

FAQs on manuka honey

What is the export value of the New Zealand honey industry?

New Zealand honey exports are reportedly worth about \$NZ120 million a year

Where is it exported to?

Canada, Australia, USA, Hong Kong, United Kingdom, Japan, Singapore and Europe.

Where are our biggest markets?

After the UK and Australia, Hong Kong is the largest market for New Zealand honey, with exports in 2011 worth \$10.3 million. In the same year, exports to Singapore were worth \$10 million and those to Japan \$9.9 million.

Why is New Zealand's manuka honey so sought after?

New Zealand manuka honey is the most expensive in the world and receives a significant premium over other honey products. It retails at pharmacies, high-end supermarkets and department stores, and a 500g jar sells for up to \$NZ90 in the United Kingdom.

Manuka honey is reported to have non-peroxide antibacterial properties; this means it kills bacteria in a different and arguably better way than other honeys.

The non-peroxide antibacterial activity is due to the presence of methylglyoxal (MG).

Some debate exists over appropriate ways to market products with MG and the appropriate tests that should be applied. Any definition must make sense to a reasonable consumer and be evidence-based. .

How long is the consultation period?

The consultation period is for three weeks and closes on 30 September 2013.

The discussion paper outlines three options for defining manuka honey. The paper asks number of questions and MPI is calling for data and information from the honey industry and others to help decide on the best option.

How do industry members make a submission?

The consultation document contains a series of questions and people are asked to comment on these. All answers will be sent to email: manuka.honey@mpi.govt.nz

What are the next steps?

A draft guideline will be released in October. There will be opportunity to comment on this before final guidelines are issued in late October. However, guidelines cannot be enforced so it may be necessary to implement the guidelines via a regulatory tool. Once the guidelines have been issued, MPI will undertake a regulatory analysis and impact assessment and talk with overseas regulators to decide if regulations are necessary. This process will take approximately three months.