

# NEW POLLINATION TARIFF FOR 2021

The Western Cape Beekeepers' Association has approved an increase in its recommended pollination charge for 2021 by only 4%.

The nominal increase is part of renewed efforts by the WCBA to offer much better value to food growers in the province, including setting more rigorous standards for our member beekeepers who provide pollination services.

The new rate is R1 019,00 (plus VAT) per managed beehive. This is for the deciduous fruit sector only and for a maximum period of up to fourteen days.

The WCBA, however, recommends a higher price for berry pollination - subject to negotiation - because of the challenges posed by the early onset of the blossoming period. This is due to the lack of suitable forage for honeybee colonies in the build-up to the berry pollination season. Beekeepers, therefore, often have to resort to expensive measures to boost colonies in time for the berry blossoms.

In deciding the new pollination price structure, every endeavour was made to limit the increase as much as possible because of the impact of the COVID pandemic on the overall economy.

Despite the increase, the local rate remains lower than that charged by our international counterparts when compared to their grower input costs.

Like all sectors of the agricultural economy, Western Cape beekeepers are dealing with spiralling costs, particularly fuel and labour. Other factors such as the increasing costs of beehive replacement due to wear and tear, and lost honey production while colonies are in pollination, all contribute to tough operational conditions.

Against this backdrop of rising expenses, the WCBA is nonetheless committed to improving the professional pollination service offered by its members.

Among the new measures being implemented is a re-vamp of its pollination inspection service. This is available to all growers, at a prescribed fee, who wish to ensure that they are receiving the best possible pollination service.

The WCBA is striving for a mutually beneficial and respectful relationship between our members and the farmers of this province. By improving our pollination standards, we believe we can play a decisive role in enhancing the Western Cape's reputation as a reliable source of quality food crops for both local and international markets.

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Release date: XX April 2021

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