

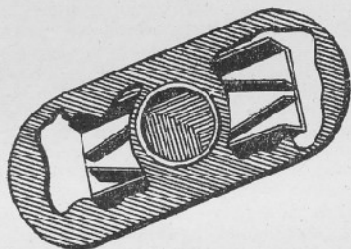
# Use of Bee Escapes for Removal of Honey

**B**EE escapes have been used in the beekeeping industry for many years for the removal of honey from the hives, but do not appear to have been brought into general use. In this article J. E. Rodie, Apiary Instructor, Department of Agriculture, Hawera, explains how bee escapes can save time in handling of equipment and give other advantages.

**T**HE Porter bee escape is a device which will allow bees to pass through a self-closing gap which is made up of two V-shaped flexible spring prongs that spread under the slightest pressure and allow the bees to pass through at the apex. After the bees pass through the springs the

points fly back into position and prevent the bees from returning.

Bee escapes are made with single and double ends and may be used singly, but usually two are mounted on a board. The board has the same measurements as the supers used on the hives and is usually made of some type of hardboard with narrow 3/4 in. timber nailed on one side only, at the ends and sides, so that when the board is placed in position a bee space is provided on the upper side.



Double-end Porter bee escape.

## Advantages

Bee escapes have advantages over any other method of removing the honey crop. They are clean, do not impair the flavour of the honey, are quick in use, and cut down working hours and costs. When properly used they overcome the problem of flying bees in the honey house, which are usually taken in when honey is removed from hives by other methods.



Method of placing escape board in position.

## Disadvantages

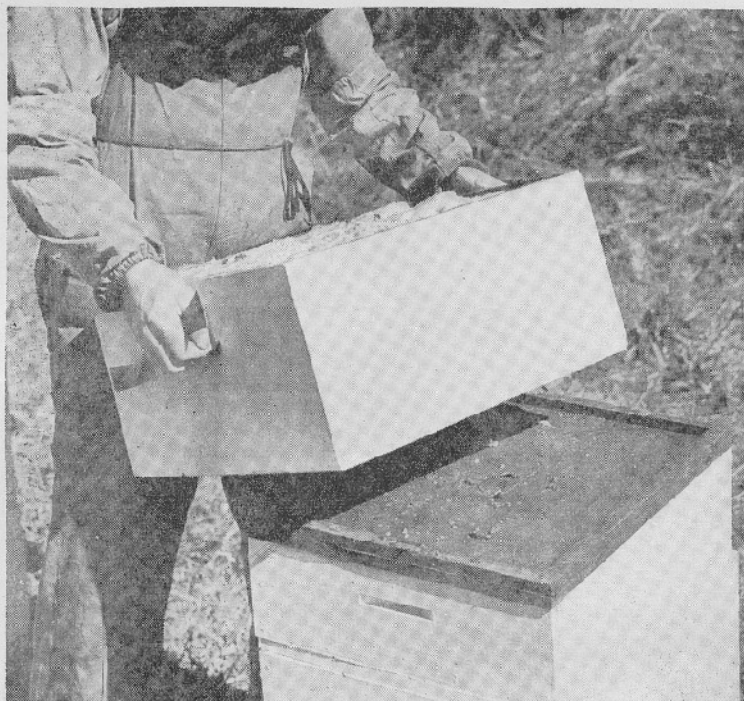
Placing bee escapes on hives in out apiaries may involve the beekeeper in more travelling, though if apiaries are situated in a confined area extra mileage can be practically eliminated, as will be explained later. If there is any brood whatsoever in the supers which are to be removed, the bees attending this brood will not pass down through the bee escape, which then becomes ineffective. This fault may be caused, however, by the beekeeper over-supersing his hives, so that the brood nest is extended into the supers, or by adverse climatic conditions at critical periods after supers have been added to the hives, so that the queen has extra unnecessary top space in which she may lay eggs.

Good beekeeping practice—adding supers only as required to accommodate the bees and providing room for surplus honey only when a steady nectar flow is imminent or in progress—will keep the queen down in the brood nest area and overcome this fault.

## Use of Bee Escapes

The usual practice is to place escapes on the hives in the evening or late afternoon of the day before the honey is removed for extracting. They may also be put on in the morning when most of the field bees have left the hive; either method appears to be satisfactory.

Extra travelling may be avoided when honey is removed from out apiaries by placing the escapes on hives on the furthest apiary first and using them again on the following day



Super of honey clear of bees being removed for extracting.

in the apiary next in line on the way home with the first load of honey, and so on.

### Placing Escape Boards in Position

On arrival at the apiary first place an escape board ready for use against each hive. To place each board in position loosen the top honey super with a hive tool and with one hand tilt the super upward just enough to apply a little smoke to quieten and drive the bees back. Then tilt the super up at an angle sufficient to slide the escape board in as far as it will go, with the bee-space side upward. Lower the super and complete the operation by aligning the super and escape board on the hive.

If the beekeeper has assistance, he may find it quicker for one operator to use the smoker and handle only the escape board while the other handles the super and makes the final adjustment.

Either way the operation can be carried out quickly and efficiently without unduly disturbing the bees.

### Removal of Honey

The next day an early start can be made and if desired the honey supers removed early in the morning and a full day put in on extracting. Removing the supers of honey early will in no way cause a major disturbance, if they are handled quickly, which can be done and the job completed in a very short time.

It is advisable, however, to place escape boards on only as many hives as the beekeeper can manage adequately in one operation when removing the honey crop, particularly in autumn, when robbing is prevalent.

### Vaccination Against Contagious Abortion

So that vaccinating officers can arrange the work efficiently, applications by farmers for vaccination of their calves against contagious abortion should be forwarded by 4 January. Members of veterinary clubs should apply to the secretary of their club and other farmers should apply to the nearest Livestock Inspector of the Department of Agriculture or private veterinary surgeon.

