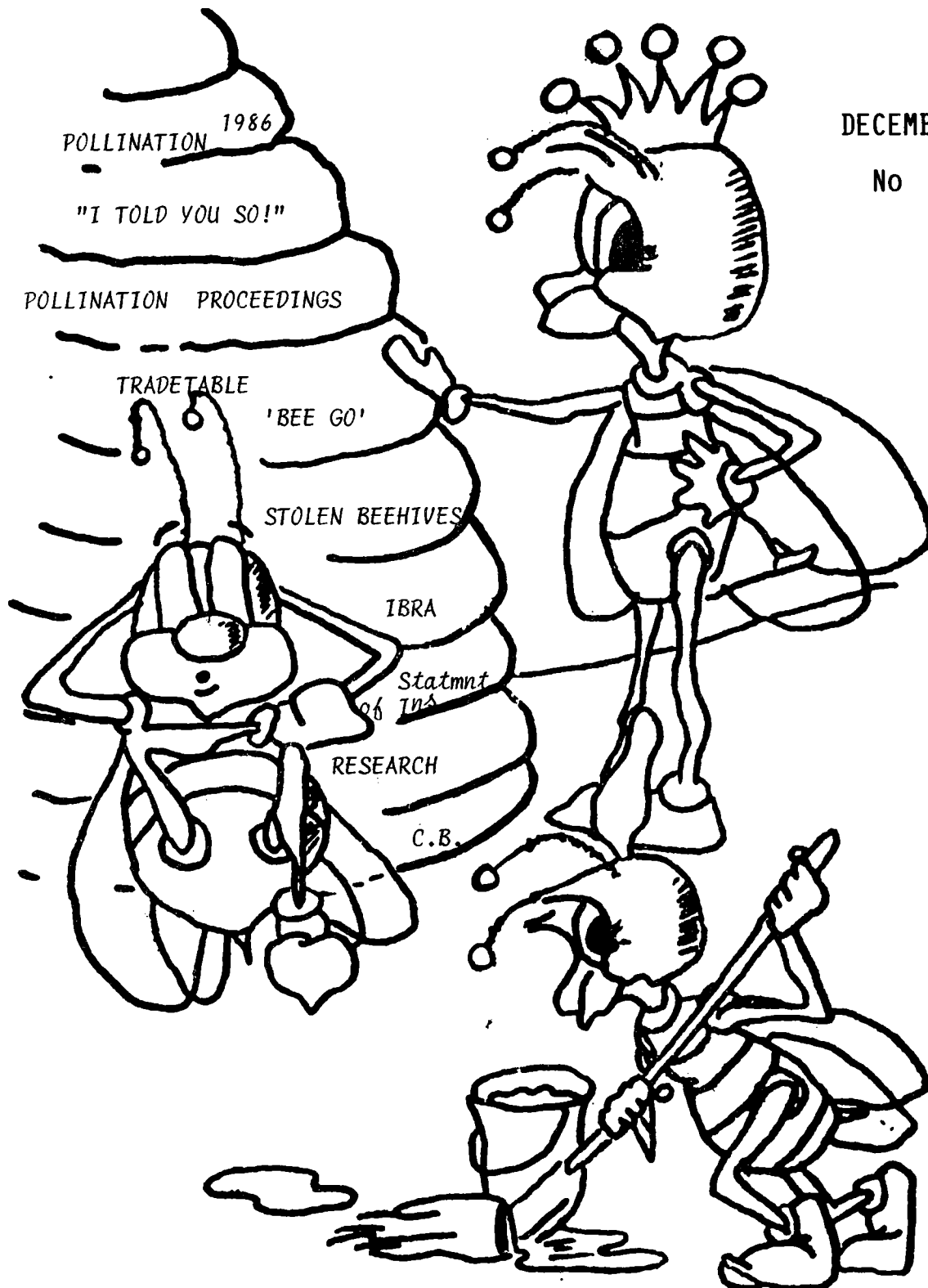


YOUR

NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 1986

No 39



Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries
Private Bag
Tauranga

Telephone: 82 069

T G Bryant
Apicultural Advisory Officer

Telephone: 65 962 Private

YOUR NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 1986

NO 39

1986 has been quite a year. Interest rates and the value of the NZ dollar have gone up and down and up like a yoyo. NZ Agriculture has been down but appears to have accepted change and is meeting the challenge and realities of the 20th Century.

