



## **AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY SEOUL**

### **Media Release on Australian honey**

Korean consumers can be confident that all Australian food is clean and safe.

Australia takes food safety very seriously and has a long history of producing high-quality, clean and safe food products.

The statutory authority Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) was established in 1991 to protect the health and safety of people in Australia and New Zealand through the development of strict food standards.

All food products exported to Korea must meet these standards, in addition to all standards stipulated by Korea.

We are aware of media reports about Australian honey containing a type of alkaloid, based on a recently published Irish study. Alkaloids are naturally occurring chemical compounds produced by plants, animals, fungi and bacteria. Plant alkaloids may get into honey when bees forage on the flowers that contain these alkaloids.

The main example in Australia is the flowers of 'Paterson's Curse'. There has been a very significant decrease in the prevalence of Paterson's Curse in Australia since the data used in the Irish study was collected, resulting in a greatly reduced risk of harmful levels of alkaloids being present in Australian honey.

FSANZ has advised that there have been no recorded cases of poisoning from Australian honey, either in Australia or overseas.

The Australian Honey Bee Industry Council has issued a public statement addressing the out-of-date data that was used in this study.

The presence of plant alkaloids in honey is not a new issue. It has been under active investigation for several years including through international fora and expert groups in which Australia has participated. FSANZ set a maximum residue limit for plant alkaloids in honey in 2000 to ensure product safety and continues to monitor the issue.

Korean consumers have no cause for concern. As well as being delicious and good for you, Australian honey is safe to eat.

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