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ADVERTISING RATES ON REQUEST

The New Zealand BeeKeeper is published eleven times per annum: February to December. All copy should be with the Editor by the 1st day of the month of publication except for December when copy should be received by 20th November.

Notes from the Executive

As I stated in these notes six months ago, your Executive and your industry needs your support, now, more than it has ever done in the past with the new responsibilities the NBA has inherited. Government officials have indicated that we may still be asked to share the cost of some of the Government funded activities, such as surveillance for exotic diseases and OR or EDPR as it used to be called. Your live bee samples you contribute for testing for AFB will also be tested for exotic diseases as well. You will receive, with your Disease Elimination Conformity Agreement form, a list of the major exotic bee disease symptoms for you, the beekeeper, to be on the lookout for, especially in areas around airports and ports of entry, secondary airports and ports. If an exotic outbreak occurs, it will, most likely, be found by a beekeeper.

Coupled with all the extra cost and work involved with changes heaped upon us, we are in the last stages of developing the Order in Council to implement the National American Foulbrood Pest Management Strategy. Some of the PMS Review Committee have spent many long hours during the drafting of the order in council in endeavouring to have the order reflect the PMS document. Some nineteen communications from MAR Reg. and nearly two hundred pages have had to be considered to get close to finality. At the time of writing this report we expect to "clinch the deal" very soon. By the time you read this we will all know if I was right. The PMS is expected to be law on October 1st, if everything goes according to plan and beekeepers can expect to receive communication from the Management Agency shortly after.

With no increase in association income this year, Executive has its hands full in doing all the everyday things that the association has to do to as well as the major responsibilities such as the PMS, levy collection, *NZ BeeKeeper*, Marketing, contact with branches, etc, etc. We are also conscious of those who had a nil honey crop last season.

To Northland and Far North branches, I must congratulate them on a well run conference and the sub-committee responsible did a grand job. To South Canterbury and North Otago I thank you for inviting us to your area for 1999 Conference and I am sure you will find the effort rewarding.

The Executive is committed to working with Government on a multitude of issues with the latest being residue testing to enable exporters to send honey to the European Union. I understand that samples are able to be collected from now on and the cost should be reduced this year. Exports and export protocols are becoming a major part of NBA responsibility. Agricultural security and Biosecurity are an area that NBA takes an active part and, as this cost us nothing, this will be continued.

Finally, we must move ahead positively to the future to make the beekeeping industry a more united and strong industry and assist your Executive to progress in the future. In our history we have had the occasional beekeeper who has "gone it alone" with limited success. It is my view that, if we can gain some sort of unanimity within the industry, we can gain greater heights by going ahead together than acting as individuals. A major number of our members we almost never hear form, as they work their bees, possibly raising a family and only managing, in many cases, to keep the wolf a little way from the door. With an industry that has much going for it at the moment, with increased awareness of the value of pollen, propolis, royal jelly, honey and other bee products, a more prosperous future must be attainable with a little intelligence, some togetherness and goodwill by all.

Let us move forward, let the wrongs and supposed wrongs done to us in the past stay in the past and let us move forward to greater prosperity and happiness in the future. I repeat what I stated six months ago, there are some exciting times ahead for us all, with some hard work and a wee bit of luck.

Best wishes to you all.

Terry Gavin

Remits to the 1998 Conference should have read -

Remit 8.
Was amended to read: That this Conference recommends to the Executive that a set of guidelines be established to act as source material for use by beekeepers.
The amendment was carried by 8-6-2 and when the remit was put it carried 13-3

Remit 9.
Was amended to read: That this Conference recommends to Executive that if the implementation of the PMS in its current form is likely to add more than $4.00 for each levied apiary in New Zealand, then more affordable methods of implementing the PMS should be investigated.
The amendment was carried 14-1-0

Remit 13.
Was moved to lie on table till next year.
This motion was carried 9-6-1.

Thanks Gerrit.

