

**waikato
bee
notes**

NO. 19

August 1983

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Ministry of
Agriculture
& Fisheries

Another Conference is now over and as usual beekeepers will be thinking of the coming season. It was very evident at Nelson that the format of future conferences and associated MAF seminars will need to be changed. Many of the remits put forward could be handled at Branch level or directed straight to the Executive.



John Scott, the Deputy Director for Advisory Services Division (ASD) of the MAF loosed off a couple of barrels at the industry near the end of the Conference seminar. In a nutshell, he was saying that the main role of ASD is to increase export income and that should be the goal of the beekeeping industry too. He said there should be greater liaison between MAF and the industry with beekeepers and executive giving a more positive guide to how we in MAF can assist your industry. Mr Scott also thought the industry should be seen to be involved in 'strategic planning' rather than 'fire fighting or crisis solving' exercises.

He said that while the industry had pulled together well in Southland with the poor honey crop and in the Bay of Plenty to get an exemption from the price freeze for kiwifruit pollination, these were really examples of 'crisis solving'.

Strategic planning, on the other hand, involved what some of us rather irreverently call 'navel gazing'. This exercise is an ongoing one and involves assessing our historical development, our current situation, our plan for the short-term and long-term future, how we're going to get there and what resources we need to achieve these aims.

The industry, under Paul Marshall's guidance, held one of these exercises some years ago and another one was planned for Flock House but never eventuated. The NSW beekeepers, advisory and research staff, have just been involved in such a planning workshop last month. It's probably time for our industry to have another in-depth self-examination now that the HMA-Co-op issue has settled down.

I believe it's time to promote our contribution to the agricultural and horticultural scene, especially to MP's and Government. We seem to grab the headlines in times of 'crisis', such as toxic honey poisoning, disastrous crops, and shortage of hives for kiwifruit. Does anyone bother to tell their MP's or the Minister for Agriculture when things are going well, or when new export markets have been opened up, for example.

The beekeeper who has no time to support his association is like the man who is chopping wood and says he's too busy to sharpen his axe.

Alberta Beekeepers Association Newsletter

SOME QUOTABLE QUOTES FROM CONFERENCE

"There's lies damned lies and statistics; then there's economists".

"The new term for the unemployed is, 'not work-ready'!".

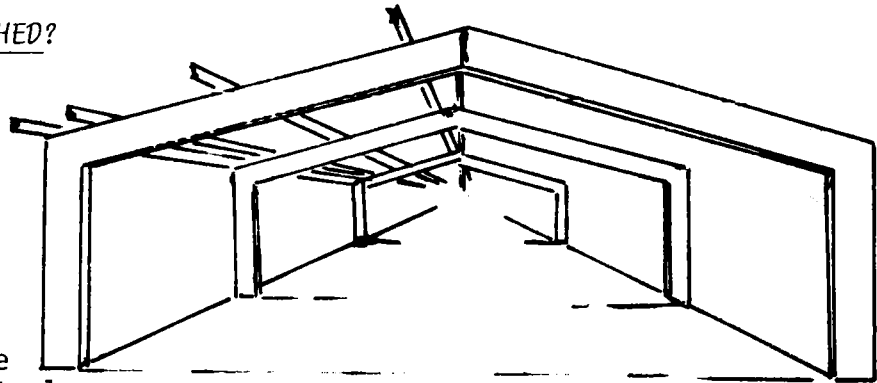
"I don't wish to labour the point" - our man was talking to Mr Kidd, the National MP at the time!".

BUILDING A HONEY HOUSE OR SHED?

a) Plywood Portal Beams

Two of our members have recently built honey houses using plywood portal beams.

These are ideal for honey houses as they are cost competitive with steel or concrete portals, they are easier to erect and leave the 'ceiling' space free for high stacking or a mezzanine floor.



The usual range of spans is 9.6m to 30m, the range of spacings from 2.4m to 4.8m, and the range of wall heights is from 2.4m to 6.6m.

