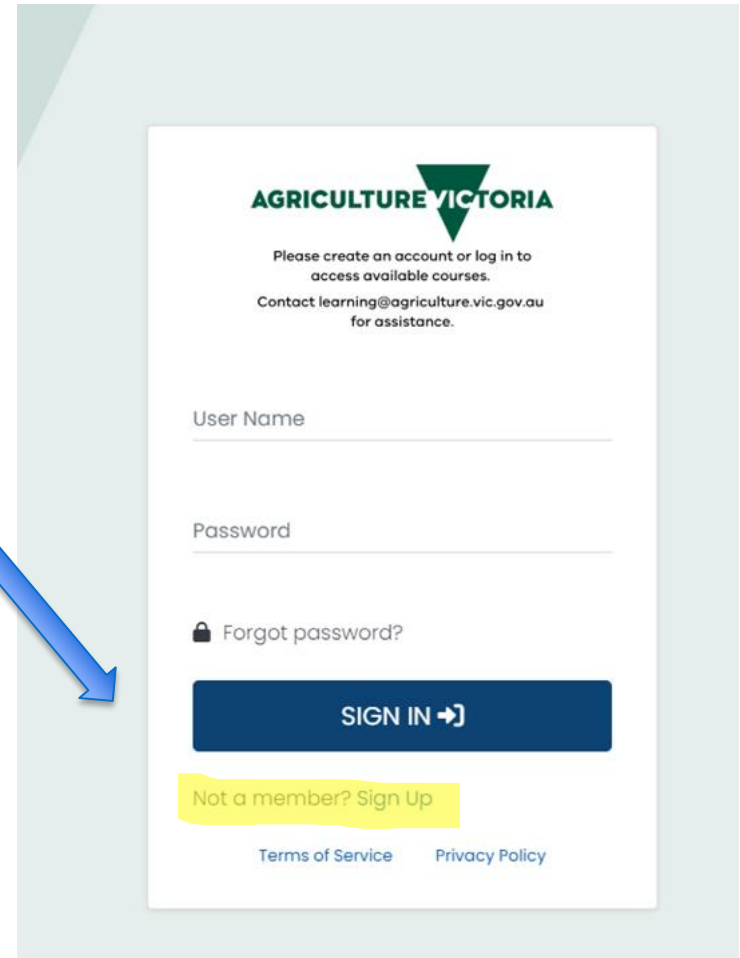
Experienced? Actively participate in an emergency response - Join the SQRT!

Complete the self-paced Victorian Honeybee SQRT Training course, which will inform you of the expectations required of you as an effective SQRT team member.

Sign up here: learning.agriculture.vic.gov.au

Select “I need to access honeybee preparedness training” in the section “Why are you here?”.

If you have any problems accessing the training, please email honeybee.biosecurity@agriculture.vic.gov.au



AGRICULTURE VICTORIA

Please create an account or log in to access available courses.
Contact learning@agriculture.vic.gov.au for assistance.

User Name

Password

Forgot password?

SIGN IN →

Not a member? Sign Up

[Terms of Service](#) [Privacy Policy](#)

