

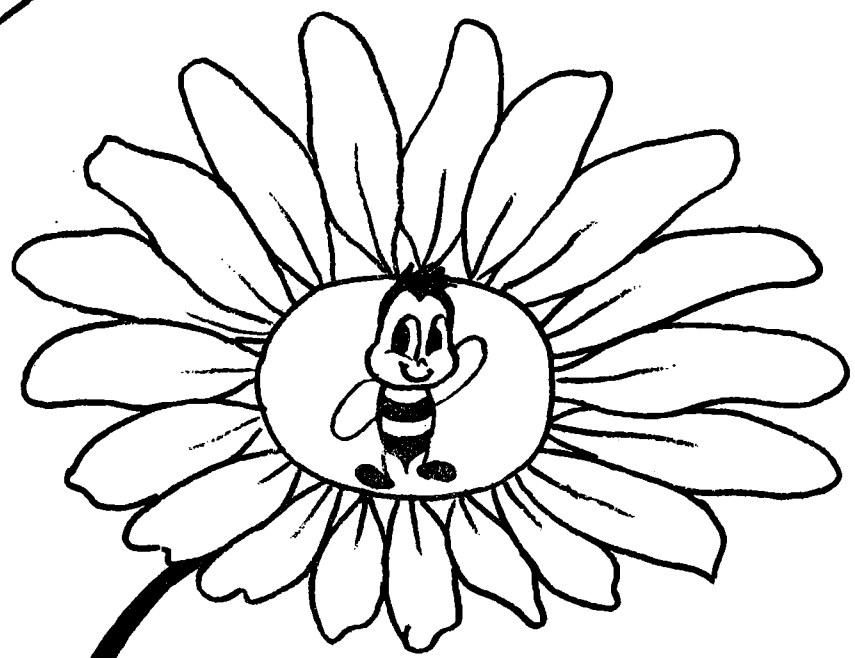
MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE
AND FISHERIES

24 AUG 1978

NELSON

NO. 2

AUGUST 1978



**waikato
bee
notes**



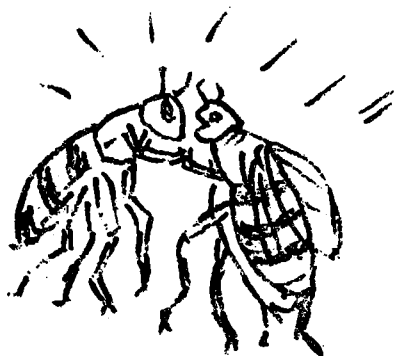
APICULTURE INSPECTOR
MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE & FISHERIES
NELSON



I haven't heard any unkind words about my first newsletter; on the contrary some beekeepers have been very encouraging.

However, since the No. 1 issue went out a new beekeeping publication has appeared.

I will be continually reassessing the need for the Waikato Bee Notes and will cease putting them out if there appears to be no need for them.



HASTINGS CONFERENCE

Another conference has come and gone. You get the feeling you've seen it all before, but they finished within two days this time and that must tell the organizers something for next year's conference in Oamaru!

The highlight of the M.A.F. Fielday on the Tuesday was a very good "talk" by Wally Simmins from the Accident Compensation Department. By using a very appropriate example he got us to think of the ramifications and seriousness of an accident to the beekeeper, particularly in a one man operation. He said most of the accidents were due to carelessness/laziness or the lack of planning. Remember that next time you stand on a woobly bee box to reach for something. The biggest problem in beekeeping is being able to locate all your apiary sites, should you even be able to get someone to help in your hour of need.

• x • x • x •

REGISTER ALL YOUR SITES

Continuing this theme, many of you put hives here and there during the season and may get around to registering them one day. Please do it as you create these sites, or at least tell your wife about them. I had to help settle an estate last week. It took a whole day of phoning, visiting and generally acting like Sherlock Holmes before I could find the 42 hives and all the extra apiary sites not shown on the register. On other occasions some of these sites never get found for a year or three and have been the source of BL outbreaks.