You should contact: Aitkenhead Building Supplies
PO Box 580
PUKEKOHE
Phone 85-047 or 86-534

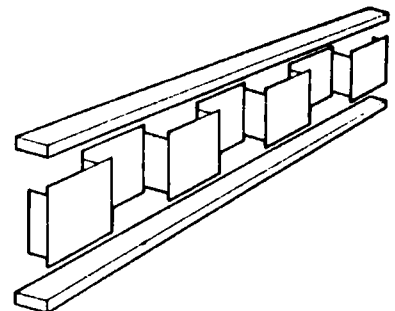
Or Henderson & Pollard Industries Ltd
Enfield Street
Mt Eden
AUCKLAND

Box 8551
Symonds Street
AUCKLAND 1
Phone 689-929

b) Scotweb Beams

An alternative to the plywood portal beams is the Scotweb beam made by McMillan & Lockwood Ltd, 15 Holmes Rd, Box 251, Manurewa, Ph 66-199 Auckland.

These beams will span from 10m up to 24m.



They are ideal for flat roofs but the span is usually limited to about 10m.

As you can see by the diagram, the beam is a mixture of heavy gauge galvanised steel and timber. The timber component means the beams can be easily fixed to any part of a structure, or they can be boxed in to meet with Food Hygiene Regulations.

I know of one honey house in Southland that used these beams and the beekeeper was very pleased with them.

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BUDGET NIGHT

This was dubbed by some as the "Clayton Budget". That roughly translated means the budget you have when you're not having a budget. Anyway, there wasn't a lot in it for beekeepers.

- * The investment allowance of 20% on qualifying plant and equipment was left in for another year.
- * Development expenditure provisions were unchanged.
- * Most farmers pay tax at the 31% rate and this has gone up to 31.5%.
- * Estate duty exemptions have gone up \$100,000 to \$450,000.
- * Residential land is now exempt from land tax.
- * Provision for transfer of property between spouses has been changed.

PUTTING IT IN PERSPECTIVE

I once quoted the statistic which showed the much lauded kiwifruit was worth the same as sheep intestines used for sausage casings, on the export market.

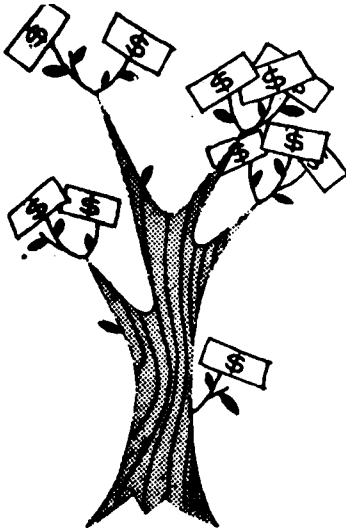
Kiwifruit is worth more today, but the whole horticultural scene still only represented 3½% of last years total agricultural income.

Reserve Bank figures report that for the export year to the end of September 1982, agricultural exports accounted for nearly 72% of our countries income.

The table shows the importance of the various industries.

TABLE 1 - INDUSTRY SHARE OF EXPORT INCOME

September 1982 Year



Meat	23.3%
Dairying	21.3
Wool	14.1
Other animal products (hides, tallow, skins etc)	6.4
Other primary products (Fish, fruit, vegetable seeds)	6.4
Miscellaneous	1.0
Forestry Products	9.1
Manufacturing	18.4

(Source: *The Exporter*, 4(8): 1982)

Horticulture earns New Zealand about \$200m per year and most of that comes from only two products; apples and kiwifruit. This sounds a lot but note, the estimated increase in export earnings from dairy products in 1983 is over 1½ times the TOTAL earnings from kiwifruit. Similarly, forestry earns three times more than the whole horticultural industry.

So why does horticulture (and therefore beekeeping) warrant such a high profile in the economy?

Well, for starters:

- * Horticulture is one of the most efficient forms of land use.
- * It is a labour intensive industry. In 1981 for example, horticulture produced 5% of the total farm income but employed 10% of those engaged in farm production and over 30% of the casual farm labour.

- * Horticultural products are being sought after as an alternative to animal products.
- * Horticulture provides an opportunity to diversify export markets and in most cases it is a growth industry.

"Prospects for Horticulture".

(Report by Economics Division - May 1983)

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MORE QUOTABLE QUOTES FROM CONFERENCE

- * *"What you're saying makes a lot of sense to me, which is why I can probably understand it".*
- * *The Mayor of Nelson, who had been saying he knew nothing about bees and blamed the industry for not promoting their industry enough; "Bees collect pollen and turn it into honey".*
- * *Mr Kidd, National MP for Marlborough (a lawyer); "What you need is a good lawyer".*

"We can't control inflation when we have to get elected every three years".

