

**waikato
bee
notes**

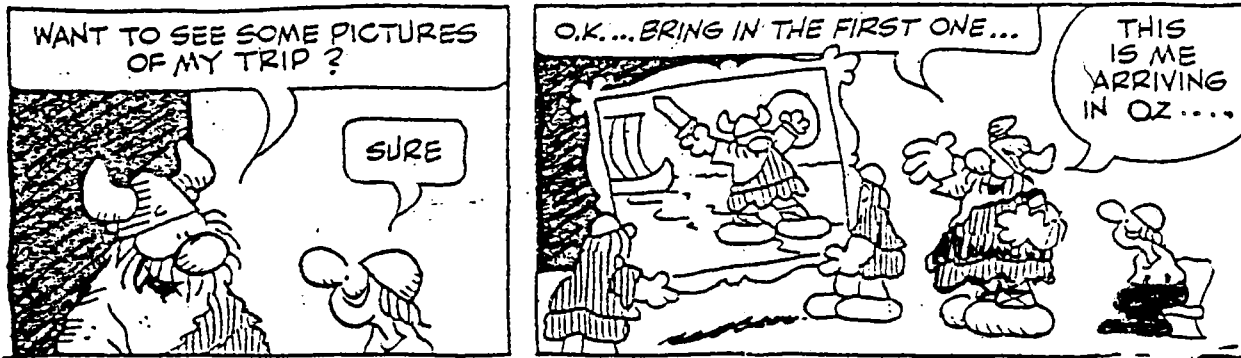
NO. 27

March 1986

- * Impressions of OZ
- * The Season So Far
- * Prices in Oz
- * GST: Register by 31 Aug
- * Wax Moth and Vapona
- * The Kiwifruit Scene
- * Trade Table: Heater Hose, Queens J Thomson, Auckland, Beehive Components, Plastic Wholesalers, Creosote/Preservit
- * EFB & Halfmoon - Comparison
- * New Loading Code for Truckers
- * Executive and NBA News
- * Overseas Honey Markets
- * Handy Hints
- * Quarantine Campaign



Ministry of
Agriculture
& Fisheries



As some of you know I was in NSW for a week in March with most of the other AAOs. We spent most of our time in and around Sydney making scheduled visits to:

- * the honey bee importation and quarantine facility at Wallgrove.
- * a gamma radiation plant where equipment infected with AFB and EFB can be sterilised.
- * the Honey Corporation of Australia's packing plant at St Mary's.
- * Hawkesbury Agricultural College to see their queen breeding and stock maintenance projects.
- * Wheen's queen breeding operation at Richmond.
- * Penders Beekeeping Supplies factory at Maitland.
- * Dr Hornitsky's lab at the Veterinary Research Station at Glenfield.

We also met with some of the local beekeepers at an evening function and spent an afternoon with the apicultural advisers from NSW. We'll be preparing a full report in due course, all or parts of which will be made available through the NBA to interested beekeepers. However, for me there were several highlights, such as:

- * seeing the gamma radiation plant in operation and being allowed into the heart of the radiation chamber to view the cobalt core. Naturally the core was "deactivated", by being lowered into a deep pool of water where it glowed with a most attractive and somewhat eerie blue colour. Beekeepers with a lot of foulbrood hives can bring the equipment to the plant in covered trucks and get them sterilised. It costs about \$7.00 a super including the empty frames. One side benefit has been the increased production from radiated hives. The cobalt rays kill all other lurking bacteria and nosema etc at the same time.

As an aside, some scientists in Russia found between 60 and 82 microorganisms per 100 cm² of hive surface. Many of these were bacteria, which along with viruses, probably sit around as inapparent infections just waiting for the right conditions to cause problems (Apiacta 1982 17 [3/4] 100-104).

- * spending a day with Dr Michael Hornitsky looking at EFB, making slides of EFB and AFB in his lab and having a general discussion on the disease and how they treat it. I'll say a bit more about EFB and half moon disorder later on.

