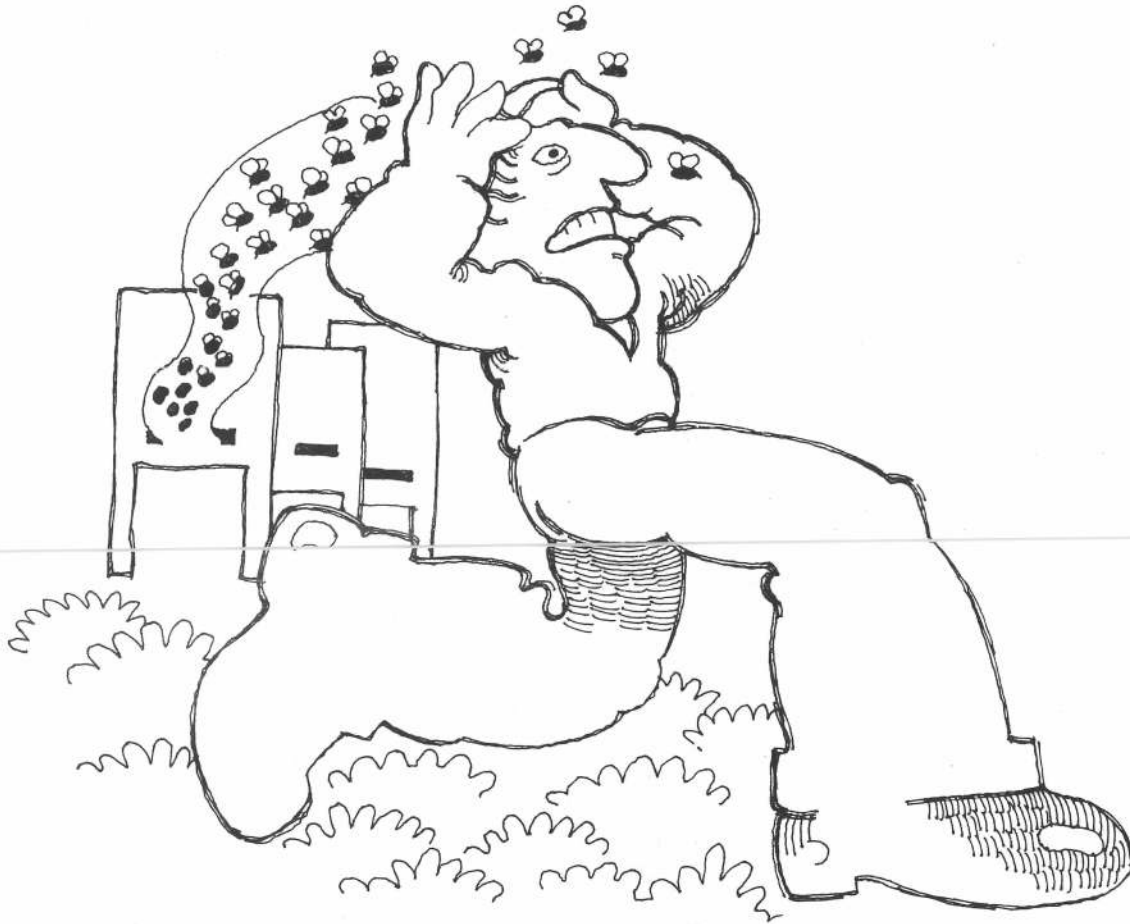


THE NEW ZEALAND  
**beekeeper**



**SEPTEMBER, 1976**

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# THE NEW ZEALAND BEEKEEPER

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Editor: Trevor Walton, Box 176, Carterton, phone 8348. Advertising manager, Alyson Mackey, Box 11-137, Wellington, phone 857-480. Advertising and editorial copy deadline for December issue: 8-11-76. Advert booking deadline: 1-11-76

## In this issue....

.... we devote much of our space to an extensive reportage of the 1976 conference of the National Beekeepers' Association. However, that's not all. On page 9 we have more beginners' notes; on page 13 Nick Wallingford of Dannevirke gives all the ins and outs of sugar feeding and also, in an article on page 19, discusses a new method of requeening. Then, of course, there are all our regular features - in short, lots of reading for those long spring evenings.

## Editorial

### Bashees and Bashers

IF THE 1976 NBA conference agreed on one thing, it was on the confusion which surrounds the marketing of New Zealand honey.

The contradictions between the constitution and role of the Honey Marketing Authority were well reflected in a number of remits which, if not taken extremely cautiously by those responsible, could result in a rapid destabilisation of honey marketing in New Zealand.

The most fundamental role of the HMA is to stabilise the New Zealand honey market and in so doing, to stabilise the incomes of all producers.

It does this by exporting that honey which is left on domestic market would result in an oversupply and a resultant price collapse. This is crucially important. The prices of all primary food products are extremely sensitive to small fluctuations in supply and demand.

In an oversupply situation (a buyers' market) the price for all honey is determined by the lowest price an individual seller is willing to accept. In an undersupply situation (a sellers' market) the price for all honey is determined by the highest price a buyer is willing to offer.

By subsidising, if necessary, the export of that honey which is surplus to domestic requirements the HMA can save all producers millions. Whether or not a producer supplies the authority with honey is irrelevant.

Thus, it is logical that while regular suppliers should be guaranteed representation on the HMA board, the HMA should represent and be funded by all producers.

By implication, the 1976 conference recognised the need for representation of all producers in HMA decision-making with its pressure for an amalgamation of the NBA and the authority. On the other hand, it rejected the concept of total industry funding decisively—a decision which must put any future government credits to back a guaranteed price in doubt.

Since cost-plus agriculture has not been endorsed by any NZ government to date, a government-backed guaranteed price for honey or any other primary product must ultimately be funded by the producers themselves. If we cannot agree on the mechanism for this funding, you can be sure the government is capable of dreaming one up for us. Witness the wool industry.

Equally contradictory were the remits and resolutions which endorsed the need for a "regulatory authority" at the very least and the failure of the conference to ensure that the authority had the means to do its job efficiently.

Given the main role of the authority is to stabilise the domestic honey market, it would be hard to imagine more obstacles being created in the way of its achievement of these ends. Because it lacks the power to set domestic wholesale prices for honey and is not provided with honey production statistics until the season is over, it can only make intelligent guesses as to the amount of its produce to sell overseas and how much to sell locally.

These contradictions should not however be fobbed off by authority members as an example of producer perversity.

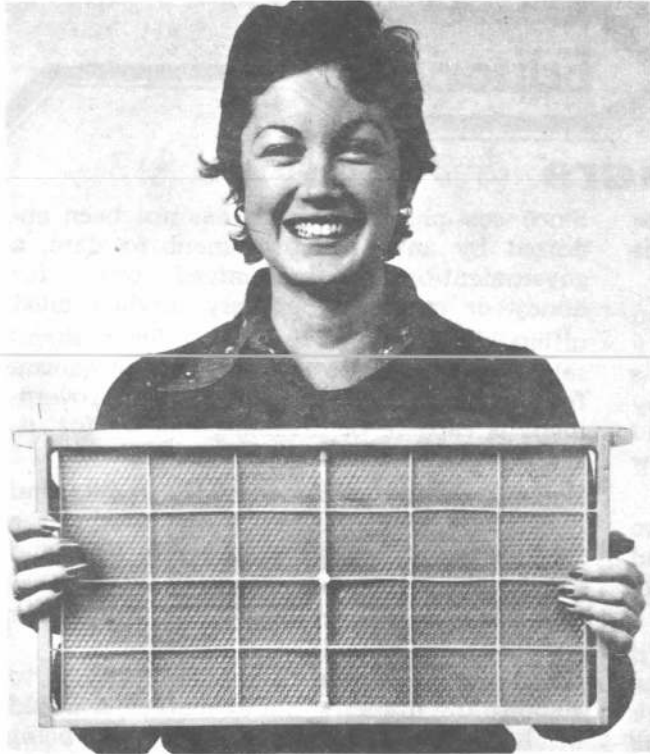
Many of the conference decisions which contained an anti-HMA bias were obviously directed more at the attitudes of HMA board members than at the role or the performance of the authority itself. But who is to blame if the role of the authority is never explained, if no one finds the time to justify its actions?

And who is responsible for a remit allowing private exports of bulk honey, when a similar remit for private exports of retail packs of honey wasn't actioned the year before?

If HMA-bashing did play a large part at the conference let's hope the lessons have been well-learned by both bashees and bashers.

There will be no place for it in this year's crucial HMA elections.

# STC Wireless Beehive Frame gains immediate response



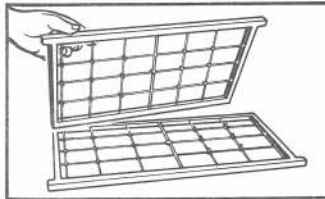
After two years of development and evaluation in co-operation with the Department of Agriculture and leading beekeepers in Australia, STC produced the "wire-less" beehive frame.

Within four weeks of its introduction no less than 20,000 STC beehive frames were in use — a dramatic demonstration of the acceptability of the frame by beekeepers and bees.

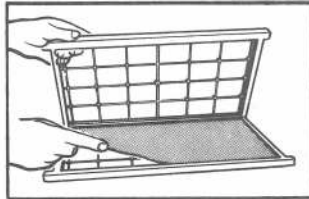
Its many advantages include:

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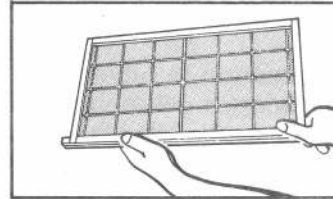
## Assembly Instructions



1. Rest one half of frame on flat surface.



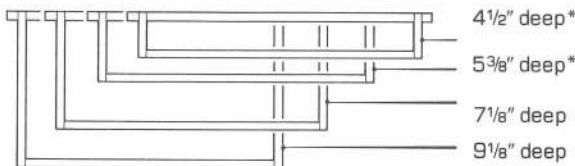
2. Insert foundation and snap frame halves together.



3. When frames are together with foundations in position push pins into mating holes at all intersections of webbing.

**Note:** To open the frame insert knife blade in bottom joint between the two half frames and prise open. Repeat operation at other points as required. Individual beekeeper's brands can be inserted for low 'one time' cost or the customer can brand them.

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# STC

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Advertising at these rates is available to bona-fide beekeepers advertising products or services relating to their beekeeping enterprise only. In cases where the appropriate rate is questioned, the decision of the editor will be final.

Rates: Full-page, \$50; Half-page, \$30; Quarter-page, \$15; \$1 a column cm. No deductions for contracts will apply.

### Commercial Rates

Full-page, \$80; Half-page, \$50; Quarter-page, \$25; \$2 a column cm. \$20 per page loading for inside cover, outside back over and spot colour. Concessions available for contracts.

### SUBSCRIPTIONS

The NZ Beekeeper is distributed free to all beekeepers owning more than 49 hives who, after paying their compulsory hive levy, automatically become members of the National Beekeepers' Association of New Zealand (Inc.)

Beekeepers owning less than 50 hives and others who may wish or may not wish to join the association, will pay an annual subscription of \$7.50 which includes the cost of a subscription to the NZ Beekeeper.

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# CORRESPONDENTS

## NEW HMA ROLE

Dear Sir,

A new role for the HMA was to me the message of the 1976 conference. A new course for our industry will call for much wisdom in the ensuing months.

Now is the time for seeking a middle road which will encompass the aspirations of the majority of our beekeepers.

In seeking to reorganise our industry I believe we must also take note of the remits that were lost for not only do they represent the interest of many beekeepers, it would be shortsighted not to admit they had some merit and should be considered when planning a new role for the HMA.

The coming authority elections will be of utmost importance but I believe the main responsibility rests with the industry with both suppliers to the HMA and non suppliers getting together and agreeing to a new role. It must be obvious to many we have passed remits for private exports etc. without providing the mechanics on how to effect the change.

I believe we now have a golden opportunity to restructure the HMA and enable it to serve a far wider section of our industry. To this end I will make a few suggestions which may engender some useful discussions.

- The HMA sell its Auckland Building and utilize lower cost bulk storage.
- To cease retail packing of honey.
- To purchase honey offered to the authority.
- Honey surplus to the NZ market requirements sold on the export market.
- To regulate the private export of bulk and retail packs.
- To levy all honey at the point of sale to provide: a. Funds to cover administration costs. b. Establishment of adequate reserves to maintain stability on the NZ market.
- To license all honey packers.

I believe a production levy will be accepted by the industry if it can be shown that the HMA will be operating in the wider interests of the whole of the industry. This levy could well prove to be a more equitable method of financing the NBA than the present hive levy.

Licensing of honey packers may well prove necessary but more important will be the stabilising of bulk honey prices.

To conclude, as long as we remain a fragmented industry we will effectively deny ourselves a just return for our labours.

Yours,

R.C. Jansen

## NBA ELECTION VOTES

Dear Sir,

Whoever devised the system used, had little idea of permitting voters much choice.

Four names — voters had to vote for three.

Very little choice indeed. Every voter would be voting for at least one person who he did not wish to see elected.

What I would like to know is — who thought this original method up?

As president, Ivan Dickinson has to take full responsibility.

Could Ivan please explain why I am compelled to vote for a person who in my opinion is not suitable for an Executive position.

Yours,

Robert Davidson  
Timaru

The reason for a "three-or-nothing" system is to ensure all votes have equal weighting. If voters could use only one of their three votes, it would have much more strength than those of someone casting three votes. Nevertheless, in response to concern expressed by Mr Herron and others at the annual meeting the president undertook to ensure that alternative voting systems were investigated by the executive. See page 21 of this issue.

## KILLER BEES

Dear Sir,

In the late 1930s my husband was attacked by wild African bees while on colonial service in Kenya.

Is there any likelihood of killer bees becoming established in New Zealand in the near future?

Yours,

Grace Farnhill,  
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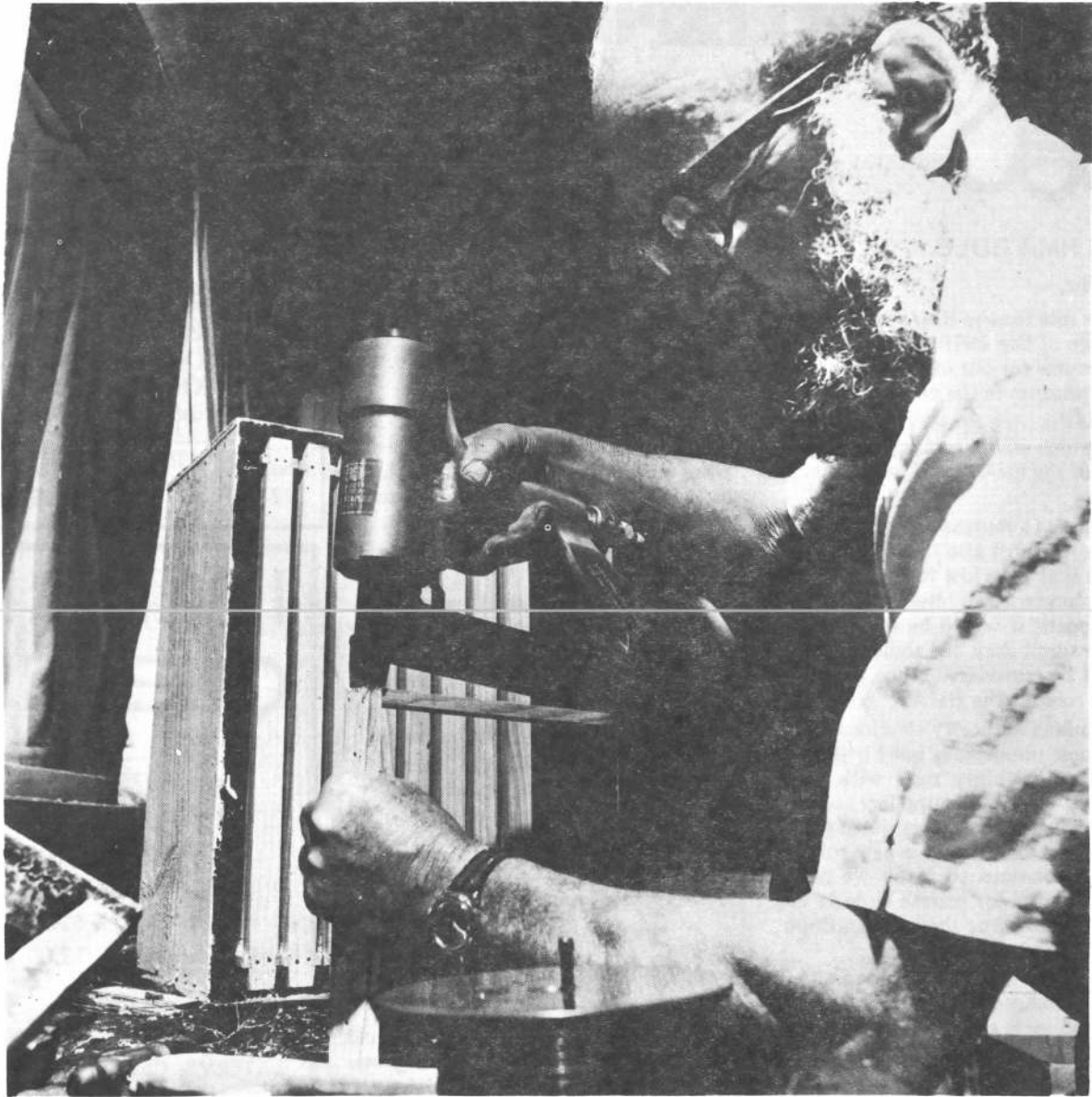
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**KING  
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#### **Pollen export incentive**

The export incentive committee of the Department of Trade and Industry has decided to include pollen within the increased exports taxation incentive. The decision has been back-dated to April 1, 1976.

