

# Busy Bees



Mietta Smith  
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## Enviro-Stories

Enviro-Stories is an innovative literacy education program that inspires learning about natural resource and catchment management issues. Developed by Peekdesigns, this program provides students with an opportunity to publish their own stories that have been written for other kids to support learning about their local area.

[www.envirostories.com.au](http://www.envirostories.com.au)

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# Busy Bees

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This book has been published as part of the 2018 From the Farm to You Enviro-Stories program. Students used their imagination to write and illustrate stories that highlight the importance of where our food and fibre comes from. This program was supported by the Cotton Research and Development Corporation.

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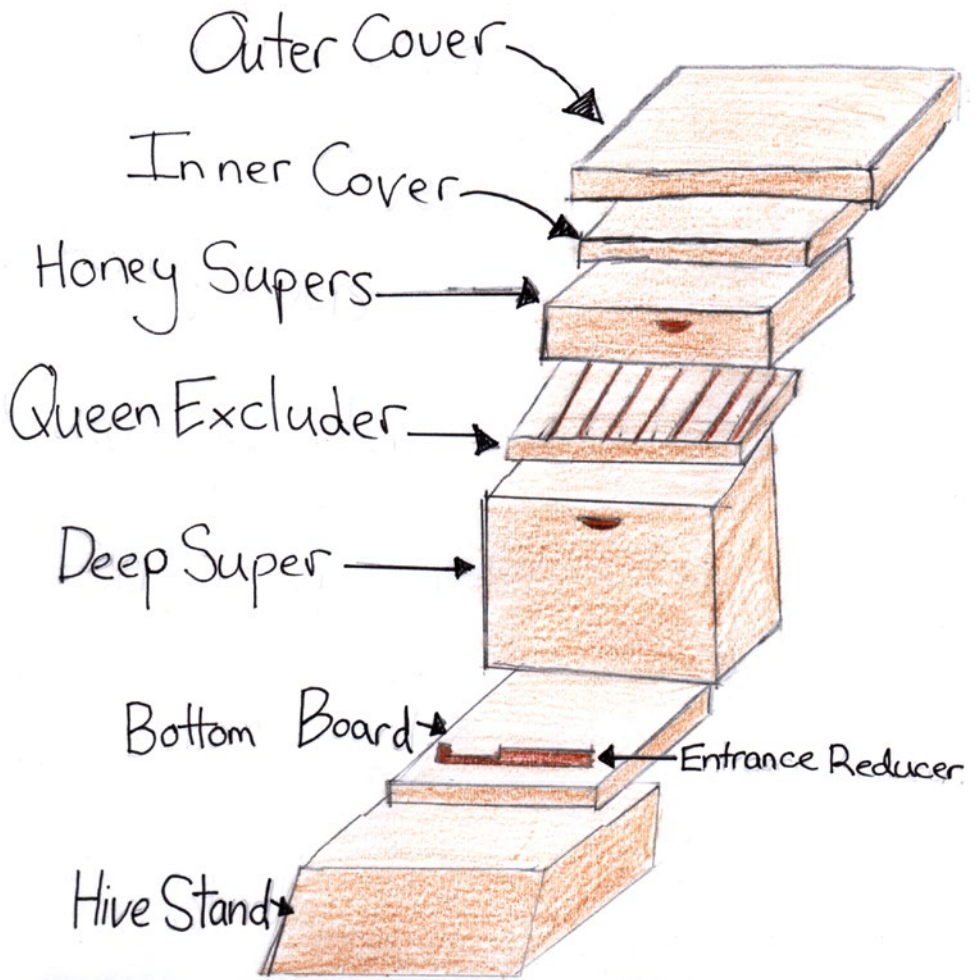
Hi! I'm Mandy Smith and this is my husband Ian with our baby Penny. We are honey bee farmers. Our farm is located about five kilometres out of Mansfield in Victoria, close to Lake Eildon.



