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# The New Zealand Bee Keeper

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see page 5.

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# From the President

## Toward a fair, practical and simple levy

This month's Notes from the President are fairly long. I believe it is important, however, as it describes the how and why of the National Beekeepers Association's proposed Commodity Levies proposal. It is essential that beekeepers understand and agree with the principles and the intent.

### Hire levy to be revoked

The National Beekeepers Assn has been funded since 1978 by a levy on beehives, paid by beekeepers who have 50 or more hives. The level of '50 hives' as a level of 'commercial' has long been disputed. As well, the Hive Levy Act is based on a declaration from beekeepers as to hive numbers. This has led to under- and non-declarations by a small number of beekeepers and the resentment by other beekeepers who have paid their fair share.

On 1 January 1996 the Hive Levy Act will be revoked, replaced by the Commodity Levies Act. Before then we must describe for ourselves the industry organisation we want, the activities we want to undertake, the amount of levy that we can pay to support it and who should be paying that levy. We must then convince the Government that we are in general agreement, that a majority of the people and commodity to be levied agree with the levy being imposed.

### What should the NBA be doing for beekeepers?

Discussions within the beekeeping industry on these issues have been carried out over the last five years or so. We are close to the level of agreement that we need to carry on to the next step required by the Commodity Levies Act. It would not be reasonable to expect all beekeepers to agree on WHAT the NBA should be doing. HOW much of it, and WHO should pay HOW MUCH to do it. I believe, however, that what we have come to is the most acceptable set of activities to be funded in the SIMPLEST PRACTICAL manner that is still basically FAIR to all concerned. Those three key words will be explained further in this article.

Beekeepers want the National Beekeepers Assn to be their unified industry voice, representing their interests to Government and to other organisations. They expect the NBA to provide the communication systems within the industry (such as the branch structure and the industry's magazine) and to facilitate such activities as an annual national conference so that industry opinion can be expressed and debated.

Beekeepers want an effective American foulbrood control programme, even though it must now be funded by the industry rather than Government. Finally beekeepers want generic marketing activities for our products and

*Continued on page 4 →*

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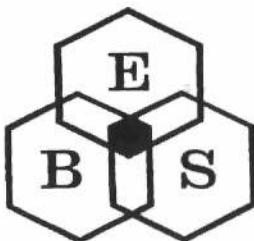
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**FROM THE PRESIDENT**

*Continued from page 3*

services to improve financial viability by increasing the value of our products.

Anyone who does not believe these last two requirements to be the case should go back to re-read the remits over the last few years. They should also go out and talk with some other beekeepers rather than the same negative minority that seems to speak so loudly. I honestly believe that the industry overall wants these two activities at a similar level as at present.

**The Proposed levy**

Let me state the intent as clearly as possible:

The NBA wants a levy that is based on the number of registered apiaries as at a given date of the year. Every beekeeper with MORE THAN ONE registered apiary will pay a levy. A levy is payable for the second apiary and every other registered apiary, regardless of whether it is a permanent or seasonal apiary (whether it has bees on it all year round or not).

Along with the payment of a levy will come the opportunity to be a member of the NBA. The New Zealand Beekeeper magazine will be included in the levy to act as a communications and education medium. The levy proposed is planned to be \$50.00 for the first leviable apiary and \$21.00 for each apiary after that.

**Basis for the levy**

The levy to fund the National Beekeepers Assn must be accepted by the majority of people who will pay the levy and by the majority of the 'commodity' to be levied. In order to get that level of acceptance, it must be seen to be:

- \* FAIR on the people to be levied
- \* PRACTICAL to administer
- \* SIMPLE to administer

FAIRNESS can be a very complicated issue. It means that no group should receive either unfair advantage, nor should a group be forced to pay inordinately for goods/services received. It should mean that all users should have a similar perception of value for money, and not feel that they are getting an especially good or bad deal out of the apportionment of costs. It means that the people who stand to benefit from the services should pay for them, and that those who will benefit the most should pay the most.

PRACTICAL means that whatever method of levying must be workable. Sometimes this means that the FAIREST way of collecting a levy may not be possible, particularly if the information required can't be readily obtained.

The FAIREST levy for, say, the marketing of honey might be on the amount of honey produced. (Even this would be arguable, as queen producers and pollinators would not contribute to the levy, yet an increase in the value of honey will lead to an increase in the costs of queens and pollination fees.) But we have no PRACTICAL way of ensuring the fair collection of a levy if we simply allow beekeepers to declare for themselves how much honey they produced. It would just create a system that would be open to abuse by the few and then resented by the majority.

The levy will be for the number of registered apiaries as at a given date in the year. It might be more FAIR but it would certainly not be SIMPLE to levy for registrations that change during a given year. There is no PRACTICAL way for anyone but the beekeeper knowing which sites actually have bees on them on that date. That information is simply not available — we would have to rely on a declaration by the beekeeper. That just makes things more complicated and open for abuse. We have chosen the PRACTICAL option rather than the perfectly FAIR solution.

SIMPLE means that the calculation and collection should be as easy on both the NBA and the beekeepers as possible. Again, sometimes a FAIR solution, one that might even be PRACTICAL may lead to such complexity that it becomes more trouble than it is worth. It might be more FAIR to pay for each of the activities based on a different sort of levy, for instance. Quickly, such systems become complicated and impractical. While FAIR is important, so are PRACTICAL and SIMPLE.

