

Varroa Mite and Pollination Risk Management

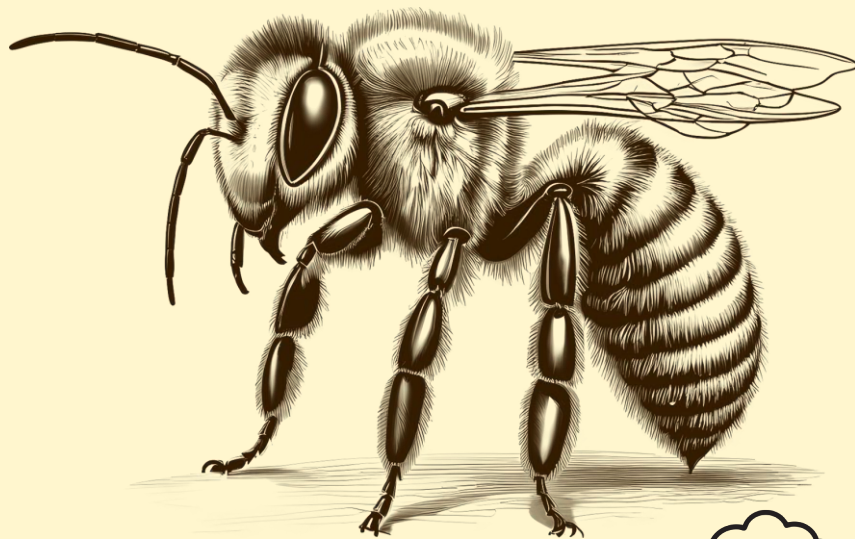
Monré Meyer

Apiarist

Certificate III in Beekeeping

Victorian Apiarist Association Board Member

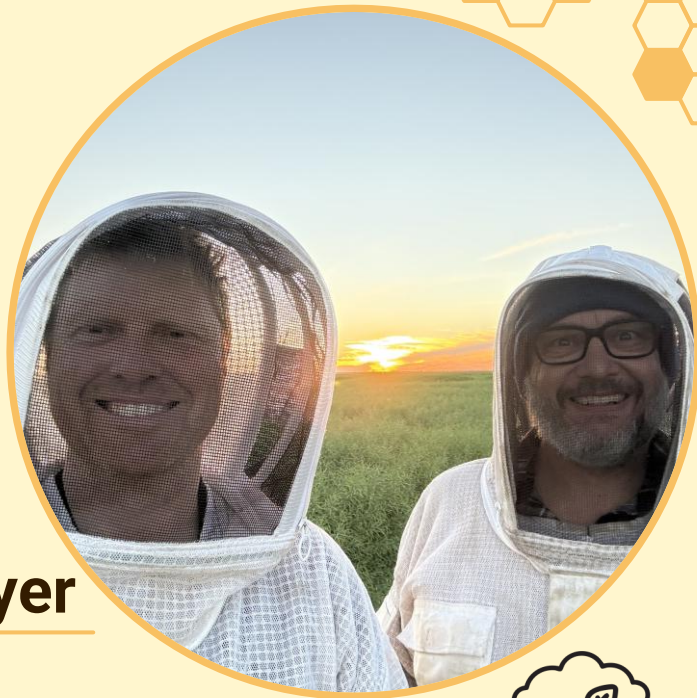
Victoria Farmers Federation Horticulture Committee Member



The Beekeepers

James Brownlie

Monré (Ray) Meyer



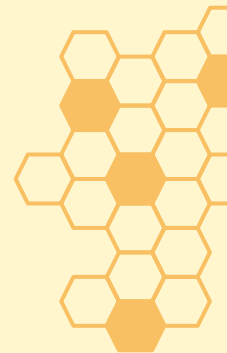
Pure Pollination

Commercial Pollination Services

- Professional pollination-focused operation
- Approximately 1,600 managed colonies
- Interstate operational capability
- Registered in Victoria and New South Wales
- Established biosecurity systems
- Active Varroa mite management program
- Commercial transport and logistics capability
- Research and industry engagement

Beekeeping Consultancy

- Pollination planning and management
- Independent hive inspections
- Apiary management advice
- Biosecurity planning
- Recreational Beekeeping Support
- Mentoring and training
- Hive management advice
- Disease management
- Apiary establishment guidance
- Varroa monitoring and treatment planning



Recent News Headlines



Crop failure fears as deadly bee parasite wipes out hives and forces beekeepers to quit

By Warwick Long, Angus Verley and Danielle Pope

ABC Rural

Beekeeping

Thu 4 Jun

Hobby beekeepers urged to check for varroa mite as more than 1,000 ACT beehives destroyed

By Peter Lusted

Beekeeping

Wed 8 Apr

Queensland beekeepers paying thousands each month to fend off varroa mites as colonies devastated



By Will Murray

Beekeeping

Thu 4 Jun



'A big wake-up call' for Australia's billion-dollar farm sector



By Andrew Miller

Updated June 9 2026 - 1:34pm, first published 1:04pm



Recent News Headlines



Growers urged to prepare after Landline spotlights Varroa's pollination toll

16 June 2026



WHEN BEE
FOUNDATION

June 3, 2026 | News & Media, Research

Australia's pollination system could face a potential shortfall of 290,000 commercial honey bee hives during peak pollination periods under the most likely future scenarios, according to a new national report.



