

In his address to this conference Mr I.G. Forbes, deputy director (horticulture), outlined the ministry's position regarding it servicing the beekeeping industry, as well as servicing the other sectors which comprise our farming, horticultural and fishing industries.

The advisory services division's responsibilities to the beekeeping industry includes providing an effective advisory service, certifying export shipments of bee products, maintaining a quarantine service to prevent the introduction of harmful diseases, pests and undesirable genetic characteristics; and ensuring that beekeepers meet their obligations in controlling bee diseases.

The division sees its principle function as assisting and encouraging primary producers achieve increased production, particularly export production.

Mr K.W. Simpson, presently apicultural advisory officer in Palmerston North, will in August, take up the position at Oamaru created by the resignation of Mr V.A. Cook. Mr Cook has resigned to take up an important post as beekeeping adviser in the United Kingdom. Earlier this year Mr T.G. Bryant, apicultural advisory officer in Gore, was selected as the division's candidate in an advisory exchange scheme maintained with Canada Agriculture. Mr Bryant is stationed in Alberta and will return next March.

The ministry has been obliged to reduce the number of staff servicing apiary districts from nine to eight; the last change took place in 1973. A recent gazetted amendment to the apiary registration districts, has extended the Tauranga district to include East Cape, Gisborne and the Wairoa areas. Taranaki, Manawatu, and Hawkes Bay will continue to be serviced from Palmerston North.

During the past three years the ministry has trained and employed over 30 field officers and livestock officers to assist district apicultural advisers with the examination of honey for export and check inspection of hives.

Beekeeping statistics

Beekeepers, apiaries and hives: As at May 31 1980, there was a national total of 5 217 beekeepers maintaining 19 450 registered apiaries and owning 233 810 hives.

Interest in beekeeping as a hobby continues unabated. There has been a

Beekeeper category	Beekeepers	Apiaries	Hives
owning 1 – 50 hives	4792	6780	25 809
owning 51 – 500 hives	301	4230	57 805
owning more than 500 hives	124	8440	150 196
Totals	5217	19 450	233 810

14 per cent increase in the number of registered beekeepers owning up to 50 hives this past year; a 43 per cent increase in the past three years.

The number of beekeepers owning between 51 and 500 hives also shows a significant increase: 10 per cent over the past year; 39 per cent over a three year period. It can be anticipated, that from within this group will emerge a new generation of commercial beekeepers.

There has been little change in recent years in the number of beekeepers owning more than 500 hives.

The honeycrop: The honeycrop for the 1979/80 honey season was 7 489 tonnes; approximately 1200 tonnes above the average for the past 10 years. Although most North Island districts produced below-average crops there was a record South Island honeycrop of 4 600 tonnes, partially due to exceptional yields in Canterbury and Nelson apiary districts.

New Zealand's total honey production for the last three years has been:

1978 –	8 269
1979 –	6 474
1980 –	7 489

For the year ended August 31 1979, the ministry graded 1 850 tonnes of extracted honey for the Honey Marketing Authority.

Private exporters, exported 127 tonnes of extracted honey, 172 tonnes of comb honey, and approximately 225 tonnes of honeydew honey.

American brood disease: The level of American brood disease (*Bacillus larvae*) has shown a slight decline this past year. During the 1979/80 season 722 apiaries and 1 578 hives were found to be infected with American brood disease.

Beekeepers reported 535 apiaries and 1 097 hives infected with American brood disease. The ministry's check inspection programme has been maintained at the relatively high level of 14 per cent of all apiaries. This programme has been assisted by the use of field

officers and livestock officers in a number of districts, as well as the continued employment of beekeepers as part-time inspectors.

Beekeepers should continue to report all suspicious maladies within bee colonies. New Zealand is free from many bee diseases, pests, and undesirable genetic characteristics affecting beekeeping industries in other countries. To assist beekeepers in recognising these maladies the ministry has issued a new publication in the AgLink series (FPP428). The publication describes the nature and symptoms of a number of bee diseases not present in New Zealand (including acarine, varroa and European bee diseases) and outlines control measures to prevent their introduction and spread.

Beekeeping legislation

Proposed amendment to the Apiaries Act 1969:

At present with parliamentary counsel is a proposal to amend the Apiaries Act 1969. This proposal, prepared by the ministry and discussed with and supported by your national executive, suggests a number of mainly procedural changes to the Apiaries Act. These include a new definition for honey; improving the system of allocating beekeeper code numbers; simplifying the requirements in respect of the beekeepers' annual statement of inspection; modifying the conditions of the permit to keep bees in a restricted area; and increasing the penalties for offences under the act.

Your association will be given a further opportunity to consider this bill upon its introduction to the house. Unfortunately this may not be until next year.

Honey export regulations: Also with parliamentary counsel at the present time are draft Honey Export Regulations which are intended to replace the current 1950 regulations. These proposed regulations have been considered by beekeeping industry groups and have received majority support.

As proposed, an exporter, if he so chooses, may export honey without

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government certification. If he requires certification the proposed regulations provide the basis upon which honey will be inspected and certified by the ministry. The regulations are sufficiently flexible as to maintain and stimulate the export opportunities for New Zealand honey in the face of increasingly demanding quality standards set by importing countries.

To be certified for export under the proposed regulations the honey must still be free from foreign tastes, odours, fermentation, high moisture, adulterants or any other organic or inorganic substance foreign to the composition of honey; but otherwise the requirements to be met are those related to the specific certification standards set by importing countries.

Procedures: The ministry's apiary registration system has been the object of a study by the organisation and methods section of management services division. As a result of this study a number of improvements to the existing apiary registration system are planned.

When the proposed Honey Export Regulations become law there will be some changes in the ministry's sampling and certification procedures. Mr G.M. Walton, chief advisory officer (apiculture) will be prepared to discuss these procedures with industry groups in-

Apiary district	No. of diseased apiaries	% diseased apiaries	No. of diseased hives	% diseased hives
Auckland	131	3.8	235	0.85
Hamilton	117	4.8	211	0.55
Tauranga	60	3.6	164	0.87
Hastings	43	2.8	86	0.41
Palmerston North	37	1.9	120	0.66
Nelson	91	6.4	170	1.19
Christchurch	40	1.6	135	0.41
Oamaru	98	3.9	206	0.62
Gore	105	5.3	251	0.84
Total	722	3.7	1 578	0.67

involved in the exporting of honey, during the next few months.

Advisory activities

Apicultural advisers have again provided a wide range of advisory services to beekeepers in their districts during the past year. In addition to normal advisory activities, including individual advice; arranging, attending and addressing meetings; and preparing articles for publication; ministry staff have carried out a number of other advisory projects.

Beekeeping courses have been held at the ministry's Flock House and Telford training institutes. Other courses are planned. Encouragement and assist-

ance has been given to the establishment and operation of new beekeeping clubs.

Apiary section staff have reviewed beekeeping publications and have identified a number of topics which should be prepared or updated. In due course these articles will be published in the ministry's AgLink series.

One important Flock House course proposed for next year is intended for the leaders of the beekeeping industry. The objectives of this course are to review the current state of beekeeping in New Zealand, examine its future directions and goals, and to identify the factors which are limiting the industry's development.

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