

NO. 18

MAY 1983

**waikato  
bee  
notes**



Ministry of  
Agriculture  
& Fisheries

For once market prices, costs and competition don't seem to be overriding topics of conversation. "What else is there to talk about?" you ask. I guess it's no secret. The one major concern is who has some honey to sell and who hasn't.

The overall picture still looks like a 2.5 to 2.75 tonnes/100 hive average, with a large range from 2T to 6T/100.



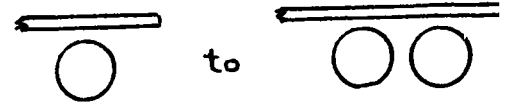
So what does this season mean for beekeepers:

- \* The overall crop average wasn't too bad although some of our members are in a serious financial loss situation. However, we can't call it a disaster, so relief funding from the Rural Bank, as beekeepers in Southland have available, will be more difficult to get. My colleague in Southland estimates the crop there as 0.5T/100 hives.
- \* If you have a Rural Bank loan then the bank may extend the term of the loan. In other words, they may waive repayment of principle for the past year but you will still have to pay interest. They will also expect you to have called on your trading bank or other financial sources first.
- \* The real problem is not being able to borrow money to tide you over, it's how to service the extra loans. I'm afraid I don't have any magic wands to help there.
- \* Because of the poor to average seasons we have been having lately and the nature of some beekeepers development programmes, the Rural Bank are taking a close look at our industry. It may be harder to get loans from them in the future. In short, I think we've lost our triple A rating!!
- \* Pollination of kiwifruit and other horticultural crops must seem more attractive.
- \* Nodding thistle saved many of us this year. I'll come back to these last two points later.

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#### QUOTABLE QUOTE

*"An optimist is one who would say "my honey is half full".  
A pessimist say's "my honey tank's half empty!!".*



HAYMAN - REESE STRETCHPACK SYSTEM

This is probably not the season for many of us to be spending a lot of money on capital items, but you may be interested in this system that is used a lot in Australia.

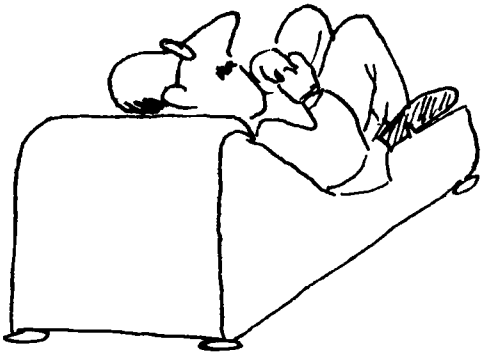
Basically the kit consists of an unpowered auxillary axil that bolts on behind the drive axil, without any cutting or welding. Also included are load springs shock absorbers, mounting towers and all attaching parts.

Unfortunately the Stretchpack doesn't increase the payload of your vehicle only the deck area. Its main application would be for more fuel efficient utes, and small trucks.

If you require any further information, contact Transport Equipment Division, Motor Specialities Ltd. In Hamilton, the telephone number is 82 999.

And the price; \$2500-\$3000. It may be cheaper to invest in a tandem wheeled trailer!

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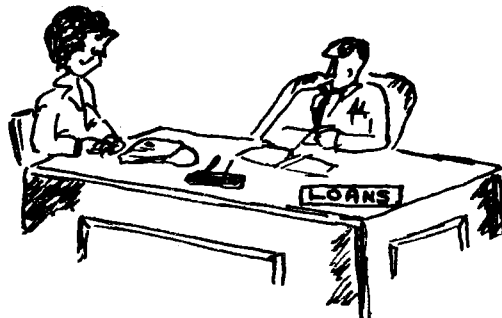
The crop's all in and the hives are wintered down - right? - and thoughts turn to holidays, repairs and maintenance, conference, bank managers, accountants .....? But what about exercise? Most of us get "bad backs" because we don't toughen up, or exercise between bouts of hard work. Mark Twain had a delightful quote that I identify with, but I know I shouldn't, and you shouldn't either!

