

Finding the Tasmanian Leatherwood honey uniqueness

The CRC for Honey Bee Products analysed the iconic Tasmanian Leatherwood honey to identify and characterise its unique properties. The research identified the properties that contribute to the quality and health properties of the honey. This new knowledge will also help to protect the Leatherwood honey brand against fraudulent activity.

Leatherwood honey is a unique and rare monofloral honey, gathered by honeybees from the endemic Leatherwood tree (*Eucryphia lucida*) in the heartland of Tasmania. As the Leatherwood tree only flourishes in the wilderness of the rainforest, it differs from the vast eucalypt forests covering the rest of Australia. The honey produced from the Leatherwood tree has a distinct flavour and is characteristically different to most other honey produced in Australia.

The Tasmanian Beekeeping Association asked the CRC for Honey Bee Products to characterise Tasmanian Leatherwood honey to better understand and identify its unique properties.

Characterising Leatherwood honey is not only important for protecting the Leatherwood honey brand against fraudulent activity, it also helps to identify the unique properties that contribute to the quality and health benefits of the honey.



CRC HBP
FOR HONEY BEE PRODUCTS



traceability



bioactive
honey



quality
product



Tasmanian Leatherwood honey samples collected by researchers





Using the CODEX honey tests and cutting-edge analytical tools, researchers analyse Leatherwood samples collected over three years to identify the unique properties of Leatherwood honey and their relationship with the healing bioactivity of the honey.

Researchers found that Leatherwood honey has antioxidant properties and a significant peroxide activity. The process of bioactivity in Leatherwood honey was found to be different to that of Manuka honey.

Leatherwood honey was also found to contain phenolic acids and flavonoids, which contribute to a probiotic effect. CRC researchers quantified the level of these important chemicals in Leatherwood honey.

An 'electronic tongue' was used to quantify the aroma and taste of Leatherwood honey. This new technology showed that Leatherwood honey has high umami, or mouthfeel, compared to other Australian honey.

High levels of octadiene-ols were also detected in the honey, which when heated contributes a sweet tropical fennel and ginger aroma to the honey.

Leatherwood honey is the backbone of the Tasmanian honey industry. It supports the ability of beekeepers to meet the growing demand for pollination services for the Tasmanian horticulture industry.

Research by the CRC for Honey Bee Products to protect this special honey and promote its health benefits is a critical step in supporting and lifting Tasmania's agriculture productivity.



Stephens Apiarists

Honey collected from Tasmanian Leatherwood tree nectar is unique, high-quality and has bioactive properties

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