



MEDIA RELEASE
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Parliamentary report shows bee industry faces challenges, but in pretty good shape

Managed bee hives and honey production in New Zealand is increasing and there is little or no evidence that pesticides are affecting bee health, according to a parliamentary committee report released this week.

Agcarm chief executive Graeme Peters says "This is an excellent report because it summarises all the issues facing bees and puts them into perspective."

The report notes that honey production and exports are rising.

"This is not surprising as the number of managed hives is increasing. In 2005 there were about 300,000 hives. As of last year that number had grown to more than 500,000, which is excellent news as the bee industry is vital to New Zealand agriculture."

The Primary Production Select Committee report '[Briefing on the health of bees](#)' concludes that there is no evidence of colony collapse in New Zealand, even though neonicotinoids have been used since the early 1990s.

In the European Union, where some neonicotinoids have been restricted, anecdotal evidence links bee losses to the varroa mite or starvation. In Australia there is little evidence of neonicotinoids affecting the health of bees, according to a [report](#) by the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority.

The crop protection industry takes its responsibility towards pollinators seriously. It recognises the vital role that pollinators play in global food production and the need to protect pollinator health. For more than 25 years, the industry has been actively involved in finding solutions to improve honey bee health, and minimise the impact of crop protection products on bees.

The varroa mite remains the biggest threat to New Zealand bees. Finding new ways to manage the mite, especially resistant populations, needs to be tackled.

Agcarm welcomes the introduction of the Bee Industry Advisory Council to address the problems affecting the bee industry.

"I encourage everyone with an interest in bees to read the report. It is a coherent and science-based summary which explains that the bee industry faces challenges, but is in good shape," Mr Peters said.

The report can be found at:

http://www.parliament.nz/resource/en-nz/50DBSCH_SCR56864_1/34a0a5f2526c4db590c2b0330083d8af2313b150

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Agcarm is the industry association of companies which manufacture, distribute and sell products that keep animals healthy and crops thriving. Member companies are committed to ensuring that these products are used safely, effectively and sustainably.

Graeme Peters Tel: 04 499 4225 Mobile: 027 667 7400