

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE HORTICULTURE DIVISION

### APIARY INSTRUCTION AND INSPECTION.

(An Address by Mr. B. G. Goodwin,  
District Supervisor, Palmerston North,  
to the Annual Conference of the  
Association.)

As the Supervisor in charge of the Wellington, East and West Coast districts of the Southern portion of the North Island it gives me particular pleasure to address this Conference, and I wish to express my thanks to the General Executive of your Association for giving me the opportunity of doing so.

In response to your Executive's invitation to me to state how the re-organisation of the Division which was carried into effect some eighteen months ago insofar as it affects the Apiary Section of the Division, has operated, I would state that—

I am of the opinion that there existed in the minds of delegates to last year's Conference considerable misunderstanding and misapprehension as to the changes in administration then introduced by the Department. These changes and the benefits which were likely to accrue from them were given careful consideration by the Department before they were introduced. In this matter the Department had the experience of similar organisation of the Fields and of the Live-stock Division which had proved highly satisfactory.

The innovation so far as the Horticultural Division's organisation was concerned was effected for no other reason than as a genuine endeavour to increase and improve the services which were being rendered to the beekeepers by its officers. As far as I am aware there was no intention to impair those services which were being rendered or to deprive the Section of any official position associated with it. The position of District Supervisor is an administrative office—the Dis-

trict Supervisor being the representative in the territory allocated to him of the Director of the Division. All the officers of the Horticulture Division within the territory come under his control.

This arrangement is of considerable benefit to the officers including Apiary Instructors, as it enables them to meet the Supervisor and discuss matters upon which they require guidance much more readily than in the past, and as the Director's representative the Supervisor is able to discuss with and assist the Apiary Instructor in the organisation of his work to better advantage which must be to the benefit of the beekeepers. The Supervisor does not interfere with the Instructor in respect to technical matters relative to the practice of beekeeping. The Apiary Instructor on account of his experience and of the extent to which he has specialised in the principals and practices of beekeeping is expected to be qualified in this direction.

From my own experience, and in this I am supported by my fellow Supervisors, I can say that the arrangement has worked well and smoothly in the respective districts. Our aim is to work with a team spirit and not as individuals, each and all putting his best into the work to carry on a further stage, the good work of those who have served your industry so well in the past. From the Director down our motto is "Service."

The Department is in complete sympathy with your aspirations and will continue to assist you as in the past to improve conditions pertaining to beekeeping for the benefit of those engaged in the Industry.

I ask your indulgence to enable me to refer to certain aspects of the work of the Section with which I have come in close contact since taking up the position of Supervisor for the Wellington and East and West Coast districts of the Southern portion of the North Island:

The two main services which the Apiary Section renders to beekeepers are:—

- (1) To instruct individual beekeepers in up-to-date methods whereby production may be increased and improved in quality.
- (2) To inspect apiaries for disease and see that the provisions of the Apiaries Act, 1927, are complied with.

These two aspects of the Apiary Instructor's duties are closely associated.

By instruction and inspection the continued existence of disease, box hives, unregistered and other undesirable features of the Industry, should be considerably reduced.

Eradication of disease—to become a possibility—involves an intelligent and active co-operation on the part of the producers generally with the Departmental Officers, and this can only be developed by an organised policy of **education**. Any plan lacking this factor will fail in the ultimate, even though success may apparently attend the initial effects of an inspectional drive.

The Division has other responsibilities to the honey industry as well as that of the elimination of disease. One responsibility is concerned with the development of the industry, through a progressively increasing number of efficient producers, and its importance to this country ultimately will be judged on how many more tons of good honey are produced.

Under present conditions, Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen, inspection is necessary to keep the incidence of bee diseases down to a minimum.

The Instructor's duties may be summarised as follows—

- (a) Lectures and meetings.
- (b) Field days and demonstrations.
- (c) Visits of instruction and advice.
- (d) Inspection work.

The development within the industry of an increasing number of efficient producers co-operating with the Department is the best means of lifting the status of the industry.

Education thus becomes the first step in a plan working towards the eradication of disease.

It appears obvious to me that one way to build a spirit of co-operation

between the Division and the producers generally is to create personal confidence and regard between them. The establishment of groups of beekeepers in various centres of the district enables them to come together for advice and discussion at regular intervals by means of meetings.

It has been found that as beekeepers learn that interesting and informative meetings are being held they soon form the habit of attending, and it is through contact between Instructor and Producer that real co-operation can begin to grow and develop.

The existence of regular meetings soon becomes known among the beekeeping fraternity, and usually such meetings soon tend to improve both in attendance and in quality of discussion. They also provide the Instructor with an opportunity of getting into touch with a greater number of beekeepers in the district than would otherwise be the case, thus saving a considerable amount of time to the Instructor.

Opportunities will also be given during the day or days following meetings for the Instructor to visit apiaries for instruction or to investigate complaints with regard to alleged breaches of the Act.

The inspection service rendered by our officers is an important one to the industry. It has the effect of causing the beekeeper who is inclined to be somewhat lax in his methods to take steps to maintain his bees in better condition and freer from disease than would be the case if no inspection system existed. I am pleased to say in the main these beekeepers willingly meet their obligations when approached in a firm but sympathetic manner.

To sum up my points, I submit that

- (1) The need of the Honey Industry is a larger output of better honey.
- (2) It is wise to concentrate on the fundamental needs of the industry—which include disease control, but is not entirely confined to it.
- (3) It is better to combine instruction with inspection than to concentrate on either one at the expense of the other.