The FAIREST levy cannot be used if there is no SIMPLE, PRACTICAL way of implementing it. It is practical and simple to levy if the 'commodity' or some aspect of its production can be easily measured, countered or weighed and the number doesn't change often (hectares of orchards for instance). Similarly, levies are possible if a product passes through a small number of handling or sales points, so the quantity can be readily verified (meatworks, produce markets, packhouses/coolstores).

After many long discussions, our industry has agreed

*Continued on page 4 →*

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*Member*



## FROM THE PRESIDENT

### *Continued from page 4*

that the fairest practical and simple means that we have for levying the people who will benefit from the NBA's activities is the number of registered apiaries. We have not been able to describe any other 'commodity' that we can levy on that would not ultimately leave the whole system open to abuse by the few who would try to avoid paying their fair share of costs.

The Hive Levy Act has shown us that we do not want to use ANY levy that is based on a declaration that is not easily verifiable. That is, we do not want a minority of beekeepers to opt out of their fair share of levy by making false declarations, knowing they cannot be readily confirmed.

We have not made exceptions for very small number of hives, or special ways of counting apiaries that have large numbers of hives on them. To complicate the system for the exceptions would only serve to make it more difficult to understand and enforce. We have chosen the SIMPLE rather than the perfectly FAIR solution.

## The Next Steps

We are hoping to send out a ballot in November based on the above description. Because the Minister will use the results of the ballot to decide whether the NBA can have such a levy, it is important that all aspects have his office's approval as we go along. That is currently consuming a lot of effort, as the people assisting us to word and design the material are new at it, too.

## NZ honey taught to chefs

Now that we have started the process of consumers realising that there are some very exciting taste differences between our various honeys, the next step is to get New Zealand restaurants featuring, not just "honey" on the menu, but specifically named NZ mono or multi floral honey types.

The Christchurch Polytechnic has one of the most successful professional cookery classes in New Zealand. In September I met with chef tutors there to discuss introducing New Zealand honeys into the training curriculum. The answer was YES; this decision by the Christchurch Polytechnic to include honey in their chef training classes is a very exciting opportunity for us. Dennis Taylor, the head of Section of Christchurch Polytechnic, was intrigued with the range of flavours of various New Zealand honeys and believes that by teaching chefs how to use New

Zealand honey's unique flavour characteristics chefs can further enhance many dishes. It is important that the National Beekeepers Association continue. To do so, it must be financially viable, it is only fair that the people who benefit from the activities should contribute, that people should not be able to get the benefits of the marketing and disease control programmes without paying for them.

I hope beekeepers will realise that the basis for the proposed levy has been carefully thought through to ensure that it is as FAIR as possible, while still being PRACTICAL and SIMPLE. Please help the National Beekeepers Association to continue into the future, ensuring continuity of representation for beekeepers, disease control and marketing activities.

I am happy to discuss the levy, or any other respect of the NBA, with beekeepers at any time. Please don't hesitate to contact me.

**Nick Wallingford**  
55 Wating St  
Tauranga  
Ph/Fax (07) 578 1422



*Canterbury Polytechnic Professional Cookery Chef Tutors try different NZ honeys with NZ Honey Marketing Consultant, Bill Floyd (right).*

*Start Goodall adds clear golden Canterbury clover to a buillion, watched by Dennis Taylor, while Hugh Wall (left) evaluates a North Island Rewarewa with Bill Floyd.*

Zealand honey's unique flavour characteristics chefs can further enhance many dishes.

During October I will be carrying out a "matching exercise" with a group of chef tutors. The intention is to match specific NZ honeys to specific food types.

In the same way that people recommend and prefer certain wines

with certain foods, we believe that the same applies to honeys. The results of this matching session will be used as a major media release throughout New Zealand; and of course the results will be published in the later issues of *NZ Beekeeper*.

**More from Bill Floyd on page ?**

# Honey . . . It has more going for it than you thought!

The report "Honey in Microwaveable Foods" has some amazing information on honey and in particular how it is a unique product with a very complex composition.

The conclusions in the report shows that honey has some unique properties that make it invaluable in microwave cooking. For those with a scientific bent I will quote from the report:

"Liquid honey is a supersaturated, microwave reactive solution of mixed sugars, greatly modified due to: (1) Special Non-electrolyte effects of mixed sugars, (2) combined ionic conductance effects of phosphates, gluconic acid, delta-gluconolactone and other salts, and (3) added ionic conductance effects due to the presence of metal salts of organic acids.

Honey is a better water-activity management food ingredient than sugar or corn sweeteners, a property complementary to its superior microwavable reactivity. This is especially true of microwavable baked goods formulations where total sugar and electrolyte concentration in aqueous phase is rather high.

Honey's special chemical attributes are fructose and glucose, maltose and trisaccharides, free proline (naturally available for browning

reaction under slightly alkaline conditions), and the presence of organic acids. A composition with greater than 30% fructose is claimed to be of special value in microwaveable food formulations (US patent 5069910). In combination, these attributes account for novel edible susceptor properties for fast and high temperature heating of surface films/coatings based on honey on the one hand and baked good browning compositions on the other."

....and there's a lot more where that came from.