Kiwifruit is once again the glamour crop and prospects for the future look bright.

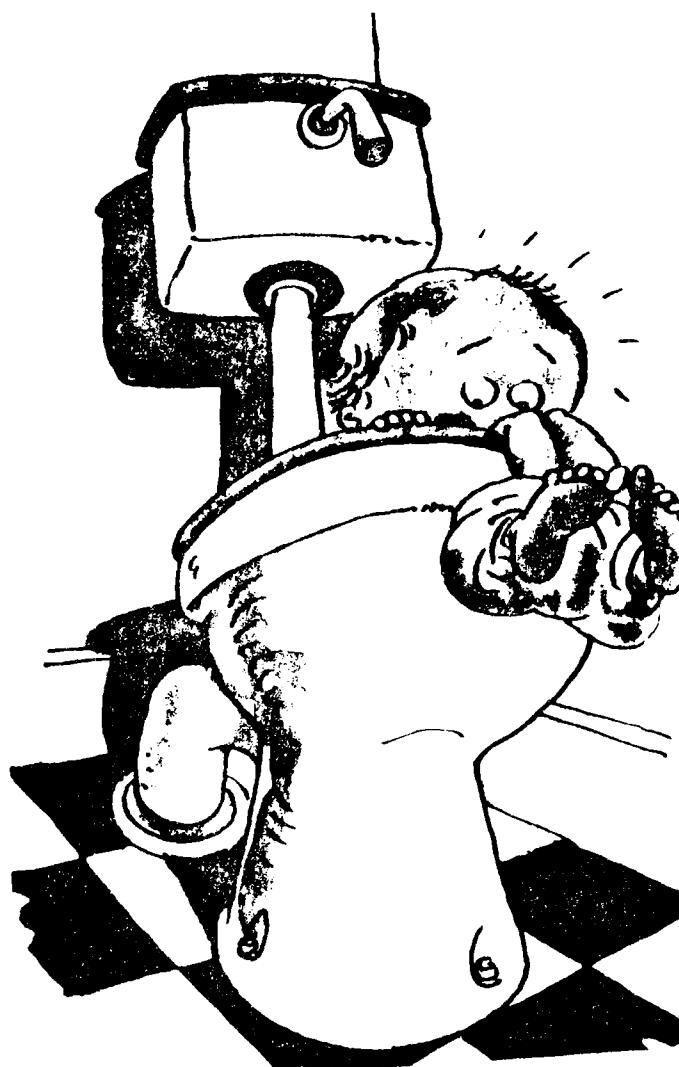
Honey prices have taken a leap forward and prospects for the future look bright. NZ Queen bees have in some instances not performed well overseas but NZ breeders have initiated a programme to iron out the faults and are working hard to win back client confidence.

Kiwifruit pollination has come and gone for another year and local beekeepers are slowly gaining their sanity.

A year of change and one which has affected us all in more ways than one. Industry response to meet change has been positive and encouraging for all concerned.

We in the MAF have also been faced with rapidly changing times, its not yet over but the general feeling is one of optimism. It is a nice feeling for those of us involved in apiculture to know that we have the support of the industry.

This support is expressed in many way and the general consensus is that the relationship is one of mutual benefit, together the industry as a whole will prosper, divided we fall.