#### **Merging authority and NBA**

The NBA executive has agreed to exchange background papers with the HMA as a first step in the investigation of the merits of merging the two organisations as recommended by this year's conference. This will be followed by a special joint meeting of the board of the authority and the association executive late in October.

#### **Clear-felling concern**

The concern expressed by the 1976 NBA conference about widescale clearfelling of native forest for exotic conversion has been voiced by the NBA executive

in letters to the ministers of agriculture, forests and the environment. A similar message has also been conveyed to the Forest and Bird Society.

#### **Tonga Queens examined**

The Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries has been asked to comment on a 1976 conference remit favouring the import of Tonga Queen bees into New Zealand, provided all safeguards are catered for. The NBA executive is particularly concerned about the effects any imports might have on New Zealand's queen bee export trade and has asked the ministry to comment on this aspect in particular.

#### **Changing deadlines**

The NBA executive has decided the deadline date for membership of the association is June 30 each year for all those wishing to vote at the annual meeting or conference of the association.

#### **Minute exchange**

The NBA executive has decided that all HMA board members should receive NBA executive minutes as of right. The executive has asked the board to make available a copy of its minutes to the president of the association.

#### **Apimondia tour**

The NBA in association with the Bee Research Association is endeavouring to arrange for a group to tour to the Apimondia conference in Australia in November 1977. Those interested are requested to contact the association head office or the NBA representative in New Zealand, Graham Walton. It is important that some idea of likely interest is known well in advance so that the travel concessions available can be tapped. A head poll at conference indicated that of those wishing to visit Apimondia, most would be interested in a tour of between 12 and 14 days in duration.

## **Comb producers' annual meeting**

by H.C. Belin

THE MEETING of the NZ Comb Honey Producers' Association (Inc.) was held in the Lake View Motel, Taupo. During the general business the proposed honey export regulations 1976 took up most of the time.

The deputy director of horticulture, Mr Forbes, and Mr Smaellie were at the meeting to discuss these regulations. Many amendments were considered and as there was no allowance for comb

honey and pollen, and industrial grades of comb honey, it was decided that a special committee meeting be called in Auckland on August 5, to complete the submissions.

When these regulations become law, the honey industry will be paying grading fees for the first time as it is government policy that all agricultural industries pay for the grading costs.

The highlight of the evening was a talk by Mr P. Berry on Comb Honey export marketing when he showed how he moved prices upward to obtain the world's record prices for Comb Honey. It is hoped he will now be able to help the whole industry in the same way.

Mr J. Wright of Bombay, South Auckland, was again elected president.

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## A FRESH START

In this issue David Williams of Rotorua takes a close look at hive construction and manipulation. Once stung but never shy, he leads the beginner down the path of pleasurable and profitable beekeeping.

"My articles are designed to be both practical and provocative," he writes. "There may be many points amateurs would wish to raise and would do so if told to write in. I would be happy to provide answers to the best of my limited ability and can always call on the literature or the experts for the really tricky ones."

Mail your questions to: "A Fresh Start", Box 176, Carterton.

## THE HIVE

LET'S TALK ABOUT the hive itself. We've already said that you need two brood chambers, but there is one rule that must be laid down now and for all time, and that is that all equipment must be 100 per cent standard.

Never deviate a hairsbreadth from the specification even if you make your own and never, but never, bother with silly things like half depth supers or other frivolities. Much more trouble than they're worth, difficult to manipulate, double the trouble for half the honey.

So — standardise everything down to the last fractional millimetre.

Right, let's start from the ground up. You are a hobbyist so you can do things the professional would find inconvenient or wouldn't want to do anyway.

Such as an awkward but super-efficient floorboard, for example. It's too high and the landing board sticks out the front, so the commercial beekeeper couldn't truck it, that isn't going to worry you.

Your floorboard rests on two 100 mm by 50 mm (4"x2") pieces of C3 treated radiata up on edge. One of these bearers will be a couple of centimetres in from the back, the leading edge of the other will be nicely in line with the front edge of the brood-chamber. They will be one centimetre less long than the floorboard is wide and the galvanised nails going down through the boards into them will be nicely staggered to make them firm.

The floorboards themselves will be of dressed, untreated radiata and will protrude 8 cm out front as a landing board, from which another piece of untreated board will slope down to the ground. A piece of dressed 150 mm by 25 mm with the square-cut ends angled away to make a good fit is as good as any.

It will be held in position, leaning against the front lip of the landing board, by two galvanised nails pushed through two pre-drilled holes at the bottom edge where it rests on the ground.

This slope is not, as you might think, for them to land on, but merely to provide an aerodynamic updraft to lift the honey-laden bees into the hive and not let

them drop under. Saves hundreds a day in the season.

The floorboard rim will be of strips of 16 by 12 mm untreated radiata and these will make a rim very slightly inside the outer edge of the chamber all round except at the front, which will be open full width in summer.

In service, the back bearer will have a loose extra piece under it to tilt the whole hive slightly forward. This makes it easier for the bees, ensures that the rain does not run in, and the slight step in around the rim helps rain drip off and not soak in.

The chambers themselves are standard, so no need to discuss here. Keep adding a coat of paint every year, white for preference because it looks best in the garden, and that should keep them intact and waterproof.

Don't paint the actual floorboard in any way because the dew condenses on the paint and the first bees out in the morning get stuck in it. There's nothing more pathetic than a dozen or so bees upside down feebly waving their legs in the air. With bare wood the droplets soak in and you don't get this trouble. You can paint round the outer rim if you like.

A hive mat is a must.

A piece of thick sacking should be cut to size and laid over the tops of the frames after the tops have been scraped clean. This should be replaced every year, or more often if it gets overpropolis-ed and doesn't sit easily. Don't play around with anything else.

You come across characters who use hardboard with or without a rim and the bees have a happy time sticking it down or building it all together with combs of their own if there is room and it's a major operation to remove it.

You get people trying to use thick paper or cardboard and the bees eat their way through and stick it down and it tears when you try to remove it. Beekeepers using plastic mats learn how bad condensation and saturation can really be.

Just a simple piece of thick sacking please. It teases up easily, you can expose a frame at a time if you want to (remember, bottom two chambers nine frames each, honey supers eight), it's flexible enough to sit down easily, keeps the bees down comfortably, dries out easily, and so on.

The roof should have inside dimensions one centimetre larger than the super in width and length, should have 10 cm deep sides, a wood or softboard inner cover and a wooden rim to rest on the super walls to avoid crushing the bees. In other words, you make a large shallow box and rim in the outside of the inside!

Outer covering is conventionally tin, folded at the corners and nailed on, but you can use any waterproof material. I use neatly folded black plastic with drawing pins holding it under the bottom edge. Plastic encourages all the rain to run off quickly. It is also cheap, readily available, easy to put on and replace when needed, and seems to keep the hive drier than tin — but that's probably post hoc reasoning.

If you do use plastic, remember not to put your smoker on it, nor leave oddments of wax on it or they melt and make it brittle. Otherwise, its excellent.

Well, that's the basic hive, and a very useful and harmonious unit it is. Keep it simple, keep it standard, and every summer will be golden.

One last hint. Never keep just one hive. Always keep two. That way



*Handle with care and you'll have very few stings.*

you can always do a bit of quick swapping of frames, or stores, you can hep up a weak hive and cool off an over-strong one, you can try your little ideas out on one hive and keep the other as control, and, whatever happens, you always get some honey with two. So, try two as the bare minimum.

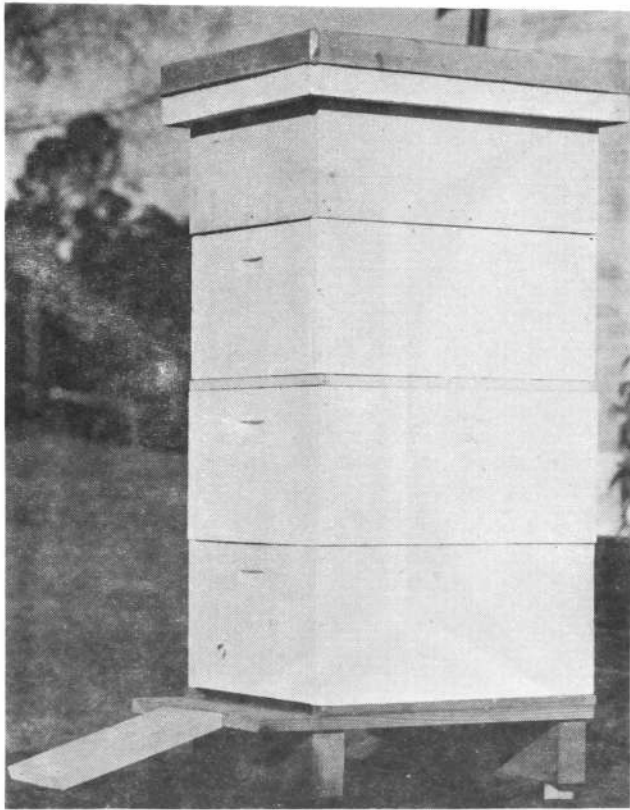
Having defined the hive, this might be a suitable time to discuss hive examination, assuming you now have hives plus bees.

Choose a clear, calm, sunny day — if it isn't, don't do it. The best times are 10 am or 3 pm, but these are not critical. Get the smoker going really well, place yourself at the side of the hive and not in front, put two good slow puffs in the entrance, wait one minute. One more slight puff there, g-e-n-t-l-y lift off the lid

(bees are responsive to changes in barometric pressure which is one reason they hate heavy weather — and people who take hives lids off roughly), place upside down on ground in front and slightly to one side of hive, place a spare hive box diagonally on it.

Tease back one corner of the hive mat, gently smoke there and continue smoking as you peel it right off. Place handily out of the way, ditto with the smoker. Lever the second frame in on your side away from its companions, doing all this and subsequent operations in extreme slow motion. Raise slowly, inspect, place gently in spare box.

The rest are now easy to get at and examine, so take each one out in turn, examine, gently replace where you want it. If sorting brood versus stores, one or



*The basic hive: "Keep it simple, keep it standard and every summer will be golden."*

other category can be left in top, other sorted into spare.

Gently lever off top box, place conveniently near other box, start on bottom brood chamber in same way after another *mild* smoking. Every movement should be quiet and gentle at all times. Jarring, knocking, dropping of frames, etc. will earn its own painful reward.

Smoke gently if the bees get active.

There may be times when the disturbance due to your clumsiness is so great that the only thing to do is to close up and walk away. It happens to all of us, less frequently as you become more experienced.

One good tip for the beginner is to have a water spray handy, either a clean garden syringe or a natty laboratory model or something similar. A quick spray with this will ground flying hostiles until they dry out and may just mean the difference between success and failure in certain circumstances. So, good luck and, if all else fails, read the instructions — these instructions.

Stings? We all get stings, but not only does the commercial man get fewer stings, he also gets less poison in him. Why is this? Because he scrapes bee, sting, and all off the minute he feels it land.

It may take a few stings to get the technique but there's a great incentive. Nobody likes stings.

Handle the bees correctly and you'll get very, very few. I have friends who don't get a single sting from one year to the next. Scrape them as soon as felt and the few you get won't be too bad.

Never leave the sting itself in. The muscular contractions keep pumping long after the bee is away — incidentally this looks fascinating under a magnifying glass if your scientific curiosity goes that far.

Don't worry about stings too much. Certainly the thought of 40,000 bees all coming at you point first can be a little off-putting and certainly there are anti-histamine tablets you may carry as a precaution and certainly you get nasty swellings, particularly

if they get you in the loose flesh around the eyes or elsewhere on the face. That's the worst that can happen.

The best that can happen is that you quietly and gently, on a calm sunny day, go through your hive, see all you want to see, do all you have to do, and don't get a single sting. It happens all the time.

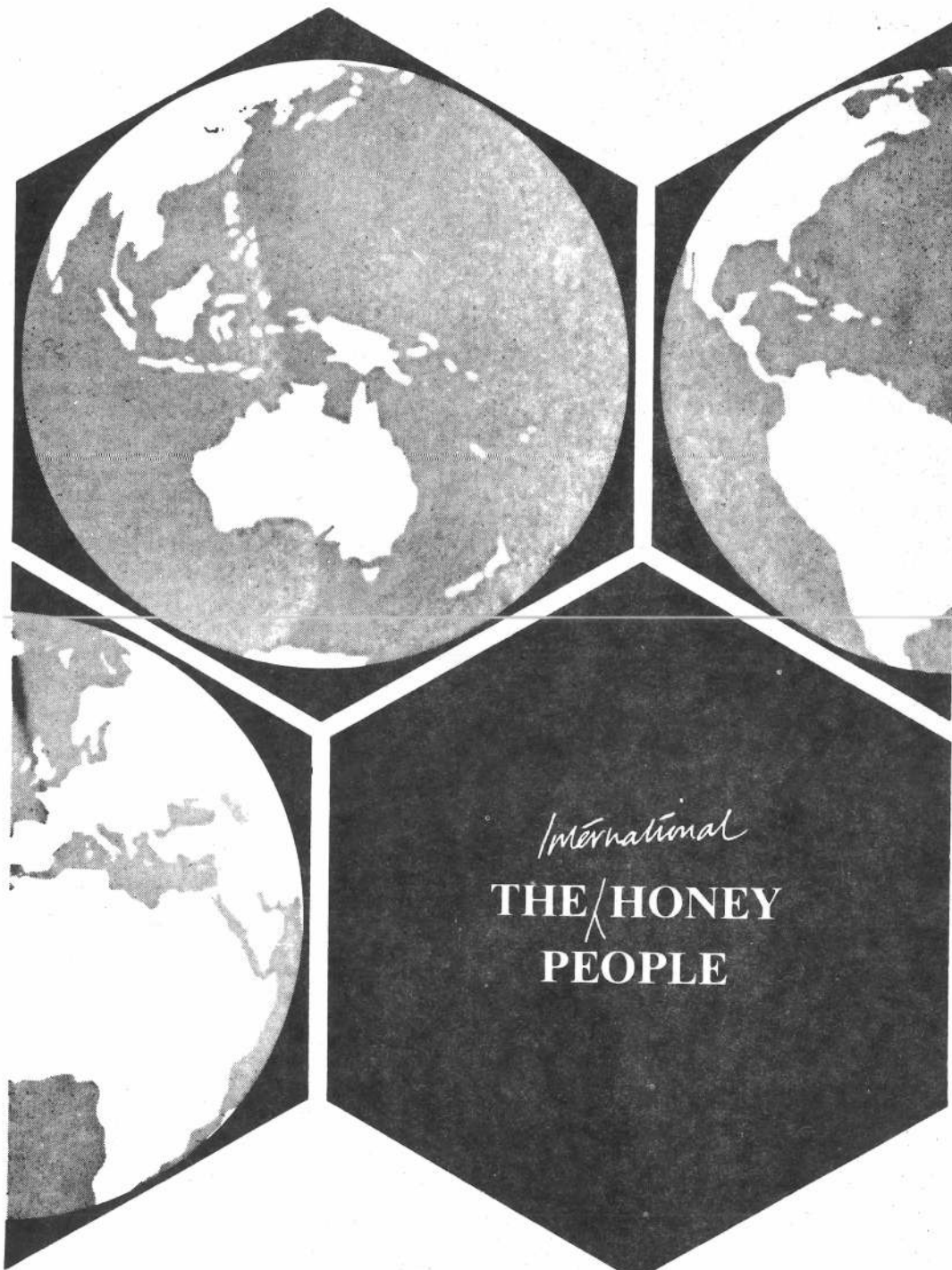
And one final note for the time of year, this time on swarms. Unless you are 100 per cent certain they come from your hives (and they won't if you've done as you should), collect them and dispose of them — a large plastic bag and a few squirts of fly spray are as good as anything, then put them in your rubbish collection, bag and all. That way you perform an act of public service as well as removing a potential menace.

