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The flip side of feeding bees... What's at stake if bee feeds end up in the food chain?

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About Me

- Food Safety and Quality Compliance Specialist
- Over 25 Years Experience in the Food Sector
- Published Author
- Experienced Food Safety Auditor
- Food Safety and Quality Trainer
- Expert in the Identification and Management of Risk
- Proprietor of haccp.com



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Australian Honey is renowned Internationally for its Clean Green Provenance... imagine how that could change if the integrity of Australian Honey was tarnished by the adoption of practices that turn a natural wonder into a something from a chemistry lab?

After all... Bees themselves are the most exquisite of chemists... They don't need humans to assist them in doing what they do best!



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The flip side of feeding bees... What's at stake if bee feeds end up in the food chain?

- The bee feeding trend
- What's at stake?
- What could happen?
- How can we mitigate risk?
- Why does it matter?



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The bee feeding trend...

What am I referring to?

- Pumping hives full of sugary liquids on a commercial scale... ultimately for profit!
- Not the periodical supplementation of bee feed for operational purposes (E.g. For baby bees, drought scenarios etc).



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The bee feeding trend...



From a 'Risk' perspective, regardless of scale of application, the feeding of bees can introduce **chemical** or **biological** hazards!



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What's at stake...

- Regulatory non-compliance...
- Reputational damage...
- Livelihoods lost...



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What's at stake? Regulatory non-compliance

- It's only a matter of time until someone takes the practice too far or takes some shortcuts that have dire consequences!
- Imagine a scenario in which:
 - a chemically tainted solution is fed to bees?
 - biological vectors are transferred to a healthy population of bees through bad hygiene practices?



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What's at stake? **Reputational damage**

- **Social media wildfire...**
 - Consumers are “informed” and have easy access to information which can be disseminated through social media platforms.
 - The question is... **Are they Well Informed or Ill Informed?**



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What's at stake? **Reputational damage**

- **Brand Damage**
 - You've worked exceptionally hard as an individual and as part of the Australian Honey Production and / or Processing Sector to create a strong recognisable brand!
 - That could all disappear overnight if a significant Food Safety incident were to occur.



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What's at stake? **Livelihoods lost**

- **Bad things happen when the Food Sector gets it wrong... and it's not just the consumers who suffer!**
- **Let's take a look at some real life examples of where we got it wrong... The cost is much higher than you may expect!**



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What could happen? **Listeria in Rockmelons**



- **Misadventure in Food Safety Management**
- **Serious illness and death (multiple cases)**
- **Sales down up to 90% for months following the event (earlier in 2018)**
- **Sales still down up to 60% in June 2018**
- **Tonnes of produce left to rot in fields**
- **Distrust in the produce sector**



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What could happen? **Melamine in Milk**

- Caused by direct human intervention as a way to increase profit
- Serious long term illness and death (multiple cases)
- Death sentences or significant jail terms for those implicated
- Estimated tens of millions of dollars spent on testing of dairy products since (industry impacts)



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What could happen? **Horse Meat Scandal**



TESCO
Every little helps



Findus
 **Nestlé**

- Economically motivated adulteration
- Massive public moral / ethical backlash
- Large multi-national companies impacted... brands destroyed
- Distrust in food supply chain integrity
- The integrity of EU food regulations questioned



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What could happen? Horse Meat Scandal



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What could happen? Horse Meat Scandal



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What could happen? Horse Meat Scandal



What could happen? Horse Meat Scandal



- Findus was a multi-billion dollar global brand.
- The brand was so damaged by the horse scandal that it basically disappeared from supermarket shelves following the scandal!



What could happen? **Bee Feed in the Food Chain**

- The outcomes could manifest in any number of ways, particularly when you consider Chemical and Biological hazards.
- Additionally when you consider the impact on Australia's Clean Green Provenance, the “**moral and ethical**” backlash on social media could be equally damaging as Chemical and Biological risk.



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How can we mitigate risk?

- Strong focus on Risk Assessment
 - HACCP (General Food Safety and Quality Risk)
 - VACCP (Food Fraud Focussed)
 - TACCP (Sabotage Focussed)
- Engagement of Industry and Regulatory Bodies regarding known risk and emerging risk on a global scale.



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Why does it matter? A part of the Food Chain...

- Contemporary Food Safety and Quality Management systems rely on all participants of the Food Sector to 'do their bit'.
- The idea is that if every step of the Food Chain **identifies** and **controls** risk, the likelihood of related risk causing issues further down the Food Chain is significantly lowered.



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Why does it matter? A part of the Food Chain...

- Global Food Standards such as SQF and BRC have provisions for 'Animal Feed' within their certifications.
- This ensures that if a Food Processor or Manufacturer makes their materials (including waste) available for Animal Feed, they must manage related risk to ensure their participation doesn't cause Food Safety or Regulatory non-compliance within those Animals (or further processing).
- The 'theory' behind this is the same as for the risk associated with Bee Feeding scenarios!



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Questions?



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