Ministry for Primary Industries
Manatū Ahu Matua

Manuka Honey Meeting Summary

Monday 10 February 2014, 10.00 – 4.30pm**,** Brentwood Hotel, Kilbirnie, Wellington

Facilitator – John Bell, Deloitte

Meeting Attendees – see Appendix 1

Actions:

- Manuka honey labelling guidelines to be completed by June 2014
- MPI to establish two working groups - one working group to produce manuka honey labelling guidelines, and one group to provide technical input and oversight of manuka honey research needed for the guidelines
- Each group to be made up of a maximum of 6 – 7 industry representatives and one MPI representative
- MPI to send a letter of invitation to the main industry bodies to provide nominations to each group
- Final decisions about membership to be made by MPI
- Work programme for the groups by the first week of March
- First working group meetings by the second week of March
- MPI will ensure regular communication with all manuka honey stakeholders as the guidelines are developed

Topic 1: The approach for developing manuka honey labelling guidelines

The table below summarises the main points raised in this discussion group

Question	Key themes	Details
1: What guiding principles should be taken into account by the working party?	Truth in labelling	Truth in labelling needs to be from beekeeper to drum to pack
	Clarity for consumers	Importance of information sharing across the whole supply chain
	Minimise fraud	
	Scientifically robust descriptors	
	Practicality to implement	For verifiers and regulators, as well as for producers
	Cost effectiveness	Including for both domestic and export markets
2: What challenges need to be addressed in preparing the labelling guidelines?	Making sure the working groups operate effectively	Ensuring adequate and appropriate industry representation, addressing issues of confidentiality and use of data and honey samples, resourcing, managing a tight timeline
	Education for beekeepers, producers, consumers and	More information about manuka properties for beekeepers,

	overseas regulators	information to all industry about FSC requirements and implications for activity claims
	Challenges for determining how best to police the definition	Regulation, country of origin requirements, managing bulk exports, differentiating types (eg medical and food honey)
	Science challenges	Ensuring sufficient peer reviewed, independent science is available Addressing regionalised honey Acknowledging that guidelines will be interim and may need to be reviewed if further science arises
	Proactively managing relationships with international partners	Discussions with CODEX and regulators, communicating FSC implications to overseas markets
3: What is the preferred approach for developing the labelling guidelines that ensures industry participation? *What is the preferred method of communication?*	MPI lead with industry working party. Group needs to be diverse with all industry represented	Suggested representation from: National Bee Association, Honey Packers and Exporters, Manuka Honey Exporters Collective, Maori landowners, Federated Farmers Bee Industry Group
	Consensus and solutions focus	Working groups require members with high level of integrity, objectivity and ability to work as part of a team
	Specialist involvement and scientists	
	Need for good communication channels between MPI and the industry, and within the industry	Some suggested approaches include: a consultation document followed by wider stakeholder meetings, webinar/ web-based discussion, monthly science updates, communication through RMP lists

Topic 2: Science activities required as input to the guidelines

The table below summaries the research priorities as discussed at the workshop.

Short-term and Long-term Honey Research Priorities		
Research area	**By June 2014**	**Long-term**
Pollen	Re-examine the pollen measurement methodology, including Moar's (1985) paper, and using existing samples from GNS or elsewhere to provide a more robust pollen-based measure of manuka honey purity.	Reinvestigate the Leptospermum / Kunzea split and consider whether this needs to be defined and the two species separated in terms of manuka honey identification.

	Investigate more sophisticated microscopic differentiation of Leptospermum and Kunzea.	Develop quantitative data on the nectar-pollen relationship with respect to honey recruitment so that categories of manuka (none, blended, manuka) can be established with nectar-based data.
	Investigate PCR techniques to differentiate between Leptospermum and Kunzea.	Develop standard sampling and testing methods, with development of standard samples of known provenance.
	Develop standardised pollen extraction methodology, that is, honey is extracted from the comb in a robust and consistent manner, to ensure that pollen counts reflect nectar content, and include grain counts as part of any measurement scheme.	
DHA / MGO / NPA		Investigate the sources of variation in contents, particularly determining whether there is subspecies variation in DHA / MGO / NPA, and provide conclusive evidence for absence or presence of DHA and MGO.
Chemical Fingerprinting	Chemical analysis – provide first verifiable data on specific nectar-based chemicals as candidates for manuka identification.	Determine specific Kunzea properties nectar and honey properties.
	Establish manuka honey sample reference bank with wider accessibility.	Study of Leptospermum / Kunzea biochemical properties (Analytica/ UMHFA).
		Determine Leptospermum biochemical variation with soil, climate, rainfall, temperature etc.
Physical / Sensory Properties	Quantitative analysis of sensory properties (aroma, taste, colour), including literature review.	
	Quantify protein and thixotrophic properties.	
Other	Establish a rationale and methods for categorising manuka (e.g. <10%, 10-50% as blended, >50% manuka) and guidelines for removing the lowest category as a branded manuka honey.	
	Develop channels and protocols for wider distribution and communication on science, including priorities, data and analysis.	Develop channels and protocols for wider distribution and communication on science, including priorities, data and analysis.