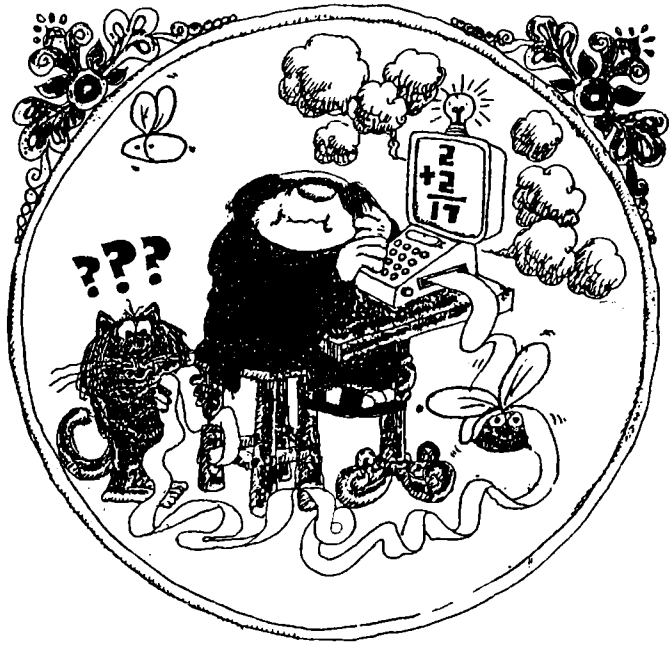


To err is human...

WHO SAID "I TOLD YOU SO!"

A note in NZ Kiwifruit Report 4 December 1986 No 22. 4. Reports coming in from users of the \$20,000 Pollen Aid kit designed by MAF Ruakura and sold by Turners and Growers are not encouraging, with problems in pollen recovery and diepatch alleged, and labour content higher than was originally expected.

One major BOP orcharding operator says he has "thrown the machinery in the corner" after component failures, while others say the labour content for Pollen Aid has been "astronomical and uneconomic". Other users report a disappointing pollen recovery percentage and problems with the flower mill equipment. Turners Horticultural Supplies Manager Rod Ketels was unavailable for comment. Unquote.



to really foul things up, use a computer.

