



# B-QUAL Australia Pty Limited

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Issue 2; Volume 4; Dec 2005

## NEWSLETTER

## CHRISTMAS 2005

### CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

With the New Year upon us, your New Year's resolution should be to get involved with B-QUAL. The B-QUAL Board has progressed many improvements in the Program to assist new and existing members. Innovations to B-QUAL to be implemented in 2006 include:

- B-QUAL Self Learning Program (available now);
- Umbrella Group accreditation for beekeeping clubs and associations (available now);
- Biennial auditing for beekeepers that sell direct to packers (in place);
- Web access to common forms (due in January 2006);
- CD assistance package for beekeepers that have participated in B-QUAL training but have not progressed to audit (available from February 2006).

The old regime of accreditation is still in place and the new materials have been included in the new package. The new system fits into the old program and current members do not have to change.

With the introduction of the Self Learning Kit new members will be able to follow a step by step guide to complete food safety training and to complete the QA manual to be ready for audit. The free 1800 630 890 help line will be in place to assist.

Bee keepers still ask why they should participate. I can say that if you stay ahead of your competition it will assist you in the market place. If you are a B-QUAL accredited member there is every opportunity that you are able to sell your honey direct to the major stores through packers as B-QUAL has the required safety and quality requirements that sellers of honey now require; this is one reason that B-Qual has the support of the packing sector.

**See Over**

*Chairman's report continued ...*

B-QUAL is a quality system that is working and has demonstrated it provides the food safety outcomes required.

The deadline for beekeepers to undertake an audit is **31 August 2006**. For those members that have not gone to audit to date; please call 1800 630 890 to schedule an audit. Complete and fax the form on the back of this newsletter as soon as you can.

In closing, I would like to reinforce that B-QUAL is owned and managed by the Australian Honey Bee Industry through the B-QUAL Board. As Chairman of the Board I can assure you that we will continue to manage the Program to meet your needs. We appreciate that it is difficult to implement the Program when conditions in the industry are difficult. However, I urge your participation so that you may make the best of the good times that will come in the future.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere thanks to one and all for your continued support for the program, and to wish you and yours all the best for the festive season and a great 2006.

Ken Gell  
Chairman  
B-Qual Australia Pty Ltd

## **Biennial Auditing!!!**

Means being audited every second year when the beekeeper meets the conditions set by the B-QUAL Standards and Rules. In summary these requirements are:

- The beekeeper must only dispatch honey to packer/s;
- The member has had an audit without Major Non-conformances identified (a Major Non-conformance may be raised after a number of minor non-conformances have been raised at the discretion of the auditor);

The beekeeper is not required to apply to be included in the biennial auditing regime.

All members must have been audited by **31 August 2006**.

## **UMBRELLA GROUPS**

To meet the need for smaller beekeepers and beekeepers that are part of a beekeeping club, the Board has implemented Accreditation Rules and Standards to include Umbrella Groups as part of B-QUAL.

This category is available now. To participate in B-QUAL as a group the costs are as follows:

Application fee:	\$110/Group
Audit fee:	\$880/Group*
Training:	\$220/member

\* Conditions apply

For more information, contact the B-QUAL administration office on **1800 630 890**.

# AUDIT PREPARATION (Repeated from June/July)

Feedback from B-Qual Auditors indicates that many beekeepers are not prepared for the audit process. To assist, the following guideline is provided so that both auditors and beekeepers are better prepared.

In all cases, the audit is undertaken for the benefit of the B-Qual participant and to maintain the integrity of the program. All B-Qual audits to date have been announced audits. This allows the beekeeper sufficient time for preparation. Participants preparing for an audit should budget time to review their quality system and records to ensure that any changes in their operations since the last audit, or since training was undertaken, has been taken into consideration. In preparing for the audit, and to ensure you get the most out of the audit possible, you should follow the steps below:

## Initial Certification Audit

1. Check that you have all training materials and your training certificate on hand;
2. Check that you have completed all sections of the quality system. This means that you are required to have considered all points of the Risk Management Plan (RMP, Section 2.6) and the Food Safety Plan (FSP, Section 2.7) if you sell honey directly to the public.
3. Amend the work instructions (Section 2.3) to reflect your operation. Once changes are made; sign and date each work instruction at the top right hand corner of the work instruction where Approved: and Date: appear. Once signed and dated by you they are then auditable. This is the reason that the auditor will conduct the Desk Audit first.
4. Consider if records maintained by you are adequate to show that the requirements of the Standards are being met within your operations. The auditor will commence an audit trail either forward or backwards. That is, from your apiary records to the extraction records to dispatch records or the other way around. You can keep records in any form that you feel comfortable with. B-Qual requires that they be retrievable and be maintained for two years. Many beekeepers have reliable diary records and other records such as their delivery declarations. Most just need to fill the gap between apiary – extraction – vendor declarations (sales records).
5. Consider the areas other than honey. It is often the case that beekeepers will have all the honey related records maintained well, but there may be gaps in records for training, inventory and cleaning records, for example.
6. Don't forget samples. Taking samples for at least each load extracted is a B-Qual requirement. Samples provide a backup for you as the beekeeper and provide you and your customer with evidence if a problem has been detected by the packer/end user. A simple check of the corresponding sample will identify if the problem is at your end or theirs. In any case you need to know.
7. Once you have all bases covered, do an internal audit (use Record 11) and address any non-conformances that you have identified.
8. Complete the B-Qual Audit Request (attached) and fax it to B-Qual Administration.
9. If you need assistance with any of these areas, call B-Qual administration on **1800 630 890** for assistance over the phone.

NB. This is a guide only and does not represent B-Qual Rules and Standards.

## Routine Audit

1. Conduct an internal audit;
2. Amend your quality system to address any non-conformances that may have been identified; and schedule the audit.



# B-Qual Audit Request

Please send completed form to:

AUS-QUAL Pty Limited,  
PO Box 3175, South Brisbane, Q4101 or

Fax to **07 3361 9222**.

## Contact Details

Business Name \_\_\_\_\_ ABN/ACN \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person : \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Town/city: \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

Location Address \_\_\_\_\_ Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

## Location Map

**Please draw a rough map to assist the auditor in reaching you (attach another page if required)**

## Assessment Details (Please return this form)

*Ideally, your B-Qual audit should take place when honey is being extracted, but if you are not extracting this does not stop your audit being progressed. The audit does not require a visit to your apiary site/s.*

When do you expect to be ready for your B-Qual Audit? Call **1800 630 890** if you would like to discuss.

Please nominate a month that would best suite your operation to have an audit conducted.

Month: \_\_\_\_\_

Nominate a specific date that suits you: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/ 2005/06

## B-QUAL PRIVACY STATEMENT

The information being collected may be personal information. B-Qual collects this information for the purpose of providing and assisting B-Qual improve its program. Any personal information that is collected by B-Qual is for that purpose only. B-Qual respects the privacy of individuals. Generally B-Qual does not release personal information. However, in response to a legal requirement, in an emergency or in exceptional circumstances the Chairperson may at their discretion authorise the release of personal information. In all other circumstances the B-Qual privacy policy governs the collection, the use and disclosure of personal information.