

## **AHBIC PLEASED WITH RESULTS OF FAKE HONEY COMPLAINTS**

The Australian Honey Bee Industry Council (AHBIC) is pleased that the results of its complaints to the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) have resulted in the fining of the distributors of Victoria Honey. See the press release from ACCC below.

AHBIC first complained back in September, 2012 about the labelling and in 2013, after having the honey analysed in Germany, complained to the Victorian Department of Health who, after their investigations, passed it over to the ACCC.

Members of the AHBIC Food Safety and Prevention of Residues Committee have been to the forefront in pursuing these fake honeys. Also AHBIC would thank those beekeepers who have alerted us and have supplied samples. The cost of the analyses have been borne by AHBIC.

AHBIC still has a further five (5) complaints with ACCC about fake or adulterated honey. ACCC are now progressing these complaints.

In light of these imported products that are not honey or adulterated with C4 sugar, AHBIC has made representations to the Department of Agriculture to have the inspection protocol for imported honey lifted from its current 5% level.

## **ACCC acts on 'Victoria Honey' misrepresentations**

23 June 2014

Basfoods (Aust) Pty Ltd (Basfoods) has paid penalties totalling \$30,600 following the issue of three infringement notices by the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) in relation to Basfoods' "Victoria Honey".

The ACCC considered that Basfoods had misrepresented that its "Victoria Honey" was honey produced by honey bees on product labelling and on its website, when it was mainly comprised of sugars from plants including corn and sugar cane.

In addition, the ACCC also considered that by naming and labelling its product "Victoria Honey", Basfoods had represented the product as originating from Victoria, Australia when in fact it was a product of Turkey.

The three infringement notices were issued to Basfoods because the ACCC had reasonable grounds to believe that the labelling of "Victoria Honey" and Basfoods' website contained false or misleading

representations about the composition and place of origin of "Victoria Honey", in contravention of the Australian Consumer Law (ACL).

Basfoods has provided an enforceable undertaking to the ACCC in which it has admitted that its conduct contravened the ACL. Basfoods has undertaken to only sell product as honey if it is entirely produced by honey bees, and to regularly test its products, including honey. Basfoods will also publish a range of corrective notices.

"It is difficult for consumers to test claims by traders that a certain product is actually "honey" or is from a certain place of origin," ACCC Chairman Rod Sims said.

"False claims of this kind not only mislead consumers but can also disadvantage competing honey suppliers, particularly those who source honey locally within Australia."

"Honey suppliers should now be on notice that they must have a basis for selling a product as 'honey', which likely should include tests to confirm the product is in fact honey produced entirely by honey bees. The ACCC is aware of concerns in relation to other suppliers and products labelled as honey and will pursue these further with the benefit of the outcome in this matter," Mr Sims said.

Basfoods is an Australian company that supplies Mediterranean and Turkish food products. Basfoods supplied "Victoria Honey" to independent supermarkets, speciality retailers, online stores, delis, restaurants and cafes. Basfoods also supplied "Victoria Honey" through its retail stores and via its website. Basfoods supplied the Victoria Honey product in one and four kilogram containers from around January 2006 to 6 December 2013. From July 2011 to December 2013, Basfoods supplied 180,649 one kilogram tubs and 1,126 four kilogram tubs of Victoria Honey.

The infringement notices are available on the [infringement notices register](#).

The undertaking is available on the [undertaking register](#).

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