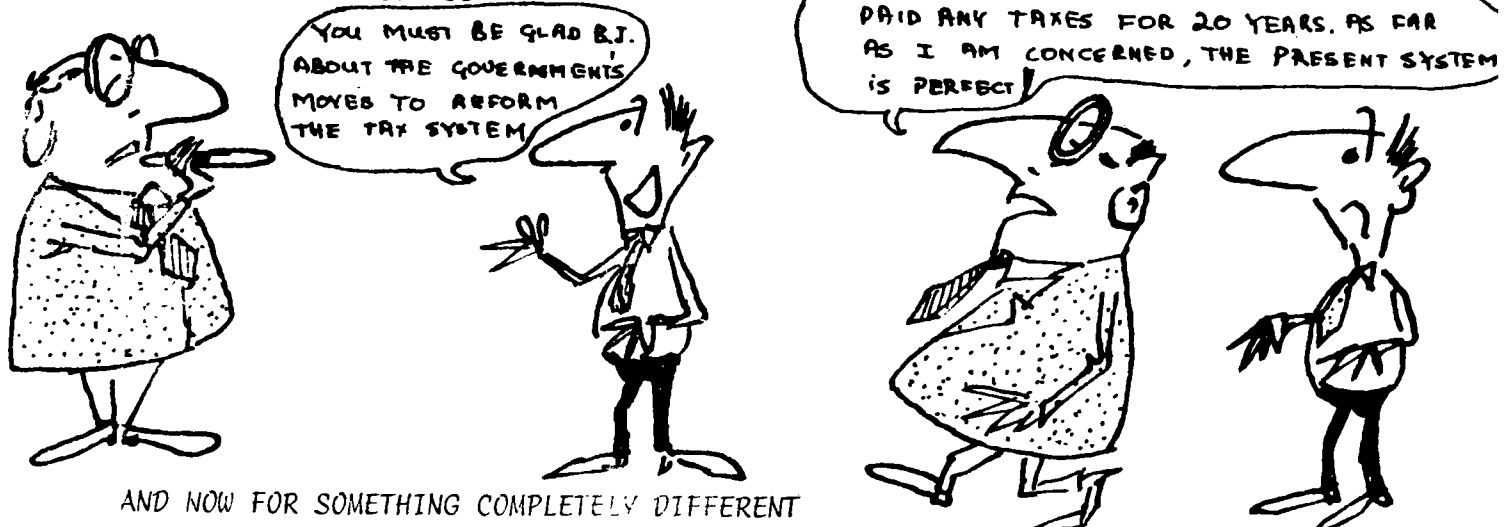
POLLINATION SEMINAR

This was a very well attended event, the programme was topical and the calibre of speakers tops. If you want a copy of the proceedings, send \$12.50 to MAF Tauranga, includes GST.

That reminds me, how are you coping with GST. Hopefully all the notes in newsletters, talks at meetings etc. have made the transition easy. How many of you met the deadline for the first payments, all I hope.

I get the impression talking to beekeepers it was a lot of fuss about nothing!

MIND YOUR OWN BUSINESS



SOME OBSERVATIONS DURING POLLINATION

This year's experience confirms for me that the recommended standards for pollination as set by MAF and the KPA are RIGHT.

Hives with the equivalent of 4 full full depth frames of brood, which implies a young, vigorous queen, with a box and a half of bees, implies an expanding colony with room to expand plus honey stores or syrup fed is the most productive pollination unit.

Hives too strong, honey bound and queens either old (2 yr) or with no room to lay, are honey producers. Colonies with less than the required amount of brood and bees do not measure up when compared to prepared hives of the RIGHT standard.

Beekeepers and growers have, as a general comment, taken a lot of trouble over providing the bees with good sites, this has had good spin-offs for both groups. There is, however, a great deal of grower concern over hive standards, "Am I getting good hives", is an all to common question. Many are or will be insisting on firm contracts written and verbal in the future with stated standards etc.

I think this may be advantageous in the future as it will bring some long term stability into the industry for those who like to plan ahead. Beekeepers or at least the majority, have nothing to fear from a written contract and it will have benefits providing both parties are considered.

Ron Trotter (of Fletcher Challenge) on New Zealand's floating dollar:

"About half of New Zealand's traders think the \$NZ is too high, about half think it is too low, which is why it is where it is".

ooo000ooo000ooo

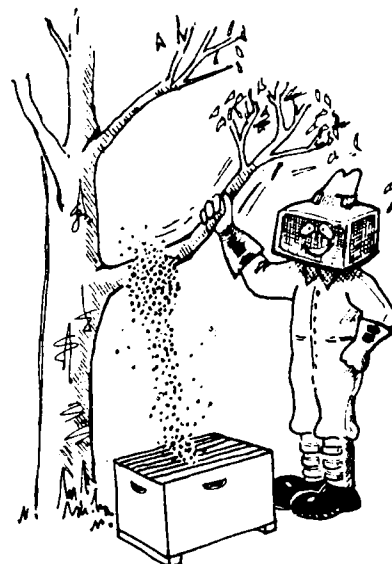
APICORP - a new exporting company.

Congratulations to those who formed this group and good luck in your new venture. Apicorp has taken over the Ross Rounds moulds etc and recently successfully negotiated sales to Japan. The group is also investigating markets for Ross Rounds and other products for the benefit of the group and potential suppliers

MARKET FOR POLLEN

*Mitchell and Cole, Fitness Center, Phone 8364081
Auckland, wish to buy one 200 litre drum of pollen
per month.*

*If you can supply please contact the buyer
direct.*



TRADE TABLE

Comvita Laboratories have imported a consignment of Bee Go. Bee Go is used to remove bees from honey supers. A similar product to Benzaldehyde, it is said to be more effective however, will chase bees at a lower temperature and does not aggravate the bees.