This type of material from America, totally professional and credible, is of great value to us. The NZ honey industry could not have produced this material itself and we are indebted to the American beekeepers for making it freely available to us.

I am already talking with some NZ companies about food projects. Unfortunately the commercial nature of that work means that I cannot talk about it in this column, but the end results will be increased demand for NZ honeys by food manufacturers, in particular some of the light and dark blends, rather than the high value mono floral honeys.

This usage of the lower value blends is good news for all of us!

## HoneyQual Mark

As a result of the exciting developments in our work getting food manufacturers to include honey, the need is becoming quite urgent to develop a set of standards by which manufacturers can order their honeys; and that honey producers can use for their own marketing purposes. In tandem with producing this set of specifications will be the development of a model by which we can licence out the use of our HoneyQual industry trademark.

It is interesting to note that both the USA and Australian beekeeping honey boards also have the development of specifications and standards as a priority.

## Latest news from the USA

We have now established an ongoing "Technological Exchange Programme" with the American Honey Bureau. I am sorry to have to admit it is a very one sided affair at present with the information from America being of tremendous value to us but it will be some time before we can reciprocate.

Just arrived in October are the following reports from the American Honey Bureau; (copies of which are available to any NZ - based (hive levy paying) NBA member for \$10.00).

"Honey and Microwaveable Foods"  
"Honey in processed Meats"  
"Honey and Fruit Spreads"  
"Honey in Frozen Desserts"

Copies of these will now be sent out to all companies who have purchased the NZ Honey Food & Ingredient Advisory Service's Customer Kit; and we will of course be targeting NZ manufacturers who can benefit from the information in the reports.

## Marketing Plan Update

The Marketing Committee is meeting this month to review our progress to date and to prioritise work for 1995. The key strategies that we are concentrating on are the Food Ingredient Advisory Service and its work with food manufacturers and the food service industry (restaurants and caterers).

If you have any thoughts you want made known to the Committee please contact one of the members before Tuesday 25 October.

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Steve Lyttle  
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Bill Floyd  
Tel 03 578 2706

That's all for this month,

*Regards*  
**Bill Floyd**

For advice or information on any NZ honey industry marketing issue, NBA members can contact:



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# Obituary — Percy Berry

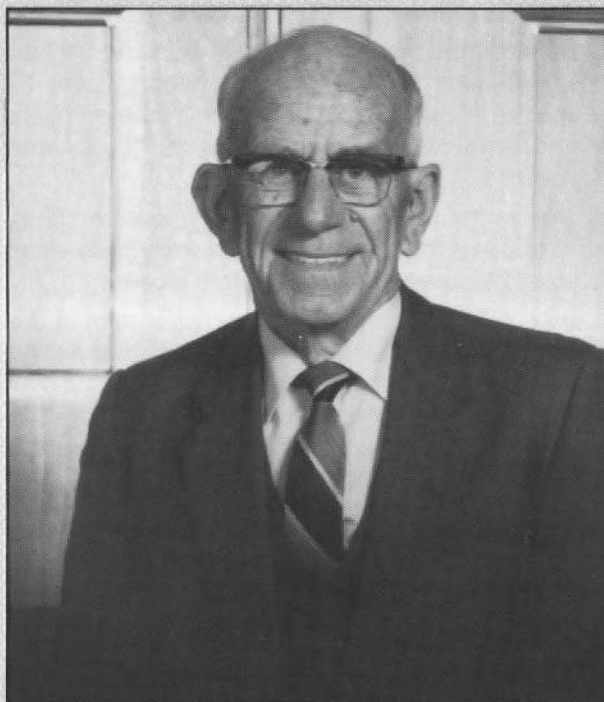
Percy Berry, life member and former president of the NBA, died on 11 September 1994. Percy had been involved with the beekeeping industry for more than 50 years. He established Arataki Honey Ltd, a family business that grew to be the biggest beekeeping enterprise in the southern hemisphere.

Percy Berry had a long involvement with the National Beekeepers Association at local and national level. He was also a member and chairman of the former NZ Honey Marketing Authority. He was well known for his strong views on commercial and political issues and fought long and hard for improved honey prices and access to international markets. Even in later years he kept an active interest in industry matters and was the first visitor to the new Association head office in Hastings.

His other great interests were the United Nations and rifle shooting.

Percy is survived by his sons Ian, Alan and Russell, his daughters Colleen and Marion, 19 grandchildren and 27 great-grandchildren.

*Jenny Dobson (granddaughter)*



## Eradication of AFB and the Pest Management Strategy

### What are we trying to achieve?

Late 1992 to early 1993 a committee headed by Ian Berry was asked to take a radical rethink of the goals and objectives of a disease control programme. This committee made the following suggestions:-

- 1) The most economic way to control AFB is eradication.
- 2) The major component of any programme would be education. This would be split into hobbyist and commercial. Each branch hold an annual AFB education meeting to be attended by a MAF AAO and use an education kit developed by NBA.
- 3) Establish a "user pay" service to small beekeepers to include access to a disease testing programme and advice from branch members.
- 4) Statement of inspection due date be changed to June 1. This was considered to be a more suitable time.
- 5) Branches to appoint a "Disease Co-ordinator" to direct the branch disease programme.
- 6) That NBA Executive consider the development of a Pest Management Strategy for the eradication of AFB. Conference 1993 was almost unanimous in support of eradication. Then came the 'Biosecurity Act' and the opportunity to develop a Pest Management Strategy to do what we want it to do.