Questions



**IF YOU SEE ANYTHING UNUSUAL,
CALL THE EXOTIC PLANT PEST HOTLINE**

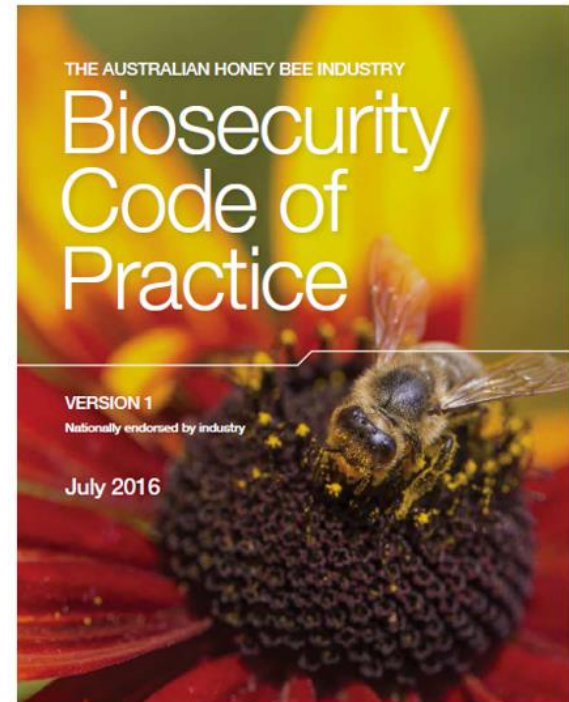
1800 084 881

Use the Code to learn how to stop the spread?

The honeybee industry developed the code of practice for three main reasons:

1. Improve beekeeper biosecurity practices
2. Manage endemic disease more effectively
3. Provide skills to look for exotic bee pests and disease, such as Varroa

beeaware.org.au



Compulsory bee registered

bees.agriculture.vic.gov.au



1 or more hives must be registered.

Registration is **free** for 1 - 5 hives (online)

6 - 50 hives is \$30

51+ hives is \$0.60 per hive.

Branding - Registration number

Burn, stencil, paint, endorse, stamp, carve or etch
the letters / figures of the brand, not less than 19 millimetres in height.



Report notifiable diseases

agriculture.vic.gov.au/biosecurity/animal-diseases/honey-bee-pests-and-diseases/notifiable-bee-pests-and-diseases

Immediately

All the exotics, like Varroa, Africanised bees, Tracheal mite, Deformed wing virus etc

*Notify Exotic Plant Pest Hotline: 1800 084 881

Within 12 hours

AFB & Braula fly

*Notify Apiary Officers

Within 7 days

Chalk brood, EFB & Nosema

*Notify Apiary Officers



BeeMAX

Disease Present *

No Disease Present

American foulbrood

Braula fly

Chalkbrood

European foulbrood

Nosema

If you need help identifying diseases, refer to the excellent [Bee Aware site](#) or [Agriculture Victoria](#)

Inspect for pests and diseases

OUR GREATEST LINE OF DEFENCE IS **STILL** EARLY DETECTION

A beekeeper must test one hive per apiary, kept by the beekeeper, for the presence of arthropod bee disease 2 or more times in any 12-month period, with a minimum of 4 months between 2 tests.

(2) A beekeeper must test for arthropod bee disease under sub regulation (1) by using the drone uncapping method and —

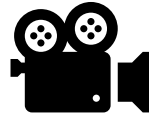
- (a) the sugar shake method; or
- (b) the alcohol wash method.



Mite testing



Keep records



1. Date of inspections
2. Strength of hive
3. Any pests or disease found & action taken to manage
4. Hive movement
5. Introduce any additional bees or used hives/components into your apiary
6. Biosecurity related training