Front cover...
This picture showing Caucasian bees (A.m. caucasica) was taken by Gerrit Hyink during the BOP Discussion Group trip to Queensland last month, enjoying the hospitality of queenbreeders Trevor and Marion Wheaterhead.

STOP PRESS

The MPS Review Committee are pleased to inform you that Cabinet has approved the Order In Council for the National Beekeepers' Association Strategy for American foulbrood.

It will come in to effect on the 1st of October 1998.

Terry Gavin, Chairman

National Pest Management Strategy for American foulbrood

Do you have unwanted beehives?

The Pest Management Strategy (PMS) for AFB provides a six month Amnesty Programme for unwanted beehives (Clause 19.6.7).

Call the Management Agency on: (06) 843-3446 (Harry), or fax: (06) 843-4845

The New Zealand **BeeKeeper**

THIS ISSUE

Letters to the Editor

Letters are invited on the understanding that they must include the writer's full name and address. Nom-de-plumes or initials will not be accepted for printing. Letters should be no more than 200 words, if longer they will be abbreviated. Letters not for publication should be marked NOT FOR PUBLICATION. Opinions expressed in the magazine are not necessary the opinions of the NBA.

Dear Sir

I would like to correct a statement made by TW Corbett in a Letter to the Editor in the August 1998 issue of this magazine regarding the New Zealand Honey Exporters Joint Action Group (NZHEJAG). Mr Corbett stated: "Now we have a honey JAG which is going to give our product even more recognition. We are all going to benefit from this. So when it comes to marketing and honey JAG budgeting priorities for how to spend your funding, don't forget the PMS."

While I have no argument with the sentiments expressed by Mr Corbett, I feel there is a basic misunderstanding expressed here of the relationship between the Honey Exporters JAG and the NBA, especially where funding is concerned.

The NZHE JAG has no direct connection with the NBA - it is an independent organisation of individuals and companies who are involved in exporting honey and honey products, and has been established under the auspices of Trade NZ - the government body responsible for the promotion of export trade of all kinds. There are a number of JAGs established by Trade NZ for a wide diversity of export products and activities ranging from organic foods to airline catering and kitset housing.

The Honey Exporters JAG does not receive any financial support from the NBA. Our organisation is funded entirely by annual subscriptions paid by members, based upon their annual export volumes, along with matching financial support from Trade NZ for approved export activities. This support is provided for a limited period only - usually five years, after which time the JAG is expected to be self-funding. We acknowledge a financial contribution just received from the Honey Exporter's Organisation which was seconded to the NZ Honey Packers Association, and which wound-up their activities at this year's annual meeting in Waitangi.

While it is our aim that the activities of the HE JAG will create long-term benefits for the honey industry as a whole, it is not true that any resources from the NBA are being provided to achieve this. We welcome applications to join the JAG from anyone involved in the exporting of honey or honey products - further information can be obtained from Fiona Welch at Trade NZ, Auckland, or myself for membership details.

Allen McCaw, Chairman, NZ Honey Exporters Joint Action Group

Dear Sir

Graham Gaisford has for many years pushed apitherapy and has been a lone voice. Good on him, but his letter (June *NZ BeeKeeper*) attacking John Heineman is unacceptable and not the way to push a debate.

Point 4 - Yes, we acknowledge all the work eastern governments have put into alternative medicines but there is definite reluctance to accept this by our western medical industry. They want to know scientifically how a process works, require double blind experiments and peer review before they take anything on-board. This isn't going to be done by the medical industry as there is no money in it for them. This is gradually happening thanks to Dr Peter Molan who has turned a hobby in something we can ultimately profit from, but it takes an awful lot of time.

Points 5 and 6 - We are a tiny industry with only 1500 members. The projects supported by our industry have been slanted towards promoting New Zealand honey and providing beekeepers with greater financial return, now and in the near future. We produce 1% of the total world honey crop, have a high internal demand and in the past (pre The Honey Marketing Board) had difficulty marketing our excess overseas because of inconsistent honey crops. The small amount of money put into these (all we can afford) has payed enormous dividends for us and has put New Zealand honey on the world map.