"I've never yet met a problem that can't be solved", aside "Try winning the next election!".

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THERE'S OIL IN THEM THAR PADDOCKS!

A new herb is blooming in Massey University's experimental plots, and the seed is expected to provide quantities of fine oil. This could be the beginning of a significant new cash crop for New Zealand farmers, if the American success with domesticated meadowfoam (it is a California wildflower) is repeated here.

The oil from meadowfoam (*Limnanthes alba*) can be adapted to take the place of special commercial oils presently in short supply (including that of the sperm whale, currently threatened with extinction). In addition, the meal residue, after the oil is removed, has been shown to have value as a nutritious stock feed when used in mixtures.



Meadowfoam is a winter-growing annual, preferring wet conditions, but the past dry spell does not seem to have been too detrimental, the scientists report. Plans now call for expanded field trials to see how the plant performs in other areas of New Zealand and in other seasons.

According to the Australians, who are also looking at Meadowfoam, honey bees tend to visit the nearest neighbour of the flower they have just visited. The bees tend to move in a forward direction and avoid flowers of another variety. This observation is important for plant breeders and any hybridisation program that may be developed.

Apparently the large white or yellow flowers are attractive to bees and surplus honey crops can be expected.

Source: *Waikato Districts Farmer*, December 1982: 25
Australian Beekeeper, December 1982: 121
F C Pellet, "American Honey Plants", *Dadant & Sons*: 245-6

MORE ON TREES FOR BEES

The Committee from our Waikato NBA, set up to look at encouraging County Councils, Valley Authorities, City Councils etc to plant more bee trees has been busy door knocking and letter writing.

In general, local bodies have been receptive as long as it won't cost them any money. In the mean-time the Government has given the go-ahead to the "Beautiful New Zealand" Scheme. They're kicking off with \$1.57 million for the 1983/84 program and with an extra \$600,000 for job creating and training schemes. This should employ 180 people right off the bat and rise to over 500 in subsequent years.

Spending for the 1984/85 year is budgeted at \$1.57 million of Government money and another \$1.08 million from the Department of Labour.

Several of our members from Te Awamutu area offered free willow trees to 'their farmers' if they would plant and fence them off from stock. The offer was well received. A number of farmers even chipped in and purchased a bunch of rooted cuttings themselves.

The tree movement is well under way in other places too, especially Canterbury, Otago and Southland. Local nurserymen in the Waikato are apparently colour coding tree labels suitable for bees and birds. Southland beekeepers went one better. They printed labels with a bee logo to give to their nurserymen. I'm sorry I can't reproduce the colour but take it from me, it would stand out - it's a bright yellow!.



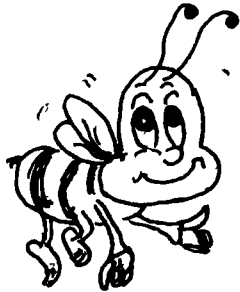
**AMENITY AND FARM SHELTER
TREES FOR BEES
SOUTHLAND/SOUTH OTAGO**



AUS 4891779
BRIT 8008502

Advisory Staff in the Gore office even composed a little ditty about bee trees.

"OWED TO A BEE"



*"Buzzy was a hungry bee
Because he didn't have a tree
No-one knows how bees can feed
Without the pollen plants they need.*

*So when you plan a shelter belt
Consider how poor buzzy felt
And plant some trees that bees can use
Or in the end we all may lose".*

Source: *Southern Beekeeper, July 1983*

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ESTABLISHING EUCALYPTUS

Here's a new Aglink type publication from the Forest Research Institute (FRI), Private Bag, Rotorua. Ask for Bulletin 107 1982, called "Establishing Eucalyptus". It talks about seedling production, site preparation, transport, planting, weed control and fertilisation.

And a couple of handy hints for protecting trees from rabbits, hares and other nasties:

The first from Australia, where a beekeeper recommends putting a used car tyre around young seedlings. The rabbits won't cross the tyre and it would probably help conserve moisture and heat too.

The second suggestion comes from Nick Ledgard, FRI, Christchurch. You mix up a brew of 10 parts mutton fat to 1 part kerosene and melt it in an old pot. Allow to set then mold into tennis ball sized lumps. The idea is then to coat one hand with the goo, grab the seedling and rub upwards with one motion. Don't be too liberal with the repellent or you'll burn the leaves.