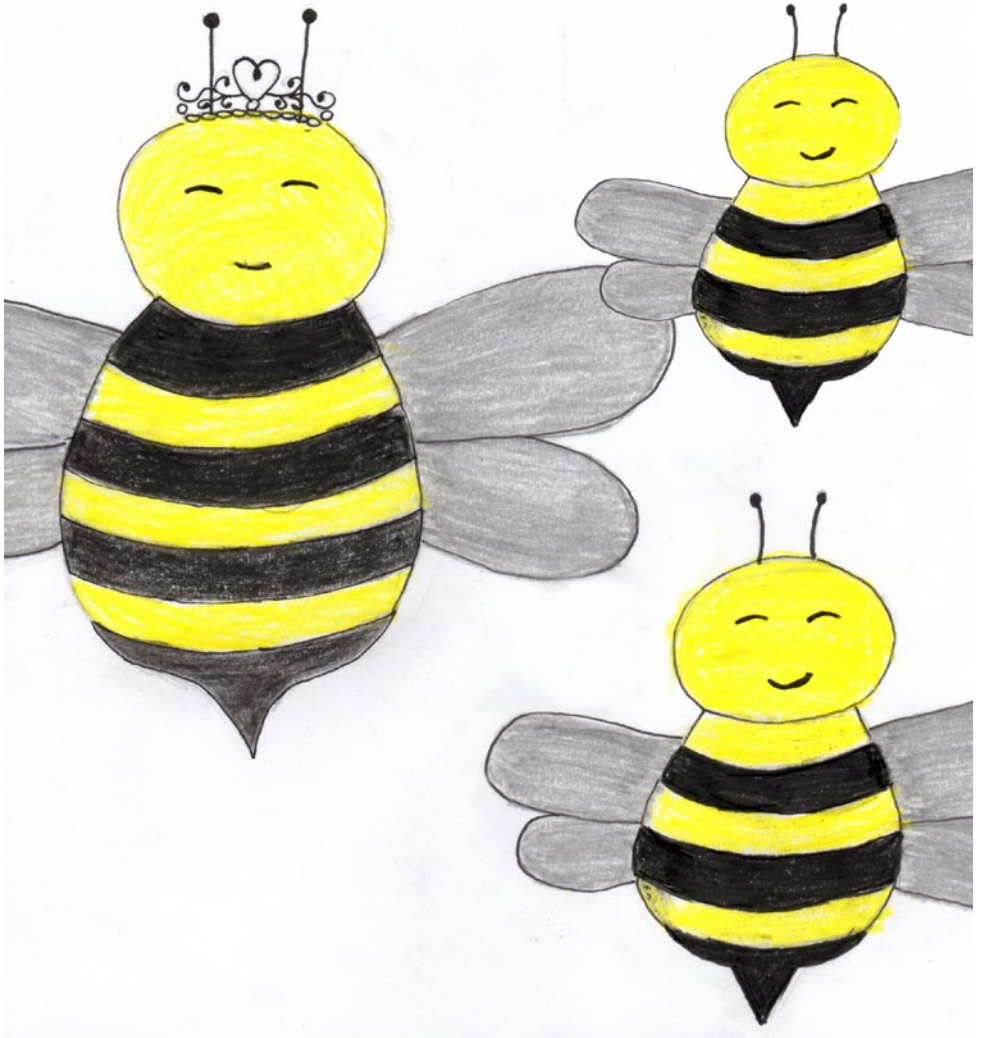
Our farm, which is 250 acres in size, has 500 bee hives on it. Each year we produce 20 kilograms of honey per hive. That equals 10,000 kilograms altogether.



We sell our honey to local cafes, restaurants, supermarkets and at our local markets every Saturday. Some of our produce is also sent to Melbourne.



Each of our 500 hives has eight parts. From the bottom up they have a stand, the bottom board, entrance reducer, deep super, queen excluder, honey supers, inner cover and on top, the outer cover.



Every hive has a queen bee, drones and lots of worker bees. The queen bee is the mother and leader of the hive. The drones are the male bees that fertilise queens and the worker bees, who are all female, gather pollen and nectar to bring back to the hive.



We set up our hives in spring and summer when there are plenty of flowers to collect nectar and pollen from. The bees are very busy in those months.



In autumn the bees are busy making honey, ready for them to eat in winter. Winter is the best time to harvest, so we collect honey from the hives in August.