The major objection to Bee-Go is said to be its odour. A small amount of ammonia will neutralise the odour if applied whenever this chemical is spilled.

Method of use is similar to Benzaldehyde, ie a reflective type lid with cheese cloth used as an absorbant. It does work best if tops of lids are painted black.

PRICE: PINT JARS \$26.40. 1 PINT REMOVES 4.5 TONNES HONEY

PHONE ALAN BOUGEN 31167

OR WRITE P O BOX 225 TE PUKE

!!!!!!!!!!!!

A WARNING!

When using any chemical certain cautions must be taken. READ LABEL directions CAREFULLY and follow the manufacturer's recommendations. This gives the best results and will not contaminate the honey.

When using Benzaldehyde clean the pads thoroughly with plenty of water to remove the build-up of crystals. If fume pads are not cleaned and placed in an enclosed area, the build-up may result in spontaneous combustion.

!!!!!!!!!!!!

STOLEN BEEHIVES

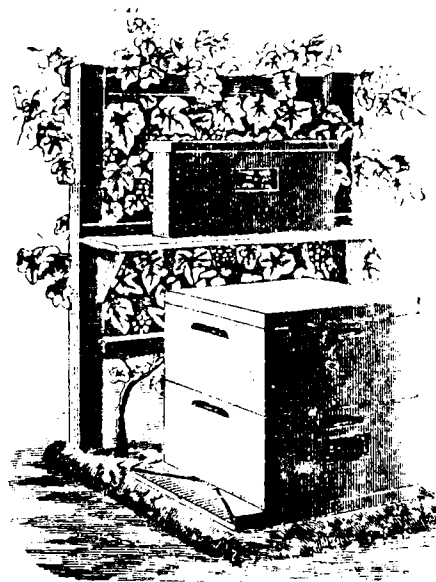
Seven beekeepers have reported bees stolen this spring. Thefts have ranged from, single hives removed from orchards, brood frames and bees removed from hives (the thief had the audacity to replace those which he removed with empty comb), nucleus colonies and whole hives.

Recently the MAF identified stolen gear in two apiaries. After a thorough investigation involving the new owner of the hives, the original owner, the Police and MAF it was concluded nothing could be done.

The problem, the equipment was not branded, although there was an indication that brands may have been chiselled out.

A warrant was taken out and equipment seized, but even a concerned Police Dept conceded that the evidence was not conclusive enough to stand up in court.

The Police were adamant, unless equipment is branded and that includes frames, the chances of bringing a successful case are non existant.

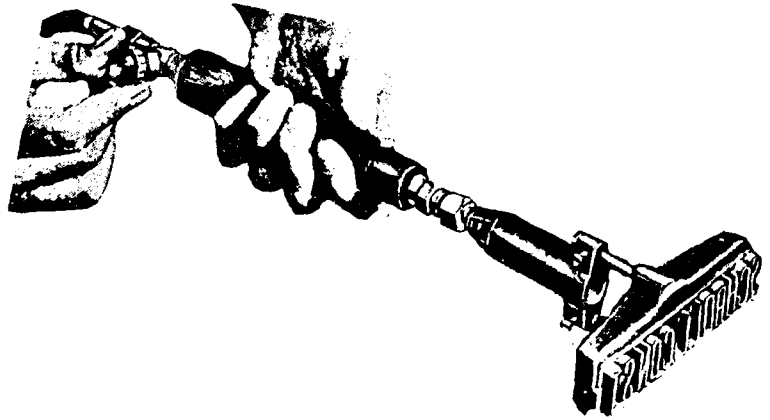


The "Simplicity" hive first manufactured by A. I. Root in the early 70's.

The conclusion by all parties - BRAND EQUIPMENT if you want to prevent theft. If stolen gear is found it must be POSITIVELY IDENTIFIED before there is any hope of success.