So far FRI have used it successfully on eucalyptus and conifers only, so if you have another species try a few first. The upward rub also tells you if you've heeled the tree in firmly enough!

And one last tip. If you wear bare hands during this operation cancel all social engagements for the evening

HOW TO LOSE WEIGHT WITHOUT REALLY TRYING.....

	<u>Calories</u>
Jogging Your Memory	125
Beating around the Bush	75
Climbing the Walls	150
Passing the Buck	25
Throwing your weight around (Depending on your weight)	50-300
Wading through Paperwork	250
Sticking your neck out	175
Cutting Corners	200
Making Mountains out of Mole Hills	500
Dragging your Heels	100
Pushing your luck	250
Climbing the Ladder of Success	750
Wrapping it up at Day's End	12
Fiddling the Books.....!	500



STICKING THINGS TOGETHER

- a) I've two products to tell you about. One is a hot glue extruder made by Bostik. It is an electric hand gun that holds glue and chalking sticks, that can be used on cardboard cartons, wood, metal, plastics, ceramics, leather, polystyrene and polyurethane foam.

A bond is made within 15 seconds and the glue sets solid in 60 seconds. You leave the glue sticks in the gun until needed again. I've seen these guns in some beekeepers honey houses. They were using them for sealing cartons of packed honey and also cut comb.

Retail price is about \$30 for the gun and six glue and four chalking sticks.

- b) The other product is an electric staple gun made by Rapid. You're probably familiar with their ordinary hand operated guns, the Rapid 24 and 34. They also have a Rapid 11 stapling hammer for tacking carpets, lining packing cases etc.

Their new model is the electric Rapid 136 at around \$168. It would be very helpful to replace the tacks used when wiring frames, amongst other things. All these guns use the same Rapid 132 staples. The electric model will hold 84 staples with a 6-14mm leg length.

Ellis and Burnand in Hamilton have the Rapid range in stock.

WEATHER WATCH

So you thought we've been having a dry and mild winter! Well, you were right. Records at the Hamilton airport to August 16 show the following:

Rainfall this month to date 13.6mm
Average rainfall for August 117mm
1983 rainfall up until August 1 499mm
Average for January 1 to August 696mm
No. of frosts this month 5.3
Average frost for August 10.5

I wonder how many of you read the rather sobering article in the Herald of July 23, on the Walker Cell - that large mass of air in the Pacific that follows the shift in warm water called the El Nino or Christchild because the two forces usually arrive on the West coast of South America around Christmas time.

The Walker Cell and El Nino were responsible, amongst other things, for the draughts in Australia, the tropical cyclones in the Pacific, and the prevailing westerly winds we had all last summer.

The bad news is that El Nino is still there and not likely to subside until 1984-85. So my guess is that our coming season will be similar to last years - a dry spring, windy summer, draughts on the East coasts and probably wet and cold again in Southland.

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*On world affairs; "Why do I brutalise myself
by reading the newspaper each day?"*

Tage Johansson

TRADE TABLE

- * Andrew Cory has about 300 dry sugar feeders (top feeders) for sale. Andrew is also taking orders for supers. Phone Hamilton 63-634.
- * Len Baker will make division board feeders out of tin plate to order. Two sizes; one will hold about 4 litres and the other about 6-7 litres, and both are 80¢ each. You'll have to add the brackets, put the spacers and top rail in and wax. Phone Len at Gordonton 614.
- * Queen Excluders: John Walker, Fletchers Road, RD 1, Waimauku, Auckland is making excluders. He's a retired wire worker. I haven't seen his work nor do I have prices. Mr Walkers phone is Waimauku 411-8214.

New Zealand Beehive Supplies are also stocking excluders for \$6.40 each with frame. Phone Taupo 86-788.

- * Timber for bee boxes. Ellis and Burnand will sell you a packet of 238 x 20mm air dried boxing grade timber for \$1.42/metre. It's a good line of box grade. Ask for Bill Greene, Ph Hamilton 73-299. (There's about 80 boxes in a packet).
- * A request from Stephen Mahon and Lindsay Hansen. If you know of anyone who is expecting to buy a lot of foundation ex-stock from them, tell them to forget it. (Alliance Bee Supplies may be able to supply ex stock).