* the Honey Corporation's packing plant was a most efficient operation with eight filling lines, for liquid honey only. I saw two operations there that caught my eye. One was the way they stacked cartons on pallets. They used to pack the cartons tight together on a pallet and cover with shrink wrapping. This was expensive at around \$4-\$5 a pallet and involved another operation. Now the cartons receive a squirt of hot non-tacky glue on their tops and are open-stacked on the pallet. The glue provides a non-slip surface so the cartons stay put and the gaps allow circulating air to cool the honey down much quicker. The price is right too at about 50¢ a pallet.

The other feature that intrigued me was "bag-in-the-box honey". Yes, it was just like an overgrown wine cask. They had a collapsible wooden and steel case built on a pallet. The honey was put into a thick plastic bag liner and a honey gate was supplied that when screwed into place pierced the bag. These containers were sold mostly to the bakery trade.

Some of you that have asked me about the trip have been more interested in what I got up to after hours! Well, I'm not going to tell you everything but I will admit to enjoying the scenery on Bondi beach and I even made a pilgrimage to Kings Cross - well three pilgrimages actually!

* * * * *

THE SEASON SO FAR . . .

Woe, alac-alas, despondency, gloom . . . Things aren't quite that bad perhaps, but what a disappointing finish to such a promising start. The story seems to be the same everywhere in the Waikato - the honey flow was on November-December with nothing much in January. Down Taupo way the flow came in February and there was still a shake out in late March when I was down there doing some BL checking.

Kiwifruit hives did nothing to half-a-box with an overall average looking like 3T/100. It may well finish up less than that. There seems to be more "unders than overs". The only bright spot has been good early sales, mostly for cash.



BUDGET

The word budget is being used a lot these days but the word comes from the French bougette, meaning a satchel or wallet for holding important papers.

It seems the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in the House of Commons, traditionally carries his papers in his bougette. These papers frequently announce new taxes, expenditures, bills etc. In short a budget. I just thought you'd like to know that!

* * * * *



"Well, I'm addicted. ... Have you tried Carol's sheep dip?"

PRICES IN OZ (all prices \$NZ)

- * Petrol was 65-68¢ li, diesel almost the same as here when road user charges are added and LPG was 51¢ li.
- * \$13-18 would buy an excellent meal at a BYO restaurant. Depending on the ethnic type chosen, this would be two-six courses. It didn't pay to look too closely at the kitchens in some of these places but we all survived.
- * Wholesale honey prices in drums 90¢-\$1.40.
- * Export prices f.o.b. white honey \$1646 to \$1770 tonne, extra light amber \$1550-1668 T and light amber \$1532 T.
- * Second hand car prices - you don't really want to know.
- * Mortgage interest rates around 13-15% when you can get them. Second mortgage 18-21% and OD about 18% I think.

Fuch's warning: *If you actually look like your passport photo, you aren't well enough to travel.*

Sir Vivian Fuchs

GST : REGISTRATION BY 31 AUGUST 1986

This is not likely to go away so start studying what GST is and how it works. You should have received a booklet through the mail on the subject and we had a talk on GST last year at our NBA meeting. Peat Marwick Mitchell & Co also put out a very good booklet (79 pages) that is free for the asking. It's called "The Complete Business Guide to GST". They have offices in Hamilton PO Box 929, phone 392-400 and PO Box 110, Tauranga, phone 85-179.

* * * * *

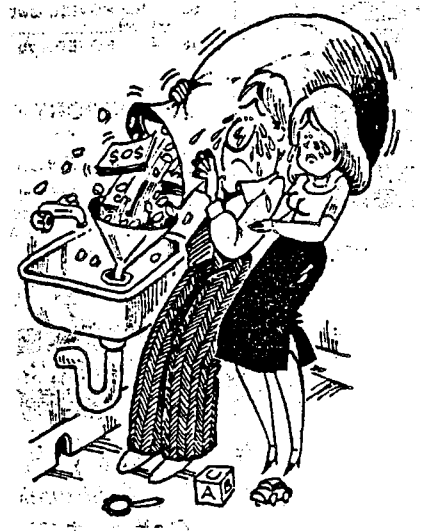
Daffynisn "A sweater is a garment worn by a child when its mother is cold".

