

## **SAVEYOURLEATHERWOODHONEY ASSOC. - MEDIA RELEASE APR 2013**

THE RECENT REPORT AND COMMENTARY IN THE MEDIA ABOUT THE GROWING IMPORTANCE OF EXPORTS OF LEATHERWOOD HONEY TO CHINA IS WELCOME POSITIVE NEWS IN AN ENVIRONMENT OF BUSINESS, STRUGGLING TO SURVIVE.

HOWEVER THE LEATHERWOOD RESOURCE FROM WHICH THE HONEY IS PRODUCED, HAS BEEN SUBSTANTIALLY DESTROYED IN THE PROCESS OF CLEAR FELL AND BURN TIMBER HARVESTING PRACTISES IN STATE FOREST.

THE LITTLE LEATHERWOOD THAT IS LEFT IS EITHER PROTECTED IN NATIONAL PARKS OR GROWS IN STATE FOREST MANAGED BY FORESTRY TASMANIA. IT REMAINS AT RISK IN STATE FOREST AS A RESULT OF THE PREFERRED HARVESTING METHODS ADOPTED BY THE TIMBER INDUSTRY AND APPROVED BY FORESTRY TASMANIA.

THE LIMITED RESOURCE REMAINING WILL NOT SUPPORT ANY EXPANSION OF THE BEEKEEPING INDUSTRY OR THE POLLINATION INDUSTRY, SO AS TO TAKE FULL ADVANTAGE OF THE EXPORT POTENTIAL NOW APPEARING AND MORE IMPORTANTLY, THE INCREASED FOOD SUPPLY REQUIREMENTS OF THE HORTICULTURAL AND FARMING INDUSTRIES.

IT WILL BE NECESSARY FOR THE PRESENTLY UNTAPPED LEATHERWOOD RESOURCES IN NATIONAL PARKS TO BE MADE AVAILABLE, IF THE OPPORTUNITY TO GROW THE LEATHERWOOD PRODUCTION FOR EXPORT AND THEREBY POLLINATION SERVICES TO OUR FOOD PRODUCTION SECTOR, IS TO HAVE ANY CHANCE OF BEING GRASPED WHILE IT IS STILL POSSIBLE.

OF MOST IMPORTANCE TO TASMANIA IS THE MAINTENANCE OF AN EFFECTIVE AND GROWING POLLINATION INDUSTRY. THIS CAN BE ACHIEVED BY HAVING A ROBUST AND GROWING BEEKEEPING INDUSTRY. IT IS THE EUROPEAN HONEY BEE, BRED AND MANAGED BY THE BEEKEEPERS, THAT DELIVERS ALL OF THE POLLINATION REQUIRED TO DELIVER TO THE GROWERS AND SUBSEQUENTLY TO ALL OF US. 60 – 70% OF ALL THE FOOD WE ENJOY. THIS MEANS THAT A STRONG BEEKEEPING INDUSTRY EQUALS A STRONG POLLINATION INDUSTRY WHICH RESULTS IN A STRONG FOOD PRODUCTION SECTOR OF THE ECONOMY. BUT... THE BEES MUST HAVE A RICH RELIABLE RESOURCE AVAILABLE EACH YEAR TO ENSURE A CONTINUITY OF HIVE STRENGTH... AND THERE IS ONLY ONE SUCH RESOURCE... AND THAT IS THE LEATHERWOOD TREE.

THE TWO BEEKEEPERS FEATURED IN THE RECENT MEDIA REPORT CARRY OUT SUBSTANTIAL POLLINATION INVOLVING AS MUCH AS UP TO FOUR THOUSAND HIVES, AND THIS IS ONLY A PART OF THE INDUSTRY.

MANY BEEKEEPERS ARE ALREADY EXPERIENCING DIFFICULTY IN MAINTAINING THEIR PRESENT BEEKEEPING VIABILITY AND THE SUBSEQUENT DELIVERY OF POLLINATION SERVICES.

AS THE LEATHERWOOD RESOURCE DISAPPEARS SO WILL THE BEEKEEPERS, ALONG WITH THE POLLINATION SERVICES THEY PROVIDE AND THE TASMANIAN GROWN PRODUCE.

JUST MAINTAINING THE STATUS QUO, DEPENDS ON THE LEATHERWOOD RESOURCE NOT BEING DIMINISHED FURTHER.

WHILE THE WORLD HERITAGE NOMINATION AND TASMANIAN FOREST AGREEMENT RESERVES (IF CREATED), HAVE THE POTENTIAL TO MAKE A SIGNIFICANT POSITIVE IMPACT ON LEATHERWOOD RESOURCE RETENTION, ACCESS TO THE LEATHERWOOD IN THE REMAINING STATE FOREST WILL CONTINUE TO BE OF CRITICAL IMPORTANCE TO THE SURVIVAL OF THE INDUSTRIES WHICH RELY ON IT.

IF HOWEVER THE RESERVES DO NOT EVENTUATE THEN MOST IF NOT ALL OF THE PRESENT STATE FOREST WILL REMAIN AVAILABLE FOR TIMBER HARVESTING AND THE RETENTION OF THE LEATHERWOOD RESOURCE IN THESE AREAS WILL BE EVEN MORE CRITICAL FOR BEEKEEPING AND POLLINATION, WITHOUT HOWEVER, THERE BEING ANY GROWTH POSSIBLE IN THESE INDUSTRIES.

**ALL TIMBER HARVESTING MUST TAKE ACCOUNT OF THE LEATHERWOOD RESOURCE, FOREST PRACTISES PLANS MUST ALWAYS PROVIDE FOR THE RETENTION OF THE RESOURCE AND GUARANTEED ACCESS TO LEATHERWOOD MUST BE MADE AVAILABLE IN AREAS OF THE NATIONAL PARK.**

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