A REQUEST FROM THE HOBBYIST BEE CLUB

Anyone who has an old copper boiler and hand steam knife that they would like to donate to the Club, please contact me.



MIREX ANT AND WASP CONCENTRATE

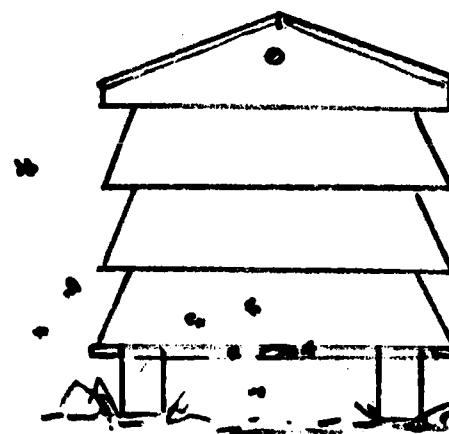
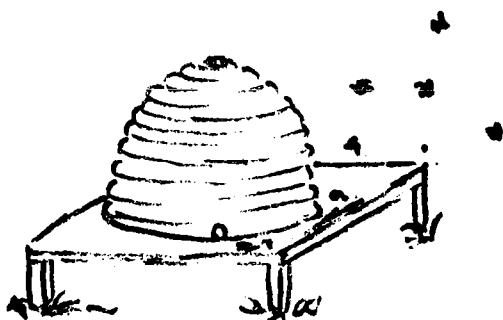
Since my last Bee Notes Mirex insecticide has come back on to the market in sachet form. The instructions are to ascertain what substances the wasps are feeding on by tempting them with fresh fish or sugar, e.g. jam, then mix the insecticide into these baits.

I'm not happy with the notion of mixing Mirex in sugar baits and the matter has been taken up with the distributors. A case of honey bee poisoning has been reported from Tauranga only a couple of months ago.

I suspect that Mirex and dry icing sugar should prove safe to bees but still be attractive to wasps. Or how about trying stale beer, if there is such a thing in your place!

Anyway, Mirex is fairly expensive but it is one of the very few insecticides that are attractive to wasps; most of them, such as DDT, are repellent.

The N Z agents are Agchem Distributors Limited
P O Box 87
Nelson.



SMALL BUT NUMEROUS

The statistics on England's beekeepers for 1977 are now available. It seems they are enjoying a boom in hobbyist numbers too. There are over 35,800 beekeepers all told, owning 189,000 colonies. There are only 133 beekeepers with more than 100 colonies, and 337 beekeepers with 40-60 colonies. The rest are owned by the rest!

The number of hobbyists in the Hamilton district (1-50 hives) has increased by 44. I wonder how much these people affect the total sales of producer packers. Every kg of honey produced or given away by a hobbyist is a kg not purchased off the shelf.

WELCOME BACK KOTTER

Phil Reed, the ^{*}peripatetic beekeeper from Ohaupo, has just returned from several months in the U.K. and on the Continent.

Phil reports that hives are selling for £100 in England, English honey is fetching £1.20 - £1.40 a lb, and all the importers want to know when private exports of bulk honey will be allowed from N.Z!



Buzz heard that Phill (a well known stirrer!) attempted to buy a tall stetson and cigar in Los Angeles to annoy his brother-in-law on arrival in the U.K. But Phil couldn't find a hat big enough for his sized cranium and thinking to have a bit of fun with the lovely shop assistant said "You Americans always have the biggest and the best, I thought you'd have a hat to fit me". So far so good, but quick as a wink our lovely shop assistant replied "Yes we do, but we don't cater for BIG HEADS".

Buzz also heard that Phil has put on a bit of weight while tripping around. Opinions have been expressed as to the purpose of his belt - was it to keep his pants up or his stomach in?

Insects caused half a million dollars
worth of damage on cotton crops in
U.S.A. last year

EUROPEAN BROOD DISEASE IN AUSTRALIA

The confirmation of this disease in March 1977 has caused all sorts of problems - state borders have been closed with the resultant hue and cry from affected beekeepers, prosecutions

* You can look that word up yourself - Feel free to use it anytime.

have been taken and hives have been destroyed.