THE STRATEGIST

Bee sting: the varroa-mite incursion is a biosecurity warning

19 Aug 2025 | Andrew Henderson



Bilpin apple grower fears mystery failed crop could be linked to varroa mite

By Victoria Pengilley

Stateline

Fruit Trees

Sat 8 Nov 2025



Recent News Headlines



Researcher predicts Australia faces feral bee die-off as varroa mite found in swarms



By Kim Honan

ABC Rural

Beekeeping

Thu 9 Nov 2023

Bush hives dying, beekeepers challenged as treatment-resistant varroa mites spread

By Jennifer Nichols

ABC Rural

Agriculture

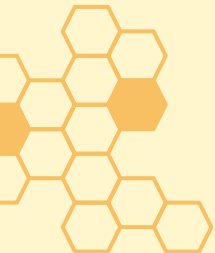
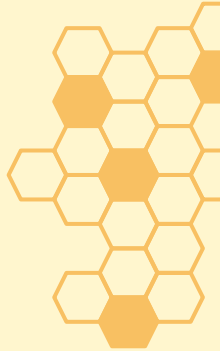
Wed 4 Mar

...it is estimated 90 per cent of south-east Queensland's wild honey bee colonies have collapsed...

Queensland beekeepers paying thousands each month to fend off varroa mites as colonies devastated; Will Murray, ABC News

In other countries, the spread of the parasite has led to the loss of around 96% of feral honeybee populations within just a few years of its arrival.

Implications of varroa mite establishment for Australian plants and their persistence; Tom Le Breton, Amy-Marie Gilpin, Chantelle Doyle, Mark K.J. Ooi; University of New South Wales



Recent News Headlines



Major setback for beekeepers as varroa mite chemical resistance detected again



By Joshua Becker

ABC Rural

Beekeeping

Mon 13 Apr

Queensland beekeepers desperate for new varroa mite treatments as colonies collapse

By Will Murray, Emma Johnson and Tayla Larsen

Beekeeping

Fri 12 Jun

Bush hives dying, beekeepers challenged as treatment-resistant varroa mites spread

By Jennifer Nichols

ABC Rural

Agriculture

Wed 4 Mar



Miticide-resistant varroa found in NSW: What beekeepers can do

By Elizabeth Frost

Updated February 20 2026 - 9:22am, first published 9:20am



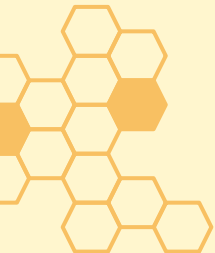
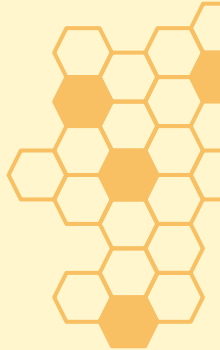
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International

**The
Guardian**

'Could become a death spiral': scientists discover what's driving record die-offs of US honeybees

US honeybee deaths hit record high as scientists scramble to find main cause



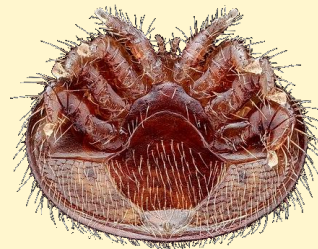
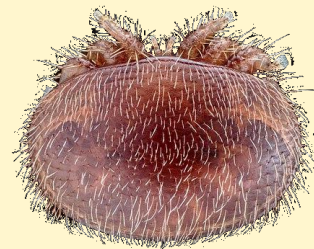
USDA Researchers Find Viruses from Miticide Resistant Parasitic Mites are Cause of Recent Honey Bee Colony Collapses

"It developed into the largest US honeybee die-off on record, with beekeepers losing on average 60% of their colonies, at a cost of US\$600m"

"...it was evident that over 60% of commercial beekeeping colonies had been lost since the prior summer, representing 1.7 million colonies and an estimated financial impact of \$600 million."



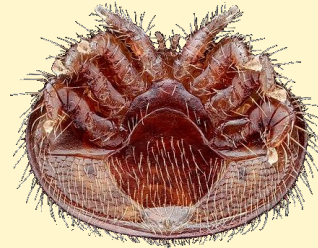
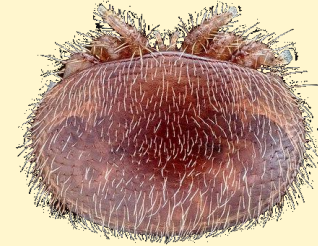
MIGHTY MITE



