

NO. 1

MAY 1978

**waikato
bee
notes**



Ministry of
Agriculture
& Fisheries



This is the first newsletter for the Hamilton Apiary District. I will be sending it out, on a quarterly basis, to all beekeepers who own 50 hives or more. Proposed mailing dates are May, August, November and February.

Southland beekeepers receive a similar newsletter as do Tauranga beekeepers; and some of you with bees "out east" will receive Doug Briscoe's letter. Contributions, helpful criticisms or suggestions will always be welcome.

1. BEE BUSINESS



"We've all finished extracting haven't we? We haven't? Oh, well so much for that New Year resolution. And how about your bees? They should all be tucked up for the winter too." Brood rearing didn't continue too long into the autumn this year, so colonies should be in great shape for the winter. Not too many

bees and heavy in pollen and stores.

If you think your hives will open up light in the spring how about feeding them now. It's probably a bit late for dry raw sugar feeding but the bees will pack syrup into the cells left over from brood rearing.

I think there will be quite a few queenless hives going into the winter judging by the number of late swarms that were about.

REMEMBER

BEES DON'T FREEZE TO DEATH;
THEY STARVE TO DEATH!

2. WHO'S FEELING LIKE THIS?



From all reports I've gleaned the Hamilton district has enjoyed another good season. Even better than last year in fact. It looks like the final crop returns could be in the order of 5.5 - 6 tonnes per 100 hives. These crop figures are only guestimates at best and are put together from what you tell me plus an estimation on crops produced by the hobbyist group.

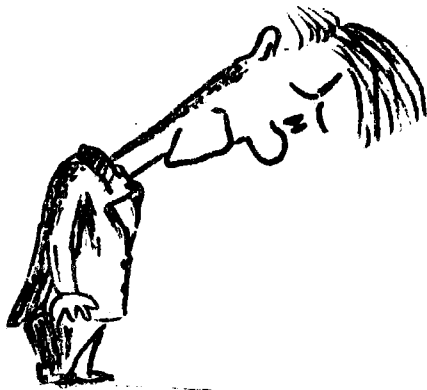
3. ON A MORE SOBERING NOTE

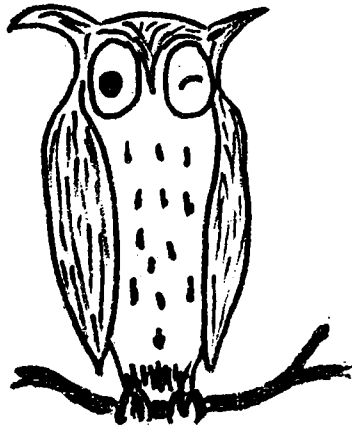
Bacillus larvae is, and always will be with us. Some of you are doing a good job of reporting it as and when you find it. It doesn't take much to drop me a note or ring me up. Others are only telling me about the big outbreaks, not the hive here and the hive or two there.

Tracking down BL is like putting a jig saw together, but you need all the pieces. Most beekeepers are always ready to blame their neighbouring beekeepers or wild swarms. In some cases they are warranted in doing this. But frequently they develop a mistrust against their neighbour that is unjustified. I had reported to me, or found, 150 BL hives since January 31 this year, 1978.

I've sent two suspicious brood samples to Wallaceville recently for diagnosis. They showed all the symptoms of European Foul Brood that I knew in Canada. However, Wallaceville couldn't find any EFB spores. So they sent the samples to Rothamstead in England. No joy there either. Several other apiary staff have also sent in samples suspecting EFB.

I only hope we don't confirm this one here. Australia has a high incidence of this disease in some states and it hasn't responded to drug treatment. So let me know of any suspicious diseased brood.





4. YOU CAN'T TURN A
BLIND EYE TO THIS
PROBLEM!

April 1 1979 is the date when all honey houses must be registered. And this winter is the time to get hold of your local health inspector and find out what he requires you to do to your premises to bring them up to standard. He wont be impressed by arguments such as:-