Judging by the number of new beekeepers or expansion programs being undertaken by beekeepers who won't have enough of their own wax, supplies of foundation could become tight later on.

Also advise your friends that even if they do have wax not to leave it too late to get it converted. You wouldn't make such a blunder of course!

- * The Disabled Citizens order book for frames is filling up. Don't leave it too late to order your supplies.

* * * * *

Buzz says "If everyone agreed with each other only one person would be doing all the thinking".

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POLLINATION

We think we're "big bickies" talking of 18,000 hives into the Bay of Plenty kiwifruit this year. In California (about the same size as New Zealand) there are over 500,000 colonies. In 1980 450,000 of these were used in pollination and another 150,000 came across the border from other states!

(*Australian Bee Journal* 64(4): 1983)

70 schools in New Zealand now offer horticulture courses. They operate on an annual grant of just over \$200,000. Schools in the Waikato include Hamilton Boys, Te Awamutu College, and Taumarunui High.

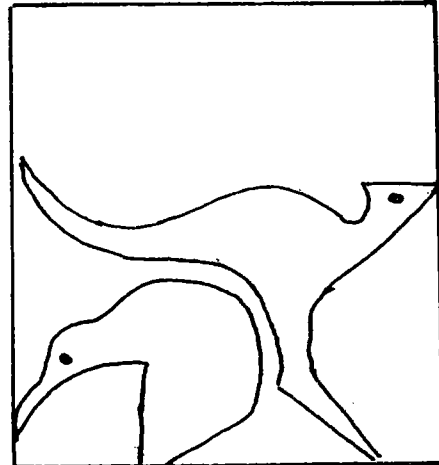
A BUM DEAL? (Saw this article in "Horticulture News 4(12): June 1983)

It has been suggested that Australia's Department of Trade and Resources should rethink the logo chosen for events surrounding the CER agreement.

Does this logo indicate that New Zealanders are getting the raw end of the CER deal? And do kiwis work with their noses to the grindstone while Australia's profits increase in leaps and bounds?

Is the bottom dropping out of Australia's export world, or is New Zealand getting a little behind in the deal altogether?

Australia could ruffle a few feathers with this logo, but then again, it may just be trying to "make ends meet".



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NEW ZEALAND POST OFFICE - NEW SERVICE AVAILABLE

They call it the Bureaufax Service. Basically it's long distance photocopying that can include correspondence, reports, legal documents, plans, logos etc.

The catch is that pages have to be A4 in size - that's the size of this page.

The charges are very reasonable:

First page	\$1.40
Each additional page	0.60
Delivery	2.70 (if required)

Bureaufax messages are delivered the same way as urgent telegrams are. You lodge your messages at the Telegraph Counter. Bureaufax Centres are located in just about every city in New Zealand, including Thames, Otahuhu etc. Some overseas firms have their own terminals and these can be accessed too.

For more information contact the Bureaufax Service Centre, Telegraph Branch, Chief Post Office, Hamilton, phone 391-099 Ext 655.

STATISTICS

Our annual statistics for the Hamilton region look something like this:

1-50 Hives			More than 50 Hives			Totals		
Beekeepers	Apiaries	Hives	Beekeepers	Apiaries	Hives	Beekeepers	Apiaries	Hives
586	803	3430	68	1805	37,327	654	2608	40,757

Our disease picture looks rather alarming at first sight but a significant number of diseased hives 'appeared' in one outfit after a change of ownership introduced more rigorous inspection procedures. Some of these figures should have appeared in last years statistics too.

	Diseased Apiaries		Diseased Hives	
	Number	%	Number	%
1982	71	2.7	110	0.27
1983	152	5.7	257	0.63
Total for NZ - 1983	758	3.5	1475	0.56

Our honey crop also took a dive but not as bad as Southland.

