

Consumer attitudes to the traceability of Australian honey

The CRC for Honey Bee products investigated which methods of tracing and authenticating honey products consumers prefer.

Providing buyers with assurance on the quality and provenance of honey is essential for ensuring Australian honey is recognised and priced for its unique characteristics.

In 2021, CRC researchers applied near field communication (NFC) and quick response (QR) tags to the labels of honey products for sale overseas and domestically. These tags allow consumers to readily obtain information on batch tracing, as well as educational and marketing material.

Researchers investigated consumer response to, and interaction with, these methods of tracing and authenticating honey. Each NFC and QR tag linked consumers to a CRC for Honey Bee Products traceability website.

The website opened with 'Nectar from the wild' and asked the question, 'Why choose West Australian Honey?' It then gave consumers a choice of more information for 'Healthy Living', 'Delicious Taste', 'Always in Season' and 'Skilled Apiarists'. Researchers used Google Analytics to obtain data on consumers who used the tags to access the website.

CRC researchers obtained and analysed data on the proportion of NFC and QR tags used, the location of users and the web pages visited for almost a year.



CRC HBP
FOR HONEY BEE PRODUCTS



traceability



quality product



resource tracking

NFC and QR codes were used the most in Australia, followed by Japan, Singapore and Hong Kong.



Scan for more info on honey and this genuine WA producer

QR codes on CRC for Honey Bee Products sample honey jars



As the honey was Australian, the results may indicate that Australians are interested in local products and support 'buying local'. Japan and Singapore are strong consumers of Australian products and are also early adopters and users of mobile technology.



Within Australia, consumers in Perth, Adelaide and Melbourne had the greatest uptake of the QR and NFC codes.

CRC researchers found that QR codes were used more than NFC codes, generating 66% of leads compared to 34% generated by NFC tags. This may have been due to consumers' familiarity and acceptance of QR codes during COVID-19, where QR codes were used to gain entry into events, restaurants and stores.

Buyers may also have found the QR codes easier to use, as mobile devices do not need specific software or approvals to access the website. NFC capability is available now on new smartphone models, which may increase their use and acceptance by consumers in future.

When consumers used NFC or QR codes, they spent the most time on the CRC's traceability website pages 'Healthy living using pure honey/prebiotic-bioactivity', 'Antimicrobial - bioactivity', 'West Australian honey companies' and 'Landing page'. This finding reflects strong consumer interest in bioactive honey.



QR codes on honey jars let buyers scan and trace the origin and source of honey

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