*"Whenever I have the urge to exercise, I lie down until it passes"*

### HOW TO SURVIVE ANOTHER YEAR!!

Here's a check list -

- \* Borrow more money. That's the easy part. Perhaps you can service the loan now, but what if next year's crop is down too??
- \* Do a cash flow forecast. Budgets are even more essential in bad seasons than good ones.
- \* Prune expenditure - particularly capital items. R & M on hives can wait for better times as well.
- \* Buy cheaper sugar. The NZ Sugar Refinery has now offered fine liquid sugar for sale at \$80 tonne cheaper than equivalent dry weight. I wrote about this in Bee Notes No 11 May 1981.



*".... and then there's my Bonus Bond which is bound to come up any day now ..."*

We are also looking into industrial sugar that is over \$100/tonne cheaper than bagged AI. The breweries buy this. I'll keep you informed of progress here.

- \* Send someone in the family out to work!
- \* Try and find some nodding thistle sites or kiwifruit pollination contracts.

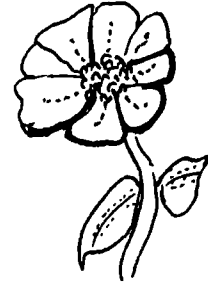
### KIWIFRUIT POLLINATION

At a recent discussion group, some beekeepers were adamant that KF pollination wasn't economic. Others just sat back and smiled.

It's true that managing colonies for pollination requires different management skills and shifting hives when daylight saving is upon us compounds the usual problems of trucking bees. But on the credit side you get \$48 (or more) per hive, you can guarantee and budget on that and the money is usually paid before Christmas or early in the New Year.

The price freeze has fixed the pollination fee at \$48/hive. Most of you who attended the pollination seminars know how that price has evolved. It's Arataki's price and they have costs, especially labour, that most of the rest of you don't.

Let's look at them again -



ARATAKI 1981  
(Estimated)

Extra farming cost/hive	\$4.00
Extra feed - sugar or honey	5.00
Shifting hives to depot *	3.50
Shifting into orchards	3.50
Shifting out of orchards to depot	3.00
Shifting depot to outyards	3.50
Agents fee, overheads, etc	5.00
Loss of honey (20 kg)	25.00
	<hr/>
	\$52.50

\* Less \$3.50 if hives coming from the restricted zone.

Assuming you don't have to pay an employee's wages then the only extra cash costs you have to meet (before you receive your pollination fees) are really petrol and oil for the truck.

Preparing colonies for KF pollination is no different than preparing them for a honey crop, except that some hives are too strong by mid November and need the extra bees and stores taken out of them. Weaker colonies would be boosted at the same time. If these weaker hives were being prepared for a honey crop then they might not receive this extra attention. If they are going into KF orchards they must receive it.

On a round trip from the Waikato to the BOP then, what does your truck cost to run? I'd suggest \$1-\$5 per hive; you won't have an agents fee either only 10-50¢ per hive for toll calls. Most Waikato beekeepers don't have bush sites and its doubtful if hives would gather 20 kg of honey off the buttercup between mid November and mid December; half a box at the most.

So our total cash outgoings look something like -

Extra feeding and management	\$1.00 per hive
Shifting (in and out)	8.00 per hive
Loss honey (10 kg) at \$1.30 harvested and extracted	13.00 per hive
	<hr/>
	\$22.00 per hive

You can argue about these figures but the paper difference of \$26 gives you a lot of margin to pay the true running costs of the truck, repair and maintain hives, and so on. The main point is that you have generated a surplus of cash when it's needed most. You have money to settle those accounts that crowd in around Christmas time.

But please member the ground rules of pollination -

- \* Register your sites (especially if going to the BOP).
- \* Use the insecticide map system operating in Te Puke and Tauranga.
- \* Don't enter the business lightly. The kiwifruit growers don't need "here today - gone tomorrow" types.

