

## Control of Bacillus Larvae

The report of the special meeting held in Wellington last October, attended by the Dominion Executive and Officers of the Department of Agriculture, has now been released by the Minister of Agriculture (the Hon. B. E. Talboys). The following summary is compiled from the report.

Those present were the members of the Executive, including the General Secretary and the Editor, and Messrs. E. Smaellie, L. H. Johnson, L. A. M. Griffin, I. W. Forster, R. S. Walsh (Department of Agriculture), and T. Palmer-Jones (Wallaceville). Mr. A. M. W. Greig, Director of the Horticulture Division, was in the Chair.

The meeting had been arranged by the Minister of Agriculture (the late Hon. T. L. Hayman) at the request of the Association, to review existing measures for the control of Bacillus Larvae and to draft and consider improved measures. In opening the meeting the Chairman made it clear that this was a mutual problem and he asked everyone to contribute to the discussion on the basis of his personal knowledge and experience.

### Recognition

The serious nature of the disease was acknowledged and the meeting agreed upon a general procedure to ensure that every beekeeper would be able to recognise the disease.

### Inspection

It was considered essential that every hive in the country must be inspected at least once a year and that the responsibility for this inspection must rest with the beekeeper.

It was agreed that one thorough inspection by the beekeeper should be made mandatory during the spring months. After this annual inspection the beekeeper should be required to complete an inspection statement indicating that he has inspected all his hives. Where disease is found appropriate steps are outlined and in these apiaries a re-inspection is considered essential in early autumn before the honey crop is removed.

### Part-time Inspection

This should be continued to assist the Apiary Instructor in a check inspection of representative apiaries.

### Action when Disease is Found

The following general principles were adopted:—

(1) That if the beekeeper himself found diseased hives, after notifying the Apiary Instructor he should burn the diseased hives to the satisfaction of the Instructor.

(2) That if the equipment was practically new he may seek the Apiary Instructor's authority to save such equipment provided he is prepared to sterilise it as approved by the Instructor.

It was considered that the Apiaries Act should be amended to give authority to burn all hives in an apiary where there was a high percentage of hives actually infected.

### Chemical Drugs

The meeting was unanimous that the drug Sulphathiazole had no place in efficient beekeeping and its use for checking the spread of B.L. should be prohibited. The meeting was of the opinion that this drug only checked the development of B.L. spores but did not destroy them, and that it was impracticable for a beekeeper to use this drug without affecting the honey produced in such a hive with the consequent danger to human health.

The Apiaries Act should also give Inspectors power to take honey samples for checking whether drugs are present in the honey. If drugs are detected the honey should be destroyed.

### Movement of Hives and Equipment

Adequate control of the movement of hives and equipment was considered to be important. If it is proposed to move hives following a change of ownership it should be a legislative requirement that the beekeeper must notify the Apiary Instructor and have the hives inspected before they are moved.

### Prosecutions

Prosecutions should be taken where necessary to make the Regulations effective.

### Work of Apiary Instructors

The major importance of inspection work in the beekeeping industry should be given more emphasis.

### Advisory Committee

From the discussions it was apparent that this disease would remain a continuing problem which would require regular review, and it was recommended that a Bee Disease Advisory Committee should be constituted as soon as possible under clause 16 (jk).

### Apiaries Act

It was agreed that any proposed amendments to the Regulations under the Act should first be submitted to the N.B.A. for consideration.



A well fenced hillside apiary on the corrugated or serrated country towards Wairoa. The farmer-beekeeper is Mr. A. D. Smith, with Mr. Ray Ellery (dark suit) looking on. —Photo Sefton Line

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