* * * * *

MORE THINGS FINANCIAL

While we're still in the "financial mode", Mr Douglas has been having discussions with our Director-General and you can bet they weren't swopping honey recipes.

Our financial position is not clear as yet as there are all sorts of exercises being done on saving or earning money in MAF. However, we've been told at this stage not to expect anymore money than we had last year.



I'm very grateful to those of you who helped with part time apiary inspection work and didn't submit any accounts. I hope to be able to pay mileage next season if not wages.

* * * * *

"When a habit begins to cost money it's called a hobby"

* * * * *

WAX MOTH AND TOXIC CHEMICALS

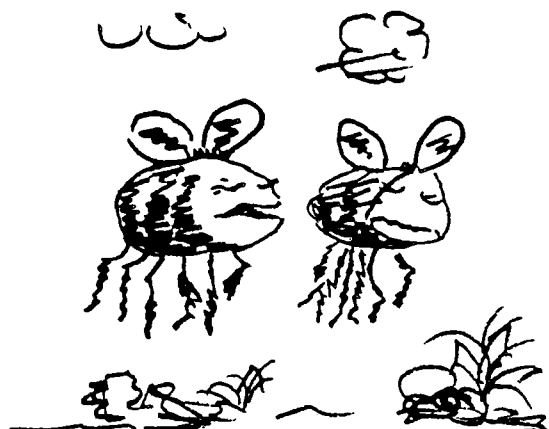
I've warned you all before about using insecticides such as Vapona and borer bombs to kill wax moths. These chemicals become absorbed in to the wax and will kill your bees when you put the boxes out. Well, I've just found another case where a semi-commercial beekeeper cum orchardist had taken off his honey and was all set to extract it. So far so good, except there were patches of brood and lots of bees still in the honey boxes.

Our friend didn't like this so he sprinkled some Vapona (dichlorvos) on to the concrete floor. Well, it killed the bees a treat but disaster struck when the extracted boxes were put back on the hives. What a mess. Out of 30 or so hives involved about six were completely dead, another 10 will be lucky to recover and the rest might just struggle through as nuc's provided the queen hasn't been killed. And all that took only two days.

The only safe chemicals to use on honey combs are pure methyl bromide (no chloropicrin added) ethylene oxide, cyanagas or PDB crystals. The first three of these are highly toxic to humans so don't use them unless you have the relevant licence or experience.

* * * * *

THE KIWIFRUIT SCENE



"Actually, I'm no longer a worker. I'm a pollination consultant."

* It was not a happy pollination season for a lot of beekeepers - or growers too for that matter. However, that does not excuse the behaviour of some towards the people at Fruit Federation who operate the pesticide map scheme. I can only hope that no Waikato beekeepers were guilty of the following:

- not notifying MAF or Fruit Federation when your hives were taken into and out of the orchards.
- not supplying a list of your orchards to the KPA for their monitoring work, ie if you are a member of the KPA.
- phoning Fruit Federation offices outside the requested hours, ie between 8.30 and 10.00 am and getting abusive when this is pointed out.

If we abuse the service the Fruit Federation people are kindly supplying for our PROTECTION then we will lose it. I know they are already discussing whether to hand it back to us or charge for their services. The ball is firmly in the beekeepers court on this one.

* The statistics for 1985 look like this:

<u>BOP</u>	Total pollinators	122	
	Total hives	30,690	*(25859)
	Total orchards	1,573	(1591)
	Av hives/orchard	19.5	(16.3)
<u>Waikato</u>	Total pollinators	23	(23)
	Total number of hives	1,053	(770)

*figures in brackets are for 1984.

* The fees ranged from \$55/hive to \$78 for any number of hives with a common average of \$72±3.

