

The New Zealand BEEKEEPER

Published Quarterly on the 20th January, April, July and October,
by the National Beekeepers' Association of New Zealand.
Gilbert S. Kirker, Editor.

Subscription, 2/- per annum, post free; 6d. per copy.

VOL. 4, No. 1

JANUARY 20, 1942

THE BEEKEEPING INDUSTRY.

A Synopsis Prepared by the Horticulture Division of the Department of Agriculture. Published by Courtesy of the Hon. J. G. Barclay, Minister of Agriculture.

The beekeeping industry in New Zealand is essential to our economy, as it supplies a national service of pollination of flowers of economic plants, and also adds to the wealth of the community by the production of a first-class food that would otherwise go to waste.

In July, 1917, regulations for the registration of all apiaries from one hive upwards came into force.

The general trend in beekeeping is illustrated by the following table:—

Season.	No. of Registered Beekeepers.	No. of Hives Owned.
1919-20 ..	6,392	69,877
1929-30 ..	6,925	104,239
1940-41 ..	5,248	136,362

The present distribution of hives in the various apiary inspection districts throughout the Dominion is as follows:

District.	No of Beekeepers.	No. of Apiaries.	No. of Colonies.
Auckland	1,182	1,467	15,503
Hamilton	561	1,112	31,355
Hastings	649	1,004	13,231
P'merston N.	1,036	1,864	25,640
Nelson	342	443	5,498
Christchurch	665	1,213	23,888
Invercargill	813	1,246	21,247
Totals	5,248	8,349	136,362

Of the above number of beekeepers 1,299 own commercial apiaries and 3,949 domestic apiaries.

Production: The estimated total normal production of honey for the Dominion from commercial and domestic apiaries, based on the present number of colonies, is 3,396 tons. This production is harvested in the respec-

tive apiary inspection districts as shown on page 2.

The production of honey from commercial apiaries last season (1940-41) was approximately 15% below normal, owing to adverse weather conditions in certain localities, and would amount to 2,696 tons.

Marketing: The plan initiated by the Government in December, 1938, to set up a central receiving, packing and sales depot for the voluntary use of beekeepers, subject to a seals levy of one half-penny per lb. imposed on all honey retailed outside of the organisation, has succeeded in stabilising the market for the sale of honey throughout the Dominion. There is no other organisation in New Zealand catering for the packing and sale of honey on behalf of producers.

The Internal Marketing Division has also assumed the authority and responsibilities of the Honey Export Control Board, which now acts in an advisory capacity. All sales of honey made in New Zealand by beekeepers outside of the organisation provided by the Government are of a private nature between individual beekeepers and merchants, consumers or manufacturers.

Grades and Values: The percentage of honey passed at the Grade Store in each colour grade during the past season was as follows:—

	White.	Extra Light Amber.	Light Amber	Medium Amber.
North Island	43%	44%	11%	2%
South Island	91%	7%	2%	—

Payment to beekeepers for honey supplied to the Internal Marketing Division is made on a pro rata basis according to grade.

Consumption: With an export of 500 tons during a normal year, the consumption of honey from commercial apiaries is approximately 3lb. per head of population.

Labour Requirements: Reports from all districts indicate that commercial beekeepers (1,299 persons with more than 10 hives each) employ a total of 65 permanent assistants and 100 casual assistants for from three to six months each season.

Honey-production Areas: Following are the main commercial honey-producing centres in each apiary inspection district and the approximate proportion of honey produced in each colour grade, i.e., White, Light Amber Groups, Medium Amber and Dark Amber:—

Auckland and N. Auckland: Main areas of production—Franklin, Manakau, Eden and Whangarei Counties. Grades: White 16%, Light Amber 34%, Medium Amber 34%, Dark Amber 16%.

Hamilton: Waikato, Waipa, Mata-mata, Ohinemuri, Hauraki Plains and Otorohanga Counties. White 35%, Light Amber 65%, Medium Amber 5%.

Hastings: Hawkes Bay, Waipawa, Pahiatua, Masterton and Wairarapa South. White 60%, Light Amber 35%, Medium Amber 5%.

Christchurch: Production evenly distributed between Waitaki River boundary and the Ashley County in north. White 70%, Light Amber 28%, Medium Amber, 2%.

Invercargill: Southland, Gore centre and Otago Central (Vincent and Maniototo Counties). White 90%, Light Amber 7%, Medium Amber 3%.

Nelson: District comprises Nelson, Marlborough and Westland. In Westland the bulk of production is secured from tree tops (Kamahi and Rata). Where Kamahi predominates the honey does not find a ready sale. A mixture of honey gathered from Rata and Blackberry, however, finds a ready sale. Production from ground sources is very small in Nelson and Marlborough.

