

Media Release

Wednesday 19 October, 2016



PREMIUM JARRAH HONEY JEOPARDISED BY LOGGING AND FIRES

Ahead of the flowering of jarrah in the next few months, the WAFarmers Beekeeping Section implores the Department of Parks and Wildlife (DPAW) to safeguard the future of the jarrah industry by implementing sustainable logging and fire prevention practices.

WAFarmers Beekeeping Section President Leilani Leyland said there were approximately 200 jarrah sites in Western Australia with a potential retail value of \$30 million in a flowering year, but activities by DPAW and the Forest Products Commission were threatening this income.

“Beekeeping is one of the most sustainable industries, but by constantly burning and logging this resource, the State Government is jeopardising this small but important and valuable industry,” she said.

“In Western Australia, a jarrah crop can produce up to 500 tonnes, which translates to a figure in the vicinity of a \$7.5 million farmgate price.

“While apiarists are still expecting to get a good income from this year’s jarrah crop, despite the loss of forty sites during the Waroona fires, this income could be threatened by logging of forests and planned burning of apiary sites.

“On a business level, the loss of the jarrah honey crop this year could cost local businesses in excess of \$500,000 in honey production alone, which is a considerable loss considering the biennial nature of the jarrah crop.”

Mrs Leyland said the WAFarmers Beekeeping Section did not believe it was an unreasonable request that the State Government inform producers of logging or burning activities ahead of time.

“Considering how low the footprint of the apiary industry is, how important it is for food production and how in-demand jarrah honey is on local and international platforms, we find it difficult to understand why the Department of Parks and Wildlife and the Forest Products Commission is putting the industry at unnecessary risk,” she said.

“It can take up to thirty years from seed to blossom for a mature jarrah tree to produce the honey required to replace logged trees, and a two-hundred-year-old jarrah will produce far more nectar than a thirty-year-old one as they have finished growing and will put their energy into reproducing not foliage.

“We urge the State Government to take into account the beekeepers use of the state forest as a resource as part of their planning process, and try and work the burns around the flowering cycles of the trees.

“We also suggest that the Forest Products Commission stop logging native forests as it is unsustainable, and instead log plantation forests. This would be much more acceptable and sustainable.”

ENDS.

All media requests must be directed to WAFarmers Media and Communications Officer Melanie Dunn on (08) 9486 2100 or melaniedunn@wafarmers.org.au.

Address: 125 James Street, Guildford WA 6055 // PO Box 68, Guildford WA 6935

Tel: (08) 9486 2100 // Email: reception@wafarmers.org.au

www.wafarmers.org.au