Your method of construction, it may even be unique, is simply not good enough.

Lesson number two in this instance, buy equipment from a reputable source, have MAF check the hives and issue the appropriate permit and OBTAIN A BILL OF SALE from the vendor.



INTERNATIONAL BEE RESEARCH ASSN

The IBRA has undergone significant changes of late, the major one being relocating to the University of Cardiff campus.

Before Hill House was sold they sent me significant stocks of their publications which are available for purchase. If you are wanting to add to your library or want a book on bees to give to that special person for Christmas or birthday, then some of the titles available are:

Pests, Predators and Diseases by Morse
Honey, a Comprehensive Survey. Ed Crane
Anatomy and Dissection of the H6. Dade
Directory World Honey Source, Crane
Pollen Loads, Hodges
Some Operations in Bee Management, Johansson
Honey Bee Brood Diseases Hansen
Queen Rearing, Rutner

and many more. P.O.A. for more detail, contact either myself or A Matheson.

-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-



Computer still in the shop, Jenkins?

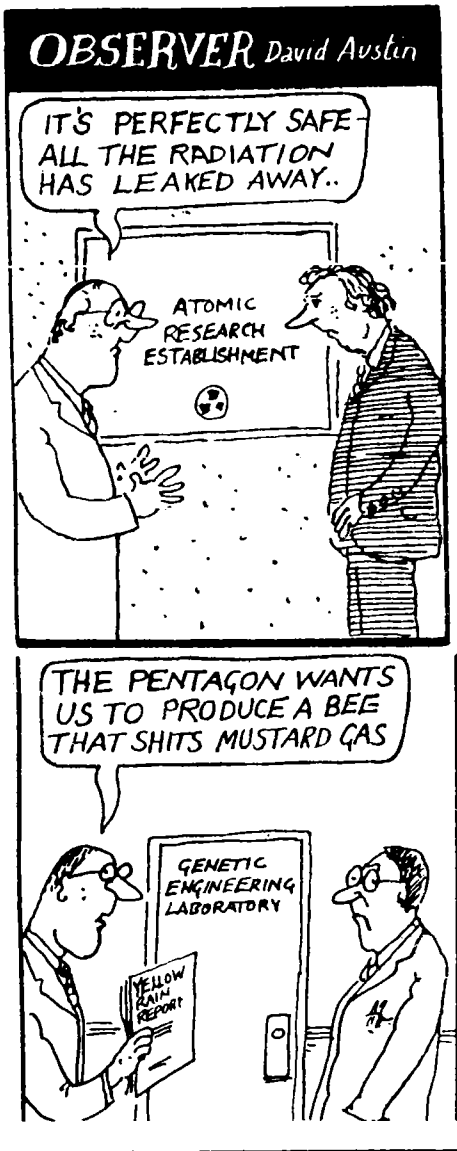
STATEMENTS OF INSPECTION

These went out rather late and a flood of returns have come in as a result. If you haven't received yours, please let me know, if you have received it, please return promptly with any corrections, additions noted.

The AFB reporting forms enclosed are for reporting disease only. They should not be returned with your Statements of Inspection, rather keep on hand and if and when you diagnose disease USE the forms to report the incident immediately to MAF.

We also enclose details of the New Bee Diseases Diagnostic Service. This service has been put in place to help you, if in doubt use it, or if you want information which may assist you in making management decisions, eg to feed fumigillan for control of Nosema or not to feed, then the Diagnostic Service can assist you.

Which reminds me, thanks to Norm Dean for arranging the consignment of Fumidil. For the best results it is suggested you use it, as per instructions, when feeding colonies in the autumn.



RESEARCH NOTES

All beekeepers should be familiar with the work of Ivan Foster who demonstrated most convincingly the influence of young queens on honey production. This research has been amply backed up from practical experience by many beekeepers.

More recently J Woyke carried out an investigation of the factors influencing honey production.

