

# BEE MANAGEMENT TIPS

## BEE MANAGEMENT TIPS DURING FLOWERING

During flowering growers are faced with managing both beneficial insects and pest insects. Beneficial insects are crucial for pollination and are a major asset for industry stakeholders (*beekeepers*). Flower pest insects, such as lace bug or flower caterpillar, can cause extreme yield losses (*from 50-90% losses*). These factors combine to create a challenging situation for macadamia growers to manage. The desired outcome is to limit the damage caused by pest insects while avoiding any losses of beneficial insects. The AMS has worked with the NSW Beekeepers Association to develop some practical guidelines for macadamia growers to utilise during flowering. These are:

- **Use only registered or permitted crop protection compounds during flowering** (maintain a copy of the permit and/or label in your spray records and follow the requirements outlined in the critical use comments).
- **Do not spray while bees are foraging** (from mid morning to mid afternoon) **during flowering**. Flower spray applications should occur when bees are not foraging (from late afternoon through the evening) and should be finished and the product dried before bee flight the following morning.
- **Communicate with your beekeeper and neighbours.**
  - Have a pollination agreement with your beekeeper, which includes access details, time on farm and how you will communicate regarding bee health and safety (sample agreements are available).
  - Know where the bee hives are, and ask neighbours if they have any hives.
  - Notify your beekeeper if you will be spraying and what product will be used. Based on this information, the beekeeper may want to move the hives.
  - Beekeepers are generally only able to move one load of hives per night. Give the beekeeper enough notice, at least two day to be able to move the hives.
  - When hives need to be moved, bee keepers lose both time and honey. The stress of moving the hives results in loss of production (honey).
  - Manage re-entry of hives depending on crop protection products that may have been used.
- **Take note of other flowering plants and water sources within bee range.**
  - This may indicate foraging bees on your property even if you do not have hives on your property.
- **Placement of hive is essential for effective pollination.**
  - Ideally hives should receive adequate morning sunlight.
  - Negotiate distribution of hives through the orchard with your beekeeper. Bees will travel several kilometres to forage, but the best pollination will take place when bees are placed interspersed between cultivars.
  - A level site will be required for hive placement.
  - Consider access to water. When bees need to travel long distances to water they can be less effective.
- **Be aware of spray drift and the effect it may have on bees and beneficial insects.**



### Acknowledgment:

Geoff Manning (NSW Beekeepers Association) for his input.

### Further Information:

For more information on this topic, please contact the AMS Industry Development Manager and/or your pest consultant.

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