However, if it should happen (and it will) that someone should offer you bees at present occupying their roof, walls, shed, letter box, etc, refuse as politely as possible and as often as necessary. The work will be long and dangerous, the rewards nil, while the generous donors will complain about the inconvenience and the damage. Tell them to call in the experts, while making it perfectly plain you are not in that category.

Don't rush off full of naive enthusiasm thinking you are going to get cheap bees and free honey. Remember Heinlein's TANSTAAFL — There Ain't No Such Thing As A Free Lunch — not one in ten of these feral colonies have any stores worth having and you certainly wouldn't want any of those horrible disease-ridden, bad-tempered, independent-minded bees in your hives. Leave them 100 per cent alone.

You may want to increase your stocks. This is not the time of year for it unless you can buy full, certified hives and the subject will be dealt with later.

Incidentally, if you have any specific queries you would like answered, please write in and we will do our best for you.



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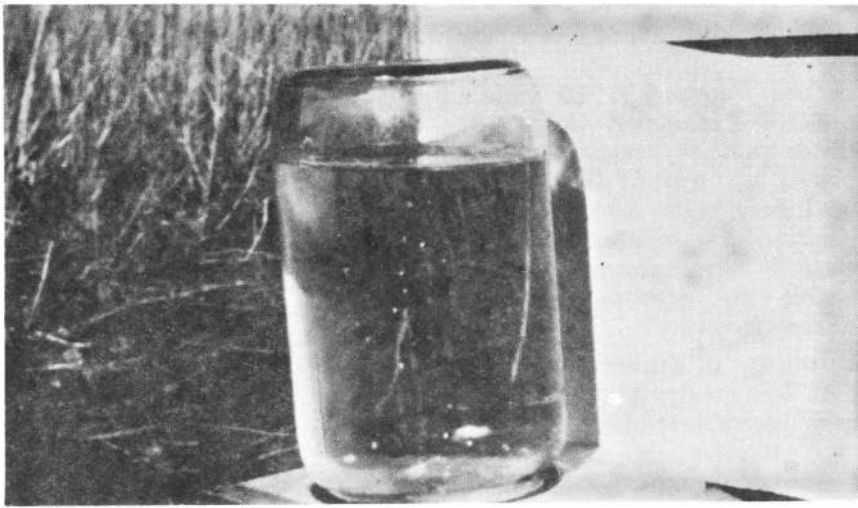


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Feeding colonies of bees, for stimulation of brood rearing or providing stores, is a task carried out by all beekeepers at one time or another. With certain types of management, this takes the form of feeding back combs of honey saved for the purpose. More commonly, dry sugar or sugar syrup is fed.

In this article, Nick Wallingford of Dannevirke, describes some of the equipment and procedures used in connection with feeding colonies of bees.

## To feed or not to feed

A BEEKEEPER SHOULD examine his overall management plan before choosing a feeding programme.

The number of hives to be fed, sources of "feed" honey available, initial and maintenance cost of feeders, relative convenience of their use, efficiency — all of these and more factors will play a part in helping him to choose or modify his methods of feeding. Often the final choice is a compromise.

In dealing with syrup, for instance, the use of a very small capacity entrance feeder filled several times a week is highly efficient in stimulating brood production, but the inconvenience involved in using it on large numbers of hives far from home might make its use impractical.

### Spring feeding

If you are in an area where there is a large quantity of honey that is of low relative value, of inferior colour or unpleasant flavouring, it might be profitable to run a percentage of hives just for a supply of this "feed" honey to feed the rest of the hives, allowing you then to take more of their high value honey.

Any hives used for this purpose should be carefully inspected for foulbrood at all times, since there is no easier or more disastrous way of spreading the dis-

ease throughout your hives. Alternatively, combs of feed honey can be separated out at the extracting stage and saved for later use.

This involves a little on the spot "grading" of the honey crop by visual inspection and taste, and it should be remembered that any frame used for this purpose will be going into the brood nest — broken or sagging combs should be culled out. I would still hesitate to recommend this unless your hives have been free of foulbrood for some time, or unless you carry out a very careful inspection for disease on every hive as you remove its honey.

Feed honey should be stored in sound boxes on a drip tray with a cover of some sort. Mice and robbing bees can be annoying and ruinous, so care should be taken in its storage.

In some cases areas where wax moths might be a problem, fumigation might even be advisable. Your apiary instructor can advise you on this.

Feeding the colony essentially involves the removal of empty frames from the outside of the brood nest and their replacement with combs of honey.

Be careful not to take out the combs of pollen which will be found on either side of the cluster. If during your work in

the brood nest you rotate the old, sagging and broken combs toward the outside, the bees will use up any honey in them, and they will be empty and ready to take home to melt down.

### Winter feeding

Using combs of honey to provide stores for wintering a hive is carried out in much the same way. It should be remembered that bees need an open area of comb upon which to initiate their clustering, so do not shift combs of pollen or honey into the middle of the brood nest unnecessarily.

Where large amounts of stores are needed to over-winter a hive, it can become difficult to get enough honey into the hive without unduly breaking up the brood nest. Combs half filled with honey and pollen can also limit the amount of honey put into a brood nest.

With most beekeepers wintering their hives in two boxes, the obvious solution would be to add a third box, but this has some drawbacks — looking for the queen in the spring is more difficult, and some beekeepers try to keep their white combs for extraction only.

If a queen excluder is put between the added box of combs and the brood nest, there is the chance that the cluster will leave

the queen below to die as they move up and into the box of honey.

A method used by some South Island beekeepers seems to solve these problems. They use a piece of bagging about 300 mm by 450 mm (12" by 16") between the brood nest and the box of honey combs.

Very few queens will ever go out to the edge of the hive to go around this mat and into the third box, but the bees seem to transfer the honey down during periods of settled weather in the winter so they are able to make use of the stores provided in the additional box.

#### Feeding dry sugar

Feeding dry white sugar or dry raw sugar is a fairly accepted practice among some beekeepers. An article by Ivor Forster in the March 1976 edition of the "NZ Beekeeper" detailed his findings after feeding hives on dry white sugar one year and feeding dry raw sugar the next, in both instances comparing the hives with others fed with sugar syrup.

In 1973-74 he found that significantly more honey was stored by the syrup-fed group than by those fed white sugar dry. The difference was not so marked between syrup fed hives and those fed dry raw sugar. He concluded, that short term feeding with dry sugar is satisfactory, particularly if some honey is available to the hive.

Some beekeepers feed dry sugar by simply pouring it into the hive over the tops of the frames, usually toward the back or sides of the hive. There is some risk of wastage as the bees may throw the sugar out of the hive, viewing it as "foreign matter" rather than converting it to stores.

Another method involves using a strip of newspaper 500 mm by 125 mm (20" by 5"). This is placed between the two brood boxes along one side of the hive. Dry sugar is then poured down in the space between the outside combs and the wall.

Other beekeepers use containers to hold the dry sugar, either a

paper bag, or a trough type feeder placed on top of the brood nest.

In the February 1976 issue of the NZ Beekeeper, Colin Rope states that dry sugar should be placed on top of the hive immediately below the lid. In this position condensation and warmth rising from the colony enable the bees to utilize the sugar effectively.

However, it should be stressed that though dry sugar feeding is very convenient, it may not be very effective, and should not be employed unless the hive has a moderate amount of honey available to it.

#### Feeding sugar syrup

There are many popular feeders for use with sugar syrup and each has merit for certain operations and conditions. These descriptions are of those that seem to be most commonly used in New Zealand, as well as a few variations used overseas.

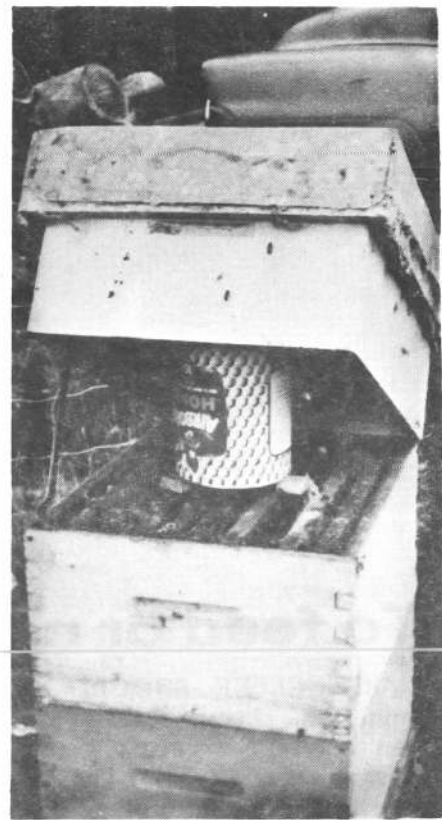
About the smallest capacity feeder for syrup is the Boardman, or entrance style feeder. It consists of a jar with a screw lid with five to six small (1.5 mm or frame nail size) holes punched or drilled in it.

When turned upside down, the bees can take the syrup through the small openings.

The jar is inverted onto a block of wood which is bored to take the screw type lid and hold it a beespace above a passageway which leads into the hive. The feeder is placed on the bottom board with the projection into the entrance.

A variation used in the United States is to insert this style of feeder into a hole bored into the second box (used during the flow as an upper entrance) where the bees will be able to take the syrup even if the weather is quite cold, since they will not have to travel so far from the warmth of the cluster.

The greatest advantage of the Boardman is that the level of the syrup is visible from the outside of the hive, and it can be examined, removed, or refilled without



*A friction lid tin can feeder in place on top of a hive.*

having to disturb the bees at all. For this reason it has some merit with queen raising hives where manipulations should be kept to a minimum.

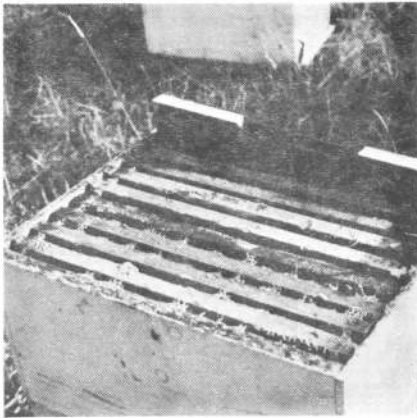
Probably the most widely used feeder, especially among commercial beekeepers, is the over-the-hive type feeder with a capacity of three to four gallons. One style, made entirely of wood, consists of a shallow watertight box with a "chimney" through from the hive so that the bees are able to climb up into it to take the syrup.

The chimney can be two slotted blocks of wood joined together or it could be a solid block with a 25 mm hole drilled through it. The bottom of the box should be of hardboard and inserted into saw kerfs in the sides and ends so that it gives a beespace of 8 mm above the tops of the frames.





*Top feeders in place with straw in the syrup to prevent feeding bees from drowning.*



*Place the division board feeder where the outside frame should be.*

The other style much in use is made with either an old 60 lb honey tin (small lid type) or an egg pulp tin cut in half, each piece being attached to a shallow box the size of a half depth super.

The bees come up into it through the gap between the two tins. The lids should be soldered in place to avoid leakage.

Some sort of **flotation** material is needed to keep the bees from drowning in the syrup. Wood wool, straw, brush or some other fibre should be placed in the feeder to give the bees something to run around on.

The tins may need to be waxed or painted to give the bees purchase.

Its biggest disadvantage is its small capacity, and for this reason it is used very little around commercial apiaries.

The friction-lid feeder is one alternative.

Five to six, 1.5 mm holes are punched in the lid of a five or 10 lb can filled with syrup, which is inverted directly over the brood nest.

Several sticks should be used to keep it from resting directly on the top of the frames.

If a mat is used it can be either folded over, or a hole can be made through it to give the bees access to the tin. Several tins of feed can be given at one time if a large feed is necessary.

An empty super is placed over the feeding tin and the hive's lid replaced.

The division board feeder is a trough-type feeder made to replace one or more of the outside frames in the hive. It has the same outer dimensions as a frame, and similar lugs to support it.

The sides can be made of hard-board or tin or some similar material, as long as the feeder can be made watertight. Melted paraffin wax is ideal for this purpose.

Its capacity will vary with its width, being anywhere from five to 10 lb. The feeder can be easily filled with a watering can (without the rose, of course) after it is in the hive.

Two variations of the division-board feeder are worth noting. One is the use of a plastic bag instead of the traditional-type construction.

An old culled comb is slipped into the plastic bag and stapled along the top bar just enough to join the two. It can be slipped into a gap in the outside of the hive and then filled in the regular manner, the bag swelling with the weight, but retaining its shape when pressing against the adjacent frame and the hive wall. The old comb gives the bees a place on which to stand and walk while they take the syrup, as well as helping the bag keep its shape as it is emptied.

Another easily made and cheap feeder can be constructed by

folding galvanised iron around a form, then dipping it in hot paraffin wax. If the folding is done carefully, the wax will make it watertight without any soldering at all. This is a fairly quick and inexpensive division-board feeder to make.

Many beekeepers keep one of these feeders with each hive throughout the year, storing it on top of the hive, or in stacks in the yard. During the honeyflow, it can be turned upside down on the top super, and if the bees unexpectedly run short of storage space it will hold another half a box of surplus honey.

When taking off the last of the honey any unfinished supers can be left above the feeder and the bees will transport the honey down and pack it around the broodnest. Wax scrapings can be stored in it until they are taken home to be rendered. The feeder can also make a handy stool on which to sit to examine the hive.

Another type of top feeder used in Canada, Australia and New Zealand is a large plastic bag filled with two gallons or so of syrup. The top is closed with either a rubber band or wire fastener. Zip lock bags are very popular, too.

The feeder is placed on top of the brood chamber, with an empty super around it. Several small holes or a gash is made on the top of the bag and the bees take the syrup through this. The bags cost about 5c and can be reused, filling through the hole in the top, or they can be discarded after one use. This method is described by Keith Doull in the August 1970 issue of the NZ Beekeeper.

There are a number of considerations to be taken into account when feeding sugar syrup.

A large feed too early in the spring or too late in the autumn will have a tendency to seriously deplete the bee strength of a hive, when several smaller feedings might be handled more adequately.

Although it might necessitate another visit, the hives will come

through in much better shape if fed a little but often. At any rate, do not wait until late in the autumn to do any syrup feeding needed for winter stores, since it involves considerable work for the bees converting syrup to sealed stores and it places a lot of stress on the hive if these same bees will have to carry the hive through the winter.

It would be far better to feed early to make use of the larger

force of field bees left from the gathering of the crop and then the hive can winter with the still fresh young bees raised just before brood rearing ceases.

Murray Reid made this point very forcefully in an article in the April 1974 issue of the "NZ Beekeeper" on feeding sugar syrup to hives in winter.

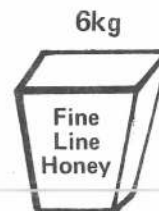
No matter what type of feeders and feeding you use, steps should

be taken so that robbing by other bees in the area does not get started. Keep all honey and sticky combs covered while working the hives, and be careful not to drip syrup, since once the robbers have started it is very hard to stop them.

