



## Media release

30<sup>th</sup> Sept 2020

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Beekeepers in WA harvest some of the world's purest and unique honey with an estimated farm gate value of \$50 million, exporting \$8.1 million worth of natural honey in 2019.

Additionally, the State-wide horticulture sector annually relies on 11,000 beehives for the pollination of the Avocado, Apple, Berry and Almond industry, this service is valued at \$1.1 billion. Future demands expect an increase to 19,000 hives within the next 5 years.

BICWA advocates for sustainable practices that will protect and enhance the bee industry for the 3500 registered beekeepers in WA, especially on important issues that underpin resource access, protection and expansion.

This low-impact, highly sustainable industry is under threat and will not be able to meet future demand without community, industry and government recognition of its importance and safeguarding the resources needed.

BICWA and the Forest Industries Federation WA (FIFWA) jointly met with Senior Policy Advisors for the Environment Minister Stephen Dawson on a collaborative proposal to provide greater beekeeper access to Crown Land. The concept of beekeepers accessing FIFWA sites post logging prior to rehabilitation was put forward.

Brendon Fewster, BICWA Chairperson says "existing apiary sites don't fill the demand required to support the bees all year long."

BICWA is advocating for beekeeper access to additional apiary sites in our forest.

Furthermore, Industry proposes reversing the decline of lost beekeeper sites and allowing access to National Park, Crown Land and water catchment areas as well as input into planning decision that might affect the loss of these sites.

"BICWA believes that with the right protocols and training in place, many of the lost sites should be accessible," said Brendon Fewster.

"It is essential to communicate and find the best outcome for everyone. "

"We advocate for our fellow beekeepers and endeavour to find ways to protect the biggest asset not only for industry and tourism but for future generations to come", said Brendon Fewster."