Palmerston Nth.: Production evenly distributed, with the exception of the following counties, which are of little importance—Hutt, Waitotara, Waimate West, Whangamomona, Clifton, Pohangina and Waimarino. White 40%, Light Amber 55%, Medium Amber 5%.

Comparisons:

Percentage of commercial beekeepers in New Zealand: North Island, 62.%; South Island, 37.5%.

Percentage of normal production of honey: North Island, 62.%, (1,973½ tons); South Island, 37.%, (1,198½ tons).

Government Assistance to the Industry: This is provided by the Horticulture Division and the Internal Marketing Division.

APIARY INSPECTION DISTRICTS.

Inspection District.	Commercial Apiaries:		Domestic Apiaries:		Grand Totals.
	Total No. Hives.	Normal Av. Production.	Total No. Hives.	Normal Av. Production.	Honey Production.
Auckland ..	12,060	323 tons	3,443	46 tons	369 tons
Hamilton ..	29,782	797½ tons	1,573	21 tons	818½ tons
Hastings ..	11,079	291 tons	2,152	28 tons	319 tons
Palmerston Nth. ..	21,827	562 tons	3,813	51 tons	613 tons
Nelson ..	4,472	119½ tons	1,026	13½ tons	133 tons
Christchurch ..	21,749	582½ tons	2,139	28½ tons	611 tons
Invercargill ..	18,542	496½ tons	2,705	36 tons	532½ tons
Totals ..	119,511	3,172 tons	16,851	224 tons	3,396 tons

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE (Horticulture Division). Appendix 1

APIARY STATISTICS, 31st MARCH, 1941, AND APPROX. NORMAL HONEY PRODUCTION.

1,299 beekeepers own commercial apiaries and 3,949 domestic apiaries.

Inspection District.	COMMERCIAL APIARIES:			NON-COMMERCIAL APIARIES:			GRAND TOTALS:		
	No. with over 10 hives.	Total No. hives.	Approx. production av. season.	No. with 10 hives & under.	Total No. hives.	Approx. production av. season.	Apiaries.	Colonies.	Production.
Auckland	373	12,060	323	1,094	3,443	46	1,467	15,503	369
Hamilton	652	29,782	797 ^{1/2}	460	1,573	21	1,112	31,355	818 ^{1/2}
Hastings	394	17,079	291	610	2,152	28	1,004	13,231	319
Palm. Nth.	768	21,827	562	1,096	3,813	51	1,864	25,640	613
Nelson	134	4,472	119 ^{1/2}	309	1,026	13 ^{1/2}	443	5,498	133
Ch'church	668	21,749	582 ^{1/2}	545	2,139	28 ^{1/2}	1,213	23,888	611
Dunedin	536	18,542	496 ^{1/2}	710	2,705	36	1,246	21,247	532 ^{1/2}
	3,505	119,511	3,172	4,824	16,851	224	8,349	136,362	3,396

The discrepancy between the figures shown herein and those shown in the annual report is explained by the fact that a purge of registrations has since taken place bringing forward a number of new registrations.

PETROL RESTRICTIONS.

The sudden virtual cancellation of petrol supplies to beekeepers in the middle of December practically brought the industry to a standstill at a season of the year when beekeepers most need petrol in tending their hives putting on final supers and removing early honey for extracting.

Instant action was taken by the Dominion President and the General Secretary, the strongest possible representations being made to the Government. Similar action was taken by the Honey Control Board and the Honey Section. By the end of December the position was alleviated somewhat, but it is imperative that beekeepers recognize the inevitability of reduced allowances in the present emergency.

The Oil Fuel Controller, Wellington, wrote under date December 30:—

"I have been directed by the Hon. Minister of Supply to reply to your letter of the 15th December in reference to the recent petrol restrictions on beekeepers, and I have carefully noted your suggestions.

"I have instructed Local Controllers to review the licenses for beekeepers, and sufficient petrol to meet their

minimum essential requirements will be made available.

"At the same time I wish to stress the urgency of saving petrol, and should be pleased if your members would make every effort to reduce their requirements to the lowest possible figure.

"Any of your members requiring a re-adjustment of their licenses should be asked to place their cases before the nearest Local Controller."

(Note: The General Secretary was inundated with correspondence and telegrams in the above connection from all over the Dominion. Replies were sent in many instances, but it became an impossible task in the end, in addition to coping with official correspondence in the matter, so many letters will appear to have been neglected, but all possible action was taken immediately the position arose. The General Secretary would like to mention that the situation was not ameliorated any by the sudden calling of a number of emergency Home Guard "Stands to" and he is, in addition, endeavouring to cope with nearly 600 hives alone, since his partner is now serving overseas, and it has been impossible to engage labour.)