The charge for vaccination is 2s. per calf, irrespective of the number, and the closing date for applications for dairy calves is 14 January and for beef calves 31 July. Applications to Livestock Inspectors must be accompanied by a cash payment of 2s. per calf. Application forms can be obtained from any Livestock Inspector.

**T**HOUGH chalk brood has not been reported in New Zealand before, there is no doubt that it has been present for some time. Samples recently discovered in Southland have been examined by T. Palmer-Jones, Principal Research Officer, Department of Agriculture Animal Research Station, Wallaceville, and confirmed as being chalk brood disease. In this article D. W. A. Seal, Apiary Instructor, Department of Agriculture, Invercargill, describes the disease and ways to combat it.

**C**HALK brood is not a serious disease of bees and can be avoided by good beekeeping methods, but its presence to any extent indicates that conditions generally in and about the hive could be improved for the general comfort of the bees.

This brood disease is caused by a fungus called *Pericystis apis*. The spores of the fungus find honey bee larvae a suitable medium for growth, and soon after larvae have been infected the threads of the fungus (hyphae) permeate all the larval tissues and cause death of the larvae. They die soon after the cells are capped.

### Symptoms

Chalk brood is easily recognised, as the dead larvae harden into white, chalky mummies. Finally, they lie loosely in the cells and are easily removed. Sometimes the bees themselves will remove a number of the mummified larvae and generally attempt to clean out the cells by taking off the cappings. Both worker and drone brood larvae may be affected.

### Treatment

Chalk brood will not gain a footing in a good working colony with a high morale. Any badly affected combs should be removed and burnt. If an affected colony fails to throw off the

disease on its own, it should be strengthened by the addition of young bees and hatching brood and encouraged by feeding 50 per cent. sugar syrup.

Chalk brood can be avoided by not allowing the bees to winter in too large a brood chamber. One that is badly ventilated and only partly occupied during winter provides an excellent resting place for the spores of the fungus. When the brood nest expands in spring or early summer and covers combs harbouring these spores the larvae are liable to infection.

Up to the present chalk brood has been located only among the darker races of bees, particularly in Europe. This may be due to their tendency to excessive swarming, which tends to leave too large a brood chamber for the remaining bees to care for properly.

One authority states that not much can be done to prevent infection of a few larvae by spores carried into the hive by the field bees if conditions are right for their germination and growth. Serious spread of the trouble can be avoided, however, by closing down the hives for winter with not more than two boxes for the brood nest and stores and keeping the hives clear of long grass in winter and spring to prevent dampness and allow adequate ventilation for maximum comfort of the bees.

## Radio Broadcasts to Farmers

**R**ADIO broadcasts to farmers will be given during January as follows:—

**1XH Hamilton**, Mondays at 12.33 p.m. and Tuesdays at 8 p.m. (Frankton stock market report), Wednesdays at 12.33 p.m. (report from Ruakura Animal Research Station), Thursdays at 12.33 p.m., Fridays at 8 p.m. (stock sale review).

**1XN Whangarei**, Mondays at 8 p.m. (Northland livestock report and "Farming for Profit"), Wednesdays at 8 p.m. ("Farming for Profit"), and Fridays at 8 p.m. ("News for the Farmer").

**1YA Auckland**, Mondays at 12.33 p.m., Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays at 7.45 p.m., and Fridays at 6 p.m. and 7.15 p.m.

**1YZ Rotorua**, Mondays at 12.33 p.m. (Waikato stock market review), Tuesdays at 7 p.m. (Hamilton stock market report), Wednesdays at 7.15 p.m. (Pig Council talk on fourth Wednesday of every other month at 12.33 p.m.), Thursdays at 12.33 p.m.

**2XA Wanganui**, Wednesdays at 8 p.m. (Wanganui stock sale report), Thursdays at 8 p.m.

**2XG Gisborne**, Tuesdays at 8 p.m., Fridays at 8.2 p.m. (Gisborne stock market report).

**2XN Nelson**, Thursdays at 8 p.m.

**2XP New Plymouth**, Thursdays at 8.1 p.m.

**2YA Wellington**, Mondays at 7.15 p.m., Thursdays at 12.33 p.m., Fridays at 7 p.m. (Feilding stock market report).

**2YJ Napier**, Tuesdays at 12.12 p.m. (Hawke's Bay orchardist session), Tuesdays at 7.10 p.m., Wednesdays at 7.15 p.m. (Hawke's Bay-Poverty Bay livestock market report), Thursdays at 12.33 p.m.

**2ZA Palmerston North**, Mondays at 12.33 p.m., Fridays at 8.45 p.m. (Feilding stock market report).

**3XC Timaru**, Mondays at 8 p.m. (Pleasant Point stock market report), Tuesdays (fortnightly) at 8 p.m. (Tamuka stock market report), Wednesdays at 8 p.m., and Saturdays at 10.30 a.m.

**3YA Christchurch**, Mondays at 12.20 p.m., Wednesdays at 7.15 p.m. (Addington stock market report), Thursdays at 12.33 p.m. and 7.15 p.m.

**3YZ Greymouth**, Mondays and Thursdays at 12.33 p.m.

**4YA Dunedin**, Mondays at 12.33 p.m., Tuesdays at 12.33 p.m., Wednesdays at 12.33 p.m. and 6.50 p.m. (Burnside stock market report), Thursdays at 12.33 p.m.

**4YZ Invercargill**, Mondays at 12.33 p.m., Tuesdays at 12.33 p.m. and 7.15 p.m. (Lorneville and Gore stock market reports), Wednesdays at 12.33 p.m., and Thursdays at 12.33 p.m.