

NO. 9  
AUGUST 1980  
*Teaio Aho*

**waikato  
bee  
notes**



Ministry of  
Agriculture  
& Fisheries



Well, another conference has come and gone. I wasn't there for all of it so I can't really comment on the proceedings. However, one important point to emerge from Warren Hutchinson's talk, during the MAF Seminar that preceded conference, had some rather far reaching implications. Warren is the Honey Grader employed by the HMA.

He didn't give any details but it seems that a sizeable shipment of South Island honey from a number of beekeepers has been, or is likely to be, rejected by the Japanese because they found residues of drugs in some of the drums.

Warren didn't specify which drug was found but no one, as far as I know, feeds expensive Fumidil B to honey producing colonies for nosema control. So that would seem to narrow the options down to the drugs usually recommended overseas for controlling AFB.

This is perhaps rather timely in light of discussions at the last Waikato Branch meeting in the McMeekan Centre. Attendance at the meeting was rather poor, but one of our members, who had just returned from a trip to the USA and Canada, wanted the MAF to carry out trial work on the efficiency of drug feeding to control AFB.

I wasn't in favour of such a project on the grounds that we already know drugs will control (but not cure) AFB. Under New Zealand conditions where the AFB disease has not had a chance to become resistant to the drugs, I suspect we would achieve 'remarkable' results. However, within a number of years of a continual feeding program we would be in the same situation as many beekeepers are in now, in Alberta, Quebec, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Virginia, Delaware, Connecticut, Maryland and probably other states as well, where they are resorting to expensive ethylene oxide fumigation to try and assist in controlling AFB.

Trevor Bryant wrote about the disease situation in Alberta in issue No.14 of the Apiarist. I suggest you re-read what he had to say on Page 3.

The problem with a drug feeding program lies not with the efficient, intelligent beekeeper, who feeds the correct quantity of drugs at the right time, and unfortunately, our beekeepers travelling overseas only talk to this type of operator. The problem arises when insufficient quantities of the drugs are fed leading to resistant strains of AFB developing. This problem would be compounded in New Zealand where there are a lot of hobbyist and part-time beekeepers operating apiaries alongside commercial men and hives are forever changing ownership and location.

Unfortunately we can also create a marketing problem by feeding too much of the drugs and at the wrong time. In this case residues will be found in the extracted honey. Sensitive, and valuable markets like Japan, will simply reject any shipments found to contain drug residues and they make a lie to the often stated position in New Zealand that we do not feed drugs to control AFB.

And while I'm on the subject, the problem of AFB affects all of us either directly or indirectly. I mentioned in my Waikato Bee Notes No.7 some of the bee disease certificates required by countries such as France, Italy, Queensland, W Australia, Spain and Portugal.

These often require us to certify that the honey was produced in disease-free hives and all the hives within a certain radius (your neighbours hives as well) were apparently disease-free.

With more and more beekeepers and companies exporting honey and beeswax the beekeeper must be much more careful to note which extraction line came from what area. You must do this if you think there is the slightest chance of any of your crop being exported to the countries or states listed above.

Remember this information is still required even if you don't physically export your own honey. Remember too that your colonies might be clear of AFB but other colonies within the same area might not be.

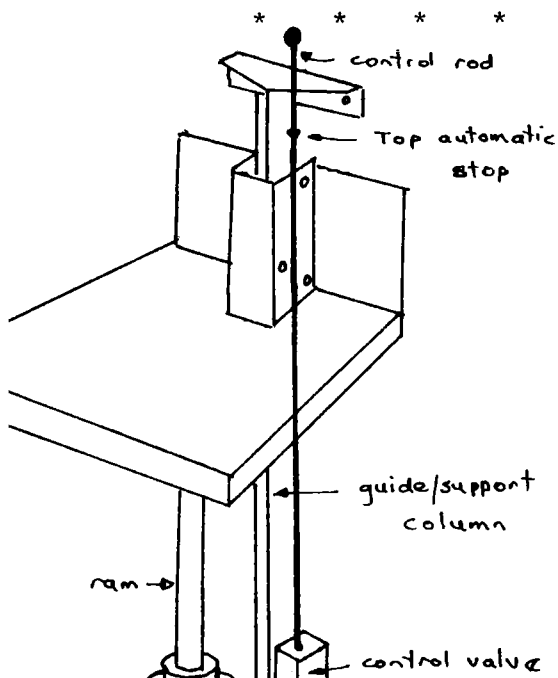
You can probably avoid the problem by not reporting any AFB disease (although it is a legal requirement to do so) and unless part-time inspection work had shown any problems you would get a signed phytosanitary certificate. But then what happens if your honey is analysed for AFB spores by the importing country. Germany is one country I know of that has analysed honey and no doubt there are others. What happens then? Well, I'd suggest you (or your agent) run the risk of having your shipment rejected because it didn't conform to the certificates. Also the credibility of the Honey Grader's signature on the certificate would be called into question.