**BEE FARMERS vs BEEF FARMERS!**

*A beekeeper has to make his bees happy in order for them to make more honey.*

*A farmer, on the other hand, ends up killing his stock even when he loves each animal.*

*Dr Koeniger*

NODDING THISTLE SITES

Noddies saved a number of Waikato beekeepers again this season.

Pressure for sites is growing and a lot of agro is being generated between some beekeepers. Provided your sites are registered, I don't enter the argument, but I hate to see the problem occuring.

While I'm talking about sites, I am getting a lot of registrations from South Auckland and BOP beekeepers for sites in the Waikato. With the advent of urban sprawl and KF orchards, these beekeepers are going to be looking more and more to the Waikato for apiaries.



### The Realities of being a Beekeeper

*"When I was young, I had few hives and lots of theories. Now, I have lots of hives and no theories."*

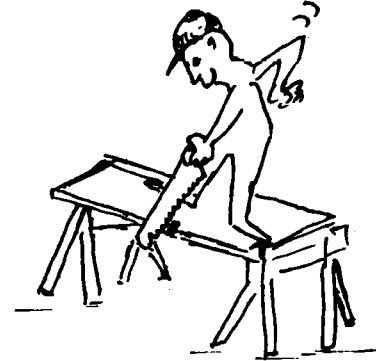
Anon

#### AND YOU THOUGHT YOU HAD PROBLEMS !

A survey of South African beekeepers revealed that their hives suffered a lot of problems we don't have.

For instance, the beekeepers listed the following as rather serious:

Greater and lesser wax moth, branded bee pirate, yellow bee pirate, ants, fork tailed orango, European bee eater, Alpine swift, other birds, small hive beetle, large hive beetle, EFB, starvation, theft and insecticide poisoning.



In the "occasionally serious" category they listed:

A Tachinid fly, bee louse, bee scorpion, badgers, baboons, Natal green snakes, night adders, toads, beetles and moths.

"WHEW!" What a list. But no AFB. Still, I don't think I'd swop all that plus extremely stroppey bees for a few problems we have in NZ.

*Source: B Buys. 1981. A Survey on Honey Bee Pests in South Africa. South African Bee Journal 54(4).*

#### DISCLAIMER

*"Mention of any proprietary product does not imply endorsement by MAF or recommendations over similar products not mentioned".*

By the way; I don't always check out the manufacturers or agents for products I tell you about. It's still up to you to carry out the usual procedures,

- viz - investigate the company and their products
- get quotes in writing, if possible
- negotiate guarantees or warantees
- complete the contract (by handing over some money).

STRIP DOORS

I kid you not, that's what these things are called, and I think they're great, especially in a large honey house or factory where fork lifts are running around all the time.

Basically the "doors" are strips of clear PVC plastic that overlap each other. You can see through them, push or drive through them, yet the agents claim they keep out draughts, dust, birds, noise and flies.

The "Strip Doors" can be used either for external or internal openings. The Wavespan strips are the thinnest and are reinforced with nylon. They are used mainly for internal doors. Both Wavespan and the thicker non-reinforced Clearstrip are suitable for temperatures ranging from -35°C to 50°C.

If you want more information - contact G Nelson, Manager, Ampex Industries Ltd, 110 Waimairi Road, Christchurch. (P O Box 6066). Telephone: 45 395.

AMPEX STRIP DOORS

Door	Interior 300 mm wide Clearstrip 50 mm overlap 3 mm thick	Exterior 300 mm wide Clearstrip 100 mm overlap 3 mm thick	Interior 200 mm wide Clearstrip 50 mm overlap 2 mm thick	Interior/Exterior 300 mm wide Wavespan 100 mm overlap
2.0 m high 0.8 m wide	\$78	\$98	\$67	\$46
3.0 m high 2.0 m wide	\$279	\$337	\$244	\$157
3.0 m high 3.0 m wide	\$415	\$498	\$365	\$234

These examples of prices include freight and insurance. A metal fitting is not supplied with Wavespan as it can easily be attached by the purchaser.