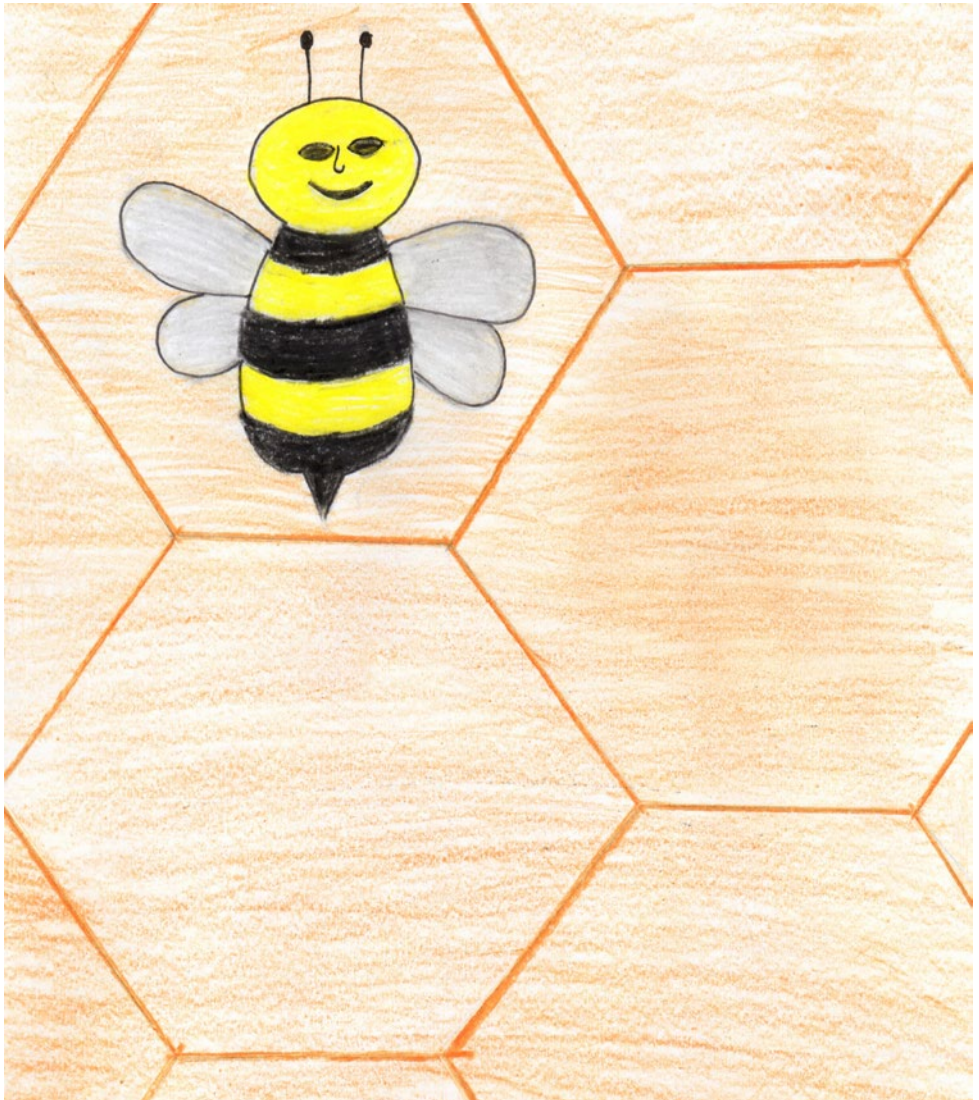
We must always make sure we leave enough honey for the bees to eat so our hives remain healthy.



We check the bee hives every ten days to make sure that they don't have any diseases like varroa mites.



We are looking to expand our business by making sure we get better use of all the products from the hive, including the wax. We also plan to make some extra money from supplying bees to pollinate crops.



After harvesting the honey, we also have a lot of beeswax. This forms the honeycomb where the bees store the honey in the hive.



My husband, Ian, had the great idea for us to use the wax by making bees wax wraps, candles and soaps and to sell them at our local markets.



My brother, Rupert, mentioned that he is growing canola this summer on his farm in Narrabri. He asked if I could bring some bees up to help pollinate his crops.



I made up some new hives, put bees in them and then drove them to Rupert in Narrabri.

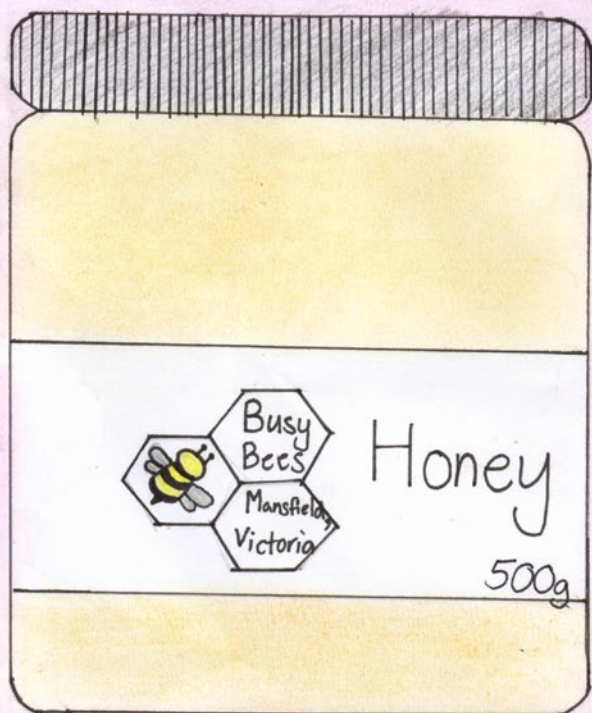


Rupert loves the bees so much! He was surprised by the good job they did pollinating his crops and was so happy that he decided to buy his own bees off me.

He told his neighbours and other farmers about the pollinating bees and now they also want their own bee hives.

So now our bees are working hard in a variety of places to bring us yummy honey and other products, and they also help fertilise crops and the native environment.

Our busy bee business looks to have a bright and busy future.







Mietta Smith  
Narrabri Public School, Year 6 2018



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