* I gave you what MAF AAOs consider to be a desirable minimum standard for a kiwifruit pollinating hive in my last newsletter. Andrew Matheson has elaborated on that in the autumn issue of the NZ Beekeeper. Read his article on pages 20-22 as well as the results of the Nelson survey. Similar surveys were carried out last season in Northland and to a lesser extent in the BOP and Taranaki/Wanganui areas.

* We found some AFB in kiwifruit pollination hives last year. Please mark your pollination units and keep good records of where they go, just in case you have to do a trace back operation.

* Kiwifruit was worth 172 million dollars in 1984-85 (f.o.b).

* * * * *

"If he said what he thought he'd be speechless"

* * * * *

TRADE TABLE

- * Nissan dealer service outlets are marketing a Shape-N-Fit heater hose kit. It's made in the USA and comes in three diameters 1/2", 5/8" & 3/4" and each section is a metre long. The hose has a spine wire plus spiral wire embedded in the rubber so it can hold its shape once bent. Sounds ideal for an emergency kit. Prices should be under \$20.
- * Queen bees and cells; call John Thomson, 18 Sunnyside Road, phone Hamilton 495-081. It's never too early to put in your orders for next season.
- * Beehive Components - Auckland have taken over some of the machinery from Taupo Beehive Components. The Manager is Theo Nieuwendyk (just ask for Theo!) and you can call him at Auckland 444-2739. Prices quoted at 1 March; full-depth and 3/4 Hoffman frames are \$54 per 100, less 2½% for orders in excess of 3000 frames or less 5% if over 10 000 frames.
- * Plastic Wholesalers (Waikato), 414 Te Rapa Road, Hamilton, phone 496-849 are agents for most of the plastic manufacturers including AHI. They can sell you plastic lids for honey jars and if you dicker enough you should get them for the same price as Renshaws in Auckland plus freight to Hamilton. The benefit to you is no delay. Your contact is John McCracken. John had a display at our 1985 field day at Geoff Ernest's place.
- * Creosote is back in a product called Preservit. It's being marketed in five colourfast colours by Carr Pountney & Co Ltd, 30-34 Fort Street, PO Box 232, Auckland 1, phone (09) 30-276 or 390-276. Dalgety's also stock it. However, its not advisable to use it on bee boxes as the smell can taint honey. If using creosote for floor boards leave them to weather for three to six weeks. Preservit comes in 10 li tins only at \$61.95 per tin.

"To err is human. To find someone to blame is genius"

* * * * *

EFB VS HMD (HALFMOON DISORDER)

Having been reintroduced to EFB while in Australia, I now feel more competent to tell the difference between the two in the field. Dr Michael Hornitsky from Sydney visited Dennis Anderson's lab at Mt Albert in March. When he saw our HMD he was so certain it was EFB, that wagers were made. I understand Dennis is still drinking the "proceeds". Anyway, I'll summarise my impressions of the field symptoms for you for these two problems.

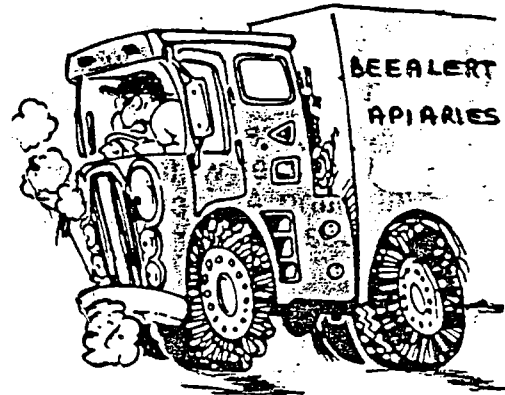
Description	EFB	HMD
Appearance of brood	Patchy, shot-gun pattern.	
Age larvae die	Die at about four days when coiled in base of cell.	
Colour larvae	Yellow-brown colour turning brown as dry into loose scales. Scales can be removed.	
Air tubes or trachaea	Trachae stand out as network of white threads.	
Position of scale	In base of cell or twisted up cell wall, may be around lip of cell.	In base of cell, also forms flattened halfmoon scale round cell wall and especially lip of cell.
Smell	Pungent and sour	No particularly offensive odour.
Other symptoms	Rest of brood normal.	Queens become drone layers and queen cells are produced. Can be cured by requeening.