*If you're in Hamilton, call in at Ellis and Burnands on Anglesea Street. They have several of the Clearstrip doors there.*



### POLLEN ALLERGIES

Many people are allergic to pollen. Usually they just sneeze their heads off; like me. But, severe reactions can occur occasionally when people eat pollen. One such case is being argued in the USA right now. A customer reacted to eating pollen and had to be hospitalized. He is now suing the seller as there were no warning notices on the containers.



I've told you before about this problem with propolis, yet people still sell both pollen and propolis with no advice that it could be dangerous to persons who are allergic to such products. It doesn't take much to put a precautionary notice on your labels.

*Source: American Bee Journal. March 1983: 229.*

*One of our members does most of his beekeeping with a utility and only uses the big truck for taking honey off and supering up.*

*One day, one of his farmers, who had only seen him in the ute, struck up a conversation during which he enquired how our beekeeper harvested his honey,*

*"Do you bring a big truck and suck it up like milk?"*

### HONEY CROP INSURANCE

The Alberta Beekeeper's Association has introduced a crop insurance scheme for their members. It will be administered by Alberta Agriculture's Hail and Crop Insurance Corporation and the Agriculture Department will pay the administration costs and half the premium costs.

Beekeepers must have at least 200 hives and the crop coverage will be determined by the individuals 5 year average crop yield or the 5 year average for the district.

Premiums are based on the percentage cover desired (70% or 80%) and on an area rate which is lowest in the South and highest in the North where the risk of crop failure is greatest. Beekeepers have been lobbying for ten years to get this scheme.

You can get more information by writing to Ed Patching, General Manager, Alberta Hail and Crop Insurance Corporation, Lacombe, Alberta, Canada. Telephone 782 4661.

I think a few beekeepers wished we had such a subsidized scheme operating here. Why not find out about it and ask the NBA to follow it up with Government.

*Source: American Bee Journal. May 1982: 334.*

### DROUGHT RELIEF OZ STYLE

The Victorian Apiarists Association applied to their Minister of Agriculture on September 3 1982 for relief from the severe conditions they were facing. They had a reply on December 29 1982 acknowledging the importance of their industry to agriculture and their problems.

Then came the relief in the form of -

- \* Concessional finance for carry-on purposes funded through the Rural Finance Commission, at approved locations.
- \* 50% subsidy on sugar.
- \* Interest rate subsidy schemes administered by the Commonwealth Government in Canberra.

*Source: The Australian Bee Journal. March 1983: 4.*

Some beekeepers I know are a little stiff necked when it comes to direct Government subsidies, but the situation regarding subsidised sugar may have some merit.



Seven and a half year old son came home the other day after doing a school project on insects; in his case bees.

"Dad," he said " if we get honey from honey bees, why don't we get butter from butterflies?"

I'd be interested in any replies you might have. I gave him the old standby - "Go and ask your mother!"

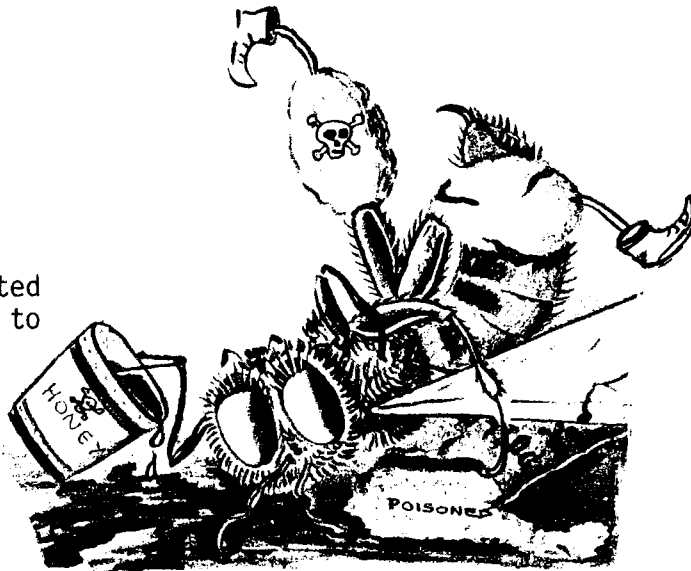


PESTICIDE REGULATIONS 1983

These came into force during March of this year. Clause 14 is the one we are interested in, because this is the part that helps us to protect our bees. It says -

