



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 section).
- **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 before bee flight the following morning.
- **Communicate with your beekeeper and your neighbours.**
 - Have a pollination agreement with your beekeeper (sample agreements are available).
 - Know where the bee hives are, and ask your neighbours if they have any hives. Hives are best placed where they will receive ample morning sun.
 - If you have hives on your property, 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 to be able to move the hives. At least two days notice is recommended.
 - When hives need to be moved, bee keepers lose both time and honey. The stress of moving



Stingless bee.
Photo: B. Cutting.

the hives results in approximately 14% loss of production (honey). Therefore, moving the hives away and back again incurs a loss of approximately 28%. Communication with your bee keeper is essential and can minimise any losses.

- Manage re-entry of hives depending on specific crop protection products that may have been used.
- **Take note of other flowering plants within bee range.**
 - This may indicate if you have foraging bees on your property even if you do not have hives on your property.
- **Be aware of spray drift and the effect it may have on bees and beneficial insects.**

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Further Information

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

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