Department of **Agriculture**
Government of **Western Australia**

Media Statement

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JARRAH FOREST HONEY: POTENTIAL HEALING PROPERTIES.

The West Australian Beekeepers Association has discovered that honey from one of WA's endemic forest species has naturally high antibacterial activity that strongly inhibits the bacteria *Staphylococcus aureus,* otherwise known as Golden Staph.

The Association and the Department of Agriculture's laboratories in Bunbury have spent a year working on the honey from the unique Jarrah timber species in the State's south west.

Department research officer Robert Manning said the honey could be helpful in controlling Golden Staph, a bacterial disease in people that has become resistant to antibiotic treatments.

"The antibacterial activity of the honey primarily comes from hydrogen peroxide, which is derived via an enzyme in the honey called glucose oxidase. This becomes active when honey is diluted and its acidity is neutralised. The enzyme is sensitive to light and heat," Mr Manning explained.

"The Jarrah honey has significantly higher activity levels than Manuka honey from New Zealand, which is also strongly antibacterial," he said.

"The active factor in Manuka hasn't been identified and is known as UMF (Unique Manuka Factor). While the Jarrah honey doesn't contain UMF, its activity due to hydrogen peroxide, can be nearly twice as high, but on average it is about 50% higher than Manuka.

"The potency of Jarrah forest honey varied with the location of where beehives were found in the forest and some honeys surveyed showed no activity towards inhibiting bacteria," he said.

Further research into the honey's potential and surveys of where it is found are continuing.

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