



Committee Secretary
State Development and Regional Industries Committee
Parliament House
George Street
Brisbane Qld 4000
via email to sdric@parliament.qld.gov.au.
cc sdric@parliament.qld.gov.au.

March 17, 2022

Dear Committee Secretary and Members,

RE: IMPACT STATEMENT, BEEKEEPING AND THE HORTICULTURE INDUSTRY

The Nature Conservation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022 is currently before the Queensland State Development and Regional Industries Committee for consideration. The bill (if passed) will deliver extension of access to key floral resources located on Queensland National Park apiary sites until 31 December 2044. Current legislation in place will exclude access as of 31 December 2024.

The viability of our Industry is dependent on numerous factors including the long-term viability of the beekeeping Industry in Australia and so we provide this impact statement in support of ongoing access to Queensland National Park apiary sites.

As a not-for-profit regional organisation, Bundaberg Fruit and Vegetable Growers Limited (BFVG) represents the interests of fruit, vegetable, nut and herb growers and the businesses that support them across the entire supply chain in the Wide Bay Burnett region of Queensland.

A diverse growing area, the Wide Bay Burnett is Queensland's most productive irrigated agricultural region. In addition to leading the state in output of citrus and avocado we are the largest producing region in Australia for sweet potato, macadamia, chilli, and passionfruit.

Home to a thriving berry industry from blueberry to strawberry we also have significant protected cropping environments that support year-round production of figs, cucumber, and many other crops. Local advanced manufacturers rely on the production volumes of this region to support a wide range of value-add products which alongside our fresh produce is exported globally.

A significant food bowl for Australia that grows commercial quantities of over forty different commodities, we're putting fresh produce on plates around the world.

The region contributes over \$1.5billion to Queensland's economy each year due to our significant production horticulture industry which has a gross value of production of \$573million for fruit and nut commodities, \$413million for vegetable commodities and \$177million for field crops including sugarcane, sorghum, and maize (reference: conservative total comprised of publicly available reports).

As the committee may be aware around sixty-five percent of Australia's agricultural production depends on pollination by honeybees. The beekeeping Industry is essential to the productivity and hence profitability of our industry namely through pollination services. Research shows the addition of bees to a crop when flowering significantly increases the production and quality of that crop.

We acknowledge crops vary in their reliance on bee populations for pollination, so have provided a table below highlighting the extent to which crops in our region rely on this Industry for their success and viability.

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Crops heavily reliant (up to 100 percent for most) on bee populations in the Wide Bay include avocado, citrus, macadamia, mango, blueberry, cucumber, pumpkin, and rockmelon as shown below in *Table 1.0*.

Commodity	Responsiveness (%)	Commodity	Responsiveness (%)
Avocado	100	Blueberry	100
Grapefruit	80	Cucumber	100
Lemon & Lime	20	Pumpkin	100
Macadamia	90	Rockmelon	100
Mandarin	30	Watermelon	70
Mango	90	Beans	10
Nectarine	60	Brussel Sprouts	100

Table 1.0 Crops grown in the Wide Bay Region and their responsiveness to bee pollination by percentage of yield. Adapted from Pollination Aware: The Real Value of Pollination in Australia (RIRDC Pub. No. 10-081, August 2010).

The Queensland honeybee industry has reported the State demand as of 2020 was 91,000 bee colonies. Of that a staggering 44 percent or 40,000 colonies were in the Wide Bay Burnett alone. Given the increase in macadamia and avocado plantings since 2020 we can expect this number has increased significantly. Floral reserves within National Parks in Queensland are vital to maintain the health of honeybee colonies prior to pollination services.

We write today to provide this information and support for the beekeeping industry to extend access to key floral resources located on Queensland National Park apiary sites until 31 December 2044.

Without bees, food security is at risk.

If you require any further information regarding this topic, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully,



Bree Grima
Chief Executive Officer