As you can see EFB and HMD share many of the same symptoms. In HMD more flattened scales lie around the cell wall and especially near the lip of the cell and the colony eventually becomes a drone layer. In EFB there is a very distinctive pungent smell given off by young larvae affected by the disease. If you're in doubt about any sample give me a call.

Dr Dennis Anderson, DSIR, Private Bag, Mt Albert, Auckland is looking for live queens from hives showing symptoms of HMD. If you find any please send the queen and some escorts in a queen cage (with candy) to Dennis.

NEW CODE FOR TRUCKERS

From 1 February this year the MOT is enforcing a new loading code for truck drivers. The maximum fine is \$2000. If you want to read the full code send \$9.95 + \$1.05 p & p to Mail Orders Government Printing Office, Private Bag, Wellington and ask for "Truck Loading Code". Andrew Matheson tells me a girl on a bike was killed recently in Nelson when she got caught up in a rope trailing behind a truck.



I saw a half-depth or cut-comb box on the side of the Tahuna-Paeroa road the other weekend and Russel Berry had to collect one of their hives from the Rotorua-Taupo highway near Reporoa. Unfortunately the hive wasn't being transported on an Arataki truck at the time! So if anyone finds some Arataki hives or equipment where they "shouldn't ougta be" then please let Russel or myself know. In both cases these loads couldn't have been too secure.

* * * * *

It's not enough to just rope your load on your trucks. If you're shifting bees, especially in daylight, secure them too, with entrance closures and travelling screens or a truck cover. I get complaints every year about beekeepers with kiwifruit hives or honey on board, stopping for diesel or sandwiches and leaving a bunch of mad bees behind. Please be more considerate. The local resident beekeeper often gets the blame!

* * * * *

Foulbrood AND all that. *One of our members found a "foulbrood" hive recently by the not to be recommended method of olfactory detection. He lifted the lid, took a whiff and closed it up again to wait for my visit a few days later. Well, I lifted the lid and smelt a smell too but it wasn't foulbrood. The odour was coming from a dead mouse on top of the inner-cover! Blush, blush, red face, embarrassment . . . and another lesson learnt.*



BITS AND PIECES FROM EXECUTIVE AND WAIKATO BRANCH

- * Massey and Victoria Universities and Lincoln College are undertaking some market research on honey for our industry.
- * Executive and the honey packers are trying to establish a market reporting scheme that would be made available to branches.
- * Promotional material is being retailed in the North Island by Ashcrofts Honey House Ltd in Havelock North. A full list of what's available will be published in the autumn NZ Beekeeper.
- * A goodwill handout card has been prepared by MAF and Exec to give to passengers who have had honey or bee products taken from them at the airports. Unfortunately my newsletter can't show the card in colour but we'll have examples at NBA meetings. Exec has ordered 3000 for a trial run.

- * MAF and Exec are meeting at Flock House 19 and 21 May to update your industry plan. If you have any suggestions for objectives or action plans please give them to Tony Lorimer.
- * Being on executive and especially being President, is a rather thankless task and one involving a lot of sacrifice. Ian Berry is not standing for President again. Please give some thought to your industry and see if you can assist by standing for exec or taking an active role at branch levels. We've got our AGM on Thursday 24 April - the day before Anzac weekend.
- * Conference is in our region this year - 23-24 July with a MAF/NBA seminar or workshop on the 22nd. The venue will be the Travel Lodge at Rotorua.
- * We had a very informative and enjoyable field day at Tony and Jane Lorimers early in March. Thank's Jane and Tony for hosting us. It was also good to see the Wilson-Neil-Hororata team there with their hospitality tent. The venison steaks were magnificent. Hope you make it an annual event guys!

* * * * *

Did you know that . . .

Moths eat hardly anything except holes.

People who test eyes are called optimists.

Income is a yearly tax.

Magnets are little creatures who live in apples.

Coal fired power stations should be built in the mine fields.

