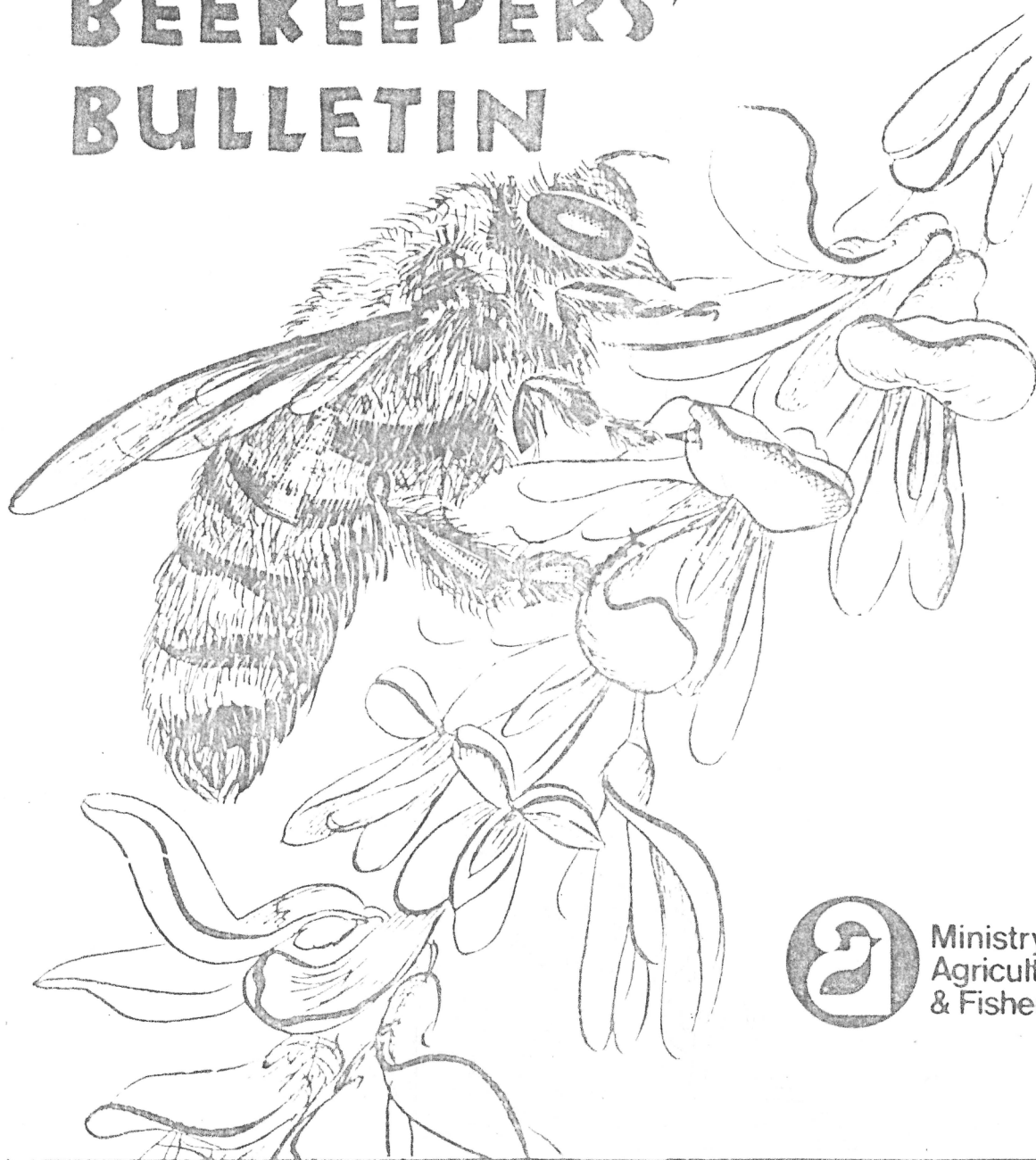


THE BEEKEEPERS' BULLETIN



Ministry of
Agriculture
& Fisheries

Edited by -

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In the last issue of "The Beekeepers' Bulletin"
I asked for your comments, contributions or
criticisms. All the reaction that I received has
been favourable, so I will assume that the Bulletin
fulfills a need.

