



# 5 Bees

Building Better Beekeeping  
Businesses after Bushfire

---

Prospectus and application  
for the 5Bees Program for  
commercial beekeepers.

Applications close 28 February 2021



# 5 Bees

Building Better Beekeeping  
Businesses after Bushfire

A program for commercial beekeepers funded by When Bee Foundation's Strategic Bushfire Rebuild & Recovery Fund.

To find out more about our work visit  
[WhenBeeFoundation.com.au](http://WhenBeeFoundation.com.au)

## What is 5Bees?

The 5Bees Program helps commercial beekeepers recover from bushfire and drought. The program focusses on beekeeping business viability and supports beekeepers to make decisions and changes that will improve their business productivity, performance and profit in the face of climate variability.

A designated business development specialist (facilitator) works with a small closed group of beekeepers from across Australia. Each group is selected to provide a diverse mix of representatives and views (eg state/region, age/experience, enterprise focus, gender, etc).

The group determines its own priorities and agenda based on Action Research principles.

### The program will include:

- identification of group priorities.
- support to become proficient in the use of relevant technologies.
- access to relevant technical specialists
- an introduction to business analysis, comparative analysis and benchmarking.





## What is Action Research?

Action Research (also called Participatory Action Research) is a methodology based on the idea that research and action must be done 'with' people not 'on' or 'for' people. It is a proven and effective way for self-transformation within groups. It has been used extensively around the globe in training farmers in rural communities and in Australia has often taken the form of focus groups of interest (Dairy Discussion Groups, Footrot Free Flocks, Farm Management 500, Dairy Business Focus, Edge Network, Target 10). It is not new to agriculture, but it is new to the Australian beekeeping industry.

**When these industry programs were evaluated, here is what participating farmers said:**

*We learned so much from each other.*

*We thought we understood the profit drivers of our business until we started comparing and benchmarking.*

*In the group environment there was no such thing as a silly question.*

*“When varroa hit the United States, beekeepers realised they needed to come together and start sharing information and working together”*

— Randy Oliver, Californian beekeeper and researcher





## What are the benefits of Action Research?

This methodology strives to achieve action and research outcomes at the same time. Rather than research remaining theoretical, the research and learning is encouraged and supported via a facilitator whose role is to support learning, adaptation, adoption and continuous improvement. The participant (in this case the beekeeper) becomes actively engaged in the research and setting the research agenda to ensure the topics are practical, relevant and meaningful.

Technology is a powerful 'tool' and focal point that facilitates learning and decision making. A facilitator and relevant technical experts work together to support beekeepers adopt new technologies, process information and support learning and innovation. The benefit of this process is that it fast tracks learning and continuous improvement.

Because beekeepers are actively involved in determining which specific applied research questions should be investigated, the research outcomes are relevant and meaningful to the beekeeper.

---

*"In order to stay in business, you are likely going to need to evolve and adapt... it may be of benefit to incorporate some new technologies"*

— Randy Oliver, Californian beekeeper and researcher

---





Photo: Kirrily Hughes

## Is it for me?

### **What are the criteria for participating in the 5Bees (pilot program)?**

To qualify, you must be a full-time commercial beekeeper whose principal source of income is beekeeping. You must also be prepared to:

- Commit to actively participating in six online meetings each year (maximum of 3 hours) for 3 years
- Participate in conducting practical research relevant to your enterprise (supply data and feedback)
- Trial various technologies (eg remote hive monitoring, record keeping, hive designs) and share results.

## How do I get involved?

To be part of the 5Bees program, complete the attached application form and return to When Bee Foundation.

### **Applications close 28 February 2021**

- Applications will be reviewed by an independent review panel in March 2021
- Successful applicants will be notified in writing on Monday 15 March 2021
- Program will commence mid April 2021.

# Application form



## Personal details of applicant (please print clearly)

Title	First Name	Last Name	Preferred
Street Address			
Suburb	State		Postcode
Work phone	Mobile		
Email	Age		<input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F

### Technology aptitude:

- I cannot use a computer and need support to get started
- I can use a computer to access basic information (eg search, read emails, find weather and news)
- I use a computer and am proficient in a number of applications but need support with new ones
- I am highly proficient in the use computers and many other technologies

## Major bee activities (please mark the boxes that best describe your major beekeeping activity)

Commercial beekeeper with \_\_\_\_\_  
*Apis mellifera* hives

List the approximate percentage split of your current income from beekeeping:

- Honey production \_\_\_\_\_ %
- Pollination \_\_\_\_\_ %
- Queen breeding/rearing \_\_\_\_\_ %
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_ %

How many years have you been  
in the beekeeping industry? \_\_\_\_\_

My Hive/Apiary  
Registration Number is: \_\_\_\_\_

What are your main priorities for your beekeeping business in the future?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

What are your biggest challenges in beekeeping and how do you think a program like this might help you?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

What kinds of technology are you interested in trialling and why?

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Apiary work history** (please provide a short overview)

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Other work history** (please provide a short overview)

---

---

---

---

---

---

**General information** (please list your hobbies, community and recreational interests)

---

---

---

---

## Referees (please provide details of two suitable referees)

### Referee #1

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Role/Position \_\_\_\_\_

Organisation \_\_\_\_\_

Work phone \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

### Referee #2

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Role/Position \_\_\_\_\_

Organisation \_\_\_\_\_

Work phone \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

## Application



### Email your application form to:

Email: [info@wheenbeefoundation.org.au](mailto:info@wheenbeefoundation.org.au)  
Subject: 5Bees Program



### Or post to:

Wheen Bee Foundation  
96 Harbours Road  
Yendon, VIC 3352

Program Enquiries: Fiona Chambers  
Phone: 0427 354 457  
Email: [ceo@wheenbeefoundation.org.au](mailto:ceo@wheenbeefoundation.org.au)

Administration Enquiries: Naomi Swift  
Phone: 0436 423 429  
Email: [info@wheenbeefoundation.org.au](mailto:info@wheenbeefoundation.org.au)

## Applications close Sunday 28 February 2021

- Successful applicants will be notified by email on Monday 15 March 2021
- Program will commence in April 2021.

## Declaration

### I understand that should I be accepted, I agree to:

- Be part of the 5Bees pilot program
- Attend 6 meetings/year for 3 years (a total of 18 sessions commencing in April 2021) with each session lasting no longer than 3 hours
- Be an active participant, engaging in trialling and evaluation various technologies as determined by the pilot group.
- Participate online via zoom or similar platform (so I can participate from anywhere I have reception).
- Supply my own computer/internet connection
- Collaborate with other beekeepers in the group (share observations and findings)
- Maintain confidentiality.

### In return, I understand that:

- I will be paid a participation fee of \$5,000 over the course of the 3 year program paid in three payments
  - On commencement \$1,500
  - At 18 Months \$2,000
  - At 36 months/completion \$1,500
- Ownership of the technology I test/trial will transfer to me/my business at the end of the program unless otherwise stated and agreed and subject to my successful completion of the program.
- Where I choose not to complete the program, I will not be eligible to receive progress payments or keep the technology.
- The participation fee applies to the initial pilot group only and may not apply to future 5Bees focus groups.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