So the message is, as always, report cases of AFB straight away, take steps to erradicate the disease and if your honey is likely to be exported code your extraction runs so the apiaries from which the honey was taken can be identified if need be.

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Chiropractors speak the Kinks english.

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### ALLEVIATE ELEVATION PROBLEMS

In the beekeeping business there is often no way around the old problem of bending and lifting. However, there's no excuse to carry on doing this in the honey house and extracting room in particular - unless you like bending of course. There is a range of equipment used by beekeepers to keep the pile of supers that are being uncapped, at a comfortable working height. Permanently fixed floor rams are operated hydraulically by oil

pumps or mains water pressure. Others favour the barrow type with forks that can be raised or lowered by a drum and cable mechanism. The electric motors can be either mains operated or powered by a car battery.

A Tauranga firm 'Elite Manufacturing Ltd', P O Box 3141, Tauranga, Ph: 83-758 makes an industrial service hoist with a maximum lift of 1 metre. The hydraulic ram is operated by mains water pressure. A pressure power pack is available where mains pressure is not adequate. Once installed operating costs are almost non-existent.

The price on the industrial service hoist is \$653.25 ex factory. The manufacturers supply installation instructions.

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At a recent trade show of the International Federation of Women's Travel Organizations held in Arizona, the British delegation's T-Shirt slogan was "*Close your eyes and think of England.*"



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2,4,5-T AND 2,4-D AGAIN

I was interested to read in a newsletter to beekeepers, put out by Alberta Agriculture, that these herbicides are not particularly toxic to adult bees. Scientists, including Palmer-Jones at Wallaceville, Dr Smith at Guelph Ontario, and others, have studied the effect of these chemicals on honey bees since 1946. Their general consensus is that under field conditions these chemicals present no serious threat to adult honey bees.

However, more recent research has been looking at what happens to these complex chemical compounds after they have been applied to the target area and how long this breakdown process goes on for.

The alarming thing reported in the Alberta newsletter, is that there is some evidence that 2,4-D may persist in honey and in beeswax for periods over 1 year. This could have implications for our comb honey exporters.

Another paper in a German science journal reported that they could not find any 2,4,5-T in honey produced by a colony during 10 days after spraying the area round the hive with 2,4,5-T. The detection limit of the method was 0.005 ppm and the daily acceptable intake for humans is 0.005 mg/kg/day. The paper didn't say whether flowering plants attractive to bees had been sprayed.

Buzz says, "*When in doubt, mumble!*"

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These letters don't mean anything, to me anyway. But if they were C183 they would tell me plenty, like whose hives I was looking at. Still confused? Persevere gentle reader and all will be revealed.

With all the publicity recently, in Waikato Bee Notes and remits to conference, on the problem of hive stealing, one of the most obvious deterrents to would be thieves is to fire brand your hives.

L W Jesson, 149 Springs Road, Hornby, Christchurch, P O Box 6051, Upper Riccarton, manufactures and sells a portable fire brand attached to a rock gas bottle. The full bottle weighs around 7 kg and is good enough for 20 000 brands on one fill. The size of the brand is shown in the heading and you can have 1 letter and up to 3 numbers.

Brand heads are made from heat resistant stainless steel and the unit takes 2 minutes from lighting to branding. The head could easily be attached to a drill press in the workshop to brand ends of supers or frames before assembling.

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Who says we've lost the art of walking. How else would we get from the house to the garage?

2,4,5-T has been used in New Zealand for the past 25 years. It is the most widely used herbicide in New Zealand.

## DISTILLATION OF FUEL ALCOHOL

*Or what to do with that batch of honey mead you put down last year!*

Recent amendments to the Distillation Act 1971 and Distillation Regulations 1977 now make it possible for beekeepers, and others to distil spirits for use as a fuel in vehicles. But there are many snags of course and here are some of them.

+ You must apply to the Inland Services Division of the Customs Department, Head Office, Wellington C.I. for a licence.



- + Approval is granted to individuals, or groups of individuals, to distil no more than 5 000 li per annum.
- + This must be for your own use as a motor spirit or a motor spirit extender ie blended with petrol.
- + Its going to cost you an annual licence fee of \$50 regardless of the quantity of fire-water produced.
- + You have to lodge a security of \$500 - and you can bet that won't pay any interest.
- + Your brew must be denatured according to a formula approved by the Comptroller of Customs - that means you can't drink it!
- + You'll need to keep accurate production records.
- + And some good news at last; you don't have to pay any excise or motor spirit duty on your brew; but - funny how there's always a "but" - this will be subject to review after 3 years.
- + You shouldn't have to pay the \$50 licence fee or the \$500 security until your application has been approved.

MAF has recently published an Aglink called Energy, Alternative Fuels. An introduction. It is number FPP 424.

