



Precision Ag
Broad Bean Bee Pollination Trial
Conmurra

As part of the Precision Ag project, an additional trial has been undertaken to determine the benefits of managed bee hives in the pollination of Broad Beans.

In the Mid-North & Yorke Peninsula areas of SA, trial work with high density managed bee hives carried out by the YP Alkaline Soils Group in conjunction with Ag Consulting Co have consistently resulted in increased bean yields of around 50% and in some cases the yield benefits have been higher.

Other observations where managed hives have been placed include

- Even seed set
- More even maturity
- Larger more uniform seeds and seeds per pod
- No aborted flowers on ground

The question was asked as to whether similar results could be achieved in broad beans & if by placing hives at high densities, an increased pod set could be achieved. I.e. Will the bees offset some of the effects of the cold, wet conditions & reduce the abortion rate of early flowers.

Hives were placed on a 100ha trial site at “Boonderoo” at the onset of flowering (early September) & will remain for around 6 weeks. The yield responses will be monitored post-harvest using a yield monitor that will compare yields in the “bee zone” to those in the untreated zone. Both previous yield data & an EM38 map will be used to offset the variability of soil type allowing for increased accuracy of results.

