

# ASD Report

## Organisation and Staffing

All nine apicultural advisory positions were filled for the first time in a number of years. Mr Ted Roberts, formerly Senior Lecturer in Agronomy at Massey University, joined our section and has been a valued addition to the team.

Over 42 field officers, livestock officers, and 58 beekeepers were engaged as part-time inspectors. Many beekeepers didn't seek remuneration for their efforts and this is appreciated.

Mr Brian Milnes, Field Officer, Auckland, began training as a bee pathologist and will shortly be offering a diagnostic service based at the MAF Plant Protection Centre, Lynfield, Auckland.

## Beekeeping Statistics

### a) Beekeepers, Apiaries, and Hives

There were 6,934 beekeepers owning 328,961 colonies of bees at 31 May 1986. Beekeeper numbers have remained static but hive numbers have increased by 19,348 or nearly 6%.

Significant increases in the number of beekeepers and hives in the 51-250 group occurred in several regions. This mainly reflected a growth in hives supplied for kiwifruit pollination.

### (b) Honey Production

The total crop was assessed at 9,471 tonnes (29kg/hive) compared with last year's production of 10,314 tonnes.

The record 1984/85 crop took a long time to clear and many beekeepers faced severe cash flow problems. Overseas buyers were active late in 1985 and continued to make good offers for the 1986 crop. These early sales of the current seasons production were welcomed by the industry with prices for dark honey ranging from \$1.35-1.67/kg net, light honeys from \$1.65-\$1.85/kg while some white honeys were reported as fetching a late season premium of \$2.00-\$2.10/kg.

### American Brood Disease

Levels of American brood disease are of concern to MAF, particularly in the Auckland region where several bad outbreaks occurred. Beekeepers continue to split, sell, and move diseased hives contrary to the Apiaries Act and MAF policy.

### Chalkbrood

Chalkbrood disease continued to spread but there are still many areas in New Zealand apparently free of the disease. A survey was carried out in Northland on the incidence of chalkbrood and MAF's policy towards the disease was prepared. These have been reported in the NZ Beekeeper 190 Winter 1986: 8-10 and 29).

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| District         | Beekeepers |      |       | Apiaries |        | Hives  |
|------------------|------------|------|-------|----------|--------|--------|
|                  | 1986       | 1985 | 1986  | 1985     | 1986   | 1985   |
| Whangarei        | 659        | 657  | 1849  | 1640     | 17867  | 18265  |
| Auckland         | 1197       | 1467 | 2953  | 2715     | 27450  | 18594  |
| Hamilton         | 726        | 739  | 3100  | 3272     | 46288  | 45466  |
| Tauranga         | 833        | 801  | 3661  | 3355     | 52324  | 48329  |
| Palmerston North | 1393       | 1395 | 3851  | 3793     | 39434  | 36274  |
| Nelson           | 596        | 583  | 2268  | 2133     | 25907  | 22775  |
| Christchurch     | 804        | 780  | 3816  | 3528     | 48751  | 45169  |
| Oamaru           | 360        | 355  | 3189  | 3455     | 41730  | 46006  |
| Gore             | 366        | 326  | 2179  | 2199     | 29210  | 28735  |
| NZ TOTAL         | 6934       | 7103 | 26866 | 26090    | 328961 | 309613 |

Fig. 1)

|      | Whangarei | Auckland      | Hamilton | Tauranga | Palm. Nth |         |
|------|-----------|---------------|----------|----------|-----------|---------|
| 1984 | 300       | 300           | 731      | 682      | 495       |         |
| 1985 | 572       | 930           | 1697     | 1550     | 1085      |         |
| 1986 | 402       | 1096          | 1492     | 1150     | 887       |         |
|      | Nelson    | *Christchurch | Oamaru   | Gore     | Total     | Kg/hive |
| 1984 | 800       | 1150          | 1100     | 560      | 5818      | 21      |
| 1985 | 685       | 1650          | 1352     | 790      | 10314     | 33      |
| 1986 | 871       | 950           | 1473     | 1150     | 9471      | 29      |

\*Christchurch figure includes honeydew

Fig. 2

| Description  | Year Ended June 1985 |           | 9 Months Ended March 1986 |           |
|--------------|----------------------|-----------|---------------------------|-----------|
|              | Tonnes               | \$NZ fob  | Tonnes                    | \$NZ fob  |
| Bulk honey   | 830                  | 1,646,012 | 1370                      | 2,778,769 |
| Retail packs | 175                  | 552,493   | 183                       | 521,258   |
| Comb         | 258                  | 1,621,987 | 90                        | 519,309   |
| Honeydew     | 661                  | 1,336,385 | 308                       | 660,817   |
| Total        | 1924                 | 5,156,877 | 1951                      | 4,480,153 |

Fig. 3

| Apiary District | Diseased Apiaries |           | Diseased Colonies |           | Apiaries Inspected MAF or MAF Agents |
|-----------------|-------------------|-----------|-------------------|-----------|--------------------------------------|
|                 | No.               | %         | No.               | %         | %                                    |
| Whangarei       | 65 (48)           | 3.5 (2.9) | 141 (107)         | 0.8 (0.5) | 10.6                                 |
| Auckland        | 177 (63)          | 5.0 (2.3) | 740 (152)         | 2.7 (0.8) | 17.0                                 |
| Hamilton        | 127 (165)         | 4.1 (5.4) | 218 (220)         | 0.5 (0.5) | 12.7 (14.4)                          |
| Tauranga        | 163 (268)         | 4.5 (8.0) | 454 (676)         | 0.9 (1.4) | 7.0 (10.4)                           |
| Palm. Nth       | 112               | 2.9       | 344               | 0.9       | 11.0                                 |
| Nelson          | 141 (153)         | 6.2 (7.2) | 287 (340)         | 1.1 (1.5) | 6.1 (7.5)                            |
| Christchurch    | 56 (40)           | 1.5 (1.1) | 145 (303)         | 0.3 (0.7) | 11.0                                 |
| Oamaru          | 107 (88)          | 3.4 (2.6) | 284 (188)         | 0.7 (0.4) | 10.0 (8.8)                           |
| Gore            | 102 (129)         | 4.7 (6.2) | 307 (296)         | 1.1 (1.0) | 9.3 (8.5)                            |
| Total           | 1050              | 3.9       | 2920              | 0.9       | 10.5                                 |

Target 10% MAF staff inspected 1440 apiaries, beekeepers (paid and unpaid) also inspected 1440 apiaries.

Fig. 4