Special care should be taken in the spring and the period just after a flow has ceased, as robbers will quickly attack and rob any weak or unprotected colony.

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## BETWEEN THE COMBS

### Wasp not after people

A harmless wasp has been causing unwarranted alarm around Auckland.

It is the small, stingless, yellow and black ichneumon wasp (*Xanthopimpla rhopaloceros*). Ichneumon wasps were introduced to New Zealand eight years ago by the biological control section of the DSIR to counter the leaf roller caterpillar, a pest of many fruit trees and home-garden plants.

The wasp has spread as far south as Te Awamutu and is often found flying around hedges in search of its prey.

According to the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries' Plant Health Diagnostic Station at Mt Albert the wasp appears to be having an effect on leaf-roller populations, but no formal assessment has yet been made.

### Bee Disease Hits Canada

A fungus disease of bees that has been primarily limited to Europe has shown up with disturbing proportions in Canada. Its full potential is not yet known, but researchers are wasting no time in investigating the disease, called chalk brood.

Don Nelson, head of the apiculture section at the Agriculture Canada Research Station in Beaverlodge, Alberta, coordinated a survey across Canada last summer at the request of the Canadian Association of Apiculturists.

"We were surprised and somewhat alarmed by what we found," he says. "We found evidence of chalk brood in 32 per cent of the 5374 hives inspected. The disease was first spotted in a few isolated hives in 1971."

Of the 32 per cent of infected hives, two per cent were severely affected by the disease, which kills and mummifies the larvae.

"Even 2 per cent mortality early in the season could affect the total hive population and thus the honey production, says the researcher.

Work is now centered on determining the disease's potential under Canadian weather conditions and its possible impact on the honey industry.

Because of harsh winters, more than 300,000 bee colonies are routinely destroyed late each summer in Western Canada. It is feared, however, that the disease will persist through the winter in the combs and affect the new bees.

The severity of the disease varied from province to province and this may provide a clue to its survival under winter conditions.

### Apimondia Field Day

At the inaugural meeting of the Apimondia Field Day Sub-committee it was agreed that the Field Day be held at Tanunda Oval on 17-10-77, starting at 10.00 a.m.

An invitation is now issued to those engaged in any aspect of the beekeeping industry who wishes to demonstrate working machinery, inventions, or special techniques, to apply to Mr D.G.

Brown, Secretary, Apimondia Field Day, Box 1671 G.P.O. Adelaide, S.A. 5001. No entry fee!

Applications should be forwarded before October 31, 1976.

In order that demonstrations and exhibitions will be of the highest standards, the Committee agreed to ask F.C.A.A.A. to appoint a representative from each State to vet applications, and to advise the Committee of Interstate interest in what this Committee hopes will be the highlight of the 26th Apimondia Congress.

Progress reports and a programme will be published in the near future.

### Fullsome praise

The New Zealand Beekeeper has taken on a new look. With greatly enlarged format, 32 pages and a completely new layout it caps any beekeeping journal anywhere. True it only appears quarterly and is linked to funds raised from hive levies on the commercial beekeepers through its National Beekeeper's Association but it certainly presents that readable look. We wish it every success.

— from *British Bee Journal*,  
February, 1976.

### Had he but followed Dad

*ADOLPH HITLER, born 20 April, 1889, in the "Zum Pommer" Inn, in the little town of Braunau in Austria-Hungary, had a father called Alois Hitler, an exciseman, 52 years of age and a mother Klara Potzel, younger than her man by 23 years.*

*In 1895, when Alois, who was the perfect double of Hindenburg with his square head and heavy drooping moustache, decided to retire he withdrew to Leonding, a village near Linz, where the Traun River joins the Danube. Until his death in 1903, the one-time exciseman, a surly, sour character, lived in a small house surrounded by a garden and pursued the joys of beekeeping.*

*Australian Bee Journal*  
56(3):15 1975



## FROM THE COLONIES

### SOUTHLAND

Southland has experienced a very cold and wet winter so we are now looking forward to a spring more suitable to beekeeping and a hope of a better than average crop.

Over the past year Southland has seen the retirement of many well-known beekeepers, namely John De Witt who now lives north of Timaru, Jack Davies of Drummond, Jack Glynn of Balfour and Norman Glass of Gore. We trust these men will enjoy a long semi retirement and we know they will keep an active interest in beekeeping.

Our thanks go to the MAF for the work it is doing in the south, organising a honeybee management course at Telford Farm Training Institute, and a seminar in Gore.

Tony Clissold,  
Waikaka.

### WEST COAST (SOUTH ISLAND)

The warm South Westland autumn that caused bees to consume stores while foraging for nectar sources that failed to produce and the cold winter that has caused them to consume still more to keep warm, means that a lot of hives are going to have less than enough stores for the spring.

Feeding sugar at its present price can be an expensive chore that no beekeeper will relish but which may become very necessary.

Naturally we all hope that the rata that is left will flower this coming season, but its depletion by disease, opossums and forestry is rather in the disaster category as far as beekeeping is concerned especially as regards expansion.

Peter Lucas,  
Harihari.

### SOUTH CANTERBURY

With the prospects of a higher than anticipated payout by the Honey Marketing Authority, drier and better wintering conditions for the bees and more honey in the brood nest in the hives than for several seasons, most beekeepers have shaken the snows of winter from their blankets, arisen from their beds and are preparing to face the coming season with much more confidence than for some time.

However we must not be too complacent — wasps were particularly bad last autumn and as the winter conditions would allow nests to survive, look out for wasps this spring. We killed 43 nests last autumn and there are still wasps in some areas.

Some parts of South Canterbury are very dry, only seven to eight inches of rain have fallen so far this year in the coastal region. Good spring rains are desperately needed if we are to have normal spring growth. Remember 1969 — this could happen again.

Operating costs have risen again, wages are high and with world honey prices showing no sign of upward movement let us curb our enthusiasm to just making sure we produce as much honey as possible for as little cost as we can.

It is only the beginning of spring, a long time to the honey flow so lets look forward to this season with optimism.

Harry Cloake,  
Timaru

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## A new method of requeening

by Nick Wallingford

BEEKEEPERS RECOGNISE the value of first year spring queens, and they often go to considerable effort and expense to raise and introduce them to their hives.

Sometimes they cause serious disturbance to the colony at a time when it can least afford it, the critical pre-flow build up period. I would like to describe a method which can result in systematic requeening of your hives with queen cells without splitting them and without hunting queens.

Many beekeepers use "tops" or "splits" in which to get queens mated for eventual introduction to the hive. Several frames of brood, bees, and honey are taken from the hive and raised into another box above a division board, so as to be completely separated from the parent hive, and supplied with a queen cell.

In theory, the cell hatches the queen mates, and begins laying, and the unit is then united to the hive, thereby re-queening it. In practice what often happens is a hive just beginning to expand has a critical amount of brood and bees taken from it, it is weakened so it cannot benefit from any early flow, and if the cell doesn't result in a laying queen, the honey, bees, and brood used to make the "top" are wasted.

To avoid splitting hives in the spring this way and yet still practice spring re-queening, a few beekeepers have been introducing a protected cell into each hive. Basically, a queen cell is inserted in a short (35 mm) length of plastic hose pipe and placed in the hive in the early spring.

Since the bees will only tear the cell down from the side and never from the tip, the virgin will emerge, and she will often be tolerated by the bees, much as they would under the supercedure impulse. In work done by Murray Reid, Apicultural Advisory Officer, as many as 60 to 70 per cent of the hives may be requeened by this simple procedure.

There are several drawbacks with this method, too. Often, both old queen and virgin disappear, making as many as 20 per cent back up nuclei a must. You will not know for sure whether the old queen was replaced, or the age or strain of the queen in the hive. In certain seasons, this method has fared better than others — the uncertainty and possible losses of productive units through requeening troubles are a disadvantage.

Through the use of a combination of these two methods, I believe I have hit on a system that requires very little more work than the protected cell introduction, but which will give more certain results. It doesn't hamper the hives development or cause loss of stores or bees, since the hive is never split into two separate units.

When you approach a hive in the early spring that has been wintered in two boxes, the cluster will generally be found in the upper box. Set this box to the side, then take the first box off the floor (and clean the floor while you're at it). Put the upper box, with the majority of the bees, on the bottomboard. Take from it one or two frames of mostly

sealed brood and gently shake most of the adhering bees back into the box. This is only to make sure you don't take the old queens as well. Put these frames in the centre of the other box, replacing them with two from it, taking care not to split the broodnest too much.

Now place a queen excluder over this box on the bottomboard. It should contain the old queen and the main part of the broodnest. On the excluder, at the rear corners of the hive, put several chips of wood or small stones and place the other box on top of the hive, so that the small gap will provide this second box with an entrance to the rear of the hive, just above the excluder. Put a queen cell with a protector next to the sealed brood that you transferred to this box. Put the cover on and leave it alone for three weeks.

By separating the old queen from the protected cell by a queen excluder, I think the cell's chances are considerably improved. Many of you use queen-right units similar to this for finishing queen cells — the excluder between queen and cells helps trigger the supercedure impulse. If all goes well, the virgin will emerge and a few days later use the rear entrance to fly from the hive to mate.

When you return to check the hive it is an easy matter to see if there is a young queen laying in the second box. If there is, look below the excluder and there's a chance the old queen will still be laying, too.

This method is a way of using the protected cell introduction

system with additional safeguards and with a way of telling if your attempted requeening was successful. If the cell doesn't result in a laying queen, nothing has been lost — all the honey, brood and bees used for the cell are still in the hive. It was never really split or weakened at all.

The unit with the young queen could be used to requeen the hive, to re-queen another hive, for increase, or as the basis for a two-queen system if the old queen is still present below the excluder.

If using it to requeen a hive the younger queen will generally

survive any fighting that might occur, especially if her unit is above that of the old queen. If used as increase, it can be placed on another bottomboard in the yard, or better yet shifted to another yard to avoid losses through drifting. It might also require strengthening by the addition of brood from other hives.

If both old and young queen are laying, I would prefer to leave the units as they are, and get as much benefit from this true two-queen system as I could, giving both additional room as needed, and possibly uniting shortly before the flow.

I believe this system has merit — it allows for fairly systematic requeening of all the hives, while never dividing the hives into two weaker units with its consequential problems. It will enable you to easily keep records as to the age of the queen, and eventually you might even begin to recognise certain of your more "tolerant" strains, those that tend to retain both old and "supercedure" queen. Such a trait would rate very high in any breeding programme.



## BEEKEEPERS TECHNICAL LIBRARY

The Library appreciates the following donations:-

**From Mrs M.J. Parker, Editor of "Bee News Tasmania" of Howrah, Tasmania.—**

Honey Plants of Western Australia, by Frances G. Smith, 1969, 82 pages.

Honey and Pollen Flora of Tasmania, by T.D. Raphael, 40 pages. Tasmania Department of Agriculture Bulletin No. 15 (photostat copy).

The Honey Flora of Queensland, by S.T. Blake and C. Roff, 1972, 234 pages.

Bee News, six copies, edited by Mrs M.J. Parker, 12 pages.

**From Murray Reid. —**

Storage of Queen Bees, by Murray Reid, 1975, 12 pages. Reprint from Bee Research Association.

Bee World, 2 copies.

**From Alister Lee of Southland for the Archives Dept. —**

Alliance Bee Supplies 1930 catalogue and price list. Gleanings, 1920, 1921.

**From General Assembly Library Wellington.—**

Photostats of the remaining missing copies of our file of "The New Zealand Beekeepers Journal", from July 1914. The library from spare copies, was able to build up the parliamentary library file up to a complete set.

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# New president elected, concern expressed about postal voting procedures

THE 1976 Annual Meeting of the National Beekeepers' Association Inc. was a fragmented affair, its business being sandwiched in between conference sessions and travel arrangements of guest speakers.

The election of officers was left until late in the proceedings and Ivan Dickinson, president for the last four years, disappointed many members by refusing to accept nomination for another term as president. He told the meeting he had decided to resign because of the need for new people with new ideas to take on responsibility within the association.

"In the period of Ivan Dickinson's presidency, some very necessary changes were made in the industry," said Percy Berry who was elected unopposed to the presidency in Mr Dickinson's stead. "Thank you for your expression of confidence in me, I hope to serve the industry well."

The first nomination for vice-president named Gavin McKenzie, who declined on the grounds of other commitments. Elected vice-president unopposed was Mike Stuckey of Auckland.

In general business, Mr Herron of Southland said he was surprised

that the postal ballots for the association executive had required members to vote for three of the four people on the ballot paper for their votes to be valid.

"The situation could occur," he said, "where a man was forced to make three votes, when he only wished to make one. In this way he could easily vote to the disadvantage of the man he wished to vote for."

Several members expressed concern about the need to make three votes and the executive secretary Mr Beard, agreed to have a look into the matter.

Further criticism was also made about the failure of the head office to inform the result of the South Island election before conference and the failure of the office to inform North Island members that a ballot was not required for representatives of that island.

These criticisms were noted by the president and the executive secretary and it was generally accepted that these were teething troubles which had resulted from the first year of operation of the postal ballot system, and should not occur in the future.

Mr Beard explained that executive members have two-year terms and that they retired in rotation. Next year he said, Messrs Stuckey, Dickinson and Berry would all retire. There had been no change in the membership of the executive as a result of this year's elections.

Resolutions were carried by acclaim during the latter part of the annual meeting congratulating Ivan Dickinson for his work as president and Chris Dawson for his work as the association librarian.

Mr Dickinson moved a vote of thanks to the host branch, Waikato, for its fine job of organising a successful conference and annual meeting, especially considering that the venue was outside its normal branch centre.

The most controversial item of general business was moved by HMA deputy chairman Kevin Ecroyd, after the failure of conference remits to define how the authority's funds which backed the guaranteed honey price would be replenished.

The remit was as follows:

*"That this conference supports the present guaranteed base price system and recognises the fact*

*that the continued operation of this scheme depends on the existence of some form of stabilisation levy. Accordingly the conference supports in principle the introduction of a stabilisation levy and requires the executive in consultation with the authority to determine how best such a levy could be implemented and operated."*

The motion found little favour with the annual meeting and only Mr Lorimer spoke in its favour.

Put to the vote it was defeated 21:38.

After the president had declared the motion defeated, Mr Hayman, government representative on the HMA, said the government would find it difficult to know whether the industry supported the base price system or not. Mr Percy Berry retorted that there was no confusion and that the annual meeting was clearly in favour of the base price system.

Although all financial members present could vote in the Annual Meeting, this was not the case for the conference, which is now a conference of delegates.

#### Delegates were:

Far North: M. Haines, T. Gavin, Northland: T. Gavin, M. McNabb, Auckland: M. Stuckey, Waikato: E.R. Robinson, D. Carey, Bay of Plenty: D. Barrow, R. Moss, Hawkes Bay: P. Marshall, B. Ashcroft, Central and Southern Hawkes Bay: D. Ward, South Western: C.B. Bromell, D. Gibbon, Nelson: G. White, West Coast: J. Glasson, Canterbury: J. Bray, G. Hantz, South Canterbury: S. Lyttle, P. Lyttle, North Otago: G.E. Winslade, S. Herman, Otago: M.J. Heineman, J. Glynn, Southland: A. Clissold, K. Herron.

## NEW LIFE MEMBERS

JACK GLYNN has been a regular attendee at beekeeping conferences for 50 years and has not missed a single conference in the last 30 years.

For many years he was secretary of the West Coast branch of the association. In 1946 he moved to Balfour, Southland, to become a fulltime beekeeper. In later years he was secretary of the Gore branch twice and was a member of the national executive for five years.

Although Mr Glynn had now sold his hives and retired from active beekeeping, his reputation as a successful breeder of queens still remained.

His nomination for life membership was proposed by Mr Clissold and second by Mr Herron. Other speakers were Messrs Poole, Cloake and Heineman.

Mr W.I. HAINES earned a strong reputation as a great worker for the industry in a remote area. He was always an industry man, his thoughts on issues always being as to how they would affect the industry, rather than himself personally.

He was a member of the association executive when it took two days to get from Kaitaia and two days to get back. This conference, illness, rather than

the vagaries of travel, made his attendance impossible.

