

Honey certification project sets industry abuzz

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Credit: AI-generated image ([disclaimer](#))

Western Australia's honey is set for global recognition following a new partnership program between the industry and Bentley-based Chemcentre which could see honey values take off for local apiarists.

Chemcentre is the first laboratory in Australia to use compositional

chemistry to analyse monofloral honeys and develop a certification to confirm their quality.

Monofloral honeys are composed predominantly of one plant species' flower.

The partnership came about after WA apiarists recognised the high quality of their monofloral honeys from tree flowers on Jarrah and Marri trees.

Without certification apiarists have just blended them with other types of honey but proper certification could see Jarrah and Marri honeys' value skyrocket from \$5 a kilogram to upwards of \$60 on the international market.

Chemcentre food scientist Ken Dods says the antimicrobial and health benefits of honey are being recognised globally, especially in Asia, and WA has some of the best quality honey available.

"WA honey is very unique for a number of different reasons, we're probably one of the last few areas in the world where bees are not highly stressed by their environment, parasites and agricultural chemicals," he says.

"By blending honeys are we losing or diluting key aspects of honey which could be of actual value in the international markets? The reality is yes we are.

"There is enormous market pull particularly from the Asian sector and a certification step is absolutely critical to the industry being able to access those markets."

Dr Dods says they test the honey's composition and quality through

techniques like counting the trace amount of pollen in the honey and analysing the pollen's DNA.

He says currently beekeeping is more of a marginal hobby because it doesn't yield great financial returns but he hopes younger apiarists will move into the industry when the certification becomes available.

Honey industry could go the way of the wine industry

South West apiarist and chairman of the Chemcentre project Stephen Davies says the [certification](#) could do to WA honey what it did to the WA wine [industry](#) over the past few decades.

"Unless you can prove you have a quality product that is what you say it is, you haven't got anything," he says.

"Our state is the cleanest state in the cleanest country in the entire world in terms of lack thereof bee diseases and parasites and so on.

"We really do have a beekeeping oasis here and the [quality](#) therefore of our [honey](#) that leaves our producers gates is probably second to none in the entire world."

The program partnership started this year and is funded for the next three years.

This article first appeared on [ScienceNetwork Western Australia](#) a science news website based at Scitech.

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