After wading through the Biosecurity Act I understand that, provided we consider the rights of others and carry out the consultation process, we can write an effective

AFB eradication programme. A draft copy of the PMS has been circulated to branch secretaries and all known bee clubs in New Zealand and comments are asked for by late January 1995 or earlier if convenient.

While research is still being done we consider live bee and honey laboratory testing to be most practical and economic. Research indicates that this lab work will save much inspection and auditing work.

Export certification is an area that the PMS can support the NZ producers to meet the requirements of importing countries. AFB is considered by many one of the most, if not the most, economically significant disease of bees. Most countries consider AFB very seriously. Exports of live bees, stocks is, in my opinion, the NZ beekeepers 'ace in the hole' as diseases spread around the world. New Zealand can offer bees with a higher 'bee health status' than any other country. Much more could be said on this subject. The main purpose of PMS is to make beekeeping more profitable. This is what we are in business for. I, and I think most beekeepers, enjoy working with bees but profitability is essential if we are to stay in business. I guess we have wondered at times whether profitability has been achieved. Rest assured, the AFB Eradication Committee will be planning to get the maximum AFB eradication for the minimum possible cost.

**Terry Gavin,  
Chairman AFB Eradication Committee.**

# From the Colonies

## BRANCH NEWS - SOUTHERN NORTH ISLAND FIELD DAY TAIHAPE

The 17th September spring field day at Don and Stewart Teesdale's Taihape property was attended by over 70 beekeepers. Amateurs and professionals freely intermixed throughout the day of varied topics and demonstrations.

The site is geared for high volume operation in honey extraction and wax processing, but there were many ideas for the small beekeeper to look at more closely.

Preparation of hive woodwork was a major item in the displays and many useful methods of wood preservation and hive assembly were shown. Wax processing in bulk left many with the idea of what can be done with creative thinking. Machinery to lighten the burden of handling honey in bulk was demonstrated along with the preparation and application of sugar syrup fed to the hives. Many smaller beekeepers were aghast with the talk of sugar quantities in the order of tonnes for the season, covering pollination hive feeding and production honey hives.

Practical demonstrations of the methods used in preparing hives for the forthcoming season were very well attended, at times groups had to be parted to allow the video cameras present to get a look in! These videos will be useful training for beekeepers unable to attend the field day.

Discussion sessions on elimination of foul brood and other diseases brought useful comment from many beekeepers. The target of total eradication of foul brood by the turn of the century was stressed along with the importance of early notification of diseased hives. Other discussions centred on the safety requirements when transporting bees on the highways and the occupational safety to practice for those engaged in the production of their own woodware for hives.

The day concluded with thanks and gifts of appreciation to Don and Stewart Teesdale for hosting the field day and providing the venue.

**Ham Maxwell - Publicity Officer.**



**Left:** Stuart Teesdale, Taihape, (seated) Ham Maxwell, Levin (in Bee suit) Norm Keane (Foxton).

**Below:** General shot of attendees.

*Photos courtesy Frank Lindsay.*





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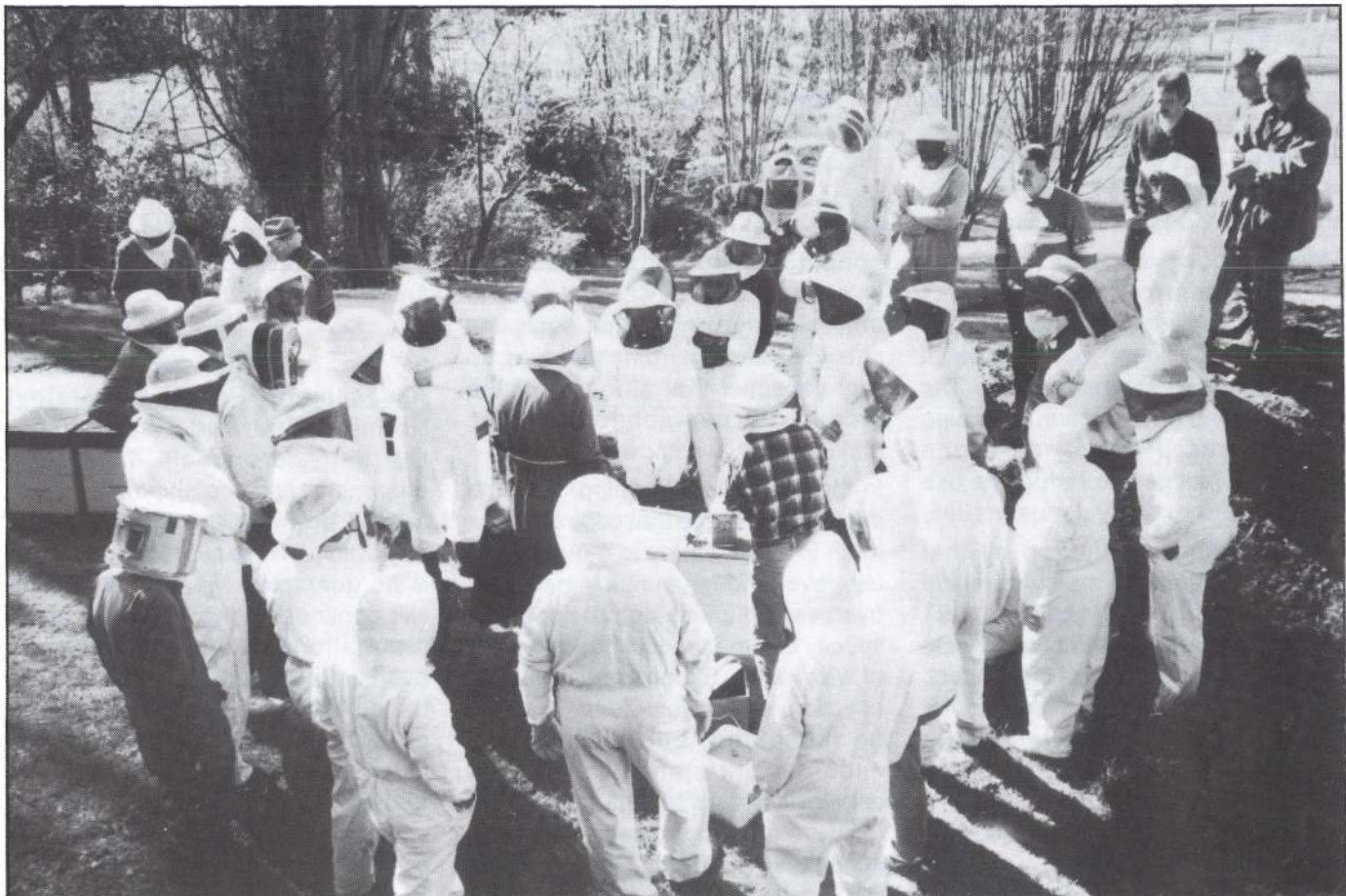
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# Bee EDPR Exercise big success

