

Bee Connected App relaunched to assist Australian farmers and beekeepers

CropLife Australia

The next-generation upgrade of the world-leading BeeConnected App was launched recently by Minister for Regional Development, Local Government and Territories, the Hon. Kristy McBain at Parliament House.

The two-way communication platform, developed by CropLife Australia in partnership with the Australian Honey Bee Industry Council, enables farmers, beekeepers and spray contractors to work together to protect managed honey bee hives.

“Australia is fortunate to have excellent farming practices, a professional agricultural sector alongside a strong honeybee industry,” said Matthew Cossey, Chief Executive Officer of CropLife Australia the national peak industry organisation for the plant science sector.

The next-generation BeeConnected App has been re-designed and built in Australia following extensive feedback and contributions from farmers and apiarists from around the country. The BeeConnected App was originally developed in Australia, for Australia and is now also an international award-winning innovation that has been adopted for use all over the world including Canada, South America, and India.

“A thriving healthy honeybee population is crucial for many farming sectors, especially in horticulture, which is why the entire farming sector needs to ensure that everything is done to protect pollinators. That is why CropLife and our members have heavily invested in this important tool to enable cooperation and coordination between farmers and apiarists in protecting honey bees. This is even more important than ever with Varroa mite having hit Australia. This has made it a tough time

for beekeepers and the growers of crops relying on honeybees for pollination. BeeConnected is a practical way for Australian farmers to support the honeybee industry by not only avoiding unintentional harm but optimising pollination activities,” said Mr Cossey.

“Using precise GPS capabilities, BeeConnected allows farmers to map the circumference of their properties and log their spray activities. It also allows beekeepers to securely register the location of their beehives now and in the future. When a beehive is detected near farming activities, both are sent an instant confidential notification allowing them to communicate and coordinate for optimal pollination without compromising or identifying specific locations. This collaboration empowers both farmers and beekeepers to protect these important pollinators,” said Mr Cossey.

Over the past nine years, the original BeeConnected App has had widespread uptake with all of Australia’s state farmer organisations supporting its use as an important decision-making tool in day-to-day operations and spray activities.

“It’s exciting to see commodities like the almond industry also get behind this tool by incorporating it as a best practice recommendation in their codes of practice and extension resources. With these substantial upgrades BeeConnected will be even more effective and useful and remain fit for purpose into the future,” said Mr Cossey.

“The Australian Honey Bee Industry Council is proud to be part of this world-leading initiative,” said Danny Le Feuvre, Chief Executive Officer of the Australian Honey Bee Industry Council. “Improving communication between users of crop protection products and beekeepers can further reduce the risk of accidental exposure of bees to any products which may have the potential to negatively impact on bee health.”

“We know that Australian farmers are proactive when it comes to the adoption of new tools and next-generation technologies to help them farm more productively and sustainably. Just like weather, temperature and timeliness of information play an

important role in informed decision-making for best-practice product application, spray applicators are urged to make use of this reliable tool to protect Australia’s managed beehive colonies with spraying this season,” said Mr Cossey.

BeeConnected is part of CropLife’s StewardshipFirst Pollinator Protection Initiative which supports the safe and responsible use of pesticides for the benefits of pollinators, Australian farming and the environment.

How does the BeeConnected™ App work?

1. Download the App

Scan the QR codes below to download the BeeConnected App for iPhone or Android or access the tool on a desktop computer via a web browser at beeconnected.org.au



2. Log your location

Log your farm property and/or beehive locations using smart GPS technology and broadcast to others in the area.



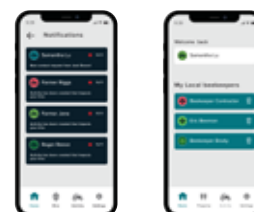
3. Register your activities

Easily log beekeeping or crop protection activities and if they happen in the same vicinity, you will be alerted through the App.



4. Communicate, collaborate and coordinate

Through the App you can communicate securely to coordinate spray activities and hive placements for optimal pollination success.



For more information visit:
www.beeconnected.org.au

