



B-QUAL Australia Pty Limited

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Produced by:

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NEWSLETTER

RENEWAL 2008/2009

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The 2007/2008 accreditation year has been exciting for the B-Qual Board. As a wholly owned subsidiary of AHBIC, B-Qual has maintained its position as the premium accreditation program for the Australian honey bee industry. As the industry's program, B-Qual has maintained close contact with the new Export Control (Honey and Bee Products) Orders 2007 that are currently in DRAFT form and in circulation for consultation purposes. These Orders are likely to come into play in late 2008 for Exporters; and will affect Beekeepers supplying Exporters by about 2011.

The number of registered members have fallen some what to 358 but the number of accredited members has risen to 208.

Operationally, B-Qual has worked with Packers and local departments of agriculture to promote the program. Although there is potential to increase this type of joint promotion, excellent results have been achieved in Western Australia and South Australia. Feedback from these seminars has been that although the B-Qual Self Learning Program is a good product; having a face to face workshop to take the myths away from HACCP; and then focus on what actually has to be done to put the system in place was useful. In the 2008/2009 accreditation year, B-Qual will encourage Packers to conduct these jointly promoted workshops to facilitate the uptake of B-Qual. South Australian Honeybee Industry Strategic Plan Implementation Committee [HISPIC] has had a meeting with South Australian honey packers who have agreed to encourage all their suppliers to be Quality Assured by December 2009.

B-Qual is working with a number of training organisations to address chemical user accreditation. Beekeepers feel that the current chemical user accreditation programs that are in place focus too much on agricultural applications like spraying chemicals and calibrating boom sprays. AUS-QUAL the National Service Provider for B-Qual has implemented a training module to address the needs of Beekeepers in a correspondence style

training course so that Beekeepers needs are specifically addressed. The qualification at this stage is maintained at Level 3.

With respect to B-Qual membership; the B-Qual Board has maintained a policy to recognise the ongoing hardship of most beekeepers with drought and ongoing commercial conditions. The members that have not paid annual membership fees have been maintained on the B-Qual database, unless express requests for removal from the program have been received. All accredited members must be financial members. That is, to have an audit, membership fees must be paid.

In closing, if the 2007/2008 year was the stabilising year for B-Qual; the Board of B-Qual look forward to the 2008/2009 year as the year for sustained growth with adequate commercial encouragement from Packers for beekeepers to move forward in the Industry owned and operated quality assurance program. I would like thank Ken Gell for his work as chairman, and the rest of the board for their dedication to the job.

Barry Pobke
Chairman
B-Qual Australia Pty Ltd

COMMUNICATION

B-Qual Australia Pty Ltd remains wholly owned by AHBIC. The Program is administered by AUS-QUAL Pty Ltd as the National Service Provider. AUS-QUAL reports to the B-Qual Board as directed. Audits are conducted by AUS-QUAL contracted auditors that are registered with Accredited personnel certification enterprise known as RABQSA. Both AUS-QUAL and RABQSA are Accredited by JAS-ANZ (Joint Accreditation Standards Australia and New Zealand).

The National Coordinator is Bevan Blacklock. Bevan can be contacted on mobile 0428 736 793.

B-Qual may be contacted by:

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B-QUAL IN VICTORIA

B-Qual through Template 25 of the Victorian Registered Food Safety Program ensures that Beekeepers and Packers that sell direct to the public in Victoria have an appropriate tool by which they may manage their enterprise. This template is the only Template registered for this category in Victoria.

Beekeepers have questioned why the local Environmental Health Officer (EHO) still has to inspect their enterprise even though they have B-Qual Accreditation. Although this is a valid question; it should be noted that B-Qual has no authority in the local jurisdiction that the EHO is operating within and therefore a separate inspection must be undertaken at the discretion of the local EHO.

The local EHOs that have been contacted agree that the enterprises that are visited that are B-Qual accredited are likely to be more informed and therefore organised than if they had not participated in B-Qual. www.health.vic.gov.au/foodsafety/downloads/fsp_templates.pdf

Quality System Records

B-Qual has provided Beekeepers with example record keeping forms to assist with the implementation of B-Qual (the Program). The record forms provided may not be suitable for all Beekeepers; particularly if the Beekeeper is a sole operator. Several Beekeepers have contacted B-Qual to seek clarification on the record keeping requirements of the Program. In most cases Beekeepers are unsure of the flexibility that is available to them as members and how using their own records impacts on the audit process. To this end, Beekeepers can be assured that there are no issues with using your own record design to maintain B-Qual compliance requirements.