The joint National Beekeepers' Association/MAF Quality Management Emergency Disease and Pest Response (EDPR) exercise, held September 12-16 in Canterbury, was a big success, if reactions from the press, government officials and local beekeepers are anything to go by.

The exercise, which included a range of MAF Qual personnel from all over New Zealand and 40 beekeepers from Mid and South Canterbury, proved to be an excellent test of several of the generic EDPR systems used for foot and mouth, fruit fly, as well as bees. These systems included headquarters establishment and management and field staff operations.

The event also had the added advantage of being something more than a simulated exercise. To give a focus to field operations, American foulbrood was the disease chosen for the response and beekeepers and MAF personnel inspected an area 30km in radius around the outskirts of Christchurch for presence of the disease. A total of 296 apiaries and 1315 hives were inspected, with AFB confirmed after laboratory diagnosis in nine apiaries and 17 hives.

The exercise generated considerable publicity and public exposure for both the beekeeping industry and MAF Qual. The headquarters was visited by several MPs, the Director General of Agriculture and representatives from the police, Civil Defence and the Selwyn District Council. Media

coverage included several Radio New Zealand Rural Report items, articles in various papers and magazines (including Straight Furrow) and an excellent, long presentation on Canterbury TV.

Interestingly, government officials (including the Chief Veterinary Officer) are now praising the exercise as an excellent example of the kind of industry-government partnership that will be required in the future exotic disease control ventures (ie, Pest Management Strategies) under the Biosecurity Act. The beekeeping industry in New Zealand can be proud of the fact that it is probably the first member of the agricultural community to have contributed skilled personnel and expertise to the EDPR programme in this way.

## Methyl Bromide on the way out

For many years, methyl bromide has been an important fumigant for comb honey. The chemical, which is odourless, tasteless and leaves no chemical residues, is the preferred means for destroying the wax moth eggs which are sometimes found in association with this valuable export product. Methyl bromide is also used widely in New Zealand as a fumigant for export fruits and vegetables when importing countries require zero tolerance for quarantine insect pests.

Recently, however, steps have been taken to control the use of this chemical sterilant, not because of any contamination fears, but because it is an ozone depleting substance. The New Zealand government, in signing the Montreal Protocol on ozone depletion, pledged to reduce its use of methyl bromide by January 1995.

New Zealand is required by that protocol to maintain methyl bromide "consumption" at or below 1991 levels. In that year, the country as a whole used 180 tonnes of the product, although 12% of it was applied for quarantine and pre-shipment purposes. We are therefore limited to 158 tonnes per year for non-quarantine use beginning in 1995.

A government working party has proposed that control of the chemical initially be in the form of import

prohibitions of the product, since methyl bromide is not manufactured in New Zealand. All imports of methyl bromide will require a permit from the Ministry of Commerce. At this point, however, it is unclear whether the permit application will be the responsibility of the importer/wholesaler or the end-user (eg, the beekeeper).

The New Zealand government is currently seeking feedback on this proposal and specifically on what constitutes quarantine and pre-shipment use. New Zealand plans to argue internationally that such use should be exempt from restriction, so it is essential that all users of the product for quarantine purposes make their views known.

In the case of beekeeping, it will be important to argue that control of wax moth in comb honey is a quarantine use, even though in many instances overseas countries do not appear to specify that the product has to be free of wax moth. Export comb honey is not required by New Zealand law to be fumigated, but if it isn't, an endorsement stating "fumigation certificate not sighted" must be added to the export certificate. As well, section 5 (2) of the Honey Export Certification Regulations says that all honey "as far as practicable, shall be

free from mould, insects, insect debris....," so we can assume that at least the New Zealand government requires export comb honey to be free of wax moth.