Point 9 - I do not agree that our bees are inferior and that we should bring in new stock. We don't want the African bee experience here. We have very productive bees in New Zealand, however I do agree that there is always room for improvement. Queen breeder's recognised this and set up a genetic breeding programme which resulted in another box of honey in a poor year. Some didn't see any difference and now this has ceased.

I do however feel, that although good honey producers, some have failings in that they continue to produce brood when there is the slightest stimulation, especially late autumn and during winter. If I were in the package bee industry, I would consider this a good trait, but I am not and don't. Hence I'm looking for those that don't have this trait and good wintering ability.

Recently I spent time with an Irish queen breeder and observed what he and a group of beekeepers had achieved with the local black bees (mellifera/mellifera) in his area. Very impressive, gentle, stayed on the frames, solid brood patterns from older queens, only a few cells of chalkbrood, flying in cool temperatures and these bees produced honey as well. Queens were also being sent to mite areas so resistance can be assessed. Shows what can be done with persistence. Shows what can be achieved with a little effort and TIME.

The only time I would actively encourage bringing in new genetic material would be in support of Peter Berry's ideas on how we should respond to EFB when it arrives. No drug feeding. Bring in semen from known resistant stock and A1 all producers queens. It may take one or two seasons before production is up to existing levels but would be far better than feeding drugs which camouflage BL and would preserve our marketing advantage.

Point 10 - At the Conference Seminar, Mr Ron Law, Director of the National Nutritional Foods Association recommended that we should commit the total of our trust funds to research now. There are a lot of others who would like to see this total spent on their projects. In the transitionary state we are in with Government funding being reduced and additional costs put on the Association, it's best to maintain this asset for a while longer. Sorry for being so conventional.

Frank Lindsay

Dear Sir

Karen McIsaac from Alberta, Canada would like to come to New Zealand about October and wants beekeeping work.

Karen (34) has studied geology and taught English last year in Equador. At the moment she is working for a beekeeping honey production unit (800 hives) in Alberta and according to the owners, she is a very hands-on person. Before this she did not have beekeeping experience but copes very well and does an excellent job.

Don't worry about her not being able to handle heavy boxes; apparently she has done quite a bit of weightlifting.

She probably wants work for the season.

If anybody wants more info, please contact us.

Gerrit and Ineke Hyink, RD 1, Katikati, New Zealand. Phone/Fax: 64 (07) 549-1233. Email: hyink@xtra.co.nz

Letters to the Editor

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Dear Sir
While in Washington State at a place called Pasco on the Columbia River, I met a local beekeeper and we became very friendly, he wanted to know all about New Zealand and I about American beekeeping. We spent an enjoyable time in his yard, down the road from his house where he had stockpiled 600 hives awaiting transport to Montana, in the Glacial Park area for pollination.
Just before we arrived there was a grizzly sow with her two cubs who killed and ate a tramper. Just as well we don't have problems like that here. So I could appreciate the problem that they have keeping bears out of their hives *(see enclosed article on page 18)*.
I was very interested in the method of transport. They hired an articulated flatdeck with a similar size trailer on which was loaded with about 400-odd hives, plus other equipment. On the back of the trailer they hitched a forklift unit with which they loaded and unloaded the unit. One could call this a bee train and looked very impressive. Unfortunately my camera broke down and I was unable to take photos. Also I had left my video camera back at the house, so came away photo-less.
This beekeeper just pollinates, he does not go in for honey production, travelling from down South to up North as the various areas require.
The beekeeper, Harley, was a delightful person as I think all beekeepers are. Some of the comments that he made to me I will pass on.
The mite is a real problem and he keeps a strip impregnated with one of the pesticides recommended by the Ag boys, in each hive. He states that while a hive has a strip within, the mites are kept under control.
There are no wild hives in trees or buildings now as the mites have wiped them out.
He also said when I asked him about the Africanised bee that they are no threat up North as the cold gets them, if the mites haven't.
On feeding, he said that he doesn't feed sugar as it's too dear. He fees corn syrup which he gets in bulk at about nine cents a pound. The bees also collect honey in some areas, mainly from the alfalfa. I noticed that most of his bees were dark ones with only a few yellow ones. I asked him about this and he said that he preferred black ones as they were more frugal with their food supplies than the yellow, which I thought quite interesting. I can also vouch for the fact that the sting of an American bee is no different than that of a New Zealand bee.
He made me promise that I would return and he would take me away on his travels.