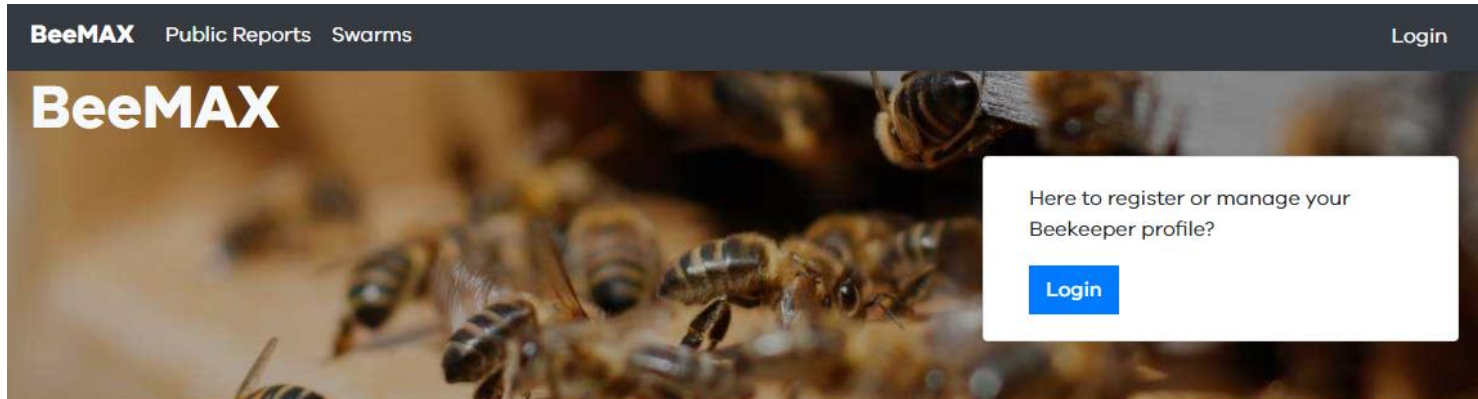
**Keep
records
=
3 years**



****Use BeeMAX if you need help
keeping records**

Online record keeping platform

Victoria's beekeeper registration and surveillance system



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1800 356 761



**BeeMAX**

Bee Keepers

Brand	Name	Status	
A007	ALLISON DRIESSEN	Registered	Selected

Your Details Registration

A007 - 2 Hives**Registered**

ALLISON DRIESSEN

Mobile: 042 [REDACTED]

Telephone: 042 [REDACTED]

Address:

WOODEND

VIC 3442

Registration Reminders via:

[REDACTED]

Emergency notifications via:

[REDACTED]

Mite check reminders via:

N [REDACTED]s

[View Certificate](#)[Compliance with The Code](#)

Create an Apiary!

Barrier system / Site Location / Apiary

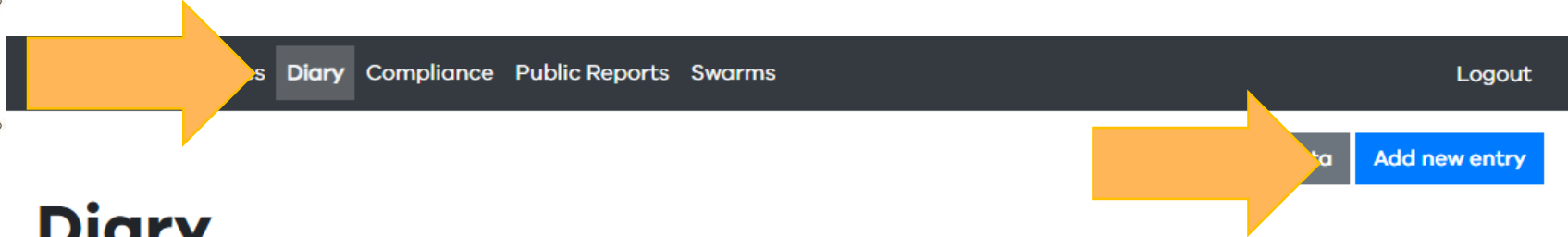
[Apiaries](#)[Diary](#)[Compliance](#)[Public Reports](#)[Swarms](#)[Logout](#)[Add new apiary](#)

Apiaries

Name	Hive(s)	Suburb	Postcode	State	Notes
Kyneton	1	KYNETON	3444	VIC	Edit
Taradale	1	TARADALE	3447	VIC	Edit
Woodend	1	WOODEND	3442	VIC	Edit



