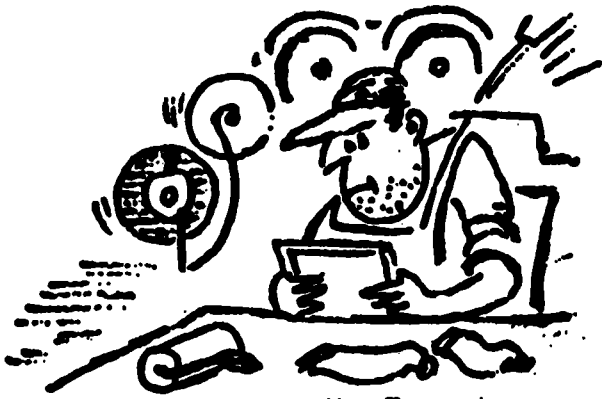


NO. 4

APRIL 1979

**waikato
bee
notes**





Record honey crops are all very nice but they make us forget that they are not the norm. Perhaps this season has provided a gentle reminder to budget and plan expansion programmes on "average" yields not bumper ones. The crop overall looks like being slightly above average with some areas doing as well as last year, others only half of last year. All in all, a patchy season, but certainly not a disastrous one.

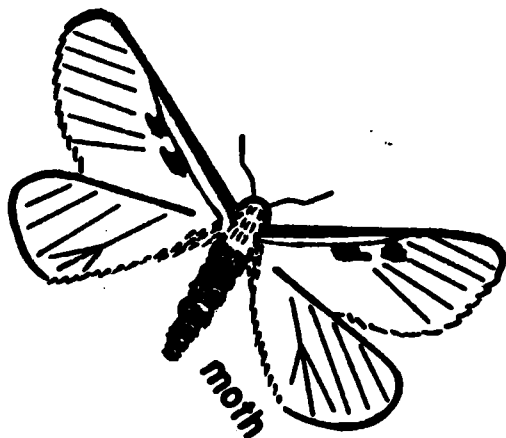
CALIES and NODDIES or in more correct parlance Californian thistle and Nodding thistle. What a year it has been for these. Many beekeepers in the Waikato, Rotorua, Taupo (and Canterbury) areas will be calling this the year of the thistle.

Yields of a super in 3-4 days, flows still going early in April, beautiful white honey, a beekeepers dream.



So I wasn't too excited to read in a Soil and Field Research newsletter recently that scientists from Palmerston North had shown it was economically viable to spray Californian thistles up to two times a year. By reducing the thistle population they were increasing the available dry matter from the pastures as well as liveweight gain in sheep.

Buzz asks "would you rather be filthy rich or immaculately poor?"
Don't answer that one.



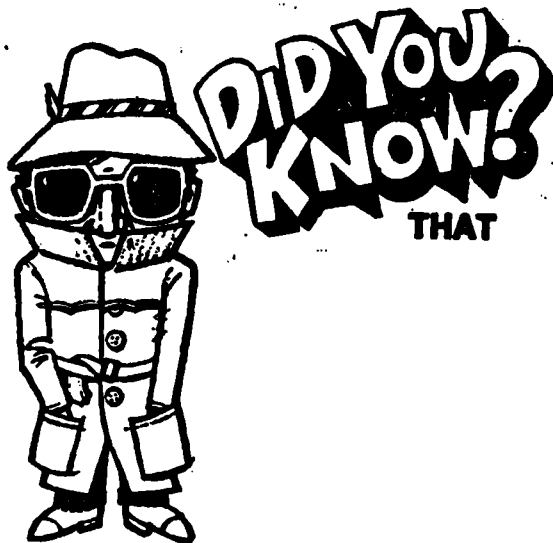
WAX MOTH:

It might have been the year of the thistle. It's also been the year of the moth! The warm autumn nights we've been having lately has seen these rascals infesting dead hives in the field but also stored extracting supers.

Even boxes stored as "dries" in fully ventilated sheds have had moths in them. So just because they've never been a problem to you in the past go and have a quick look at your stored honey boxes now. It costs nothing to look and you might save a few combs from being chewed about.