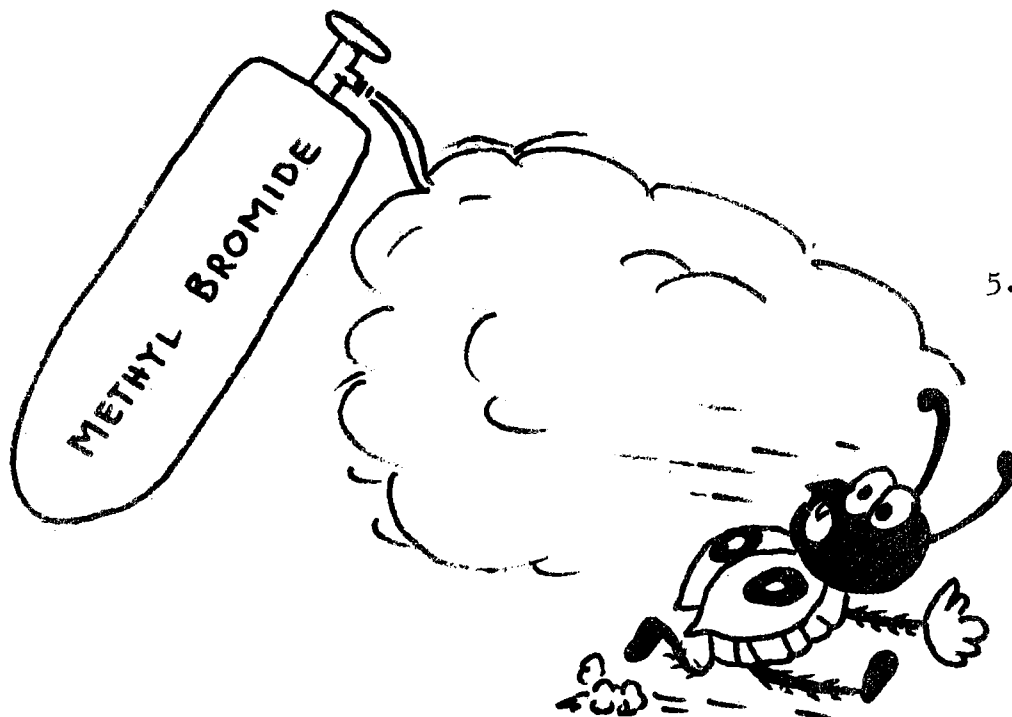
"My neighbour in another county doesn't have
to re-line HIS walls" and/or

"You Government people are all the same!"

Be patient and logical and explain the problems of processing honey. Most Health Inspectors are not too familiar with our industry. No doubt they may seem very pedantic and picky on some minor issues but that could save you from some major changes.

It's the hobbyist beekeeper, who sells most of his crop, that will be hardest hit I think. I suspect many garages, garden sheds and basements will need to be spruced up. Perhaps one solution is for several beekeepers to get together, upgrade one premise and share it.

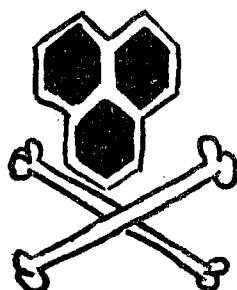




5. THE BUREAUCRATIC
GROMES ARE READY
TO STRIKE AGAIN!

This time it could be to limit the use of Methyl Bromide to licensed operators. There's nothing to stop a beekeeper from becoming a licensed operator. But he would no doubt have to undergo a course of instruction on the correct use and dangers of this odourless, colourless and tasteless gas, and the safety procedures.

Some beekeepers I know do not treat this very deadly gas with the precaution it deserves. Maybe controlling its use will be a good thing.



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6. WHAT'S HAPPENING OVERSEAS?

A recent price list from the land of Oz shows the following prices ex store:

Sydney - Honey

Bulk (clear honey) \$26.00 - 26.66/tin (27.2 kg)
 750 g jars (clear honey) \$10.20 - 10.56 per dozen
 500 g jars (clear honey) \$7.20 - 7.40 per dozen

Sydney - Beeswax

Prime Quality Beeswax \$2.90 per kg
 Lower Grade \$2.40 per kg

Brisbane

Bulk (clear honey) \$28.40 - 32.00 per tin (29 kg)
 750 g jars (clear honey) 11.45 per dozen
 500 g jars (clear honey) 7.80 per dozen

Packers' Price to Beekeepers

<u>Pf reading</u>	<u>Sydney cents/kg</u>	<u>Brisbane cents/kg</u>
0-19	75 - 76	76
20-29	75 - 76	76
30-39	75	75 - 76
40-49	73	73 - 74
50-59	69 - 70	69 - 73

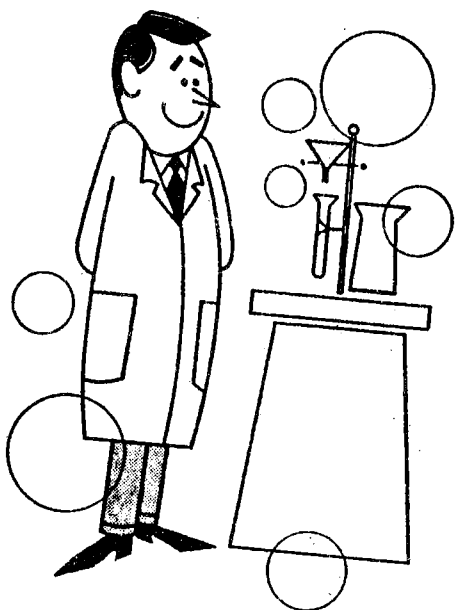
(Source: Sydney - Weekly Marketing Notes,
 NSW Department of Agriculture,
 April 4 1978)

and on the UK market,

- (a) Honey - Current prices for origins shown are as follows:
 Australian Light Amber £stg.486.50/tonne
 c.i.f. UK, Pale Amber £480.00, Medium
 Amber £467.50 and Dark Amber/Manufacturing
 £461.00, Argentine Light £510.00 and
 Mexican Light £495.00.