Gregor MacGregor

Dear Sir
Peter Berry contributed an interesting piece on Purple Brood to the July issue of this magazine. However, I fear he has confused me with my illustrious ancestor, who until recently maintained a single Beehive in Wellington. I would like to reassure the industry that I remain the Apicultural Advisory Officer in Pukekohe, and I am still named.

Paul Bolger

Dear Sir
At the Waitangi Conference the following late remit from Ron Stratford was not able to be discussed.
That this Conference recommends that executive request Government to pass legislation prohibiting the feeding of honeyed water to bird life, and/or discourages the public from this activity.
Ron is a life member of the Nelson Branch, over 80 years of age and very much a stalwart of the branch.
In the gardening section of a local radio station, it was promoted that the feeding of honeyed water to bird life would enhance your garden.
Ron telephoned the radio station to inform them of the danger of this with regard to the potential spreading of bee diseases. The response he received was that the feeding of honeyed water was not illegal and of limited concern of the radio station, and presumably of limited concern to their listeners.
At Conference, Mark Goodwin made reference to the increased bee visitation to some trees after spraying of sugar syrup.
Separately, there is anecdotal evidence that some horticulturists have used honeyed water sprayed on to their fruit trees to enhance their pollination.
I would suggest that Ron Stratford's remit was a timely contribution to the good of the industry and that this is another example of Ron's efforts and value to beekeeping.
I propose that an education programme targeted at horticulturists, the gardening community and possibly schools be implemented.
An application could be made to the Honey Industry Trust Funds for funding for this education programme.
If funding was available, I suggest that aims and criteria be established and that this education programme be contracted to a separate entity, eg Telford.
I am aware that Tony Taiaroa and other executive members are concerned with the potential danger of honeyed water being exposed to bees. I support them in their efforts.

Glenn Kelly, Nelson Branch Delegate

Library News

"William Charles Cotton - Grand Bee Master of New Zealand 1842-1847", by Peter Barrett, 1997, 160pp, Australia.
This book was presented to the library by the author after he spoke at the pre-conference seminar at Waitangi this year.
One has to greatly admire the amount of very thorough research and fact finding Mr Barrett did before writing this book. Not only does it depict the early history of beekeeping in New Zealand but it is also a picture of a human life with many great ups and downs.
A very attractive hard back cover, many wonderful illustrations, good quality paper and first-class print makes for a little treasure.
Warning: Once having made a start reading it one cannot put it aside before the last page is finished.
Together with his previous publication of the "Immigrant Bees" Mr Barrett has done the Australian and New Zealand Beekeeping Industry a great service with the gathering of and writing down these historical data of how beekeeping became part of life in this part of the world.
Thank you Peter.

Beehive
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Assembly
Service

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Phone: (03) 548-6004
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fax: (03) 548-6019

Marketing

The Marketing Plan explained, simply!

At Conference I was asked to explain the Marketing Plan and the budget in good simple language. The following article explains what we're doing and why, and what it costs. It's written for someone who hasn't got a background in marketing, but who's paying a levy that includes a fee for Marketing, and wants to know how it is or could or should benefit them.

The NBA Marketing Plan

Who pays and what are they guaranteed for their money?

The funds are based on apiary ownership. So the people who can and should expect to get benefit are the apiary owners. That's our prime goal!