" Use of insecticides toxic to bees

- (1) This Regulation applies to every pesticide in respect of which the label approved by the Board bears the words "Toxic to Bees".
- (2) No person shall apply any pesticide to which this regulation applies, otherwise than
  - (a) In accordance with a permit issued by the Director-General; or
  - (b) In accordance with the warning appearing on the label.



There are seven label warnings for each group of pesticides such as "Do not allow spray to contact plants in flower if they are attractive to bees" or "May be applied to plants in flower if they are attractive to bees, only in the evening when bees are not working" and so on.

These regulations will be administered by the Field Officers in the MAF.

The other half of the story with these Regulations is that all pesticides will have to be registered for a particular use. This means, for example, that the manufacturers of methyl bromide & Phostoxin will have to register their chemicals for controlling wax moth.

They will also have to apply to the Health Department (who administer the Poisons Act) to establish a residue tolerance for honey if they wish to promote their product for use with comb honey. I keep saying "they", but to make sure we have legal access to these chemicals beekeepers should see that the manufacturers do their bit too.

In some districts, Hastings for example, the Health Department are making beekeepers sit examinations under the Fumigation Regulations, if they wish to use registered poisons. I mentioned in my first newsletter back in May 1978 that this was coming. So don't be surprised if the exemptions from these regulations we have enjoyed for so long are withdrawn.

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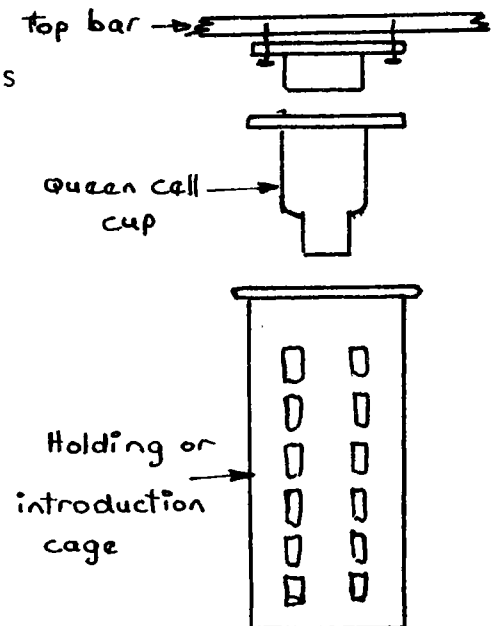
*Another optimist: "I see light at the end of the tunnel";  
His pessimist friend replies "Its only a train coming".*

TRADE TABLE

- \* Stephen Mahon, Ceracell Foundation Ltd, Box 204, Warkworth, Phone 7032, is prepared to handle your wax from the damaged reject comb stage through to foundation. He would like an indication of who would be interested in this service as he will have to build a "lean-to on the lean-to".
- \* Febflex Hyband: This is a self-adhesive flashing band that can be used for flashing or repairing roofs, gutters, glazings, chimneys or pipe wrapping. Febflex comes in 50-60 mm wide rolls, 10 m long in aluminium or metallic grey. It's made of aluminium foil backed with an adhesive bituminous/polythene layer. You peel and stick. I've used it in pouring rain and it still worked!! Available from J J Nathan.
- \* Bee boxes: See Bryan Evans, Telephone 66 523 Hamilton. Full depths \$4 to \$4.50 depending on quantity. Bryan can't hold these prices much longer as he's used up his "mother-load" source of timber.