Present day use of 2,4,5-T in New Zealand is in excess of 500 tonnes active ingredient per annum. This means that only 1 gm of Dioxin would be spread over 8 000 hectares in any one year.

#### TELEX BY PHONE

You don't need to hire a telex machine to send a telex message. You can use the Post Office to send your message to anyone of 3 000 subscribers in New Zealand or over 100 000 subscribers in more than 100 overseas countries.

You simply call "Telegrams" (or if you are dialling from outside a Chief Post Office area-dial tolls) and ask for "Phonatelex". The operator will mail you a copy of the message you've sent.



"WHO SHALL I SAY IS SOBING?"

At Chief Post Offices in Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, Dunedin, Palmerston North and New Plymouth, there are public telex machines where you can send your own message or hire an operator to do it for you.

The Post Office also has a Teltex service whereby someone can send you a telex message if you don't have a telex machine. The message is sent to the Post Office and they deliver the message by hand or by phone. Any Post Office can give you current telex charges but they are much cheaper than toll calls.

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*Politics is the diversion of trivial men: who when they succeed at it become important in the eyes of more trivial men.*

George Jean Nathan

## CEMENFORTIS

I collected this piece of 'Trade Information' from Kerry Simpson a couple of months ago.

Cemenfortis is a surface hardener for concrete floors, plaster, artificial and natural stone. Cemenfortis combines chemically with the free lime of the cement and with the particles of silica in the aggregate forming hydrated calcic-silicate. So now you know!



In practice the floor becomes so solid and hard that it is resistant to acids (honey has a similar acidity to vinegar) and moisture.

It is advisable to apply Cemenfortis to new concrete but old floors can be coated provided all oils, grease and paints are removed first. The product is applied by brush or spray gun. Two coats are recommended.

For honey house floors it would also be advisable to incorporate 1 part Cemenfortis to 10/15 parts of the gauging water. Surface coatings are also needed.

Cemenfortis is manufactured and distributed by Joseph Nathan & Co Ltd Ph: 73-303 Hamilton. It is available in 5 li (\$11.35), 20 li (\$24.15) and 210 li drums (\$149.44).

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Buzz, heard this one in the office the other day. *"There was a one armed Irishman hanging from the rafters. Do you know how to get him down? Wave to him!"*



MAF has another recent Aglink on "Rodents in Factories and Stores. Significance, Prevention, and Control." This time the number to ask for is FPP 333.

A word of advice from a beekeeper the other day: if you're thinking of buying stainless steel milk vats from the Dairy Co's, better be in quick. Feeding colostrum to calves is catching on in the Waikato and dairy farmers are buying "our" vats to store the colostrum in. This is the milk from the first 4 days after calving.

#### PUBLIC LIABILITY INSURANCE



I hate to be a scaremonger but a report in the May issue of the Commercial Grower (a horticulture journal) had this to say.

*"Rural fires can cause financial ruin to land owners ..... .. without adequate public liability cover."*

The article went on to quote recent cases where landowners faced large bills to fight fires in their districts even though the fire didn't reach their properties.

I imagine the situation would be much worse if you'd started the fire. And there can't be many commercial beekeepers who haven't had a small, or a large fire, at some time in their careers. So how about checking your insurance policies now.

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## NEW PUBLICATIONS

The New Zealand Farm Forestry Association is now putting out an official journal on a quarterly basis. It is called the "N.Z. Tree Grower" and is published by Modern Productions Ltd, P O Box 3159, Auckland. The annual subscription rate is \$4 year.



The other publication that all beekeepers should have is "The N.Z. Farmers Guide to Financial Planning" by C.R. Latta. It is published by R. Lucas & Son Nelson 1979 131 P.

This book sets out to bridge the gap between working farmers and professional financial advisers. A range of farming topics is covered from "getting started" right through to "retirement".

The author covers such vital topics as taxation incentives, accident compensation, sources of finance, estate planning, Matrimonial Property Act, record keeping, using accountants and many more.

Ralph Latta is a Chartered Accountant in practice at Hawera where he specializes in farm accounting. He is used to communicating with farmers and his book is designed to turn farmers 'on' not 'off'.

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## OBITUARY NOTICE

It is with much regret that I have to report the sudden death of Iain Forbes, Deputy Director Horticulture. Iain died suddenly from a heart attack while on holiday in Hawaii. We received notice of his death last Thursday, August 14. Iain had not enjoyed good health for a number of years but at the NBA Conference in Tauranga he declared himself to *"be in good shape provided he took things carefully."*

As a Deputy Director of Horticulture, Iain had responsibility for the Apiary Section and many policy decisions affecting the beekeeping industry. He was also Chairman of the Apiaries Advisory Committee - a committee which makes recommendations to the Minister on the toxic honey areas.

He had a good understanding and appreciation of the role apiculture plays in the farming scene and particularly the horticulture industry. Our industry has lost a good man.

*Murray Reid.*

G M Reid  
Apiculture Advisory Officer