When he found honey too heavy to handle he turned to raising queens, though even here he was more concerned with quality than quantity.

His nomination for life membership was proposed by Mr Gavin and seconded by Mr Glasson. Mr Bird also spoke.

HARRY CLOAKE has devoted considerable time to the industry, spending more than 10 years on the NBA executive and six years on the HMA. He has also advanced the cause of beekeeping in other spheres and has gained a well-founded reputation for being willing to help others in the industry.

In receiving his award, he said it was only with a great deal of co-operation with another that anything was ever achieved. "We won't achieve anything with acrimony and bitterness," he said.

His nomination for life membership was proposed by Steve Lyttle and seconded by Mr McKenzie. Other speakers were Messrs Ecroyd, Bray, Lorimer and Glynn.

GEORGE GORDON is a stalwart of the Hawkes Bay branch of the association, though his retire-

ment has meant that much of his work has gone unnoticed among the younger beekeepers.

In 1946 he played his part on the national executive and for many years was an officer in his local branch. His biggest contribution was, however, the work he did in helping frame workable dangerous sprays legislation which is now a model for similar legislation in countries overseas.

Mr Gordon, at a branch level, established a branch apiary which even now continues to provide finance for branch funds.

His nomination was proposed by Mr Marshall and seconded by Mr Ashcroft. Mr Percy Berry also spoke to his nomination.

NORMAN GLASS of Gore was a member of the National executive in the 1950s and was Gore branch president for six years. During his term as an officer of the association he became known for his ability to get his message known without having to throw his weight around.

Now retiring and on a world trip at the time of the 1976 conference, Mr Glass remains one of the best known beekeeping personalities in Southland.

His nomination for life membership was proposed by Mr Clissold and seconded by Mr Herron. Mr Jansen also spoke.





# CONFERENCE REPORT

## 1976 PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

**"A year that  
many will  
be pleased to forget..."**

THE YEAR CONCLUDED will be one that many beekeepers throughout New Zealand will be pleased to forget, some will take several years to recover from the effects of such a drastic crop. However it has taken such a year for many producers to realise just how vulnerable they are to the very rapid inflation rate that the industry has faced over the past three to four years. It should also be well and truly recognised that although small increases in prices annually do give some relief, they have been insufficient to enable producers to establish reserves to cover adverse years like that we have just had, without rushing to the nearest lending institution for assistance.

Over many years now beekeepers have failed to provide for the bad season and those producers who have been developing their businesses over the past year or so may have extreme difficulty in withstanding a season such as that which has just concluded. This situation cannot continue if the pollination service to our agriculture are to be maintained. This pollination service provided by the beekeeping industry is so much taken for granted by so many in the agricultural sector and the government and it would be in their interests to see that a run down in the beekeeping industry does not occur.

To achieve these goals there must be continuing and, to quote a

well known saying, "meaningful discussions" between all sections of the industry. Over the past months, one cannot say that this has been the case and I maintain we have received the just rewards for such folly. The industry has approximately some 125 beekeepers who are entirely dependent upon beekeeping as a means of livelihood and a further 75 beekeepers who derive at least 50 per cent of their income from honey, as well as the substantial numbers of beekeepers who own hives in the 20 to 250 group.

For all these producers we have something like five different service groups not counting the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries. In manpower between 30 and 35 persons, all of which require finance to administer their meetings and decisions. Such fragmentation does not in any way help to achieve a united industry nor does it assist in obtaining a return that will encourage further development of the industry.

However, I cannot see an easy solution to this fragmentation. The remit that you are to deal with at this conference on this subject I am sure will bear this out. There are very few, if any agricultural producer groups that do have both a marketing organisation and an association to attend to all other matters effecting their particular form of production.

This whole question of industry organisation will require a considerable amount of research and debate before any firm proposals can be formulated and put to the industry. The beekeepers with their traditional built in independent attitude that has come to the fore many times before in this industry, will in itself be a major factor.

Over the past 12 months the association has I believe, made significant steps to improve its own internal organisation, with the adoption of the new rules that was necessary in more ways than one. At conference last year I indicated that the association will have some anomalies in its rules during the interim period until the new rules were settled and adopted and that it would require the co-operation and forbearance of both branches and members to see it through this period. I personally am sure that had this co-operation and understanding been given by all branches, the calling of a second special meeting may not have been necessary.

The additional costs incurred by the association has been estimated at approximately \$700 bearing in mind the costs involved in some delegates traveling a second time. As there was in no way, any attempt by the executive to deny branches or members ample time, and opportunity, to air their views on the proposed new rules,

I fail to see what was achieved in incurring the extra costs.

Now that the association is operating under the new organisation I would give a word of warning, and that is, that the association be very wary in any future change of rules, in as much that any changes recommended by conference be first referred to the association's legal advisory to see that the changes are correct and compatible with all other rules of the association. Until recent years this has not been the case and the association has found itself in dire straights in the past due to anomalies creeping in without verification that the changes were in fact in order.

The matter of establishing the base price for honey early in the season must concern all producers. I believe that your executive took all possible steps to endeavour to have an early decision, but delay in achieving dialogue with the HMA and the fact that a General Election coupled with a change of government created delays that were frustrating to say the least.

Representations by the association to government finally produced a decision in March — about four months late. The delay in the release of this price has its effect on all aspects of honey marketing and the association must continue to solicit the support of the HMA and any other groups in the industry to present a joint case to the minister for a much earlier decision.

I am certain that had this happened this past year the base price may have been considerably improved on the 57 cents that does little to enable the producer to recover the increasing effect that inflation is having on his business and more so, his private income. In the association's submissions to the minister for an increase in the base price in January, we showed how the major outgoings of the producer had increased, and since that date, significant increases have occurred that will prove that the 3 cent increase was lost in these increased costs within three months.

The local marketing of honey is still as chaotic as ever and it seems that the age old problem of packers and suppliers to the local market not agreeing with one another, no matter if they do belong to the same association. One of the significant comments made by one or two members of the Canadian party that toured the country this year was that we are underselling our honey.

Government in March indicated to the authority that it would be competent for them to seek an increase in the local market prices to recover the increase in the base price, this surely was an indication that the government was conscious of the need for producers to be able to recover some of their increased costs and I sincerely hope that when the time arrives for negotiations on next seasons price that this is taken into account. In this matter of local marketing, there is an urgent need for the getting together of interested parties to look objectively at the entire field of honey marketing with a view to establishing a policy of better marketing both in the long and short term.

For those who attended last year's conference and heard my address, they will know many of the comments that I am making today I made then, and this concerns me for it appears to me that as an industry we have not attempted to overcome these problems. In fact I feel that some sections have drifted further apart. If no real effort is made to come to grips with the situation, I fear that the industry will leave itself wide open for continuing disorder and a lack of proper recognition of the important part it occupies in the agricultural scene.

In spite of the reservations and fears by some members of the association the Hive Levy Scheme has been accepted and has operated without any real teething troubles. It is a concern to me that we still have members who are not prepared to accept the majority decision in support of

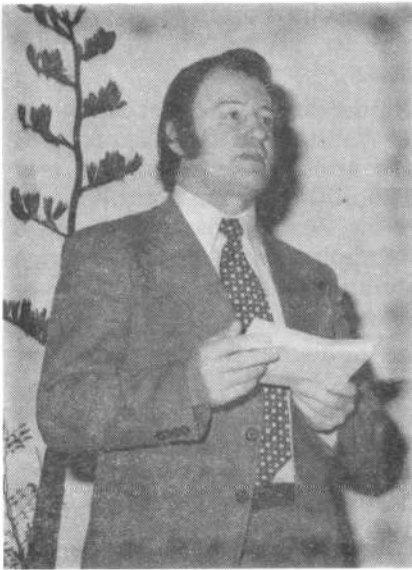
the scheme. This harrassment does little to bring any resemblance of unity and constructive policy making to the industry.

I do not agree with those who advocate that the Hive Levy should only finance the NBA. The HMA is an organisation whose decisions and operations effect all sections of the industry and it was not created solely for those who supply the authority. At this point however, I must say that I am concerned that the requirements of the authority from the fund in the first period of operation have been relatively small when one considers the figures that were estimated by some HMA members and supporters when the scheme was first envisaged.

I consider that the association's year has been a year of reorganisation and consolidation and it has not been done without problems and decisions that have required the utmost co-operation from my executive, the general secretary Mr Graham Beard, and his staff, to these people I express my sincere thanks for their efforts on the association's behalf. The remit paper for this conference has subject matter that covers all aspects of honey production and marketing and I urge you all in the interests of industry co-operation to debate these matters objectively and taking into consideration all points of view when decision time has arrived.

I agree with those that say the industry is a small one, but that does not say that it is insignificant nor that its contribution to the country's economy is of no importance. This industry will be as good as you, its members, like to make it and it is on your shoulders each and everyone to contribute in a fair and constructive manner to the solving of the present problems and promoting policies for the future that will bring us together with a due sense of unified purpose and objective.

— Ivan Dickinson



# CONFERENCE REPORT

## “The need for a united voice...”

An edited version of the conference opening address by Jim Bolger M.P., undersecretary for agriculture.

**DURING THIS PAST** season, the industry has been facing some severe problems. Costs, particularly of petrol and sugar, have risen dramatically over the last year or two, while the honey crop this season has been low.

In some places, particularly in this region and the Waikato, there has been a crop failure. Some of you impressed upon me the seriousness of the situation last February and I am pleased that you have indicated the special assistance that the government made available through the Rural Bank has been helpful.

In the long term each industry must be self balancing, and the market prices for an industry's products must in the long run determine the quantity produced. I am pleased to note that the honey industry has been self supporting and has not needed to call on government for large amounts of assistance; long may this be the case.

I am also pleased that this industry now has in operation the price smoothing and stabilisation scheme first mooted by the former minister Hon Doug Carter, some years ago. The introduction of the stabilisation scheme caused much heartburn at the time, but it now appears with some reservation perhaps to be widely accepted. This is good, for it is the policy of this government to bring about improvement income stabilisation policies in all our primary industries.

### Payout Timing

I am aware that the announcing of the payout this year was later than most of you would have wished. In large part this was due to the change of government and the minister finding it physically impossible to attend to all the many pressing problems immediately on taking office. I am sure the announcement will be made earlier next season, although I am not certain that it can be made by mid-December as some would like.

It is certainly useful for beekeepers to know the payout as early as possible in the season, but on the other hand market trends have to be taken into account before the payout can be set, and the later this can be done the better. The timing of the decision must therefore be a compromise between these two factors, and my suggestion is that we aim for an announcement in January or early February.

Some quite fundamental issues are raised in your remits, especially as to the future structure and operation of the honey marketing authority.

I think now is the time for each industry to have a thorough reappraisal of its position and the direction it should be heading in the future. The government will be interested in the outcome of your deliberations.

You must remember, however, that fundamental changes will require the support of a substan-

tial majority within the industry before the government would be prepared to adopt them.

The question of the Honey Marketing Authority's structure and operations was examined fully by a caucus committee in 1973, although many of that committee's recommendations were not adopted at the time. It may be worthwhile to refresh your memories on the contents of that report.

### Stabilisation Levy

The other important matters on the remit paper are the question of a stabilisation levy and private exports of honey. The abolition of the seals levy has meant that the authority is no longer receiving a stabilisation or equalisation type levy. At times in the past it has amounted to over \$20,000 per year.

While there is provision in the regulations for the introduction of a stabilisation levy of 5c per hive, I have not received a request for any such levy. In any case a 5c levy would amount to only \$9,000 per year, an insignificant amount when compared to the cost of maintaining last year's payout which required the drawing of over \$90,000 from reserves. I think conference should examine closely whether a stabilisation levy is required, and if so, how much it should be and what is the best way of collecting it.

### Private Exports

I have had several requests to liberalise the export of honey, but as you all know, the power to control the export of honey has been delegated to the Honey Marketing Authority. Government is therefore very reluctant to interfere with authority decisions in this area, especially as the authority is elected by all beekeepers. I am sure the government would take action only if the national interest were at stake.

I have noted the many suggestions that private exports be allowed, subject to control by the authority, and am glad that the need for orderly marketing is realised. However the ability of the authority to set and police the necessary controls and conditions must be borne in mind. I am sure you all appreciate that whatever is proposed must be administratively workable.

The chairman of the authority will, I have no doubt, tell you how sales are going, but it appears that the results will be much better than was expected when the payout was set earlier this year. I understand that the payout might even reach 60c per kilo, the maximum possible this season, with some small amount of money being put back into reserves. This is a heartening development, both for your industry and the economy as a whole.

I am pleased to note that the senate commission recommendation that imports of honey into the U.S.A. should be subject to 30 percent duty after the first 30 million lb was not agreed to.

### Answers to questions:

*On multiple or single sellers:* "The question of the relative merits of single and multiple sellers can never be answered to the satisfaction of all. The NZ Dairy Board is a classic case of a single seller and it has been immensely successful. The meat industry has a multiplicity of sellers but the previous government brought in a Bill which we agreed to which will restrict the number of companies which can market New Zealand meat.

"It depends on the industry. If you don't have the confidence that the honey industry can collate all its

### Legislation

We are looking at the apiaries Act 1969 and the honey export regulations 1950. They are being revised and updated and a copy of the drafts should be with your executive before they are brought into legislative form.

### MAF Servicing

I am aware that through retirements and a death the numbers in the apiary section of the ministry will shortly be well below establishment levels. The ministry is currently re-examining its objectives in relation to your industry and trying to look ahead. Various proposals of major concern to your industry are being considered and your executive will be informed about them when the ministry has something definite to say.

The ministry will be seeking to improve the service, but must have regard to cost-effectiveness.

Your industry, because of its scattered, uneven distribution is difficult to service.

### Government Assistance

The susceptibility of the beekeeping industry to even moderate changes in the weather is aptly demonstrated by comparing the last two honey seasons.

Many beekeepers obtained a best-ever honey-crop during the 1974/75 season, resulting in a record 7,400 tonne New Zealand yield. This year, however, has proved to be a crop disaster for many beekeepers in widespread parts of the country, including the Central Plateau.

The difficulties facing beekeepers this past season led me to an-

marketing skills in one authority, then perhaps private enterprise should be encouraged. But I believe that whatever is done should be an industry decision."

*On inspection costs for agricultural produce:* "Our broad objective is to charge out inspection services for the cost of providing them."

*On HMA costs:* "It is up to the industry to decide whether the HMA's costs are too high, it's a producer-controlled organisation."

*On the validity of the 1972 caucus committee report:* "There has been no reaffirmation of the report, but

nounce in February aid assistance to beekeepers in specific areas.

I understand 12 beekeepers in the Waikato/Rotorua/Taupo area have applied for assistance, and \$105,500 has been approved. On a New Zealand basis there were 23 applications and assistance totalling \$200,000 has been approved.

The honeybee has a recognised role in New Zealand agriculture. A good part of the credit for the development of our pumice-land pastures lies with honeybees' activities in reseeding clover. And not too distant from here, in the Bay of Plenty, the flourishing Kiwi-fruit industry depends essentially on honeybees for pollination.

At the present time, 1600 hives are brought into the Kiwi-fruit orchards to aid in the production of a fruit that is worth \$3 million a year in export returns to this country.

It has been estimated that within five years a further 1600 hives will be needed to meet the pollination requirements of this expanding industry.

This is an example of the dual role that bees play. A role that is often overlooked by those outside your industry.

That it is overlooked highlights the communications gap. This not only happens in beekeeping, but to all industries.

To solve this, one of the most important needs is for a united voice. For this reason, I will be looking with great interest at the decisions made by this conference.

then nothing has come up to make us change our minds. It would probably do no harm to the industry to take a look at the committee's report again and see whether you still object now to some of its recommendations as strongly as you did then."

*On noxious weed spraying subsidies:* "If you can show us another method of controlling weeds we'll adopt it. I concede that the indiscriminate use of sprays affects the growth of the industry. However, we have adopted a new noxious weed control system which we hope will ensure that spraying is done at the right time."



## CONFERENCE REPORT

### "Jealously guarding its export monopoly..."

An edited version of an address by Mr Russel Poole,  
chairman of the Honey Marketing Authority.

