



Department of Agriculture and Food  
Government of Western Australia



**QUARANTINE** WA

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When honey's  
not so sweet



# When honey's not so sweet

If one of our inspectors has just confiscated your jar of honey, you deserve a detailed explanation as to why!

Some hives elsewhere in Australia are infected by European Foulbrood Disease which kills bees. Luckily, infected bees can't fly across the interior of the continent because the journey's too far and too harsh, but the disease could reach Western Australia as spores lurking in untreated honey.

These spores wouldn't harm you if you ate them, but if a jar with a little remaining honey happened to get thrown away in Western Australia and our bees found it, they would take the spores back to their hive.

As the disease can spread from hive to hive, it wouldn't just be honey production that would be affected. Most of our food plants rely on bees to pollinate their flowers, so hives would have to be treated with antibiotics in order to keep our little workers on the wing.

That's why hives, honey and other hive products like royal jelly, can't be allowed to cross our border. It's possible to bring honey into Western Australia if it's been heat-treated and you've obtained a certificate from a relevant quarantine authority – but not many people are likely to go to that much bother.

Even if you're returning to Western Australia from interstate and you're carrying a jar of honey you originally bought here, it too will be confiscated as there's no way our inspectors can be sure it hasn't been opened and contaminated.

Next time you travel into Western Australia, please don't bring honey or, if you do so accidentally, bin it or declare it. Please consider our healthy, busy bees - you don't want to be the person responsible for turning their buzz off.

**For enquiries Freecall 1800 084 881.**