

Nick Wallingford, President - National Beekeepers Assn

Home:

55 Watling St
Tauranga
Ph (07) 578 1422
Fax (07) 578 1422

NBA office:

PO Box 307
Hastings
ph (06) 878 5385
fax (06) 878 6007

Work:

Bay of Plenty Polytechnic
Private Bag TG 12001
Tauranga
Ph (07) 544 0920 ext 6848
Fax (07) 544 2386

Electronic mail:

Internet -
nickw@waikato.ac.nz

To: Vegfed

11 August 1994

I would like to raise an issue that I think may well become of significance to our industries. I realise that you may well be aware of the events and the implications, but felt I should ensure that the information is spread as widely as possible.

The NBA had our conference during the week of 18 July. On the Monday, we asked Ross Meurant if he knew of any government moves that would (1) reduce the level of or (2) shift the cost to producing industries of agricultural surveillance systems. The distinctions between border protection and surveillance were discussed (border protection being the 'keep the exotics out' and surveillance being the 'did the border protection work adequately?'), as well as the need for appropriate government to government disease status statements to allow export certification. Ross Meurant seemed genuinely surprised, and said he knew of no such policy moves, but asked that we provide the question to him in a letter.

On the Friday, Dr Chris Boland of MAF Regulatory Authority, addressed us on similar issues. He spoke particularly about aspects of the Biosecurity Act as they relate to exotic pests and diseases. He stated that NZ horticulture and agriculture have always approached surveillance assurances to other governments as a necessity under international obligations, such as the Office Internationale des Epizooties (OIE). The level of assurance provided, however, he described as being more than they have recently discovered might be necessary. We drew him out on this to say that since some other exporting countries provide minimal surveillance activities and yet will still sign 'disease free' statements, we may well consider the same approach. Exporters said that we NEED to have really believable assurances. Boland indicated that such 'extra' surveillance might well be a charge to the exporters concerned, since it would exceed the actual 'requirements' as he viewed them.

Shortly after conference, we received the latest issue of Sentinel, the magazine of the National Agricultural Security Service, with an article announcing a review of animal disease surveillance programmes.

Stakeholders are asked to give views on:

1. Why is surveillance done?
2. What sort of surveillance information is required?
3. Who benefits from surveillance?
4. What methods should be used to obtain the required information?
5. Who should pay for surveillance and how (eg sale of export certificates, etc)?

The aim of the review is to create a surveillance system that :

1. Meets the information needs of the CVO, including legislative and international reporting obligations
2. Provides necessary assurances of animal health status for facilitation of international trade
3. Is cost effective
4. Puts the cost to a group or person if that specific industry group or individual benefits from the surveillance

Again, the direction seems fairly clear. MAF Regulatory is reviewing, with a mind to reducing or charging for, the surveillance services that we would expect to remain a government service.

Our industry has paid very close attention to the Biosecurity Act, before and after enactment. We feel that we have a fairly good grasp of what is happening in policy for exotic and endemic pests and disease control as it concerns beekeeping. I would have to say that this latest indication reveals another area of potential for loss of services and/or additional costs to producing industries.

As your industry is both larger and probably has different and better sources of information, we would be pleased if you would make a point of keeping this information in mind. Should you be able to help us better understand the potential impact or if you know of similar policy directions that might affect us all, I hope you'll keep the beekeepers in mind.

Yours faithfully

Nick Wallingford

cc NZ Fruitgrowers Federation
NZ VegFed