In brief. Colonies headed by queens 1 year old produced 19-27% more honey than those with queens 2 yrs old.

Individual productivity of workers had a greater influence than colony population or the amount of honey produced.

Average length of productive life of workers varied from 21 to 25 days and average number of larvae reared per worker bee from 0.8 to 1.5. Workers rearing more brood were shorter-lived.

He concluded that honey production is governed by the interaction of 3 primary factors: average daily brood production, length of worker life and individual productivity of workers.

Woyke presents the equations:

- 1) honey production = worker honey bee population x unit productivity;
- 2) worker population = average daily brood production x length of adult worker life.

As colony population is not a primary but rather a secondary factor whose magnitude is determined by two primary factors, equations 1 & 2 can be combined in a single equation
 3) honey production = average amount of brood produced daily x average length of worker life x unit productivity. Reference J. Woyke 1984: *Correlations and interactions between population, length of worker life and honey production by Honey bees in a temperate region* *Jrnl Api Res* 23(3):148-156

COMMENT

We all know that 1 year queens are the best for pollination and honey production but why do so many of us tolerate high percentages of 2 year queens in our hives. It's like the facts known about the effects of drift on honey production, we do not consider the cumulative effect over the total production unit. Eliminate drift, have productive 1 year queens in all colonies and is it unreasonable to expect an increase of 25-30% in production and with a significant reduction in production expenses.

While on the subject of productive queens I have been very impressed with the high daily egg laying rates from queens raised by beekeepers this spring. I've been critical in the past but obviously beekeepers are now putting the emphasis on producing queens right and paying attention to detail, eg using the right larval material, nutritional aspects.

HOLIDAYING OVERSEAS

If you are planning or contemplating an overseas trip, a couple of dates to note:

**APIMONDIA is in Poland, August 19-25 1987 a N.Z. Tour is being organised, contact Kevin Ecroyd, P O Box 5056, Papanui, Christchurch, for details.*

**2ND AUSTRALIAN AND INTERNATIONAL BEE CONGRESS July 21-26 1988 in Brisbane, for details write Secretary, T Weatherhead, 12 Langley Rd Camira, Queensland 4300.*

TTTTTTTTTT

INDUSTRY UPDATE

Tauranga Apiary District, includes BOP, Coromandel and Poverty Bay.

Total Beekeepers	833
Total Apiaries	3661
Total Beehives	52324
Commercial Beekeepers (50+)	93
Apiaries	2520
Hives	46555

The number of beehives in the region has more than doubled since 1981.

Total number registered beehives increased 7.6% in the year May 85 - May 86. Number of registered beekeepers increased 6% for the same period. More significantly number of hives operated by beekeepers in the 51-250 group increased 14% and those owning more than 1001 hives increased 16%.

CHALKBROOD

Chalkbrood was rife throughout the region this spring, some bees were severely infected but by pollination time the worst seemed to be over.

We in MAF have agreed on a policy towards this brood disease.

The main parts of this policy are that:

**Chalkbrood is regarded as established in New Zealand and occurring in many (though not all) areas.*

**Where chalkbrood is discovered, MAF does not require comb or hive destruction or quarantining of hives.*

**Permits to move or sell hives will not be refused because of chalkbrood infection.*

**Chalkbrood is not a notifiable disease. The most important thing to realise about chalkbrood is that spores of this fungus will be present in many hives in areas where the disease is present. That means you should concentrate*

on avoiding the conditions which can lead to chalkbrood outbreaks rather than trying to keep the spores out of your hives.