OK what if you've got some moth? Probably the easiest way to control them until the cooler weather arrives is to use PDB or moth crystals. Note - these are not the same as moth balls. A handful of crystals on a tin lid or piece of paper on top of the super stacks will do. PDB gas is heavier than air so it's no use putting it under a stack of boxes. The stack should be relatively airtight. Place the crystals after every 5-6 boxes. A handful should last 3-4 weeks.

We've found a bulk source of PDB crystals through KPs at \$1.68 kg in 40 kg tins. This comes from Auckland and freight to Hamilton adds another 4-5 c kg onto the price.



VAPONA PEST STRIPS KILL!!

Of course you did. Warnings against using Vapona or Shell pest strips in honey houses or comb storage rooms have been published many times in the past. And yet some beekeepers still persist in using them. These yellow pest strips are sold mainly to kill flies in kitchens - they will also kill queen bees in cages left in the same room as the pest strip too!

The insecticide released is dichlorvos or Vapona - a very lethal but short term insecticide. It does a very nice job of killing wax moths in comb storage sheds but the insecticide has a great affinity for wax.

A Canterbury beekeeper, who should have known better, used Vapona strips last year in his comb shed and wondered why he killed his hives when he supered them up in the spring. He tried to blow the insecticide out using heated forced air from a grain drying plant. It didn't work. He ran up a huge, and I mean huge, electricity bill, and instead of killing the bees in five hours he was killing them in 36 hours.

The beekeeper melted down all the affected honey boxes and started with fresh foundation. I believe there were over 3 000 supers involved. Fortunately he couldn't have picked a better season to do this. But it could just have easily been a drought so "bee" warned.

Damage by the greater wax moth
to beekeeping in the USA
totalled US \$3 million
or more in 1973

BACILLUS LARVAE SITUATION

I haven't heard of any problems in the field so I can only presume there is no BL around. We've dealt with an outbreak in Ngaruawahia and rechecked other areas that were a problem in the spring.

Up to January 31 1979 the Hamilton Apiary district had 563 BL colonies found or reported. This was an increase of 201% over the previous year.

Buzz saw this sign in the Xerox Head Office building:

"Adam and Eve were the first duplicators"



LIGHT READING ANYONE?

As an advisory officer I have to read a lot of journals, books, reports etc on beekeeping and related topics. I also receive copies of the indices from various journals to see if there is anything on bees or in some cases anything I can understand!!

Try this paper from a recent issue of the Journal of Experimental Zoology

Cuellar, H. S. Continuance of Circannual Reproductive Refractoriness in Pinealectomized Parthenogenetic whiptails (Cnemidophorus uniparens)

or this -

Holmes, R. S; Jones, J. T. and Peters, J. Genetic Variation, Cellular Distribution and Ontogeny of Sorbitol Dehydrogenase and Alcohol Dehydrogenase Isozymes in Male Reproductive Tissues of the Mouse

and there's plenty more where these came from.

HONEY HOUSE REGISTRATIONS



The time for thinking and stalling is past. It's time to do something about it. That means making formal application to have your premises examined and licenced as a food processing plant. The effective date was April 1 of this month. Health Inspectors are busy going around the Waikato now. Even if they've visited your place last year you still have to apply for a licence.

The wax moth was expected to cost USA beekeepers over \$4 million in 1976!



AND HOPEFULLY THE LAST?

Misprint in the Timaru Herald article on the effect agriculture spraying had on bees said "It is the first time in 22 years that Mr F Bartrum has been killed because of spraying"

ORDER YOUR FOUNDATION EARLY

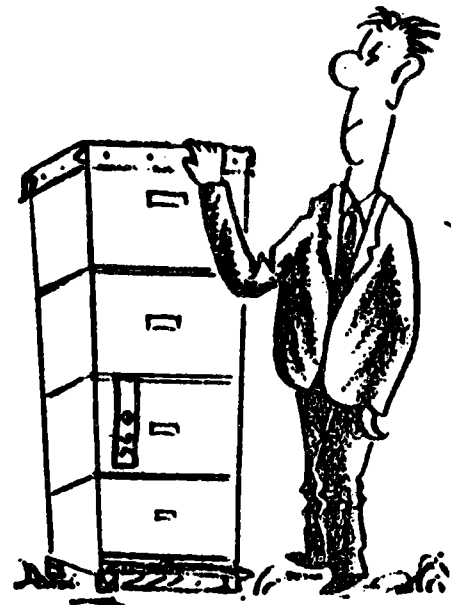
I was talking to Kevin Ecroyd at the Southland Field Day last February. It looks like a penalty payment will be charged for all late ordered foundation. There is no real excuse for not sending your wax away early for conversion.