SINCE YOUR LAST conference there has been an election for two members of the authority, which resulted in Mr Percy Berry joining the board and myself being re-elected. It is with regret that I have to report the death of a former authority member, Mr Bruce Forsyth, an active man in many spheres but especially in his service to the beekeeping industry — in his NBA branch, on the national executive, as national president, and as deputy chairman of the Honey Marketing Authority. On behalf of the industry I extend our sympathy to Mrs Forsyth and her family.

The annual accounts of the authority for the year ended 31st August, 1975 were recently posted to all suppliers and hive levy payers, together with an explanatory note as to their lateness. Due to lower export prices, it was necessary to draw on reserves to make the payout of an average of 54c per kilogram as directed by the minister of agriculture.

Export sales made since the annual balance received an immediate boost by the government's devaluation of our currency a few days before the end of August, and this initial boost has been followed by a slow but steady increase in prices which the general manager has been successful in obtaining as a result of a firm, hard bargaining attitude.

The position at the moment is that our stocks of honey are fairly low, and we should reach the opening of the new honey season toward the end of this year with practically no honey on hand.

#### Local Market Pricing

On the local market, the authority increased its selling price to recoup the base price of 57c per kilogram set by the minister as the average payout to be made this year. This has resulted in the authority's honey being the highest priced packs on the local market and consequently there has been a certain amount of buyer resistance, with a reduction in the quantity sold. For the authority to continue in the role of price setter for the New Zealand market more co-operation is needed from other suppliers to the same market in raising their prices to the same level as the authority.

Producers selling to the public from the honey house door should also assist in educating the public to the true value of honey by setting a price relative to current retail prices, rather than relating their price to the bulk price or the wholesale price.

The authority discussed the possibility of allowing exports of packed lines of honey by private exporters, and called for submissions on the subject from interested parties. Only three submissions

were received, which probably indicates the lack of any real interest by private exporters. The submissions were discussed at length, and it was decided to make no changes to current policy until the return of the general manager from an overseas trip which is to take place in August.

The countries to be visited include Europe, The United Kingdom, The United States, Japan and some Arab states, and the general manager will be investigating market prospects for bulk honey and retail packs. He will be making contact with our existing customers and seeking new buyers, especially in countries which have not been importers of New Zealand honey in the past.

#### Need for throughput

As the authority is at present constituted and has been operating, the level of payout to producers is directly affected by the level of through-put handled by the authority. Consequently the authority has been unwilling to reduce its through-put by allowing private exports which would in all probability take the best honeys and the best markets and leave the authority to handle a lesser quantity of honey, a higher proportion of which would be the harder-to-sell grades.



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The authority operates as a type of industry co-operative selling organisation, and as such it is jealously guarding its export monopoly in the best interests of its suppliers. If a majority of honey producers want this to be changed, then they must either ask the government to change the rules, or elect new members to the authority who are prepared to give some of the authority's markets to a few private exporters who will prosper at the expense of the beekeepers.

We are now in the second year of the Hive Levy, and as was predicted the authority is being criticized for the actions it is taking to collect the levy, and the 10 per cent penalty for late payment. The levy scheme was approved by a previous annual conference of the NBA and the regulations were drawn up and approved by the NBA executive. The HMA merely implements the regulations as it is required to do by law.

If you dislike the regulations then persuade conference and your executive to change them. Don't do what was done at a recent Canterbury Branch meeting where two members endeavoured to censure the HMA for asking the members for the 10 per cent late payment penalty.

I feel the NBA has not done enough through its publication the "NZ Beekeeper" to acquaint beekeepers with the requirements of the Hive Levy regulations, and the results of their non-compliance with the regulations. As the Hive Levy is designed primarily to finance the NBA and levy payers are the prime members of the association, the executive should ensure that all necessary information is brought to their notice.

In the annual report of the National Beekeepers Association for the eight months May 1, 1975 to December 31, 1975, the authority comes in for criticism of its alleged lack of co-operation with the NBA executive. One of the areas of criticism was the Hive Levy collection which I have already dealt with.

On page two of the report it states "A remit was passed at the 1975 Conference calling upon the authority to review the basis under which private packers might be able to enter directly into the export marketing of honey in retail packs". This is not correct.

The remit called on "the NBA to make a recommendation to the minister concerned to licence packers to export

*honey in retail containers subject to quality etc."*

Despite the fact that the HMA was not called on to allow exports by packers, the NBA report goes on in the next paragraph to criticize the authority for refusing to discuss the proposal with the executive.

On page four of the report, discussing the honey price as set by the minister of agriculture, the authority is accused of having "failed to move in this matter before late January or February with a price fixing date beyond mid-March".

The facts are that our meeting was held a few days before the 1975 General Election when any application to see the minister would not have resulted in a meeting with him before the election, and, as the result of the election proved, our approach would have been to the wrong minister.

As soon as the new government announced early December the name of the new minister of agriculture I wrote seeking a meeting. The minister did not make an appointment until I reminded him again in late January, and on arriving home from the subsequent meeting I worked until 2 a.m. writing a letter to the minister, as requested by him, confirming the points discussed at the meeting. From then on there was nothing I could do but wait for the minister to convey his decision to me. This took him another six weeks.

I have made this explanation at a number of beekeepers' meetings and field days, but I thought it necessary to make it again as the NBA saw fit to make such an incorrect statement and unwarranted criticism in its annual report.

The members of this authority were elected by the majority of the beekeepers of New Zealand to carry out the functions of the authority in the manner most advantageous to the industry. This we are doing, but too much of our time is wasted in answering criticism from those in the NBA who are in a position to know the true state of affairs, but prefer to ignore them as it suits their purpose.

What is needed is co-operation for the benefit of the industry as a whole, but co-operation does not mean the HMA giving up its viewpoint and agreeing wholeheartedly with the NBA.

The authority is primarily concerned with selling honey to the best possible advantage and paying the best payout to its suppliers, as the authority's payout sets the standard for the whole country. Where other points of view appear to conflict with these aspects of the authority's responsibilities, then

we will continue in our path — not of being unco-operative — but of being determined to strive for the best reward for the honey producers of New Zealand.

There are a number of remits on the order paper concerning the authority, and I propose to comment on those directly concerning the day to day operations of the authority.

Remit No. 10 from Southland re dirty containers. It is not in our interest to supply dirty containers to producers, and we do not intentionally send out dirty containers. The fact that some dirty containers have gone out would seem to prove that some of our staff are human — a statement that some may wish to dispute.

Remit No. 11 re the Kimpton agreement. This document is not classified information, but I have only one copy here. With your chairman's permission I would suggest that if those wishing a copy would leave their names with the secretary I will have sufficient photo copies made for the number ordered and they can be obtained from the secretary tomorrow on payment of the photocopying charge.

Remit No. 12 re the late announcement of the base price — I have already explained that the delay was not of the authority's making.

All the other remits affecting the authority — with the exception of Number 9 — propose changes in the concept of the authority which can best be dealt with by discussion and co-operation between the various branches advocating different ways of how the HMA and NBA should be restructured.

Remit No. 9 — censure of the HMA for lack of co-operation with NBA — this expresses an opinion with which I do not agree. However, if the conference agrees with Southland Branch and passes this remit, I hope that the conference will then proceed to give a practical demonstration of co-operation by taking the best points of remits 4, 5, 6, 7, 14 and 15 and producing a restructured NBA HMA which will give the greatest benefit to the most beekeepers.

There has been consideration for a number of years by many countries of an international set of food standards known as Codex Alimentarius. Under these standards, honey is tested for, amongst other things, the presence of enzymes. These enzymes are readily destroyed by heat, and once the Codex standards are adopted, many lines of New Zealand honey may not comply with the standards, due to loss of enzymes.

In the case of bulk honey, the producing country will be responsible for the quality up to point of delivery to an overseas buyer. In the case of packed honey the packer whose name appears on the label is responsible for the quality up to the time the honey disappears into the customer's mouth, even though he will have no control on how the honey is stored or handled once he

has delivered to the wharf at a New Zealand port. These standards could require many producers to alter their extracting processes for their honey to be up to exportable quality.

The intake for the season just ended is about 1700 tonnes — a good result in view of the poor crop in the North Island, as of this intake only about 10 per cent came from the North Island.

I have occasionally made predictions in the past with regard to the payout, and in concluding this address I am prepared to again make a prediction. As a result of the good prices obtained for honey this year I expect the payout in November to exceed the base price of 57c per kg, although I am not prepared to guess how much higher than 57c it will be.

### Debate following Mr Poole's address:

*Enzyme testing:* Many delegates were interested to discover how they could obtain an enzyme test on their product. In the discussion it emerged that tests carried out for the HMA cost about \$16 a time and that the authority would be willing to have tests done on suppliers' honey on request.

Mr Graham Walton of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries said the ministry was researching the nature of honey enzymes in co-operation with the Cawthron Institute, Nelson.

*HMA Costs:* Strong exception was taken by private packers to the suggestion that private exports would be at the expense of ordinary honey producers. Mr Poole replied that all the costs of operation of the HMA were relative to a given quantity of throughput and that the authority had to set its price to producers on a budgetted volume of throughput. "If the volume goes up," he said, "the costs get spread and there is a higher payout. If the volume goes down, the cost loading per kg of honey sold gets too high and we have to draw on reserves."

*Strong words:* Some delegates took exception to Mr Poole's address, arguing that it read more like an attack on the NBA than a formal HMA report. Mr Poole said he would have preferred not to have said much that he had, but in the face of what he considered to be inaccurate criticisms of the HMA in

the annual report he was put in the position of denying them or having his silence interpreted as tacit agreement.

*Payout:* One delegate pointed out that suppliers used to be paid an advance of 85 per cent of final realisations for their honey, with a final payment of the remaining 15 per cent. This year the advance was nearer 70 per cent and he wanted to know when the HMA was going to restore the old balance. Mr Poole said that HMA staff were currently working out final payment figures for urgent settlement.

### MOTION COMMENDING HMA

That this 1976 AGM of the National Beekeepers' Association congratulate the HMA on its successful handling of its proportion of the record 1974-75 honey crop entrusted to it. Further, it notes with satisfaction the stability enjoyed by the industry due in large part to the efficient handling and financing by the HMA of this large crop. We wish the manager and staff to be advised of this resolution and offered our thanks.

Carey/Blair

Despite some debate about whether this motion was in order, it was fully debated and carried by the annual meeting on the voices following Mr Poole's address.

In moving the resolution, Mr Carey said that he had been supplying the

HMA for 30 years and because of this was in a position to discuss facts. He said that it was possible to look back and see that a record crop appeared on the NZ scene in 1974-75 and that only the HMA could handle that which was surplus to local requirements without chaos.

Mr Carey said that many beekeepers sent large quantities of honey without inconvenience to the authority for the first time in 1974-75 and they were all paid. "Looking back there were criticisms, but by and large it was a successful operation and one that we should be thankful for. It was a job done and a job done well."

Seconding the resolution, Mr Blair questioned what would have happened if all the honey had appeared on the local market.

Mr Jansen spoke in opposition to the motion, saying that the order paper was full of calls for change and calls for private enterprise. He asked what these calls were if they weren't votes of no confidence in the HMA. "Private enterprise already handles 4000 tonnes, they could have handled 7000 tonnes," he concluded.

Mr Ashcroft said that the local market was depressed in the year in question and that it probably would have been better if the HMA had handled all honey for the local and overseas markets.

## INDUSTRY STALWART RETIRES

WITH ONLY TWO weeks remaining before retirement, MAF beekeeping superintendent, Eric Smaellie, was presented with a silver salver by the retiring president of the National Beekeepers' Association at the annual meeting and conference of the association in Taupo.

"Mr Smaellie's association with the industry has been very close," said Mr Dickinson." Also his hospitality and fellowship at gatherings such as this, field days and so on is well-known."

Mr Dickinson told the conference that Mr Smaellie had once been an active member of the association in the South Otago district and for sometime was a full-time beekeeper in his own right.

Mr Smaellie said that he had started beekeeping when he was 10 — which meant that he had had bees in his bonnet for 50 years. He said that he had started as a hobbyist, then had become semi-commercial, commercial and, finally into the then Department of Agriculture.

He said he was planning to retire in Australia — in Perth — because most of his family had settled across the Tasman. He said that he and his wife had chosen Perth because they thought it was the nicest city there.

Paying special tribute to his wife, Mr Smaellie said that any success he had enjoyed in his position was in no small measure due to her efforts. Wives often have to carry the burden, he said.





## Progress with research

An edited version of an address by Pat Clinch, scientist, Wallaceville Animal Research Centre.

MR I.W. FOSTER retired from the apiculture section at Wallaceville Animal Research Centre in September. The staff of the section now consists of Messrs P.G. Clinch, scientist (section leader), R.C.R. Tustain, scientist, and J. Faulke, technician. Mr Tustain joined the section in April.

### Nosema Diagnosis

Because Nosema spore counts, obtained from the bulk maceration of large numbers of bees, can be determined quickly, this process is normally used to estimate the severity of the disease, particularly when carrying out surveys. However, when diagnosing the cause of bee mortality it is important to know the percentage of bees infected.

Recently at Wallaceville, a method for examining bees individually for Nosema has been developed which will facilitate faster examination when investigating cases of bee mortality, and enable the percentage infection to be determined in experimental work.

### Rape Spray problems

Oilseed rape is a crop that shows promise as a source of edible oil. The meal by-product can be used as a high quality stock food.

However, problems have been encountered in trials in some areas because aphids can multiply during the long flowering period, and damage the crop. At present, it is not possible to apply an aphicide during this period, be-

cause of the risk of harming honey bees.

Last summer, work was started to determine if it is feasible to apply one of the safer aphicides at a reduced application rate without affecting bees. Further work will be undertaken next season.

### Black Currant Pollination

A two-year investigation of the role of the honey bee in the pollination of black currants variety 'Magnus' in the Levin district has been completed.

The variety was found to be only partially dependent upon insect visits for pollination. Bushes caged or sleeved to exclude honey bees and bumble bees had approximately 30 per cent fewer berries than those not caged.

Compared with 1974, the density of honey bees on some crops in 1975 was very low. It is considered that some plantations may

benefit if hives, up to a density of three per hectare, are brought in during the flowering period.

### External Acarine Mites

Colonies in an apiary in Upper Hutt were sampled at monthly intervals for 26 months, and the bees examined for external and internal acarine mites. More than 16,000 bees were inspected. 41.5 per cent were infested with mites, but none was infested with the internal mite *A. woodi*, which has never been found in New Zealand.

### Colony Variability

There is often considerable variation in the performance of colonies in an apiary, even after requeening with sister queens. Besides being unsatisfactory for beekeepers, it causes research workers to use large numbers of hives in each experiment, to minimise its effects. It is proposed that an investigation to determine the causes of the problem will commence this year.

## Production and extension

An edited version of an address by Eric Smaellie, retiring ministry of agriculture superintendent of beekeeping.

FOR THE PERIOD ending May 31, 1975 there was a total of 3250 beekeepers owning 15,396 registered apiaries and 204,191 hives. In the 251 hives and over commercial group, 168 beekeepers own 9642 apiaries and 165,142 hives.

The statistics indicate that smaller units continue to be absorbed by

larger ones; also that consolidation of economic units continues.

Honey production for the 1975-76 season was assessed at 4915 tonnes. This is 2496 tonnes less than the record crop of last year, and about 730 tonnes less than the average production of the past six years.

For the year ending August 31 1975, 2909 tonnes of bulk extracted honey was submitted for grading. Of this 98 tonnes did not meet the export grade requirements.

The total of comb honey graded for export was 154 tonnes, and 10 tonnes of extracted honey in retail packs shipped by beekeepers were graded.

The overall quality of the honey submitted for grading was very high — mainly as a result of the dry summer conditions which favoured production of high specific gravity clover honeys.

### Apiary inspections

Check inspection of apiaries for bee disease by apiary instructors was continued with assistance from beekeepers acting as temporary inspectors. The overall incidence of diseased apiaries and hives found by apiary instructors and notified by beekeepers in the 1975-76 season was 2.68 per cent and 0.51 per cent respectively. The total number of diseased hives burnt was 964.

The annual percentage of diseased apiaries and hives over the previous six years has averaged 2.44 per cent and 0.45 per cent respectively.