But the industry is a freemarket one; all apiary owners are independent operators who can buy and sell on an open market... there are no domestic or export market restrictions (unlike the Dairy Board, Apple and Pear Board, Cervena etc).

So the strategies can't be imposed on people and can't be planned to reward everyone equally.... the strategies have to create opportunities: but it's up to individual beekeepers whether or not they try for and get the benefits from them. And some apiary owners will try, and succeed and some will try and fail, and some won't try: but that's their choice. It depends on their own skills, their financial situation, their contacts.

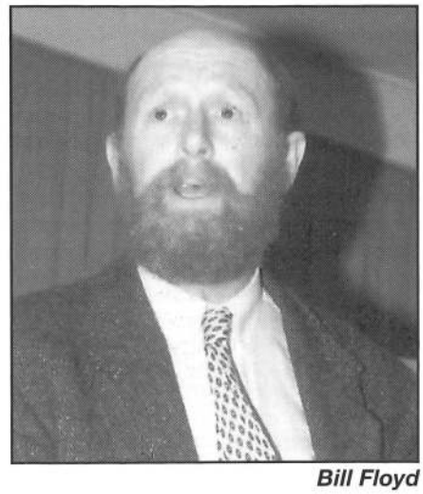
Many apiary owners are also packers and brands and agents: but the prime job of the Marketing Plan is to give the apiary part of their business more opportunities. Whether or not they succeed as a packer or agent is up to them: if they're not up to the competitiveness of developing their business into those other areas as well....that's, to put it bluntly, tough... the rest of the apiary owners can't subsidise those who can't succeed.

So how do we create opportunities?

When the Plan was developed we had a unique situation where New Zealanders already ate more honey per head of population than any other country in the world. But most people thought of honey as simply that, 'honey'. In other words, honey was (and in many cases still is) a simple commodity.

The problem with a commodity is that people can shop around and buy the cheapest one... because they think that if there's no difference between honeys why should they pay more for one than the other.

A Marketing Plan that promoted honeys generally, ie as a commodity, is only going to make opportunities for the biggest companies or the companies prepared to take the cheapest price for their labours and investments.



Bill Floyd

So it's logical that we should try and look for the differences between honeys. Differences that a consumer will appreciate and look for. Because if that happens, it means that different beekeepers will be selling different products... and the prices of each won't be simply compared dollar for kg, but the consumer will be happy to pay more for some special feature than another.

This is the concept of **'de-commoditisation'**

And when we started researching New Zealand honeys we found that we were very lucky!

(That 'we' means you as an apiarist and us as the company trying to come up with ideas!)

Because there are huge differences between New Zealand honeys and between honeys from different regions.

And so the Marketing Plan is based on two main areas of activity.

The first is discovering the differences that exist that can create special, unique values that customers might pay more for.

And the second is creating a marketplace where customers and consumers know about those differences and what the benefits might mean to them.

Then its up to the apiary owners to try and get the potential increased price the marketplace might be prepared to pay for the differences.

And its as simple as that.

So what are we actually doing?

The Marketing Budget this year was $90,000.

Floyd Marketing Ltd submitted a Marketing Plan to the Committee, setting out a group of strategies and activities that will make the most cost-effective use of the budget to achieve that 'differentiation' objective.

The Committee then got Executive approval of the Plan and we have been implementing it.

As with the last four years, the work is carried out under ten different headings (or Strategies). Each one is described briefly below, with the allocation of budget made to it. This allocation is difficult because in reality there are huge overlaps between the work in each: but it gives you an indication of the importance-rating we've given them.

The Honey Research Unit (Budget $25,000)

This is the industry's "jewel". Professors Peter Molan and Alistair Wilkins have and are producing amazing information about New Zealand honeys and their benefits. The 'manuka success story' is the most obvious one, but every week Peter is in contact with me, discussing research projects and ideas. We're about to work in collaboration with the National Honey Board of USA on some honey ideas that will have tremendous potential for New Zealand honeys.