The same applies to ordering frames and supers, especially from the Disabled Citizens in Bryant Road or Tonjaq Industries, Corner Vialou and Rostrevor Streets - both in Hamilton.

TIMBER!!!

There's no such thing as a cheap honey box but a good source you might like to try is the Frankton Box Factory at the Frankton Dairy Co., Hamilton. The Manager is Stuart Moffat and the foreman is Peter O'Brien. The timber is box grade but what I've seen of it, it is very acceptable.

They cut to length only - you have to rebate and cut hand-holds. The timber is dressed to 21 mm. They don't cut around knots so some of these end up on edges but they usually throw in a number of extra sides to make up for this.



And now for the good part. At the moment FD supers are \$1.20 and $\frac{1}{4}$ depth 75 cents.

Buzz sends this one to the Accident Compensation people.

Hickory Dickory Dock
The mouse ran up the Clock
The Clock struck One
And the other two Escaped
Multiple Injuries

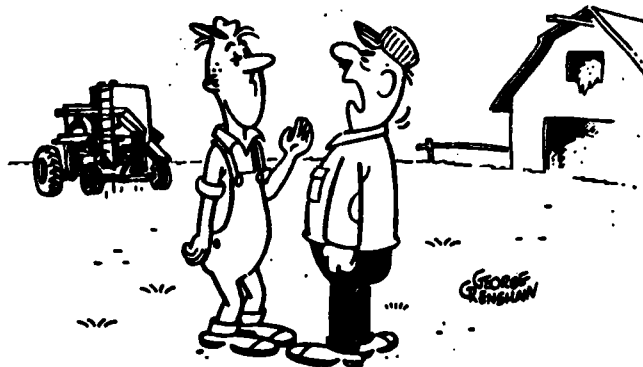
I TOLD YOU SO

For those of you who read the fine print in the newspapers, or between the lines, the recent price rise in sugar came as no surprise. The government always waits until after the golden queen peaches have finished before increasing prices.

It looks like the price has gone up by about \$15 a tonne.

As a matter of interest Business week from September last year stated that world prices had fallen from a high of US\$1,267.50 tonne in 1974 to US\$203.70 at present. The USA was the worlds largest consumer using 11 million tonnes out of a total world consumption of 90-95 million tonnes. That would feed an awful lot of bee hives!

I hope you had a restful Easter and don't forget the next NBA meeting which is your AGM. Put a ring around April 27 in the Conference Room, MAF building, Anglesea Street, Hamilton.



"I DIDN'T CALL YOU A PERFECT IDIOT JONES, NOBODY'S PERFECT"

7.

STOP PRESS

I have just received a reminder of two Business Management Courses being run for beekeepers at the MAF Farm Training Institutes at Telford and Flock House.

Both courses are the same. The course content is:

Management and Management Planning

Recording Systems

Cash Recording

Bookkeeping - principles and interpretation of a set of accounts
and how to use accounts as a management tool

Budgeting - planning, interpretation, requirements, gross
margins

Taxation - minimising taxes, income equalisation

The Telford course (South Island) is scheduled for June 11-13
and the Flock House (North Island) course for July 2-5 1979.

If there are insufficient enrolments the Flock House course
will be cancelled and participants asked to attend the Telford
course.

The tutors will be Trevor Bryant, Apicultural Advisory Officer,
Gore and Vince Cook, Apicultural Advisory Officer, Oamaru plus
MAF farm advisers and other experts.

The course will be very practical and a fairly intensive one.
Participants will be expected to be able to use, and to bring,
a calculator with them to the course.

And as a last thought, if you can't or don't want to go, then
consider sending your wife!