Parties interested in the methyl bromide issue have been asked to make written submissions to J.J. Bongiovanni, Interdepartmental Methyl Bromide Group, PO Box 2526, WELLINGTON, no later than 7 October 1994. A meeting with industry and interested groups will be held at the end of October to discuss final proposals.

New Zealand will then make a report to the International Technical Assessment Panel on Methyl Bromide Use and Alternatives. Currently, proposals exempting quarantine and pre-shipment use of methyl bromide are being viewed favourably overseas. However, there is no guarantee that the exemption will continue in the future because international public opinion may eventually see it as a weakening of the global phase-out policy. In that case, freezing of comb honey and other susceptible bee products (such as pollen) will probably be the only acceptable alternative for wax moth control.

**Source: Sentinel, September 15 1994**

# Honeybees iron out their directional problems



Taking home a "wee bit" of sugar for the bees, Vietnamese style.



Mr Rong, a commercial beekeeper in the Bao Loc district (225km northeast of Ho Chi Minh City), with one of the hives he is carrying through the rainy season.

Photos courtesy of Cliff Van Eaton from his recent visit to Vietnam.

When honeybees navigate and build honeycombs, they use their bodies as tiny compasses guided by the Earth's magnetic field, according to two researchers in Taiwan.

Honeybees (*Apis mellifera*) are among the many organisms which can sense the Earth's magnetic field through magnetoreceptive cells. In other species, including humans and homing pigeons, these cells have always been found to contain magnetite, a form of iron oxide.

But researchers have until now failed to find enough magnetite in honeybees to explain their strong response to the Earth's magnetic field. Instead they have found sacs containing granules of pure iron in the trophocytes of the bees' abdomens; these cells nourish the reproductive organs of the bee.

Now Chin-Yuan Hsu and Chia-Wei Li of the National Tsing Hua University of Taiwan believe they have found a solution to the mystery. Using a high-resolution transmission electron microscope, they have discovered crystals of magnetite no more than 10 nanometres across at the core of some of these granules.

Reporting their results in the 30 June issue of *Science* (p 95), the researchers say that they found axons of neurons which terminate among clusters of trophocytes. Those axons branch out from the ventral nerve cord, which runs the length of the bee's abdomen — further evidence, they say, that the magnetic properties of those cells influence the nervous system.

Robert Pickard of the University of Wales at Cardiff says that the most powerful factor influencing honeybees' behaviour is the direction of sunlight. Their waggle dance, for example, is an elaborate way of telling each other the direction towards the best nectar sources, in relation to the sun.

Pickard says that honeybees use the magnetic field around them to align the parallel sheets of a comb when they build in darkness — in hollow tree trunks, for example. "It will now be much easier to identify how the physiological properties of these cells contribute to the behaviour of bees," says Pickard.

The researchers suggest that the orientation of the magnetite crystals causes them to attract or repel, depending on whether they are positioned side by side or end to end. If they attract each other, the iron granule contracts; if they repel, it expands.

**Laura Spinney, *Science* 23 July 1994.**

# Notes for Beginners and others

In the September issue the importance of maintaining a cohesive broodnest was pointed out. Well we have had some nasty cold breaks since and if sheets of foundation, an empty comb or comb with feed had been placed amongst the combs with brood, thus splitting the nest, it could have caused brood to become chilled.

Keep an eye on the tucker situation. Famine now and in the coming weeks is equal to failure. Supplement with sugar syrup (50-50) and a pollen comb where needed. Feeding small quantities of syrup repeatedly will boost brood rearing more than giving a larger amount only once or twice. Don't overdo the boosting. **REMEMBER THE RISK OF SPREADING DISEASE WHEN BORROWING FEED COMBS FROM OTHER HIVES.**

If not already done entrance blocs should now be removed. Re-queening can still be done this side of the honey flow.

If you have made some nucs (tops, splits) as was discussed last month with a view to swarm prevention, you want to make the best possible use of them. Let them carry on as long as possible, that is till the honey flow starts or till the parent colony is in need of a new queen (swarm cells, failing). Unite nuc with parent colony using a double sheet of newspaper. The old queen may be removed first but that is not necessary as the young queen will be the winner anyway. The newspaper is used to make the uniting a gradual process, avoiding a battle between the bees of the two colonies.

This is of course a very simple and easy method of re-queening, is pretty well 100% successful and makes for strong colonies.

Any nucs or tops are not required for re-queening or strengthening colonies can of course be used as replacements or for increase of hive numbers.

If you do have an early made top or autumn made nuc now becoming very strong and the parent colony is still going well without any signs of swarming, running the two colonies together as a two queen unit makes for an interesting exercise. Only practical for a small number of hives.