This scientific research is creating real differences for honey types! Manuka, Rewarewa, honeydew have all benefited: we're now exploring other ideas for other honeys.

Honey and "Foodies" (Budget $12,000)

We promote honeys with chefs and foodwriters. These people influence the general public's attitude towards honeys. They have the ability to make honey types fashionable and exciting dish ingredients. Over the years we have had exceptional media publicity from our work with these people: all publicity that we couldn't possibly have paid for ourselves.

Honey and Quality Issues and Standards (Budget $5,000)

This hasn't been a success story! We've tried to get Standards in place but there are 'no-win' issues that the industry generally can't agree on. In the short-term we've backed off and are leaving it to the brands to create demand for their own Standards. But there is still ongoing work required in general areas of Standards: Ministry of Health and Food Labelling issues and the like.

Honey & Manufacturing (Budget $5,000)

Each year we run an innovation Awards Programme and promote manufacturers using honey in their products. We approach key manufacturers with ideas for new products that use the research results from the Honey Research Unit.

Its work that is slowly getting good results for us. We get publicity from the manufacturers as they promote the honey in their products that we couldn't afford to pay for ourselves.

Honey & Influential Groups/ Organisations (Budget $15,000)

This year we're putting a lot of time into creating a Close Working Relationship with the USA Honey Board. As a result we will get access to very good promotional material and research. We also spend some time creating or keeping good relationships with Regulatory Authorities or Government departments who can help us in our overall objectives.

Honey and the Industry Itself (NBA members and the like) (Budget $10,000)

It is very important that the work we do is communicated to the apiary owners. As I explained earlier: we can't make the price of honey go up... all we can do is create opportunities and communicate those to beekeepers. How 'you' exploit that is over to 'you'. We attend Conference and Field Days, respond to direct inquiries and produce printed information/articles (as in this *BeeKeeper* magazine.)

Honey and Market Intelligence (Budget $3000)

Each year we purchase retail sales statistics from Nielsens. This tells us how honey sales are going through supermarkets. We know who's selling what and for how much. It tells us if people are buying more varietal honeys and if people are paying more for honeys. This doesn't mean the apiarist is getting more for his or her honey: but at least we can tell the apiarist that the marketplace is paying more or less... its then up to them to decide if they're getting the best value from their own direct buyers.

Honey and Promotional Material (Budget $1000)

Up till now we've provided very little in the way of printed pamphlets and the like. The policy has been that individual brands should do their own thing... and if they do pay for doing it themselves they'll probably use it better (and design what they need to make their own honeys look different to others).

However, because many of the players in our industry have such small businesses there has been a call for some material to be provided by us as an industry group. It can be an extremely expensive exercise but we now have the advantage of having access to the USA's design work and photography, which we can adapt to a New Zealand use.

In next month's *BeeKeeper* we'll be listing a number of options and asking for people to indicate if they're interested in specific material (eg posters/recipe books/food and honey photos for general use); and we'll develop a package for next year based on that.

A Honey Display Unit is owned by the NBA and is available for groups to hire.

Honey Strategic Planning (Budget $10,000)

Although a Plan is developed at the start of the year, our industry (and our budget) is relatively small. This means constantly being on the alert for opportunities if they arise (and if necessary changing the Plan to suit). The opportunity to work with the USA Honey Board is a good example. This budget also covers general costs of office administration and the running of the NZ Honey Advisory Service.

Honey's Marketing Committee (Budget $4000)

The Marketing Committee system has worked very well: the present committee (Mike Stuckey as Chair, Tony Taiaroa Exec rep, Jane Lorimer, Allen McCaw and Peter Bray) is well-balanced and gives a good industry perspective on all the issues and opportunities we face.

We meet twice a year plus would have another two meetings through teleconferencing. I would be in touch with the members at least fortnightly, getting their comments and advice.

And so there you have it! If any beekeeper has specific questions they'd like to ask or confront me with, I'd be pleased to talk with them. There is no one perfect way of doing anything in this world, especially in the business of marketing.