The most important things you can do are to:

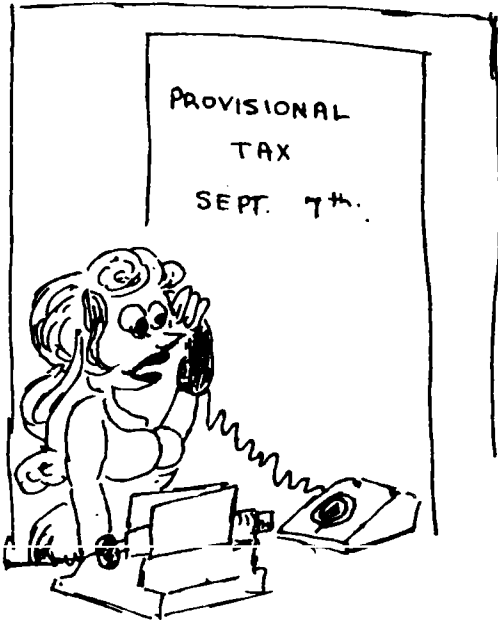
- *keep colonies strong for the time of year to avoid colony stress.
- *requeen colonies regularly with stock of Italian origin. Italians are much less prone to the disease than dark races.
- *arrange hives in an anti-drift layout to reduce spore transfer between hives.
- *select breeder queens which show low susceptibility to chalkbrood.

@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@

BEE DISEASES UPDATE

Reported AFB by beekeepers this spring appears to be down on previous years, although obviously the final picture will not emerge until hives are wintered down. MAF inspections have found lower levels which is very good news.

There have been a few hiccups particularly to the MAF inspection service. Murray Thompson, MAF Gisborne, and Rodney Bell, MAF Opotiki, have both left MAF, and this leaves a big hole. We are covering the region, and luckily most of the spring programme was achieved. We haven't managed as many colonies

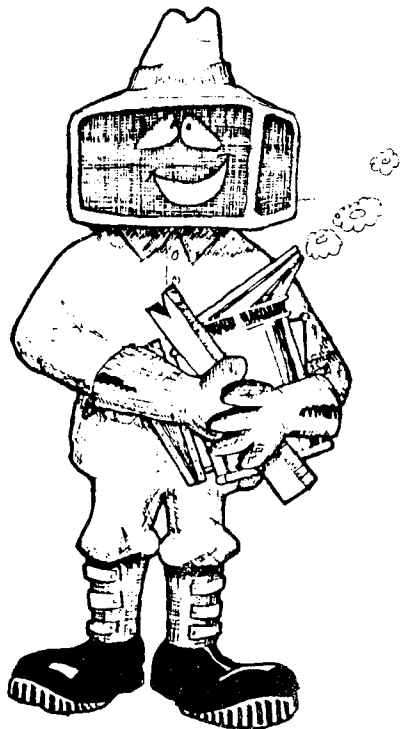


" WHO SHALL I SAY IS SOBBING? "

as usual but have spot checked as many apiaries over a large area as was practical.

Generally the picture looks good and thanks must go to all those beekeepers who have undertaken work on our behalf.

One major gripe - beekeepers are still lax when it comes to displaying Registered Numbers on apiaries. It adds to our costs, therefore your costs. PLEASE ACT NOW to get equipment branded with YOUR REGISTERED NUMBER.



SUCCESS

Peter Townsend of Pongakawa won this year's Bay of Plenty Young Beekeeper of the Year Award. Congratulations, Peter. To the runners-up, commiserations but well done, it was by no means a one horse race.



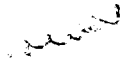
Peter's recipe for success:- Do the basics well, communicate with your fellow beekeepers, listen and learn. Plan well, plan ahead and involve those nearest to you. In Peter's case Allison, without whom he says he would not be where he is in the business today. A great team effort and one which will bring more rewards in the future.

This is the last newsletter for 1986, it is also the final of this subscription series. For subscribers, a renewal is enclosed. I hope you enjoyed receiving Your Newsletter.

To All Beekeepers, a very enjoyable and memorable Christmas from myself, David Sawden, and all the MAF team. A Prosperous and Rewarding New Year and 1987.

I look forward to meeting you all at some period, somewhere during 1987.

Regards


Trevor