Joseph Lane of NZ Beehive Supplies, Box 460, Taupo would also like to quote for boxes and frames.

- \* Stephen Mahon sent me an interesting little plastic cage the other week. Well, actually its more than a cage. The base, or male part, is nailed to the grafting bar, a female queen cell cup fits over this, and a 5 mm long plastic perforated sleeve fits over the cup. These sleeves would be useful to contain virgins if your queen cells were due to emerge and you couldn't get them out in time. To complete the unit there is a candy plug to cap the queen cage so it can be used as an introduction cage. These units would be very useful for beekeepers working with AI in queens.



OVERSEAS

- \* The Australian and US bee journals are full of letters from beekeepers on marketing matters. In America the argument wages over whether the Governments, Commodity Support Corporation, should be buying honey. Most say it should because it will pay in 1983 \$NZ1.79 - \$NZ2.05/kg. Beekeepers supply drums on a no return basis and pay freight which brings the price down somewhat.

However, something like 40,000 tonnes have been purchased by the Government and over 41,818 tonnes of cheap foreign honey imported to date. The Government is supplying some of its crop to the school lunch programme and selling some of it at cut rate prices to packers.

- \* European buyers are waiting with some anxiety to see how the US Government disposes of its crop. Consumption is reported to be down by 15-20% in Europe.

\* Meanwhile US beekeepers are demanding higher tariffs on imported honey. As of June this year all honey into the USA has to bear a country of origin stamp. This applies to foreign honeys blended and packed in America. It remains to be seen what this will do to honey sales or importing patterns.

Source: *American Bee Journal*. April & May 1983

\* Honey Import Tariffs

The United States has a MFN tariff rate of 1 cent per pound on natural honey. Comparable import tariffs in some other honey trading countries are -

Hong Kong	.. .. .	0
Canada	.. .. .	1.5 cents per pound
Australia	.. .. .	2% ad valorem
Saudi Arabia	.. .. .	3% ad valorem
Kuwait	.. .. .	3% ad valorem
Malaysia	.. .. .	(approx) 11 US cents/lb
Singapore	.. .. .	(approx) 11 US cents/lb
European Community	.. .. .	27% ad valorem
Argentina	.. .. .	28% ad valorem
Hungary	.. .. .	30% ad valorem
Japan	.. .. .	30% ad valorem
Bahamas	.. .. .	32.5% ad valorem
Turkey	.. .. .	50% ad valorem
Romania	.. .. .	50% ad valorem
Mexico	.. .. .	50% ad valorem plus 2% export promotion surcharge plus 1.50% port improvement surcharge
Venezuela	.. .. .	60% ad valorem plus 3.5% port surcharge if arriving by air
China	.. .. .	80% ad valorem
Bulgaria	.. .. .	100% ad valorem
Brazil	.. .. .	Prohibited

Tariffs change from time to time so this list should not be considered definitive. The actual tariff that will be charged can be determined only by the importing country.

Source: *USDA Foreign Agricultural Circular, Honey, March 1982.*

\* \* \* \* \*

ANOTHER BUMPER STICKER

"UNEMPLOYMENT IS NOT WORKING".

CONFERENCE SEMINAR

The pre-conference seminar on July 26 promises to be full of interest. The theme will be "Pollination and Biological Control". We've arranged speakers from MAF, DSIR, and the industry to talk about pollination of legumes, and kiwifruit, and the marketing of pollen.

Perhaps the most lively topics will be on the DSIR's biological control programmes for the German wasp, and their work on "weeds" such as broom, Californian thistle, gorse and yes - on nodding thistle too! Can you afford not to be there???

\* \* \* \* \*

That's all from me for now

I'll leave you with this comforting thought from Rev. Schuler -

"TOUGH TIMES DON'T LAST - TOUGH PEOPLE DO."

Cheers

*Murray.*

G M Reid  
Apicultural Advisory Officer