Needed an extra super with foundation and a few good combs, also an extra queen excluder. Remove two or three combs with sealed brood from parent colony, place in extra super. Fill gaps with foundation (alongside brood nest), replace queen excluder and put extra super on it. If top also very strong take a couple of combs of brood away and place into extra super, fill empty places with

empty combs. Next newspaper as for uniting and then the second queen excluder which must have an entrance cut into it as in the division board (same position). Above this comes the top (nuc), crown board and roof. The two colonies will soon happily intermingle by occupying jointly the extra super, looking after the brood and storing nectar. Placing more brood into the joint super may be repeated. Watch for swarm cells in bottom colony. A young queen heading each part will reduce swarming risk. When nectar flow starts properly units can be united or one can carry on by placing extra honey supers under the second excluder. If uniting two options: remove the very bottom box, shake bees from it, place the top (nuc) onto the second box followed by the excluder and place the extra super and the bottom box + another super above the excluder, or the top can be placed onto the second brood box thus making the brood nest into three supers with the queen excluder, the "joint" super and any further super(s) above this. Altogether a bit cumbersome and labour intensive but it is worth trying out with one or a few hives.

Ref. Management of two queen colonies by G Walton and articles by several authors, available from NBA library.

## Library Notes

**NEW ZEALAND HONEY FOOD INGREDIENT ADVISORY KIT - CUSTOMER GUIDE.** The library received a copy from Floyd Marketing. A very attractive folder containing info. about New Zealand honey: characteristics, quality uses and functions and a directory of different honey industry organisations. A real top quality, professionally produced document to take along when visiting potential customers.

Just arrived, two video tapes made by Frank and Mary Lindsay at the Tauranga Conference. Thank you friends for your endeavours and generosity.

Tape no.19 **Africanized Bees in the Americas.** Duration: 60 min. Loan fee \$4.00

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Tape no.20 **Diversification in Beekeeping.** 2 hrs 23min. Loan fee \$4.00

**MAF Quality Management.** 34 min. Loan fee \$4.00

## IBRA

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**The next meeting of the Canterbury Branch will be on October 25 at the Merivale Rugby Club-rooms 7:30pm. Speaker from the Canterbury Regional Council to be confirmed for the evening.**

# Honeycomb Directory

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Levin

# To Hungary for Beekeeping

by G Nichols — Hokianga

My Nichols family said "Ha ha! Your grandfather started a revolution to make himself King of Hungary."

"Pull the other leg" I replied.

That was in about 1938. Fifty four years later when we had a legacy, our chance came to visit Hungary. Before leaving I contacted my Szigetvary cousins and others who had known our grandfather. "A crabby old bastard, never told anybody anything."

That did not give me a lot to go on. Never mind! After a fortnight's swot of Hungarian and a tour of Canada and England we eventually found ourselves in Szigetvar in South Western Hungary where we thought grandfather might have lived. Nobody spoke English, my schoolboy German had almost disappeared in the last fifty eight years, my wartime Russian nearly got me lynched but my fortnight's Hungarian was received with great joy and replies came at about 200 words a minute faster than I could manage. Back to the drawing board!

Another legacy in 1994 gave us the chance of a longer time in Hungary and a much longer swot of Hungarian. Now I am not much of a tourist, I want to go somewhere they don't speak English and they don't eat bacon and eggs for breakfast, so what to do when not finding grandfather? Beekeeping was the obvious answer.

The Hungarian consul in Wellington helped no end. "I don't know any beekeepers but the telephone book shows a magazine called 'The Beekeeper,' I suggest you write to the editor."

This I did and it took my wife Pam and me about three hours to nut out a letter. Back came a delightful reply from Sudhayds Jenő and his wife Zsuzsa. (Hungarians are the other way round from us, their family name is Suhayda and their friends call them Jenő and Zsuzsa. That's just in case you want to communicate with them about Carniolan bees or anything else.)

Twenty seven and a half hours out from Auckland we arrived in Budapest more dead than alive, KLM have nice aeroplanes, pretty air hostesses and awful seats with bent over tops so that you cannot get your neck straight. You go around looking like Half-Hung Charlie. Jenő and Zsuzsa were there to meet us, to take us to the University where we stayed in students' quarters. We went to bed about 3pm and slept through to about 7am the next day. A miracle, our necks had straightened during the night.

I had a joke photograph of me beekeeping naked in an apiary which had only David Yanke's queens and their progeny. Jenő looked at it and could not see the joke. Next I showed him my all in one Sheriff bee suit. "You won't need that" he said laughing. I understood later when we went to see his bees in his big suburban garden. Most of his hives are in one long straight line under an open sided shelter. The hives are massive wooden "cabin trunks" with three to four colonies in each. The long shed held 36 of these massive hives. (Fig.1.) There were more hives which appeared to be made with half-size Langstroth boxes and a multitude of tiny queen mating hives under the fruit trees. Jenő removed the lid of one of the big hives, then the insulation consisting of a sugar bag or other heavy brown paper, then a layer of clear

plastic to reveal huge frames 420x360mm. He lifted out one of the frames and I saw that most of the brood was at the bottom and the honey near the top. (Fig.2).

The hives were not now very well populated, the main flows come first from Robinia pseudo acacia and second from lime trees Tilia sp. (the linden tree), both of which bloom early so probably the hives were winding down. Jenő had lighted his smoker but I can't think why, since the bees were so incredibly gentle. Pam, who reacts very badly to bee stings, came to watch and she was only wearing three garments one of which was a light summer dress.

Fig 3 shows Zsuzsa picking mulberries at a range of about two metres from the front of the hives. At first glance these Carniolan bees reminded me of the terribly aggressive British black bees so beloved of my ancestors, but they are smaller and greyer. Two other surprises, the total absence of propolis and of brace comb and I thought of the struggle we so often have to remove our glued-in frames. Jenő had a special black plastic mesh to collect propolis for sale but I never saw it in use.