Record keeping



Diary

2022

2020



BeeMAX

Apiaries

Diary

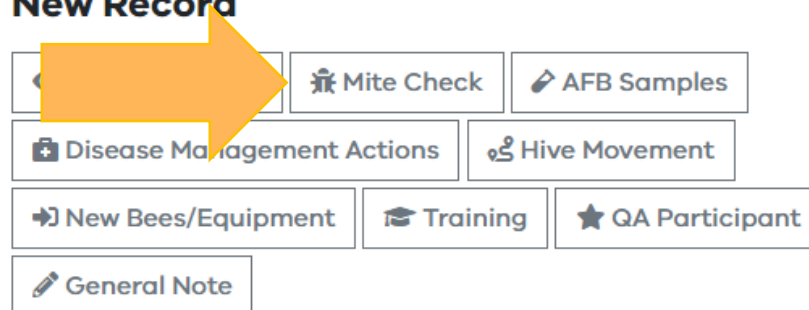
Compliance

Public Reports

Swarms

Add Diary Entry

New Record



Add Diary Entry

New Record

☐ Hive Inspection

☒ Mite Check

☐ AFB Samples

☐ Disease Management Actions

☐ Hive Movement

☐ New Bees/Equipment

☐ Training

☐ QA Participant

☐ General Note

Date *

20/10/2022

Apiary *

- ☐ Kyneton - KYNETON VIC 3444
- ☐ Taradale - TARADALE VIC 3447
- ☐ Woodend - WOODEND VIC 3442

Number of Hives currently in Apiary *

If the applicable apiary doesn't exist here, please add it to your list using the Apiaries menu option.

A beekeeper must keep the following legible records:

- in relation to testing of hives for arthropod bee disease under regulation 74B
 - the date of testing; and
 - the method of testing (drone uncapping and sugar shake or alcohol wash); and
 - an assessment of the strength of the hive;

Method(s) of Testing *

Indicate how many hives each test was performed on

Drone Uncapping

0

Sugar Shake

0

Alcohol Wash

0

Hive Strength *



Poor



Fair



Good

Attachment(s)

Notes

Remember, if you see anything unusual, call the exotic plant pest hotline. 1800 084 881

Knowledge of pest and disease

Biosecurity for Beekeepers Course (BOLT)



Visit the beeaware website
beeaware.org.au



Strong recommendations...

‘Ring of Steel’ (create a barrier system)

A major method of spreading disease within an apiary or between apiaries, is through the transfer of infected material between hives, prior to disease symptoms being detected.

A barrier system is a process of dividing apiaries into smaller sub-units, so that there is no transfer of potentially infected materials, hence hives and hive components in one sub-unit are not interchanged with those from another sub-unit.

Reduce the risk of spreading pests and diseases within and between apiaries by

1. Create sub-division of hives – site/numbers/colours
2. Minimise the misplacement of components between sub-divisions
3. Train your buddy/family/employees on your beekeeping processes
4. Record-keeping and documentation
5. Procedure for introducing swarms!

NOTE: A Ring of Steel/Barrier System won't stop you getting any disease, but it will stop you from spreading it.



Livestock Disease Control Act (LDCA) 1994 & Regulations

LDCA

Division 5--Bees

- [48.](#) Registration of beekeepers
- [49.](#) Biennial fees
- [49A.](#) [Secretary](#) may cancel registration if fee not paid
- [50.](#) [Hives](#) to be marked with registered brand
- [51.](#) Disposal and acquisition of [hives](#)
- [52.](#) Exposure of bees to infected articles etc.
- [53.](#) Access of bees to honey etc.

LIVESTOCK DISEASE CONTROL REGULATIONS 2017

Division 5—Bees

- [73.](#) Hives to be marked with registered brand
- [74.](#) Disposal and acquisition of hives
- [74A.](#) Visual examination of hives for disease
- [74B.](#) Testing of hives for arthropod bee disease
- [74C.](#) Testing for the presence of American foulbrood disease
- [74D.](#) Action taken to control disease in a hive
- [74E.](#) Hives that no longer contain a colony of bees
- [74F.](#) Action taken to strengthen a weak hive
- [74G.](#) Abandonment of hives
- [74H.](#) Bees, hives and beekeeping fittings no longer required for beekeeping
- [74I.](#) Offence to sterilise or destroy hives or beekeeping fittings infected with American foulbrood disease before notifying an inspector
- [74J.](#) Sale or use of hives or beekeeping fittings that have been infected with American foulbrood disease
- [74K.](#) Offence to wax dip certain items that have been infected with American foulbrood disease
- [74L.](#) Offence to use antibiotics to treat hives infected with American foulbrood disease
- [74M.](#) Construction of hives
- [74N.](#) Swarm catch boxes
- [74O.](#) Bees to have access to water
- [74P.](#) Records to be kept in relation to beekeeping