I apologise for the poor quality of the first issue -
the office photocopier was on its last legs! It
has since been repaired and hopefully this issue
will look better.

---oOo---



B.L. AGAIN

Disease levels so far this year are well down on last year's record incidence. Hopefully this reflects a true reduction in the disease, and not just less reporting of it.

A lot of cases have been caused either by failure to check the brood nest before harvesting honey or, surprisingly enough, by failure to recognize the symptoms. This can easily be overcome :

- make sure that you are not harvesting diseased honey supers
- become thoroughly familiar with the symptoms of the disease. Information pamphlets on AFB are free for the asking at M.A.F. offices.

There is always the problem of hives in unregistered apiaries, which can be quite a source of disease. It is in your interests to report these to me, so that I can check them out.

AND AGAIN....

While on the subject, a word about eradication methods. The Apiaries Act requires that "proper measures" be taken to eradicate B.L. and control its spread. The only officially sanctioned methods are :

- burning of all diseased bees, combs, honey, appliances, etc., or ;
- burning of all diseased bees, combs, honey and prompt sterilization of any appliances in good condition by paraffin dipping. The paraffin should be hot (160°C or 350°F) and the gear should get a good ten to fifteen minutes.

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A NEW BOILER

While up north recently, I heard about (but unfortunately didn't manage to see) a new type of boiler which is made by Bosca Industries Ltd of Hamilton.

It is a "ripple-flow" steam generator, designed to produce low pressure (35 kPa/5p.s.i.) steam for agricultural industries such as beekeeping, and it burns any type of fuel - coal, wood waste, sawdust, etc. I have a Bosca heater in my house with which I am very impressed.

It is extremely efficient because of the secondary air injection, and can be damped down for periods exceeding 24 hours. If the boiler is of the same standard, then it would certainly be worth looking at.

The address : Bosca Industries Ltd
 P O Box 5494
 Frankton
 HAMILTON

Your contact : Mr Potter.

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MICROENCAPSULATED PESTICIDES

A new menace to beekeeping is looming on the horizon. With the demise of DDT and other organochloride insecticides, many more organophosphate compounds are being used. They degrade very rapidly and present fewer environmental problems than the old types of insecticides.

However, they are extremely dangerous to handle, and because of this, someone came up with the bright idea of encapsulating them. Briefly, this means that fine droplets of liquid are enclosed in tiny polymer spheres, which are only 30-50 μ m across (1 μ m is one-thousandth of a millimetre). This small size means that they can be applied as a liquid with normal spray equipment, but are still safe to handle. Following application, the water evaporates and the chemical, usually methyl parathion, evaporates slowly through the walls of the capsule.

All well and good. But no-one remembered that 30-50µm is the size of pollen grains, so of course when bees come across the microcapsules in flowers, they pick them up and pack them into pollen balls along with the pollen.

The pollen is returned to the hive and stored, and the parathion (an insecticide) is slowly released, killing the colony. Not only is the colony destroyed, but the hive equipment may be contaminated for some time.

Protection for beekeepers is currently being formulated in those States in the U.S.A. where microencapsulated insecticides are in use. None are necessary in New Zealand at present, and our present legislation should give a good deal of protection if microencapsulated insecticides were ever introduced. At the moment, its one more overseas menace that we can do without.

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TREES FOR BEES

You probably don't have much spare time at the moment for reading. But here's a suggestion for the next wet Sunday afternoon :



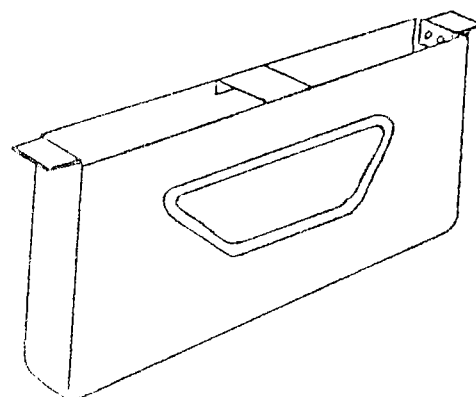
"Trees, Farms, and the New Zealand Landscape"
by George Stockley.