But all the indications are that the majority of beekeepers have had an increase in opportunities available to them through the NBA's marketing plan. The statistics certainly show that consumers are happy to and are paying more for interesting New Zealand honeys!

Royal Jelly Labelling

Just a note to say that Tuariki Delamere has informed the National Nutritional Foods Association of New Zealand that the Ministry of Health is not following Australia's lead in imposing compulsory harsh warning label requirements on royal jelly, bee pollen, and proplois products.

This means that the existing voluntary warning label environment continue.

In the absence of warning label requirements for peanuts, crustaceans, strawberries, kiwifruit, milk and a host of other food products which are of significantly more risk than bee products the National Nutritional Foods Association of New Zealand can see no reason for having any warning labels for bee products.

If members want to retain a warning label then a label similar to: "Royal Jelly is a natural product which can cause allergic reactions," has been approved by John Van Den Beuken from the MOH.

This is clearly a significant victory for common sense and science over fraudulent research.

Well done MOH!

Ron Law, Executive Director, NSMC, Waitakere City, New Zealand

Southern North Island Buzz Weekend a tremendous success

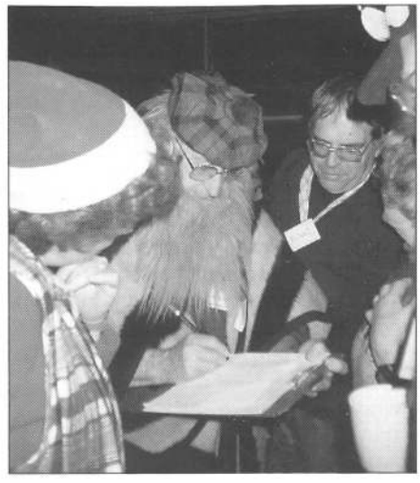
Congratulations to PJ and his team, it was a great weekend at Camp Rangi Woods in the Pohangina valley in August. There was plenty of information exchanged, but as is usual in such events, the highlight was the getting together of people with a similar interest to 'chew the wax'. The fact that everyone there learnt something new was the honey on the cake!

I have to admit that Frank's video to kick things off on Friday evening probably had a few of those new to beekeeping a bit worried. It was a classic American documentary on the spread of the African honey-bee through the Americas, including re-enactments of some of the attacks. Some victims were stung 8000 times (about 40 stings per square inch!). The original importer of the bees (a bee breeder) was interviewed and the monitoring of the spread was followed. The main reason that all attempts to control it through breeding are unsuccessful is because the Africanised queens emerge a day early, kill all other queens and so retain their dominance. The positive spin put on it all was that Brazil is now a major honey producer, at the mere cost of about 600 hives!

Saturday morning consisted of workshops on:

- bee biology (Cliff van Eaton had some great new slides of bees etc, which really did impress the old-timers),
- the parts of a hive (thanks to Robin McCammon who covered for a sick Merv Farrington admirably. I'm going to 10-frame brood boxes, now)
- PJ on hive tools, framing up, using a smoker
- Frank Lindsay on acquiring bees - collecting swarms, the legal side of buying hives, registration requirements. PJ reckons that sometimes fire brigades will help out with recovering high-up swarms. Don't expect them to hang around, though!
- John Brandon describing the importance of the spring build-up,

including the need for a young queen, plenty of space in the hive and plenty of stores. He made a useful plug for some of the literature available through the NBA library and the International Bee Research Association.



After lunch, (a BIG thank you to Marianne Lindsay and all who helped her in the kitchen) was the hands-on bit, taking advantage of the break in the weather. Robin McCammon provided about a dozen hives for inspection, (were they really that docile, or was there some Pohangina weed in those smokers?). Several new beekeepers got to see what to do with the inside of a hive for the first time.

Back inside the hall, James Driscoll led a discussion on disease identification and control and the introduction of the NBA's Pest Management Strategy. James is confident that the goal of zero AFB is achievable. The video on the European Foulbrood scare in Nelson was fascinating. The speed with which the network of people came together is encouraging for our industry, but the event highlights how vigilant we must be.