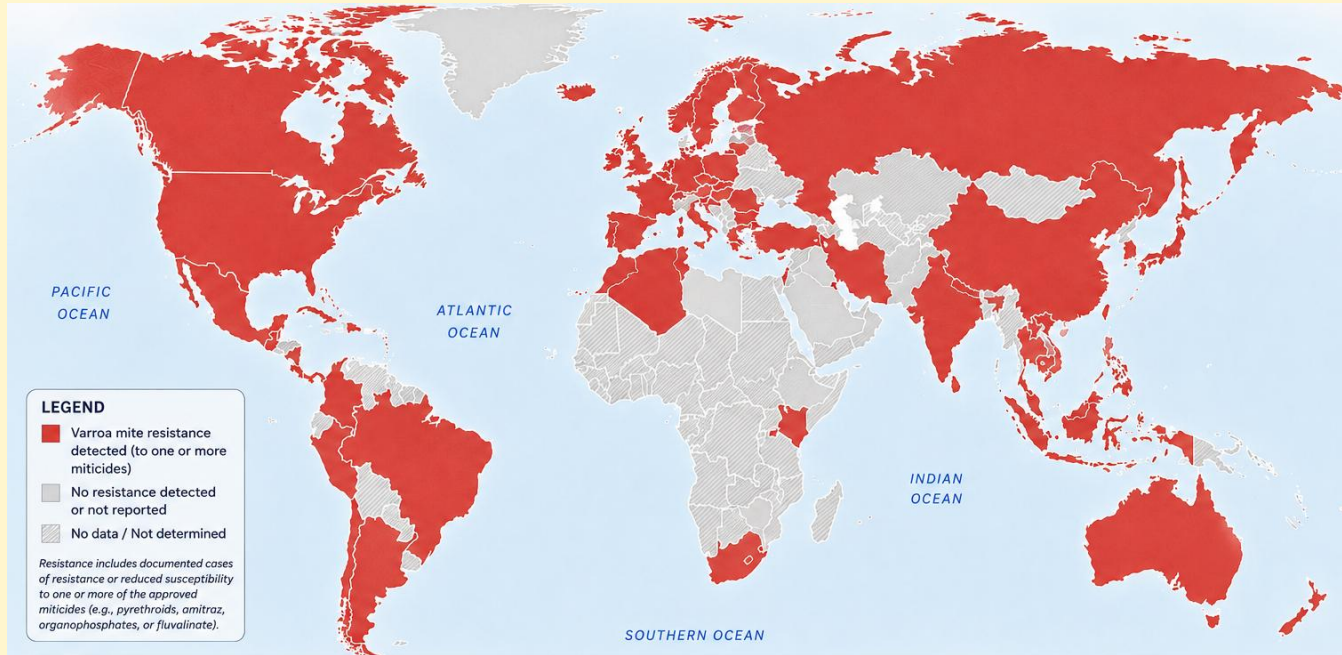
What is Varroa?

The Most Significant Pest of Honeybees

- Varroa destructor is a parasitic mite of honeybees.
- Feeds on developing and adult bees.
- Spreads viruses through colonies.
- Weakens colonies and reduces pollination performance.
- Responsible for major colony losses worldwide.



Varroa Mite distribution



Varroa in Australia

Current Situation

- First detected in NSW in 2022.
- Eradication attempt ceased in 2023.
- Now established in eastern Australia.
- Spread continues through natural bee movement and hive movement.

Australia is entering a new era of beekeeping.

Impact on Pollination

Why Varroa Matters to Growers

- Fewer available hives.
- Reduced colony strength.
- Increased winter losses.
- Higher beekeeper costs.
- Reduced pollination reliability.

Risks for the 2026/27 Season

Potential Challenges

- Shortage of strong pollination colonies.
- Higher hive demand.
- Biosecurity restrictions.
- Weather-related pressures.
- Transport and logistics challenges.
- Colony losses due to Varroa.

Risk Mitigation Strategy 1

Secure Pollination Early

- Secure pollination services early.
- Confirm hive numbers before flowering.
- Have written agreements in place.
- Maintain regular communication with your beekeeper.

Risk Mitigation Strategy 2

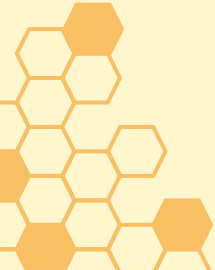
Ask your beekeeper

- Are colonies tested for Varroa?
- How frequently are inspections completed?
- What treatment program is used?
- What minimum hive strength is guaranteed?

Risk Mitigation Strategy 3

Use Multiple Beekeepers

- Reduced supply risk.
- Greater resilience.
- Improved contingency planning.
- Reduced impact of disease or losses.



Risk Mitigation Strategy 4

Independent Hive Audits to verify

- Third-party hive inspections can verify:
 - Colony strength
 - Queen status
 - Brood levels
 - Hive numbers
 - Contract compliance
- Benefits:
 - Transparency
 - Confidence
 - Reduced disputes

Key Take Aways

Supporting Growers Beyond Hive Supply

- Varroa is now part of Australian beekeeping.
- Pollination services remain available.
- Planning ahead is critical.
- Work with professional beekeepers.
- Diversify pollination suppliers.
- Verify hive quality through inspections.



Thanks

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www.purepollination.com.au/varroa