Appendix 1: Meeting Attendees

Attendee	Organisation
Alex Hislop	
Alison Milne	Wildrose Apiaries
Allan McCaw	NZ Honey Packers (& Exporters) Association/ BPSC
Allan Pimm	Hiku Honey
Allan Richards	National Bee Association
Antonia Reid	Ministry for Primary Industries
Ashley Kerei	Whai Hua Bees
Barbara Pimm	Hiku Honey
Ben Wilson	USP Healthcare
Binnie Brown	Organic Living
Brian Wilson	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
Bruce McCusker	Heathstock Apiaries
Catherine Ayers	River Terrace Apiaries
Dale de Luca	Putake Honey
Darren Clifford	The Honey Company Limited
David McMillan	Apiserve
Fiona O'Brien	Bee Products Standards Council
Frank Lindsay	Lindsays Apiaries
Gareth Ayers	River Terrace Apiaries
Ian Fergusson	Ministry for Primary Industries
Ian Gebbie	New Zealand Honey Ltd
Ian Raine	GNS Science
James Ward	Kintail Honey
Jason Merrylees	Midland Apiaries Ltd
Jenny Miller	Ministry for Primary Industries
Jenny Reid	Ministry for Primary Industries
Jim Edwards	Bee Products Standards Council
Jim Sim	Ministry for Primary Industries
Jim Flick	Ministry for Primary Industries
John Hartnell	Bee Products Standards Council
John Hill	New Zealand Manuka Ltd
Jo Bray	The Honey Company
Jon Brough	
John Whitehead	The Honey Team
John Yu	Vitamore
Judy Ferris	Bee Haven
Julie Cox	Steens Ltd
Karyne Rogers	GNS Science
Kate Smith	Waireka Honey
Kerry Paul	Manuka Health
Kevin Gibbs	Gibbs Honeybees
Lee Carmichael	
Lisa Winthrop	Ministry for Primary Industries

Mandy Suddes	Manuka Health
Martyn Dunne	Ministry for Primary Industries
Mary Kerei	Whai Hua Bees
Mary-Anne Lindsay	Lindsays Apiaries
Mary-Anne Thomason	Kintail Honey, the Honey Packers Association, BPSC
Philip Cropp	Nelson Honey NZ
Moira Haddrell	Cambridge Bee Products Ltd
Mr. Chi-Soon Kim	Beetopia
Murray Bruges	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
Narissa Harvey	Happy Valley
Neil Stuckey	Waitemata Honey Co Ltd
Nick Hanson	Federated Farmers
Nick Munn	Capital Apiaries
Nicky Elwood	Mountain Valley Honey
Pam Flack	BPSC / Arataki Honey Ltd,
Paul Steens	Steens Ltd
Peter Bray	Airborne Honey
Peter Ferris	Bee Haven
Peter Hockley	Capital Apiaries
Ricarda Vandervorst	Ministry for Primary Industries
Ricki Leahy	National Bee Association
Robert Tinkler	Ministry for Primary Industries
Roy Arbon	
Russell Berry	Arataki Honey
Scott Gallacher	Ministry for Primary Industries
Sharan Caskey	New Zealand Manuka
Stephen Black	BeesRus
Steve Lyttle	100% pure NZ honey
Stu Ferguson	Hunter Reily Ltd
Stuart Ecroyd	Ecroyd Beekeeping Supplies
Sue Walker	Honeyland NZ
Susie Stuart	
Terry Braggins	Analytica
Tom Stuart	
Tony Coard	
Tony Herrick	Hiku Honey
Tony Wright	Comvita
Vaughan Kearns	South Coast Apiaries
Victor Goldsmith	Miere Coalition
Warren Peat	Watsons & Sons
Warren Reynolds	New Zealand Honey Ltd
William Savage	
Young Mee Yoon	Honey NZ