### Restricted areas

A total of 26 permits were issued to beekeepers to establish hives in the Bay of Plenty and Coromandel Peninsula restricted areas for hive build-up, queen rearing and for production of honey. A total of 12 test apiaries with 24 hives in each were maintained within the restricted areas. Composite samples of honey taken from each of these apiaries were forwarded to the Wallaceville Animal Research Centre for toxicity testing.

Field observations this year indicated that the overall incidence of Passion Vine Hoppers and evidence of honeydew was very much lower than in most previous years.

### Research

*Queen bee survey:* This survey examined the queen introduction, rearing and breeding procedures adopted by North Island commercial beekeepers. Replies were received from 60 of the 80 beekeepers owning more than 250 hives. Although beekeepers indicated a current need for 52,000 queen bees, representing an annual introduction rate of 67 per cent, the actual queen replacement rate was less than 30 per cent.

It appears that the swing toward larger enterprises was made at the expense of maintaining or improving the honey-producing unit in the colony. The low level of queen replacement and even lower standard of quality control, indicated by this survey endorses our (MAF) priority in promoting improved queen bee production — e.g., the Flock House Course for beekeepers.

*Re-queening without de-queening:* Three years' trial work has been completed and results will be published. In the final 1974-75 season 76 queen cells were placed in hives. More two year old queens were successfully replaced (64.6 per cent) than one year old queens (46.4 per cent) The total success rate was 71 per cent.

*Experimental apiaries:* 58 hives (ex Wallaceville) were located at Templeton Research Farm and Horsford Downs (on honey dew). A storage and work shed has been located at Templeton and this apiary will be used for experimental and demonstration purposes particularly for hobbyist beekeepers.

*New nectar sources:* Further plantings of Robina pseudoacacia are planned for the experimental block at Weedons. Hare damage, droughts and competition from clover reduced the success rate of the initial plantings. 450 grams of Caragana seed were imported from Alberta and are being propagated by the Ministry of Works nurseries for trial plantings as nectar and pollen producing shelter trees.

*Sugar beet:* Plantings of sugar beet two trial blocks in Southland have been made. It is proposed to extract the sugar in a form suitable for bee feed using adapted machinery found in most honey houses. The main problem is removing the molasses from the sugar grains which contains high levels of minerals and toxic acids especially oxalic acid.

### Air-Jet extraction

A technical evaluation was made of an air-jet honey extractor at the request of the New Zealand Inventions Development Authority. The very nature of the "rudimentary prototype" prevented any comprehensive evaluation however the principle of removing honey from honeycomb using air-jet pressure was clearly established.

### Advisory work

The Flock House queen bee production course has already been publicised.

*Queen syndicate:* A group of Southland beekeepers has sponsored two commercial queen producers located at Ashburton and Takaka. Assistance has been given to queen producers, on location of mating yards, selection of breeding stock, queen houses etc.

*Honey house design:* Designs and work flow patterns were prepared for four honey houses. Preliminary investigations were made into new equipment for pumping honey and/or honey and wax cappings by mono pumps and a unit using compressed air.

*Viscous honey:* The 1974-75 season was very dry in many places and the viscous honey produced presented problems in extracting, straining and filling containers. Three discussion groups have been held in Southland on the problems of heat and moisture regulation in honey and the use of humidifiers and retractometers.

*Pollen shortages:* Following severe pollen shortages on the Canterbury Plains in the spring, further publicity via TV and discussions to farm groups and beekeepers was initiated. Natural pollen shortages were accentuated by unfavourable spring weather conditions but the farmers are being made aware of the danger of creating "clinically" clean farms with little or no spring forage for bees.

## APIMONDIA EXHIBITION ADELAIDE 1977

The exhibition will be held in the "SPACE" which is part of the Adelaide Festival Theatre complex, and will be held concurrently with the Congress.

Prospective exhibitors are asked to send the following details:—

1. Type of exhibit.
2. Floor space required.
3. Is power/lighting required.
4. Are display stands required — if so dimensions.

Write to:

Mr R.A. WINN  
WAITE AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE  
GLEN OSMOND  
S.A. 5046

## REMITs

### *in order in which they were discussed by the conference*

#### ONE BODY-ONE HEART-ONE SOUL

Remits 4,5,6

That this conference recommends that the NBA executive committee and the HMA appoint a committee to carry out an investigation into the feasibility and desirability of amalgamation of the HMA and NBA as one producer body and report its findings to branches before next conference.

Remit 4 was first proposed by Messrs Bray and Hantz of Canterbury, but it was later withdrawn in favour of remit 6. The same fate was reserved for remit 5. The final remit which was carried by the conference was a substantially amended version of remit 6.

In talking to remit 4, Messrs Bray and Hantz spoke of the advantages of one producer body which they saw as being the avoidance of the current duplication of services and the encouragement of co-operation within the industry. They also saw cost savings as being a large advantage.

Mr Robinson said Waikato was split on the matter, with members being unsure of how the amalgamated group would work and concerned that the greater time involvement would probably discourage many ordinary beekeepers from standing for office. "It could put an amalgamated body into the hands of the big beekeepers only," he said.

Mr Harry Cloake said remit 4 was typical of many remits in that it requested delegates to make a decision without any background information, a criticism which resulted in the chairman suggesting that remit 6 should be substituted for remit 4.

Remit 6 was then moved by Mr Heineman and seconded by Mr Bray. This remit was variously amended to ensure that branches were consulted before the next annual meeting and conference and to ensure that the NBA was adequately consulted in the process of investigations found broad conference support.

It was carried 15:0.

#### GRUBBY HMA CONTAINERS

Remit 10

That conference protest at the unsatisfactory condition of used containers supplied to beekeepers by the HMA.

Moving the remit, Mr Clissold said that many beekeepers went to a lot of expense and pride with their honey only to find that their tins are hardly fit to feed pigs out of, let alone get the maximum price for their honey. Referring to

pre-conference criticisms that this remit should have been referred directly to the HMA, he said that this happens time and time again and was not an isolated case.

Mr Wicht, the general manager of the HMA said that he had checked on drum cleaning procedures and outlined the exhaustive cleaning system which was carried out by HMA staff before drums were sent to suppliers.

During the discussion which followed, speakers drew attention to the difficulty of cleaning 5 gallon tins, because of the tendency of the joints in the drums to weep. Others pointed out that beekeepers were not above using drums for other than honey and that blame probably did not entirely rest with the HMA.

The remit was eventually defeated 8:5.

#### THE KIMPTON AGREEMENT LOW-DOWN

Remit 11

That this conference wishes the president to allocate time to the chairman of the HMA to outline the Kimpton Agreement to the members present, and to explain why the HMA members feel it should continue and that the president should then allow discussion on this agreement.

In moving the remit, Mr Stuckey said he didn't feel strongly about the Kimpton Agreement, but it was important that beekeepers were informed about this, the most important agreement in the industry.

Mr Poole explained that Kimpton were not agents for HMA in Britain and Europe, but had sole buying rights in that part of the world. The agreement had been renegotiated in 1972, he said, to give the best possible price to the authority and that he felt that it worked very successfully.

Under the agreement, Kimptons bought NZ honey at world market prices. If they subsequently resold the honey at better than anticipated prices, half of the extra profit was paid to the HMA in a six-monthly bonus cheque.

After making this explanation Mr Poole steadfastly refused to divulge any more information about the agreement to delegates because "those who had framed the remit had bothered to find out whether it was available" from the authority. He said he would read all or nothing of the agreement because there were those who could criticise his selection of "salient points" of the agreement as being biased.

Mr Jansen said in subsequent discussion that he was concerned that the authority's sole European buyer was also

a packer. Mr Poole replied by saying that retail packs were not Kimpton's domain, under the agreement he was sole buyer for bulk honey only.

Mr Poole later said that the authority general manager was going overseas to find out about the agreement for himself. He would be visiting packers and buyers, the persons to whom Kimpton sells and seeing the biggest packers in Europe. At the end of this, said Mr Poole, he would be able to confirm whether NZ was getting a fair price from Kimptons or not.

## EARLIER PRICE ANNOUNCEMENT PLEASE

### Remit 12

That conference request the HMA that in future the base price be announced by mid-December at the latest.

In moving the remit, Mr Clissold said that it would be nice to know the current honey price for committing product to the authority's containers. In fact, he said, the price should be struck before we start to extract.

Despite Mr Eckroyd's objections that it was the government and not the authority which set the price, the remit was carried on voices.

## COSSACKS IN THE HONEY INDUSTRY

### Remit 13

That all honey produced, except comb honey and a quantity reserved for sale from the honey house, be first offered to the HMA; the authority to have the right to accept or reject the honey, to dispose of the honey as it appears to the best advantage of the supplier, or to direct the supplier of the honey to make it available to whom-so-ever the authority directs.

*Note: The sale of honey from the honey house be limited to a maximum of 30 kg per sale and that the sale be from the honey house only, not roadside stalls or any other premises not connected with the honey house. Packers would use their own production and be permitted to purchase supplies from the authority or a supplier with the authority of, and at a price stated by the authority.*

Messrs Steve Lyttle and Harry Cloake said that their branch — South Canterbury — had put this remit forward as an alternative which they felt needed to be discussed, especially when so many remits on the order paper were looking at the marketing question from the other end of the spectrum.

Mr Jansen spoke against the remit, alluding to the erosion of freedom in New Zealand and the need for beekeepers to take a stand against the growth of bureaucracy. He said there was no call from association members for compulsory acquisition.

The remit was lost on a poll vote of 3936:230.

## HMA REGULATORY BODY ONLY

### Remit 14

That the HMA be reconstituted to act purely as a regulatory body for the beekeeping industry. Its function should be:

1. To act as agents for exporting honey.
2. To license packers and exporters.
3. To set minimum export prices for both packed and bulk honey.
4. To establish and update costs of production from time to time and notify the industry of such changes which would reflect in local prices.
5. To negotiate and arrange temporary (i.e. seasonal)

finance for producers.

### 6. To merge with the NBA.

Proposing the remit, Mr Bray said that Canterbury was putting forward something they thought would be needed in the future. He said the conference had argued ever since the establishment of HMA in 1953 about marketing.

He said he felt that the HMA should continue to exist in the future as a regulatory body rather than a body trading in honey. "It has established contacts over the world, but has the problem of overheads and these cannot be cut back further. If the authority merely acted as an agent it could boost financial rewards to producers and help lift the price on the local market."

Speaking against the remit, Mr Lorimer pointed out that the Reserve Bank overdraft facilities which gave producers their current financial security would not be available under other marketing systems. He said that given the functions of the authority laid down in the remit he could see massive overheads even without the HMA doing marketing itself.

Mr Robinson questioned whether HMA overheads were as great as was generally supposed, to which Mr Wicht replied that they were generally very low, other than one or two unavoidable aspects which were the result of the authority's statutory nature.

Mr Carey said the most unsatisfactory part of the regrettable remit would be that the even flow of honey into the authority would be disrupted. He said that its authors failed to appreciate how the NZ honey industry worked.

After considerable discussion the remit was defeated, 1544 votes to 2588.

## REGULATORY AUTHORITY ENQUIRY

### Remit 15

That this conference requests an inquiry into the feasibility of the HMA becoming a regulatory board only, thus offsetting increasing operating costs and diminishing returns to the beekeeper.

Moving this remit, Mr Jansen said the industry had to be bold enough to look at alternatives, especially since it was losing out in the battle against inflation.

Some delegates felt this remit was inconsistent with remit 14 which had just been defeated. Mr Hayman, the government representative on the authority, questioned who the independent authority might be and suggested that the 1973 caucus committee had looked in part at this area.

The remit was carried 2305:1808

## NO LICENSING OF RETAIL PACKERS

### Remit 16

That all packers who sell to the retail trade be licensed.

Proposing the remit, Mr Steve Lyttle said that licensing of packers would give more stable prices and wouldn't result in fly-by-nighters disrupting the market.

Mr Marshall said that licensing by anyone stuck in the craw a bit. He said he was pestered by the Health Department, Department of Labour and the local authority and he didn't know why he was attracting so much attention. He said he thought it was possible for the industry to over-legislate itself.

Mr Poole said the HMA could not be the licensing agent because it was a competitor with the packers. He said the Health Department would be the ideal licensing agent because they already have to determine whether a packing



Mr Gavin McKenzie



Mr Dudley Lorimer



Mr Kevin Ecroyd

house is suitable for its intended purpose — packing food for human consumption.

Mr Mervyn Cloake said the aim of the remit was to get a stable packing industry. He said that the only way a new packer can become established on the market is to undercut existing suppliers. He said that the president of the packers' association had indicated that he would support the measure.

The remit was defeated 3:12

Remit 17

That this conference supports the principle of the licensing of honey packers.

This remit was defeated after little discussion. Vote 55:8

A STABILISATION LEVY ON ALL HONEY

Remit 18

- a That an industry equalisation reserve fund be established for the purpose of guaranteeing a payout price to the producer relative to the cost of production.
- b That to finance the industry equalisation reserve fund a levy be struck and payable on all honey sold.
- c That the amount of the levy be three cents per kilogram of honey sold but this amount be reviewed from time to time and varied as required to maintain the fund at a suitable level.

*Note: This season has shown the Hive Levy cannot provide sufficient funds to maintain the present reserve to allow continued subsidising of the payout to producers at a level required to keep the industry in a sound financial state.*

Moving the remit, Mr Steve Lyttle said it was clear that industry reserves would not last for long. A levy on honey would remedy this, he said, and would in effect be paid for by the consumer.

Seconding the remit, Harry Cloake said it was obvious the conference supported a guaranteed payout because of the fuss about the date. He said the simplest way to levy the industry would be a cent or two a kg, which all should pay because authority price sets the base price for all honey sold in New Zealand.

Mr Bird said it was better that producers kept their reserve funds in their own pockets, saying he could imagine a situation like in the season just past where producers hit by seasonal conditions would have to pay out an extra 3c/kg. Other speakers including Mr Lorimer and Mr Herron spoke against the proposal, citing the erosion of funds in stabilisation accounts by inflation.

Mr Wicht said that producers would be contributing to a reserve fund this year under a formula set down by the minister.

The remit was eventually defeated 13:2.

HIVE MONIES ONLY FOR NBA

Remit 1

That the Hive Levy be used solely for the purpose of financing the National Beekeepers' Association and providing a means of membership to the association.

Mr Steve Lyttle said that it was apparent that the HMA was having trouble administering the levy and it would be better put in the hands of the NBA. Mr Harry Cloake said, in seconding the remit, that inflation alone dictated that the levy would soon only be able to finance the NBA and one or two other activities and that it wouldn't be able to provide a worthwhile smoothing fund.

Mr Ashcroft said he was against the remit because he felt that if he had to pay a stabilisation levy it should be paid to one source.

The president, Mr Dickinson, said that the levy was made part of the HMA Act because otherwise its introduction would have had to be delayed for at least two years.

Mr Hayman agreed with the president, pointing out that such a remit could well be timely. He said that the government law draftsmen had objected to the levy being imposed under the HMA Act at the time and it was only because of urgency that they let it go through.

The remit was subsequently defeated with only one vote in favour.

HIVE LEVY OPERATED BY NBA

Remit 8

That the executive had legislation put through parliament so that the NBA can operate the hive levy system.

Mr Gibbon criticised the remit, saying it was that a remit for having the levy paid to the NBA was being discussed when the HMA and NBA might be amalgamated in a year's time.

Mr Cloake said the government would be aware of the operations of the committee and wouldn't make haste until it learnt of its conclusions.

The remit was lost 5:9

## NO GO FOR COST-PLUS COMMITTEE

### Remit 20

That this conference recommend that a committee representative of all sections of the beekeeping industry be formed.

- a To investigate and assess the cost of honey production so that in relation to such costs, a more realistic selling price can be established.
- b To investigate the feasibility of all local honey sales being subjected to some form of control, thus ensuring stability of prices.

Moving the remit, Mr Clissold said that though this would not be easy to set up, it was one of the most important things the industry had to do. He said that honey prices were not moving up with inflation and that on the basis of price increases which had occurred, it appeared that the honey industry only had an inflation rate one-fifth of the rest of the country.