* * * * *

OVERSEAS NEWS (ALL PRICES NZ \$)

* The USA continues to import large quantities of honey (over 98 000 tonnes so far) primarily from Mexico, Canada, Argentina and China with smaller lots from Hungary, Australia and central American countries. Prices paid for Canadian white honey range from NZ\$1.55-1.77/kg (f.o.b and drums included), for Chinese and South American clover \$1.79-1.87/kg, for mixed floral sources \$1.45/kg (at US point of entry, drums included and duty paid). American beekeepers have put 75 000 T of honey into the government loan programme at a top price of \$2.66 kg while local prices average \$2.07/kg.



"Hey! I can feel it — we're turning around!"

* World honey production in 1985 is expected to reach 965 000 tonnes, 2% above the previous year. World consumption is expected to be less than the production levels.

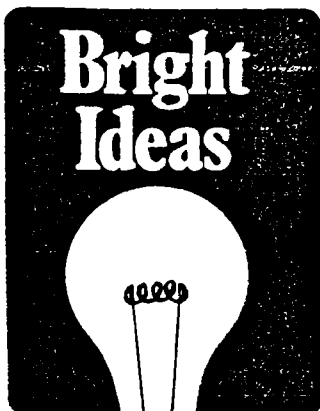
- * West Germany - 1985 production is estimated at 18 000 t, up 2000 t on 1984. Germany is buying 40% of her honey from E. Europe, especially the USSR and Poland.
- * Japan - large stocks on hand are expected to be reduced through 1985 while local production is down due to a wet season and decreasing hive numbers. Japan is buying most of her supplies from China, Argentina, USSR, Canada, Hungary and the USA. Average prices were China NZ\$1.71/kg, Argentina \$1.95/kg and USSR \$1.83/kg.
- * China - 1985 crop unchanged but exports have declined in recent years.
- * USSR is the worlds largest producer and was expected to harvest 210 000 tonnes in 1985, up 5% over 1984. Increase due to better weather and less damage from Varroa. Exports were expected to be about 25 000 t in 1985 with an average price of \$1.94/kg. Local prices however range from \$10.68/kg to \$18.22/kg. Beekeeping is seen as a profitable enterprise in the Soviet Union!.
- * Mexico - draught and the trachael mite have reduced the 1985 crop to 55 000 t. Output is expected to decrease further with the arrival of the African bee in early 1986. 26 000 t were exported during the first six months of 1985.
- * Canada - the honey loan programme in the USA is expected to curtail exports of Canadian honey to America as well as that of other countries. This honey could go on to world markets in direct competition to our New Zealand honey.

Summary

Honey sales to Europe could be difficult later this year and into 1987, especially if Western European countries and the new EEC members such as Greece have good honey crops. If Canada, Mexico, Argentina, Brazil and perhaps China can't export large quantities of their white honeys to the USA because of the honey Loan Programme, then these countries could become aggressive sellers on the Japanese, UK and West German markets, in direct competition with our honeys. But then I've been wrong before. Hands up those who remember my honey crop predictions based on sunspot activity!

Sources: American Bee Journal - January and February 1986
The Speedy Bee, March 1986

*A good beekeeper can go broke today
but a good business man should not.*



HANDY HINTS

I'm running a bit low on ideas for this section. If you have any tips or hints you'd like to pass on to your colleagues please let me know. Anyway, here are a few more.

- * To stop flashlight batteries going flat when not being used on a regular basis place a piece of cardboard or paper between the battery and the spring loaded end piece. The cardboard

stops the batteries discharging. If you do this tell your wife because she will try the flashlight, find that it's not working and go and buy two more batteries!

- * We all have tubes, jars or plastic bottles of glue etc that are next to impossible to undo once used a few times. Solution; run a coating of vaseline in the lid and hey presto, no more sticking. Also works on cans of paint.
- * One of our members recommends acrylic roof paint as being the best for bee boxes.