The Honey Production and Harvest Report (A123); and the Honey Extracting and Processing Report (B456) have been modified from original B-Qual record keeping sheets and may be used as a single page to report activity. These reports have been used in various forms for more than four (4) years successfully.

Honey Production and Harvest Report (A123) To use this type of report, the Beekeeper should complete a form for each Load for each day that activity is undertaken on the Load. This means that if a Beekeeper has four loads and they are all visited on the same day, then four separate reports are completed. The report may be filed in one folder or in separate folders per Load. In fact most Beekeepers that use a system such as this use a separate folder for each Load to minimise confusion.

Honey Extracting and Processing Report (B456) This report is normally used in the honey house, but may also be used in mobile plants with a little modification if required. This report is usually filed in a single folder

As a useful tip, in the off season, keep records of bait station checks etc in the daily diary or a wall planner or the like.

The B-Qual Approved Supplier Program includes the following statement:

Records provide evidence that activities have taken place. They are necessary to demonstrate that the quality system is working, to review business activities to help pin point any problems, to provide details in the event of traceback, and to support a defence in the case of claims/litigation, the records necessary to support apiary, extraction and biosecurity requirements for B-Qual are listed in the Table 1 of the Manual. However, if businesses have existing records that are suitable, they can be used to replace the samples provided. Besides the record keeping forms above, consider also the other important records in the B-Qual system (From: B-Qual Australia Pty Ltd Approved Supplier Program, Section 2.4) that allows the Beekeeper to meet quality system and customer expectations.

07 Order Form, To maintain a summary of purchases such as agricultural and veterinary chemicals. *A folder containing purchase dockets may be satisfactory.*

08 Vendor Declaration, To provide the necessary information about honey to be processed in the packing plant. *Individual packing plants may have specific forms to be completed by suppliers.*

09 Container Label, To identify ownership and product to comply with traceback and biosecurity issues.

10 Corrective Action Record, When mistakes occur or accidents happen that may impact on food safety, it is firstly necessary to prevent product from reaching the market place in this condition. It is also necessary to describe on the CA record what happened and what steps have been taken to prevent the problem from occurring again.

11 Internal Audit Report, To check that the business operation complies with the requirements for B-Qual registration. *It is advisable to complete internal audits prior to external audits so that any deficiencies in the quality system can be rectified.*

12 Honey Appraisal Record, To keep track of incoming stock, sampling, grading, testing and for traceback requirements.

13 Inventory Record, To keep track of stock, it is advisable to complete a stock take on a regular basis to monitor stock on hand.

14 Sale Record, To keep track of quantities of stock sold and where stock has been sold, for traceback requirements. *A folder containing sales dockets may be satisfactory.*

15 Temperature Record, Temperatures during processing may need to be monitored, for example, hot room temperature, and honey temperature for organic production.

16 Calibration Record,

To ensure that any equipment used during production for measuring or weighing is accurate.

17 Skills Check, To assess the skills of each person in the business to demonstrate competency to undertake work activities, and to assess training needs.

18 Training Register, To record all training activities for each person that works in the business.

19 Document Amendment List, To maintain a list of any changes made to the quality manual to check that out of date documents have been discarded.



B-Qual Audit Request

Please send completed form to:

AUS-QUAL Pty Limited,
PO Box 3403, Tingalpa DC, QLD 4173
Fax to 07 3361 9222.

Contact Details

Business Name _____	ABN/ACN _____	
Contact Person : _____		
Phone: _____	Fax: _____	Mobile _____
Email address: _____		
Postal Address: _____		
Town/city: _____	State _____	Postcode: _____
Location Address _____		Postcode: _____

Location Map

Please draw a rough map to assist the auditor in reaching you (attach another page if required)

Assessment Details (Please return this form)

Ideally, your B-Qual audit should take place when honey is being extracted, but if you are not extracting this does not stop your audit being progressed. The audit does not require a visit to your apiary site/s.

When do you expect to be ready for your B-Qual Audit? Call **1800 630 890** if you would like to discuss.

Please nominate a month that would best suite your operation to have an audit conducted.

Month: _____

Nominate a specific date that suits you: ____/____/ 2008

B-QUAL PRIVACY STATEMENT

The information being collected may be personal information. B-Qual collects this information for the purpose of providing and assisting B-Qual improve its program. Any personal information that is collected by B-Qual is for that purpose only. B-Qual respects the privacy of individuals. Generally B-Qual does not release personal information. However, in response to a legal requirement, in an emergency or in exceptional circumstances the Chairperson may at their discretion authorise the release of personal information. In all other circumstances the B-Qual privacy policy governs the collection, the use and disclosure of personal information.