	Waikato (tonnes)	Southland (tonnes)
1980	1129	1035
1981	1043	940
1982	1465	975
1983	877	150 ($\frac{1}{2}$ ton/100 hives)

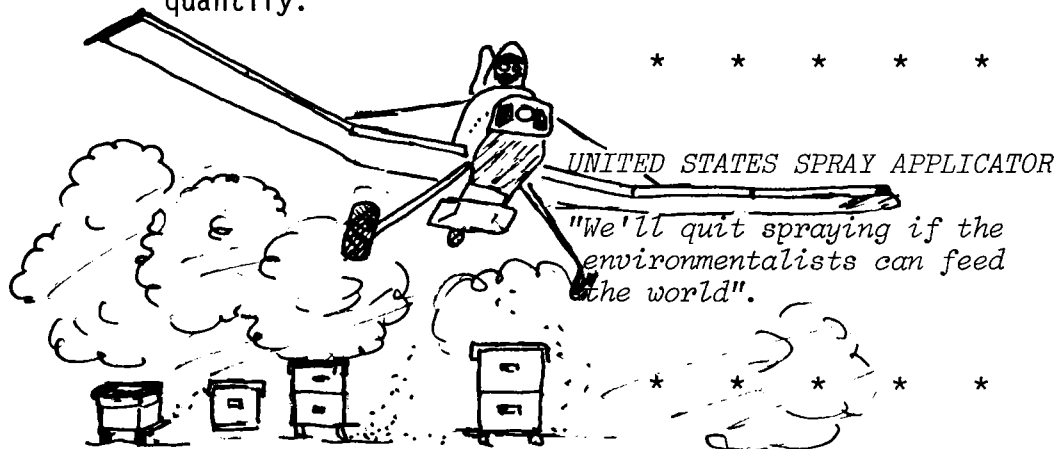
NECTAR AND POLLEN SOURCES QUESTIONNAIRE

Back in June I sent out over 60 questionnaires in an attempt to quantify the effect on beekeepers incomes from activities by foresters , councils, farmers etc.

Well, I know it was a difficult exercise but I received 21 returns, which is quite good.

Some 194 apiaries with around 4,600 hives were reported as being affected. This cost you an estimated \$20,300 per year in terms of extra sugar required or honey lost.

I'm sure the true cost is much greater but difficult, if not impossible, to quantify.



HONEY PRICES IN OZ

The price war continues across the Tasman. Minimum export prices approved for the 1983 export season by the Australian Honey Board are as follows:

Extra Light Amber (ELA) \$NZ 1.146/T

LA	1.113
MA	953
A	900
Dark A	873

Some producers have been having 'a go' at the packers reported margin of 18 ckg. The Board replied in the Australian Bee Journal 64(4) 1983 that the margin was not synonomous with profit and gave the following breakdown for export costs in 200 litre drums.

	<u>Cents per kg.</u>
Cost of drums	8.3
Labour	6.0
Storage	.2
Insurance	.2
Transport to ship	.5
Documentation, freight forwarding and port charges	.4
Interest on bank overdraft or repossession pooling while stock held	2.0
Export charge (levy)	.5
Research Levy	.3
	<hr/> 18.4

The agent's commission is 4% which, on a sale at around \$900 per tonne, represents \$36 per tonne or 3.6 cents per kg. The total marketing cost to the packer is therefore about 22 cents per kg. However there still needs to be provision for a profit margin.

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KIWIFRUIT POLLINATION

An increasing number of you will be involved with pollination this season. I guess involved is not the right word - I would prefer you to be committed (double meaning, not intended). The industry can't afford to have people in one year and out the next.

Martina Navratilova gave a "good" definition of the difference between involvement and commitment:

"Think of bacon and eggs", she said, "The chicken is involved but the pig is committed!"

Cheers

Murray.

G M Reid
Apicultural Advisory Officer

P.S - FINE LIQUID SUGAR

A group of beekeepers in our area have purchased the first shipment of fine liquid sugar (FLS) from the Sugar Refinery. It arrives in a bulk railway tanker, all 8.9 tonnes of it and it's your job to unload it as quickly as possible.

The syrup is very thick (about 65% solids) but it was soon emptied into 200 litre drums and sugar tanks on the back of a truck. As the syrup is so thick you'll need a good pump to move it. It will be difficult to dilute too.

The freight to Te Awamutu was around \$124 and the sugar cost \$650.04 per tonne (dry weight equivalent) compared to \$731 for AI. (Includes manufacturers discount). This works out at around \$124.56 per 200 litre drum including freight.

This sugar is quite safe for bee feed according to Wallaceville trials carried out two years ago. It certainly saves messy bags of sugar and the chore of "mixing your own".