* * * * *

Sign of the times: Notice at a motel

"Because of inflation our single rooms are double"

* * * * *

PACKAGE BEE PRODUCTION

Our industry in the Waikato has seen a lot of dramatic changes in the past 10 years. First we had comb honey production, then kiwifruit pollination and now there are package bees and queen bees.

A number of you have been asking me searching questions on the package bee business that I'm not able to answer. Hopefully we will have a better idea of the market problems and potential after the season ends in May.

I want to hold a one day workshop sometime in June to bring beekeepers and exporters together and talk through these questions.

* * * * *

CAMPAIGN TO FOCUS ON RISKS

New Zealanders are to be made aware of the risks of bringing unauthorised plant or animal material into the country in an advertising campaign beginning next month.

Saatchi and Saatchi Compton is the agency handling the campaign for the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries.

Under the guidance of the ministry's Corporate Policy Group for Protection, the campaign will be aimed at air travellers. They will be urged to declare any items which could be animal or plant health risks.

Television and magazine advertisements will be used, especially in in-flight magazines. An article has been prepared for our industry. It's called "The case of the honey pot that nearly spread disaster through our kiwifruit crops".

It's the story of Mrs Hilda Hislop and her beekeeper husband who go overseas. Mr H is selling his prize queen bees while Mrs H is collecting pots of honey

and not thinking to tell her husband. Well, Mrs H takes the honey home and Mr H nearly has a heart attack when he finds out.

The rest of the story is about the effects of EFB on the beekeeping industry and the significance of that on the horticultural and pastoral industries. The story line is informative and mostly correct and the style chatty. I hope people will read it.

This is another example of MAF and your executive working together to promote New Zealand's bee health status and to try and get people to declare food stuffs on arrival in New Zealand. It's called VOLUNTARY COMPLIANCE! The slogan being adopted is "If you're not sure about it declare it".

* * * * *

This is the Mk II design of the card agriculture quarantine officers will hand out to passengers after they have confiscated their honey or other bee products.

It's mostly in yellow and black and is on stiff cardboard. It is designed to slip into a shirt pocket. The real version is slightly bigger than here.



If there's an account with this newsletter then your last sub has run out. It will cost you \$10 for the next four issues, ie to March 1987. That's my lot for now. Happy extracting.

Murray

G M Reid
Apicultural Advisory Officer (Hamilton)

STOP PRESS

I've just come from a meeting with the Regional Advisory Officer (RAO), Geoff Miller, in which he reported on the meetings between Mr Douglas and our Director-General. As I intimated before, the news is not all good and the picture is still somewhat cloudy. However, we do know that the Minister of Finance has told all heads of government departments to reduce spending or increase earnings. He's not just picking on MAF.

In our case MAF's budget was \$220 million last year and Treasury are going to reduce their contribution to \$90 million by 1990. In other words, we either have to save \$130 million or earn \$130 million by 1990, at today's prices. This is across the 11 divisions in MAF.

For Advisory Services Division (ASD), we have to hand back \$4 million initially, a sum negotiated last year. As well, we look like facing a 7.5% reduction in our 1986/87 allocation. We don't know yet whether our region will be expected to contribute 7.5%, it could be more or it could be less. Working on 7.5% though, we need to save or earn around \$200,000. We could save this by not filling staff vacancies but the RAO doesn't favour this move.

We have been looking closely at charging for services and have identified several options. At this stage we don't see charging for advisory services as one of our options. As far as apicultural servicing goes we are looking at cost recovery on the disease control - hive registration side. This, as you can imagine, presents all sorts of problems and I'm not personally in favour of this.

I feel your industry is contributing already to the running of its own affairs, even though ASD might not get much revenue from this. For example, you already pay for this newsletter, you pay for courses we run at the Technical Institute and BOP Community Colleges and you are financing Dr Anderson your pathologist at DSIR, plus some research projects.

I'll keep you informed on developments as they occur. In the meantime could I renew my plea to you to contact me if you want to involve me in any advisory or regulatory programme. I'm not flush with funds but I do have "enough" to go around and it certainly helps if I can plan ahead to use my allocation wisely.