

A New Way to Secure Pollination for Berry Growers

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For Australian berry growers, pollination is the unseen engine that drives productivity, quality, and profitability. The difference between an average and an exceptional harvest often lies in the small but mighty efforts of bees who are the silent workforce ensuring that flowers become good quality berries.

Bees are essential partners in berry growing. Whether it's strawberries, blueberries, raspberries or blackberries, effective pollination improves both the yield and quality of fruit. While some berry plants can self-pollinate, the presence of bees dramatically enhances results, and that's backed by decades of local and international research.

In strawberries, bee activity can lift yields by up to 18%, producing larger, firmer fruit with better shape and higher sugar content. Blueberries, highly dependent on insect pollination, rely on honey bees to increase fruit weight and reduce development time resulting in more uniform crops that meet market specifications. Even blackberries benefit from improved pollination, producing larger, more symmetrical berries with an extended shelf life.

For growers, that translates directly into greater productivity, higher pack-out rates, and better returns per hectare. Robust pollination isn't a luxury, it's a business investment that pays off every season.

Despite its importance, reliable pollination is becoming harder to secure. Australia's beekeeping industry is under increasing pressure from several fronts. Rising competition for hives across multiple horticultural sectors has tightened supply. The arrival of the Varroa mite in Australia has further disrupted colony availability and management costs. Add to that unpredictable weather events and shifting flowering times, and many growers are finding that traditional handshake arrangements with local beekeepers are no longer guaranteed.

A shortfall in pollination can mean significant yield losses, a risk that few growers can afford in a competitive marketplace.

Recognising this emerging challenge, a South Australian AgTech start-up 'HiveHub' has developed a new, free online platform that connects growers and beekeepers across Australia. Designed to complement, not replace, existing relationships, HiveHub aims to strengthen pollination security and transparency while providing a reliable backup network when challenges arise.

The idea is simple: make pollination management easier, clearer, and more resilient by bringing together growers with pollination service providers, and using modern technology to create a win-win relationship coupled with reliable pollination outcomes.

Growers can use HiveHub to:

- **Register their farms (free forever)** – providing key details like crop type, location and flowering periods so local beekeepers understand their needs
- **Find available beekeepers nearby** – access profiles showing experience, hive availability, and service regions
- **Communicate and negotiate directly** – message beekeepers through the platform to confirm details, timing and terms

- **Create and sign digital agreements** – formalise arrangements with clear expectations and conditions to protect both parties
- **Track and manage pollination activity** – monitor hive placements, dates and milestones through a simple dashboard
- **Facilitate payments and resolve disputes** – use HiveHub’s built-in tools for secure payments and structured issue resolution
- **Build a trusted history** – review and be reviewed after each season, helping to create a national reputation network that rewards reliability

For growers, HiveHub delivers **clarity, accountability, and confidence** which are three things that have often been missing in informal pollination arrangements.

Berry crops are particularly sensitive to timing and quality in pollination. Missing even a small window can compromise yield and fruit uniformity. HiveHub helps growers safeguard against those risks by offering:

- **Access to a wider beekeeper network** – ensuring backup options if a usual supplier is affected by Varroa, weather events, or high demand
- **Centralised records** – keeping contracts, payment details, and past arrangements in one easy-to-reference location
- **Transparency and security** – digital agreements provide clarity for both parties and reduce misunderstandings
- **Biosecurity awareness** – HiveHub fosters good record-keeping and encourages best practices to protect bee health across regions
- **Future-proofing** – participation helps build a stronger national pollination network that benefits the entire horticulture sector

For berry enterprises that depend on reliable flowering windows and premium fruit quality, these benefits translate into reduced pollination risk and improved long-term sustainability.

HiveHub isn’t about disrupting existing grower-beekeeper relationships; it’s about strengthening them. Many growers already have trusted beekeepers they work with season after season. HiveHub’s tools simply make those arrangements easier to manage by providing digital records, automatic reminders, and secure payment options to streamline an often-overlooked part of farm operations.

At the same time, it creates new opportunities. If a grower’s regular beekeeper becomes unavailable,

HiveHub offers an immediate pathway to find alternatives nearby saving time, protecting yield potential, and maintaining business continuity.

The platform is designed for ease of use, with step-by-step guidance and support available to help first-time users. Once a farm profile is set up, growers don’t need to revisit it until they’re ready to arrange pollination again keeping administration light and practical.

Towards a More Resilient Pollination Network

HiveHub’s broader mission is to support the resilience of Australia’s pollination ecosystem. The arrival of Varroa has underlined how interconnected the nation’s horticultural industries are, and how important it is to plan ahead for continuity of service.

By linking growers and beekeepers through a transparent, structured system, HiveHub contributes to:

- **Greater regional pollination security**
- **Better data on national hive demand**
- **Improved biosecurity awareness and traceability**
- **A more collaborative agricultural community**

For berry growers, that means greater control over pollination planning, improved risk management, and a stronger voice in shaping the future of pollination services.

HiveHub is inviting Australian berry growers to be part of this movement. The platform is FREE to join, easy to use, and backed by a support team ready to help with setup and onboarding.

By signing up, growers can protect their upcoming harvests, strengthen existing beekeeper relationships, and gain access to a growing network of reliable pollination partners across the country.

As HiveHub’s founder explains, “Our goal is to give growers confidence. Pollination shouldn’t be a source of stress, it should be something you can plan for, manage easily, and rely on every season.”

In a time when bee health and hive availability are under increasing strain, HiveHub represents a practical, grower-focused solution that is worth signing up for.



To learn more and register your farm free of charge, visit hivehubpollination.com and join the HiveHub community.