(b) Beeswax - The market is quiet with little offering. Sierra Leone traded at stg £2 300 c.i.f. Ethiopian offering U.S. \$5 750 c.i.f. Dar-es-Salaam nominally valued at £2 500. Australian nominally valued at £2 350 - 2400.

(Source: Australian Trade Commissioner, London,
March 22 1978)



7. FROM THE SCIENTIFIC FRONT

Here's a few points from Drs T S K & M P Johansson writing in Bee World 50 (3): 89 - 100 1969. The authors have kept bees since 1951 in New York State at an altitude of 450 m where they experience some severe conditions. What they write is mostly common sense but we all need

reminders at times. For instance last year a commercial beekeeper left queen excluders IN many hives and lost quite a few queens as the bees went up onto the honey stores.

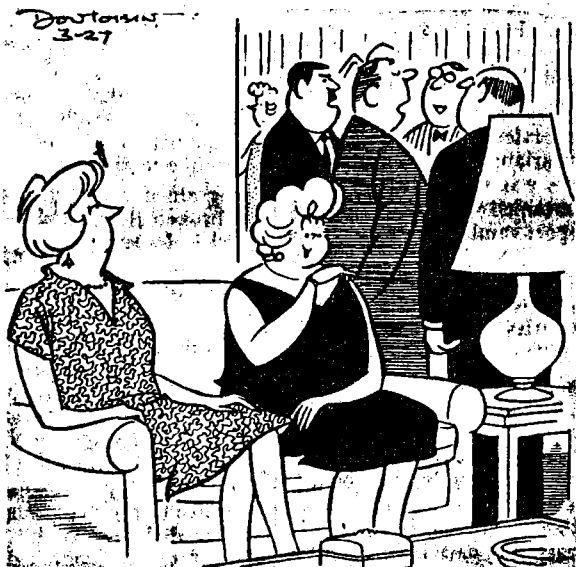
1. Locate hives on a slope facing the sun with a windbreak against prevailing winds.
2. Place hives on stands out of danger of floods and seepage.
3. Remove the queen excluder, if used, so that the queen can move freely with the cluster.
4. Unite colonies which cover less than six frames in April - May.

5. Leave 27 - 45 kg of honey and pollen in two deep or three shallow hive bodies, for stores until the first major spring nectar flow. Feed sugar syrup to colonies without this amount of food.
6. Provide a top emergency exit and ventilation.
7. Insert a dependable mouse guard before the rodents move into winter quarters.
8. Select hardy breeding stock acclimatised to local conditions.



8. ONE LAST PIECE OF ADVICE

Can I pass on a plea from the queen breeders. Please order your next seasons queens now. I suspect a lot of autumn requeening plans went out the window with so much extracting to do, so there could be big demands for too few queens next spring.

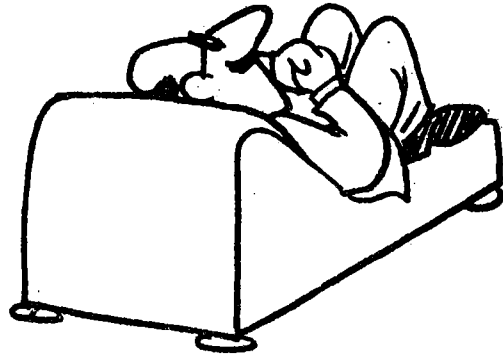


BeeKeepers Meeting

Aren't they wonderful? They've already solved the problems of inflation, smog, drugs and Southeast and it's still only eight o'clock.

9. STOP PRESS!

I'd just finished editing this newsletter when a recent copy of the NZ Farmer hit my desk; April 13 1978 to be exact. It had a very appropriate editorial on bees called Sweet Reason. The Editor went on to note that "Last year honey exports earned New Zealand just over \$1 million.



Beekeepers believe that with more effort and encouragement overseas earnings from honey could be 100 times more. Taking that assumption, honey could be earning us \$100 million annually - compare this with last year's cheese exports worth \$85 million, and fruit and vegetables worth \$65 million." Buy the journal and read the rest of the editors comments.

This journal also features regular articles by "Nor'wester, a farmer in Canterbury. His pet hobby horse is two tier farming or "sheep and nuts." Recently he has been a strong advocate of trees for bees, and more research into beekeeping - we can do with people like him on our side.

Also in the April issue of the NZ Farmer, David Williams from Rotorua, began a new series on beekeeping for hobbyists. David has written in earlier issues of the journal and also does a very good job of writing for the hobbyist sector in the NZ Beekeeper.

Murray Reid
Apicultural Advisory Officer
Hamilton