Many of you will have been through some of your colonies already. Keep a look out for brood that

- * dies at about four days of age. Dead larvae become twisted spirally and often lie around the mouth of the cell. Cappings may be perforated in severe cases, as with BL.
- * Larvae collapse as though melted, turning yellowish brown.
- * Remains may be sticky and may even rope slightly with a LUMPY consistency.
- * The trachaea or air tubes may become very prominent as a white lattice.
- * Let me know of anything unusual in your brood nest.

In South Australia alone, over 32 beekeepers and 13,000 hives have been affected by European Brood Disease. Colony infection rate is 10-50%.



Buzz say's "Desperation is a man who shaves before weighing himself on the bathroom scales".

WHAT'S HAPPENING OVERSEAS

Europe could be sitting on an average to good honey crop if the weather stabilized over the latter part of July - early August.

North America's honey crop would appear to be average at this stage with bulk prices for white honeys ranging from 88c kg - \$1.21 kg. Wholesale prices range from 95c - \$1.50 per 1lb glass jar.

Minimum Australian Export Prices of Bulk Honey

	<u>Pfund Reading</u>	<u>SA/tonne f.o.b. c3½ Australian Port</u>	
		<u>1.7.77</u>	<u>5.7.78</u>
Light Amber	51 - 65	660	760
Pale Amber	66 - 75	650	740
Medium Amber	76 - 90	640	720
Dark Amber	91 - 114	630	710

(Source - Australian Honey Board)

Current Wholesale Prices ex Store: (Prices have increased since Bee Notes No. 1.)SYDNEY: Honey

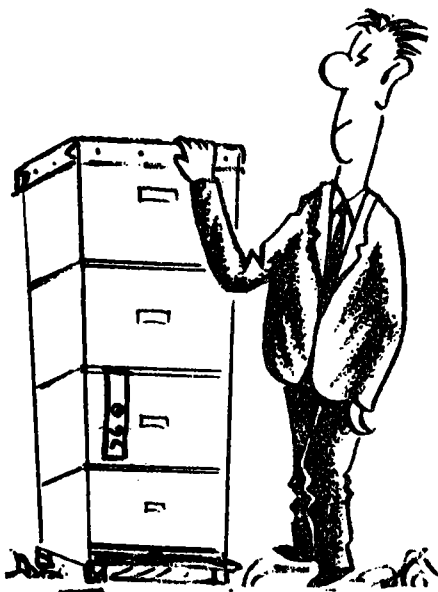
Bulk (clear honey) \$28.40 - 32.00 per tin (27.2kg)
 750g jars (clear honey) 11.45 per dozen
 500g jars (clear honey) 7.80 per dozen

Beeswax

Prime Quality Beeswax 2.98 per kg
 Lower grade 2.00 per kg



\$150 BILLION was spent in the U.S.A.
 last year on insecticides.



BEEF PLAN, SHEEP PLAN -
 NOW BEE PLAN ?

Artificial insemination has caught the imagination of some N Z beekeepers and quite a few have even ordered microscopes and A.I. kits.

Don't be misguided on this one. A.I. is a very useful tool but the technique is a frustrating one to learn. For A.I. to do any good you must have proven lines of "dam and sire" to work from.

AND THAT MEANS KEEPING RECORDS.

Here's what I look for in a potential breeder (not in order of merit).

- * good overwintering - needs little or no spring feeding
- * doesn't build up too quickly
- * reasonable temperament
- * non swarming
- * evenness of colour bands on all workers and drones
- * good honey production
- * ability to draw foundation readily

I use strips of venetian blind (with one end bent over and jammed between 2 brood boxes) to write pertinent notes on. A china-graph crayon lasts for 1 - 2 seasons provided cattle don't lick it off!

- ➔ Select 4 - 6 or more breeders
- ➔ Keep a record of where their progeny go.

A thought to take you into the next season.

Beekeepers should behave like ducks - keep calm and unruffled on the surface, but paddle like hell underneath.

