

New Zealand Bee Pathogen Programme

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The New Zealand Bee Pathogen Programme is a 3-year research programme funded by MPI. This research is developing MPI laboratory capability for diagnostics in honey bee viruses, trypanosomes, fungi, bacteria and mites. Diagnostic tests are being developed to match international protocols for microscopic and molecular identification of endemic and exotic pathogens known to affect bee health. While the first goal is to have internationally comparable bee pathogen tests to measure the presence or absence of diseases affecting trade and biosecurity, the more compelling goal is to evaluate the association between the bee pathosphere and bee health as measured by colony survival and productivity. Sixty apiaries are inspected and sampled by trained inspectors throughout New Zealand twice a year for five sampling rounds. Apiary managers are also interviewed for details regarding stock management, colony losses and productivity at each sampling round.