Mr Carey spoke strongly against the remit, saying he thought that this was the third commission or enquiry the conference had asked for. Each time, he said, the brief gets wider and wider and each one costs money. "I wonder how affluent this industry is," he asked.

"If ever there was a horse that'd been flogged up hill and down dale, it's the one of costs of production. Costs of production are so elusive, it's only an exercise in words."

Mr Stuckey said that the long and the short of beekeeping economics was the price which the industry could get for its produce on the world markets.

The president said Mr Barclay, the undersecretary of agriculture with the last government, had offered the services of a MAF economist to advise the association on the merits of a cost of production survey. The economist had made a report, said Mr Dickinson, which advised that it would cost about \$4000 for each survey and the information it uncovered would be very limited in its value to the association. The economist said the ministry would be happy to advise on the technical aspects of conducting the survey, but would be unwilling to do the legwork such as selection of the sample, interviewing or analyses. He said the result of such a survey would be an average result which would mean little to individual beekeepers because of the vast differences between types and sizes of beekeeping enterprises.

Mr Jansen commented that once the marketing system was in order there would be no need for cost of production exercises.

Mr Dickinson pointed out that in the absence of a survey, the association could easily do an index of major expenditure items and use this when approaching the minister or prices tribunal when seeking price increases.

In his right of reply, Mr Clissold said he was surprised that the more than 100 full-time beekeepers would consider their \$40 share of a \$4000 survey cost to be too great a cost. "I am amazed that beekeepers are not interested in their own problems."

The remit was defeated 3:11.

## PRIVATE PACKER EXPORTS PRONTO

### Remits 21,22,23,25

That conference reaffirm the association's support for the principle of allowing exports of retail packs of extracted honey by exporters other than the HMA, but subject to HMA control.

Carried 13:1

That this conference reaffirms the remit passed at last year's conference at Timaru relating to the export of packed (retail) honey by private packers and would like to know what steps have been taken by the HMA toward implementing this remit.

Carried 13:1

That this conference reaffirms last year's remit calling for private exports of packed honey and urges early implementation of this policy.

Carried 14:0

That conference supports the principle of exports of appropriate quantities of bulk extracted honey by exporters other than the HMA but subject to HMA control.

Carried 2863:1169

The overwhelming support for the private export of packed honey in reaffirmation of last year's conference decision and the new decision to allow the private export of bulk honey reflected the main theme of the conference: Closer producer involvement in marketing.

The failure of the HMA to allow private exports of packed honey in accordance with last year's remit also seemed to have much to do with the attitudes of delegates. This attitude was undoubtedly hardened by the unbending stand of Mr Poole, the chairman of the authority.

An example of this attitude was his refusal to explain to the conference the steps the HMA had taken to implement the previous year's remit. His answer that he had explained it all the day before in his report to the annual meeting was undoubtedly correct, but it hardly won him any favours.

Delegates speaking to the various remits did not want to create disorder in the marketplace and few, if any, wished to see the HMA without ample regulatory powers. A figure of "three or four" potential private exporting packers were mentioned by a number of delegates.

Ill-feeling at what was seen as a hostile attitude by the authority was voiced by a number of delegates, the more vigorous of them calling for a formal censure of the authority — an attitude which didn't capture the feelings of most delegates.

Mr Lorimer and Mr Carey spoke against aspects of the remits, with Mr Lorimer making a spirited defence of the HMA: "It beggars my imagination that so many people are hell bent on committing suicide when they have listened to sound reasoning from authority members as to what would happen if fewer reports went through the authority.

"It is absolutely beyond my comprehension that you are willing to wreck the industry just to prove a point. If you are willing to accept a 20 per cent levy on private exports to go to authority funds, then fair enough — but to think that a levy of 5 per cent as suggested is all that the HMA is worth is ridiculous. . ."

## BEEKEEPING VIABILITY SURVEY

### Remit 28

That the executive of the NBA arrange with the economics section of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries to have a survey on the beekeeping industry taken out urgently. The survey be of sufficient depth to indicate possible future methods of improving beekeeping viability.

Speaking in favour of the remit, Mr Harry Cloake said the proposal had far wider effects than the cost of producing honey. He said no one in the room for instance knew whether it paid to farm bees extensively.



Mr Terry Gavin



Mr Robin Jansen



Mr Michael Stuckey

Mr Forbes of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries said that such a survey would be similar to surveys being done for other branches of primary industry at present. If the industry was approaching the Reserve Bank for credit this was the sort of survey his department would have to do, but since that point hadn't been reached it was unlikely that an over-stretched economics division would accord it much urgency.

Mr Jansen spoke against the proposal, saying there were problems inherent in asking the public service to do more for the industry. "Let's keep the bureaucracy from invading more of the industry," he warned.

The remit was carried, 13:1. only North Otago voted against the remit.

### COSTS OF PRODUCTION

#### Remit 27

That the executive take immediate and strong action to establish the cost of production of honey in New Zealand based on current costs and average New Zealand wide production.

Proposing the remit, Mr Bray said that cost of production information would be a bargaining weapon for the HMA when going to trade practices for a honey price increase.

Seconding the remit, Mr Ecroyd said he couldn't agree with earlier speakers who had condemned such information as useless. While the information gained would only be an average, it would be far more useful than the present average which is a rule of thumb based on nothing.

Mr Percy Berry said there was merit in the industry knowing its costs of production, but to relate this to payout was quite the wrong approach. What the HMA should be concerned about, he said, was the highest available price for honey on the world market. He warned there was a danger that if the industry based its economics and attitudes on costs of production it might sell its produce for a low price. The remit was defeated 1:14, the only vote for the remit coming from Canterbury.

### CONFERENCE VOTING

#### Remit 2

That conference recommend that a member be able to withdraw his vote at branch level and have the right to exercise this vote at conference.

Moving the remit, Mr Clissold said that if a member was willing to come to conference in his own time and at his

own expense he should be allowed a vote. He said he was sure a lot more members would attend conference if this was the case.

Seconding the remit, Mr Bray drew attention to the poor attendance at conference and questioned whether this was entirely due to seasonal influences. He said many had asked him why they should attend if they couldn't vote. Mr Poole agreed saying that under the present system voting could be done by post after branch meetings.

Some delegates including Messrs Dickinson, Cloake and Lorimer said they favoured a change so long as it didn't further weaken branches. Mr Carey was strongly against the remit, saying it was unfair and unworkable.

Carried 2305:1831

### MORE MONEY FOR BRANCHES

#### Remit 3

That NBA executive review its policy and formula for financing branch funds, with a view to making more realistic payments for branches.

There was considerable feeling among delegates that the current system for financing branch funds was undesirable in that it required branches to make requests for funds to the executive. The executive, for its part, said the system had been developed because there was an undue accumulation of funds in the offers of some branches.

The remit was carried unanimously.

### MORE ADVISORY MEN NEEDED

#### Remit 29

This conference views with great concern the vacancy left by the late Mr Dick Hobbs and strongly urges the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries to appoint a further instructor to fill this position.

In proposing the remit, Mr Bromwell said that there had been three apiary instructors in the southern North Island three years ago and now there was only one. He said he viewed with concern the pressure being placed on the one remaining instructor.

Seconding the remit Mr Marshall asked whether the apiary division was slowly being depleted of staff until it was non-existent.

In what was later termed a "Typical departmental answer", Mr Ian Forbes assistant director (horticulture) of the advisory services division of MAF said that when a number

of staff retire they had a responsibility to examine the long term future of the service the ministry was providing. The industry he said must also realise there were relatively few commercial people in the southern North Island and northern South Island being serviced by quite a large advisory team. He said he hoped to present proposals for a restructured apiaries division to the executive as soon as they were completed.

The remit was carried unanimously.

### REVAMP "BEEKEEPING IN NEW ZEALAND"

#### Remit 31

That the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries be urged to publish an updated "Beekeeping in New Zealand".

Delegates were angry that no attempt had been made in the recent reprint to update anything other than measurements into metrics. One speaker suggested that the book must have gone to print in 1948 because of the lack of changes since it was first published.

Mr Smaellie said the reprint had only been done to service a continuing need and that a completely new bulletin was in preparation.

Mr Poole asked the conference how many of the commercial beekeepers present had seen the reprinted version of the book. When only two indicated that they had, he said it was basically a handbook for beginners and that it served this need quite well.

The remit was carried unanimously.

### HIVES AS LOAN SECURITY

#### Remit 32

That the Ministry of Agriculture be asked to approve Rural Bank finance for beekeeping development, with hives being accepted as security for loans.

*Note: Present Rural Bank policy is to lend up to \$10,000 for the purchase of hives of bees providing the borrower can offer land and buildings as collateral security. This policy hampers the purchase and sale of existing beekeeping businesses and retards beekeeping development.*

Mr Harry Cloake told the conference that when he was a national executive member some years before, he and the then national secretary had approached the SAC because of the great difficulty beekeepers had getting finance from any source. This personal approach, he said, did wonders and suggested a similar approach might have a similar affect.

Mr Marshall said he couldn't speak highly enough of the RBFC and the work it had done for him. The president pointed out that the \$10,000 maximum in the note to the remit had been increased to \$40,000.

Mr Jansen said he had a lot of time for the RBFC, but said he felt that government should recognise the high value of hives to a producer by accepting them as security on loans.

The president pointed out that the RBFC was particularly concerned about the inability of beekeepers to secure the areas where their hives were located. The bank contended, he said, that another beekeeper could come into an area and erode profitability. It was also concerned that bees could fly away or die of disease overnight, factors which it considered outweighed the residual value of a hive.

At this point Mr Bromell gave a moving account of his experiences. These experiences revolved around his inability to borrow from the bank because he did not own land and buildings despite making approaches to Jim Bolger. "I am fed up to the back teeth with the bank," he said. "I meet

other beekeepers who are happy with them, but they're beekeepers with land and buildings."

The remit was carried 13:2

### POLLINATION SERVICES UNLIMITED

#### Remit 33

That government investigate the value of the pollination service provided by beekeepers to the agricultural industries with a view to continuing the availability of loans as was the case this year.

*Note: Due to more intensive farming methods and other factors many areas in the country are, or are becoming, un-economic for beekeeping. A consequent lack of bees in some districts could well affect agricultural production and ultimately, exports. It has been claimed that the pollination service provided by bees is worth at least 15 times the value of honey; therefore it must be in the interests of the country as a whole to maintain a viable beekeeping industry through New Zealand.*

Moving the remit, Mr Jansen quoted from the April 1976 issue of the National Geographic which, in an article on the value of bees, said their pollination services had been valued at \$6000 million a year in the United States.

The remit was carried unanimously.

### FARM BIKES FOR BEE FARMERS

#### Remit 34

That apiarists be enabled to purchase farm bikes for use between apiaries, and qualify for rebate on purchase as enjoyed by other farmers.

*Note: It is considered that use of motor bikes would greatly reduce running costs between apiaries and beekeepers should be encouraged to use them by way of rebate on purchase.*

Proposing the remit, Mr Heineman said some Otago members had proved the benefits of using motorbikes in that their running costs were a fraction of what they would have been otherwise. He questioned why beekeepers shouldn't have the same privileges as other primary producers.

The debate on this remit became confused when it became apparent that no one was fully versed in the regulations relating to the payment of rebate of sales tax on farm bikes. Some speakers, in fact, saying that beekeepers were already eligible for the rebate, so long as they complied with the limitations which applied to other farmers.

Carried 10:3

### NO BULLDOZERS IN THE KAIMAIS

#### Remit 35

That the NBA continue to oppose the proposed scheme to clear fell the native bush on the Kaimai Range and other bush areas for the purpose of planting pine forest.

Moving the remit, Mr Barrow said the Nature Conservation Council had been impressed with the amount of honey produced in the range when figures had been published in the Environmental Impact Report. He said beekeepers could do more for themselves if they informed the general public and conservation groups of the value of native bush areas for honey.

Seconding the remit, Mr Glasson said there needed to be some recognition of the rights of beekeepers in forest areas. He said that on the West Coast the Forest Service didn't



even bother to inform beekeepers when they clear-felled areas in the vicinity of apiaries.

Mr Jansen and Mr Marshall spoke of problems in their districts, Mr Marshall commenting that New Zealand seemed to have become pinetree mad.

The remit was carried unanimously.

### ROYAL VISITS FROM TONGA?

#### Remit 36

That conference recommend to the minister of agriculture that he gives favourable consideration to applications to import queen bees from Tonga.

*Note: Seasonal differences offer a big advantage to NZ beekeepers with queens being available during the July/Aug/Sept period.*

This remit resulted in some quite heated debate, with delegates in favour of the remit pointing out that it was on the order paper so as to give an indication to Tongan authorities that there was a demand in New Zealand for such bees and that further work in getting disease clearances and so on was worth the effort.

Opponents of the remit, spearheaded by Mr Mervyn Cloake, compared what had happened with the import of rabbits into New Zealand with what could happen if the Tongan mite was imported into New Zealand along with queen bees. Supporters said necessary quarantine measures were taken as read, while critics said the remit then did not say what it apparently meant.

The following amendment was eventually proposed by Mr Heineman and seconded by Mr Gibbons.

"That this conference agrees that it would be desirable to import queen bees from Tonga and requests the MAF to proceed with the necessary checks to ensure no harmful diseases, parasites, or undesirable characteristics are imported into New Zealand."

Although this amendment was accepted by the conference, it was still considered unacceptable to a large minority of delegates who felt it was impossible to adequately test the queens for the undesirable characteristics which they might show under New Zealand conditions without taking the risk of bringing them into New Zealand for testing. The risk involved in this would outweigh all possible advantages they said.

The remit was carried on a poll vote 2990:1134

### SUPPORT FOR APIARIES COMMITTEE

#### Remit 37

That executive be urged to continue its interests and representation on the Apiaries Advisory Committee.

This remit was carried unanimously after little discussion.

### HONEY BEE POSTAGE STAMP

#### Remit 38

That the postal authorities be asked to depict a honey bee on a postage stamp.

Speaking to the remit, Mr Bray said the conference had made a favourable decision on this remit in years previous. On the last approach made to the authorities, they said they would bear the suggestion in mind. "It is now time it was born," he said.

Carried unanimously.

## COMBINED CONFERENCE/SEMINAR

#### Remit 40

That the executive recommend to conference that it favours the concept of a combined conference/seminar week and that this arrangement apply from 1977.

Speakers in favour of this remit pointed out how rising costs had made travel a luxury and that two major beekeeping functions in different locations could be beyond the resources of many beekeepers.

Mr Jansen said he thought the concept was grand, but did not know how he would be able to handle a seminar after two or three days of conference.

Mr Forbes of the MAF said his ministry would be quite happy to arrange a seminar in conjunction with conferences, though he did not wish to commit the ministry to doing this every year. He said he was sure in most years there would be a seminar, but that on occasions venue of the conference or the absence of suitable topics might preclude this.

The remit was carried 13:1. Only South Canterbury dissented.

## CONGRATULATIONS AND THANKS

#### Remit 39

That this conference express its appreciation to Mr E.A. Smaellie for the services rendered to this industry over many years.

Delegates expressed their appreciation of the work done by Mr Smaellie in his years in the industry with Mr Bray drawing attention to Mr Smaellie's work on the HMA and his notable address at the Australian Congress three years ago on agricultural chemical controls. This address, said Mr Bray, had drawn special mention from those who attended. In reply Mr Smaellie said he was pleased to hear that at least some of his efforts had been appreciated. "It's the best reward any man would ask for or expect."

The remit was carried unanimously.

## CENTRALISING CONFERENCES

#### Remit 41

That the executive recommend to conference that conference venues alternate between Christchurch and Palmerston North in the interests of costs and personnel likely to be concerned with seminars.

The remit drew little support from delegates, many pointing out that this move would be a death blow to the conference, which drew much strength from branch involvement in organisation.

Lost 2:13

## NEXT CONFERENCE IN DUNEDIN

#### Remit 42

That the 1977 conference of the National Beekeepers' Association be held in Dunedin.

Carried 10:3

## DELAYING ROADSIDE MOWING

#### Additional Remit

That this conference asks the executive to approach the Ministry of Works to see if it is possible to have the mowing of road edges delayed until early December.

Carried 15:0.

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