Reviewer's report

Title: Antibacterial properties of Malaysian Tualang honey against wound and enteric microorganisms: Comparison with Manuka honey

Version: 1 Date: 16 August 2009

Reviewer: Shona Blair

Reviewer's report:

I have supplied comments below based under headings for the various sections of the manuscript. I have labelled the comments as:

DR - Discretionary Revisions (which are recommendations for improvement but which the author can choose to ignore)

ER - Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

CR - Major Compulsory Revisions (which the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

General comments

This is a nicely designed study and a good manuscript with robust conclusions.

It is very interesting that the authors tested the tualang honey for non-peroxide activity and that they found it. This should be included in the methods and results sections – not just suddenly appear in the discussion (CR). There are very few honeys other than Leptospermum ones form New Zealand and Australia (ie manuka or jelly bush) that posses this type of activity.

It would be interesting if the MIC assays were performed in the presence and absence of catalase (DR). If tualang has consistent, significant non-peroxide activity, this is a very exciting finding.

ERs:

There is no need for manuka to have a capital “m”
There is no need to tualang to have a capital “t”
There is no need for coagulase to have a capital “c”
There are some minor grammatical errors

Title

DR Might be a little better as:
The antibacterial properties of Malaysian tualang honey against wound and enteric microorganisms in comparison to manuka honey
Abstract

DR Could be more concise

Introduction

ER Beginning of last paragraph on page 4 – 1st sentence not strictly correct. Honey predominantly clears infection due to its antimicrobial properties.

Methods

ER Source of the tualang honey? Is the honey used here likely to be typical of other tualang honeys, such as those used in references 13 and 14? Is it likely to be made from the nectar of one floral source (tualang?) or other floral sources?

ER There is some superfluous information. For example: 1st paragraph on page 6 – don’t need to explain the rationale behind the controls, they are self-evident

See note in results section below re honey concentrations tested

Results

ER Units should be include – eg 12.5% w/v

ER The data in Table 1 don’t need to be included and this table should be deleted. It is not necessary to provide information in the methods of how larger intervals were used first and then narrower ones. Only the final method and results need to be reported.

ER Could be more concise in parts – for example:

There is no need to list the concentration of honeys used in the text, they are described in the methods section.

There is no need to list the organisms tested in the text.

The text section is a bit long; there is no need to report all of the results in the test, just the interesting ones, the ranges, a summary, etc. (for example paragraph 3 on page 10, is concise)

The text section reporting on the results shown in the figures is too long

It would be more appropriate to say things like “…manuka honey had lower MBC values than Tualang…” rather than “…manuka honey had better MBC values than Tualang…”

Discussion

See note in general comments re the non-peroxide activity of the honey

The discussion in generally well written. However, it could be more concise especially when discussing all of the organisms tested here. More importantly how do the results reported here compare to those reported in references 13 and
14 (ER)?

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests