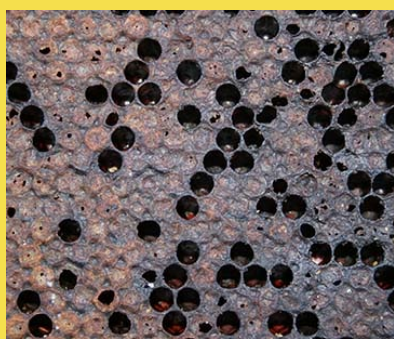




American foulbrood

Paenibacillus larvae

A fatal bacterial disease to honey bees



ABOUT

American foulbrood (AFB) is endemic across much of Queensland and is a notifiable disease which must be reported to Biosecurity Queensland when detected.

AFB is a fatal bacterial disease that directly affects honey bee larvae. The highly transmissible disease is a spore-forming bacterium with spores remaining viable for up to 40 years in some cases.

The disease is spread from colony to colony through the use of contaminated beekeeping equipment, robbing (by bees), the feeding of unsterilised honey or pollen and drift.

AFB infections will present several 'typical symptoms' that may be observed when conducting a brood inspection. The following list details the most common symptoms:

- Irregular and patchy brood.
- Cell cappings on infected brood may appear to be sunken, greasy and darker in appearance.
- Cappings may be perforated by bees as the adult bees attempt to remove the dead brood.
- Infected hives may exude a sulphurous odour (due to decomposing brood).

Beekeepers can play an active role in limiting the spread of AFB by introducing best practice colony management (checking brood comb at a minimum twice a year) and implementing a barrier management system.

American foulbrood is a notifiable disease in Queensland and throughout every state and territory in Australia.

Under the Biosecurity Act of 2014, beekeepers within Queensland are required to report the disease by calling 13 25 23. Beekeepers may send suspect samples of brood/honey to the Biosecurity Sciences Laboratory where samples can be tested to identify if AFB is present in the colony.



Above: AFB roping test. Image: Biosecurity Queensland
Top Left: Sunken diseased cells. Image: Doug Somerville
NSW DPI, BeeAware.org.au.

TAKE ACTION

If you see or suspect the presence of American foulbrood report the disease immediately.

CONTACT

Report all detections to Biosecurity Queensland on 13 25 23.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Scan the QR Code or click here for more information about AFB from the Biosecurity Queensland website.