*Suhayda Zsuzsa picking mulberries about 2 metres from the hives while we are working them.*

Jenő collected four of the huge frames, shook the bees off, removed the very last bees with a goose feather before placing the frames in a carrying box which he then took to his extracting room. He uncapped the honey with a multi needled scratcher, sliding the long needles parallel to the cappings just under the surface. The frames were supported against a two sided wooden framed metal mesh filter (This sounds like the celebrated German firm HAPAG which I remember from my youth, Hamburgamerikapaketfahrtactiengesellschaft.) He used a four frame tangential extractor and gave the combs a very short run, perhaps a longer run would have made the brood dizzy! Our morning's work yielded about eight litres of water white honey. On replacing the extracted frames Jenő sprayed the sticky cells with water.

Our first afternoon we spent at the Godollo beekeeping museum. The historical section contained some beautiful examples of skeps which appeared to be made of wheat straw ropes bound together with long spirals of willow.



Suhayda Jenö removes a 42x360mm frame.

They have a good collection of beautifully carved horribly complicated box hives, simpler box hives and many photographs of notable beekeepers, foresters with cross-bows, horse drawn wagons loaded with hives and huge bee houses containing hundreds of colonies. There is a beautiful example of a single frame extractor, the type mounted on a walking stick, the end of the stick goes into the ground and you gyrate the top to spin the comb.

The modern section I found disappointing, too much on small scale beekeeping, nothing about electronic control of extraction, no uncappers. However on the wall I saw a large poster showing grafting of eggs into queen cells. Fascinating, but how is the wax disc carrying the egg removed from the bottom of the cell. My own efforts in New Zealand to make a tool for the job had been a failure. I had used a suitably sharp ended metal tube to cut the disc of wax and then a co-axial PTFE tube inside as a ramrod. The disc just stuck fast to the inner tube although this is supposed to be the slipperiest plastic made.

*To be continued in the next issue of the NZ Beekeeper.*

## US Beekeepers oppose NZ bee imports

The lead article in the July issue of *The Speedy Bee*, an influential US beekeeping magazine, reports that several American beekeeping organisations have come out strongly against a decision by the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) to again consider the importation of New Zealand queens into the States.

The July 18, 1994 *Federal Register* announced that the USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service was requesting further comments on its 1990 proposal to amend federal regulations to allow New Zealand honey bees to be shipped into the US. American beekeepers strongly opposed such imports when the proposal was first announced and according to *The Speedy Bee* USDA officials "quietly shelved the idea."

Recently, however the proposal has re-surfaced as a result of closure of the Hawaii trans-shipment point just prior to the 1994 bulk bee export season. The US government had in the past allowed trans-shipments of New Zealand and Australian honey bees through Hawaii on their way to Canada. However, last year the American authorities closed even that point of access after federal government lawyers determined that such trans-shipments constituted importations.

Since that decision, Canadian beekeepers and government officials have been pushing to have the 1990 proposal reconsidered. The

Canadian industry has become highly reliant on bee imports from New Zealand, Australia and Hawaii since their border with the continental US was closed to honey bees in 1987 in an effort to keep out parasitic mites. In January of this year, the Canadian federal government, after consultation with affected parties, decided to extend that ban until the end of 1995.

In the article, *The Speedy Bee* summarises the arguments the American Beekeepers Federation (ABF) made when opposing the original 1990 USDA proposal. These included the belief that New Zealand bees would likely not show resistance to parasitic mites; the contention that "the supposed disease and mite-free status of New Zealand bees had not been substantiated scientifically" and the fact that New Zealand competition would place "undue burdens" on U.S. queen producers.

These arguments have since been reconsidered by the Executive Committee of the ABF, according to the article. The federation has once again decided to endorse opposition to such imports, although they have said they have no objections to renewed trans-shipments through Hawaii provided safeguards are in place to prevent bee escapes. The California Bee Breeders' Association has also circulated a letter asking members to oppose the USDA proposal. The association's

president, Steve Park, says in the letter that no imports of any honey bees into the United States are needed, although it is well known in this country that Mr Park's father, Homer Park, imported breeding stock from New Zealand through Canada in 1980, at a time when direct imports of queen bees from New Zealand to the US were technically illegal.

In the face of the ABF's opposition to New Zealand bee imports, it is worth noting that the Sanitary and Phytosanitary Agreement, a little-known part of the GATT Uruguay Accord, will in the future put in place a set of international rules and disciplines governing import restrictions of agricultural products and livestock. According to Raj Rajasekar, an analyst with MAF Policy in Wellington, while the GATT agreement "recognises the right of countries to take measures to protect plant, animal and human life and health, these measures must be scientifically based. They cannot be used as disguised barriers to trade." Under these GATT provisions, arguments such as a bee stock's susceptibility to disease, or the fact that stocks are not needed or may harm domestic producers, would likely not be valid reasons for restricting honey bee shipments from one country to another.

**Sources: *The Speedy Bee*, July 1994  
*Agcarm Review*, July 1994.**



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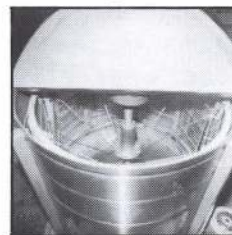
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