

Beekeeping - The Good, The Bad and The Ugly: An Update on the New Zealand Industry.

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Beekeeping has come to a prominence in recent years through dramatic hives losses through pathogens and possible pesticide use around the world and with the resulting "save the bees" campaigns. In New Zealand there have been losses in recent years but our mild climate has allowed these to be easily made up and in fact hive numbers have doubled in the last 10 years. This doubling has mostly been achieved on the success of marketing of mānuka honey originally started in the early 1990's. However with this success has come a gold rush mentality and with it all the bad things associated with greed. The Government hasn't helped, establishing a goal for honey exports by 2028 of \$1.3 billion. We are not a stand along industry. We are associated with all sections of NZ Agriculture, face a number of challenges with densities of 600 hives per square kilometre in some areas at times. Little research has been undertaken on how this impacts on the natural environment, ecosystems and the long-term health of all bee species.