Published by the Northern Southland Farm Forestry
Association, Dipton, Southland.

It contains 220 very readable pages about the place of trees in the landscape, choice of species to plant, collection and treatment of seeds and cuttings, transplanting, establishing shelter belts and woodlots, etc. And he even gives the bees a mention!

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PLASTIC BEE FEEDERS



New on the market, designed by a Waikato commercial beekeeper, these plastic division-board feeders are made of ABS - the type of plastic that refrigerator linings are made of.

The two halves are bonded together, and each unit is tested for leaks before leaving the factory. I have had one on trial in one of my queen-raising hives this spring, and found it very good. They hold 4 litres of syrup (or dry sugar).

The address : Olifin Products
 P O Box 10 217
 Te Rapa
 HAMILTON

Price : \$3.30 ex store
 (Discount on order over 100)

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IDENTIFY YOUR APIARIES

In order to assist the M.A.F.'s disease control supervision, every beekeeper is issued with a code number, which he is required to display on ALL his out-apiaries. There are quite a few beekeepers who don't do this, which makes my job and the job of the part-time inspectors all the more difficult.

Have you got all your yards clearly identified? If not, why not? Could you please make an effort to bring this up to scratch. If you don't know your ID number, ask me.

And while on the subject, one of our officers recently spent a day in court watching the Police (unsuccessfully) trying to bring a charge of theft against a beekeeper. This beekeeper had a few apiaries filled with an assortment of gear - different styles of manufacture, different types of gear, in short; different owners.

His explanation was that some had been washed down the river in a flood, and some had fallen off the back of a truck (yes, really!). While the Judge accepted that there was some gear that the beekeeper couldn't adequately account for, there was not enough evidence to convict him.

The moral of the story is - IDENTIFY YOUR APIARIES!

At least paint your ID number on your boxes (it's yours, it won't change) or preferably brand it into the boxes (and frames).

A MIXED DIET

It seems that the European Economic Community has ended up with a mammoth surplus of sugar. And when I say mammoth, I mean just that. Current estimates are about 2 500 000 tonnes of sugar stockpiled around Europe.

Because of the very harsh 1978/79 winter, sugar is in great demand by apiarists. The EEC sugar mountain managers see this as an excellent way of reducing the stockpile, in fact they have subsidized the sugar for bees by 20c per kilogram.

This is all well and good, but of course some bright sparks thought of buying the cheap sugar and using it themselves, instead of giving it to the bees. That is no good for the starving bees, or for EEC sugar policy which is designed to make consumers pay high prices for sugar, to help their sugar beet farmers.

So the sugar is being adulterated, to prevent its use by humans. This is done by adding powdered garlic, which obviously wouldn't make it taste very nice in your cup of tea. However, it has a rather drastic effect on the bees' digestive system, as you might imagine, so charcoal is put in to counteract the effects of the garlic.

The EEC can expect to unload about 15 000 tonnes of charcoal-and-garlic flavoured sugar, at a cost to the tax-payer of about \$NZ3 million, which is just a drop in the bucket when compared with the total budget for the sugar mountain - \$1000 million. I think that I'll stick to our ordinary, Fijian sugar!

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INSPECTION RETURNS

Please send these in promptly, if you haven't already done so. Delay with these prevents an accurate assessment of the disease situation, and means that a reminder has to be sent out. Cost to you (the taxpayer) of at least a dollar per throw. Multiplied by hundreds of beekeepers in New Zealand, and this represents a lot of wasted money!

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THE NEW SEASON IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER. AFTER LAST YEAR'S EFFORT, AND AN INDIFFERENT SPRING, I JOIN WITH YOU ALL IN HOPING FOR A BETTER ONE THIS YEAR.

TAKE TIME FOR A BREAK OVER CHRISTMAS - AND THE COMPLIMENTS OF THE SEASON FROM ME.

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