Now, the events of Saturday night are a little hazy in my mind, so I can only hope I get it right. Should I blame Frank's mead, James Scotch's Scotts Whiskey, or my own lack of self-control? Regardless, what memories I do have of the evening are positive. Before the 'official' function, I was fascinated with James Driscoll's tales of his six week visit to the Pitcairn Islands. About 38 people live there and there are only four surnames; virtually all residents are descended from the mutineers on the Bounty or their Tahitian partners! I understand that they have 30 plus hives on the island. James's eyes seemed to go all misty whenever he talked about his time there. He actually arrived in New Zealand from Pitcairn via a range of Pacific Islands on the previous Friday night!

Later came the inter-team competitions, including putting together and shifting a hive, making words from 'Christopher Robin', chasing nuts around the floor (!!), and honey tasting. The hat competition was won by Glen Robertson for his magnificent corrugated smoker. An anonymous Marton beekeeper won the wooden spoon for forgetting his hat! The Bees Knees Trophy went to Taranaki for the most accumulated points. All-in-all a grand effort by the evening's organisers, Sonya and Byron Blewitt, John Brandon and Lottie Ferris.

Sunday. Oh, is it really 6.30am? Again, events are a bit of a blur, but apparently PJ supered up, Frank took his honey off and Robin processed it. I do recall Harry Brown's droll suggestion that if you are going to use pantihose to sieve honey, it pays to take them off first. Real funny, Harry. Alan Richards described processing and handling beeswax. Frank scared us with the licensing and labelling requirements and costs associated with packing and selling honey.

Sue Walker from Honeylands extolled the virtues of by-products from beekeeping, including pollen, propolis, royal jelly, bee venom, larvae for human consumption, apitherapy. She described the polarisation between the claims made by some bee product suppliers and the medical profession. Much of the research into bee products has been undertaken in the East and so is not widely accepted by the West.

At last came the camp clean-up; like the whole weekend, a combined affair, then PJ and James presented the Certificates of Attendance to all.

About 90 people registered for the weekend and I gather about another 40 were turned away. Registrants came from as far away as Auckland, Coromandel, Tauranga and Rotorua and one from Blenheim! I can thoroughly recommend the next Buzz Weekend to any beekeeper. I hope that the NBA considers putting this event on its own calendar and giving it the support it deserves.

Bruce Bycroft, Levin

Notes for beginners and others

John Heineman

Spring has arrived, bees are out on the good days and beekeepers once again are gearing up to make the best of what this new season has in store. Hopefully it will be a good one. Seasons come and go, few are the same, that too helps to make beekeeping such an interesting occupation.

First inspection will have taken place (I hope!). Checking for disease, queen performance, comb quality and stores and general hive condition is the usual programme. Stores - honey and pollen. The first to supply the needed carbohydrates (energy) and the second for the protein required for the rearing of brood. Analysis of pollen shows that those little grains are full of goodies. Amino acids, vitamins and minerals, all very important in the diet of the nurse bees which have to supply the "brood food" to the young larvae. So it is most important, especially at this time of the year to ensure that a hive has both sufficient honey and pollen on-board. A shortage of the last will prevent optimum brood rearing.

The feeding of sugar syrup will encourage the bees to go out and forage, that is if the weather permits and flowering plants are in the vicinity. However weather conditions often do not co-operate and some areas have few pollen producing flowers just now. Some colonies are much better pollen gatherers than others. It may well be that a hive has plenty reserves and can spare a good pollen comb to help a poorer neighbour along. Always make sure that there are no signs of disease (especially BL) when changing combs from hive to hive.

Not a bad idea to invest in one or more pollen traps. Place them on the best pollen gatherers. The harvested pollen can be stored in the deepfreeze for use next spring. Then this pollen can just be sprinkled on and rubbed into the cells of a comb and placed into the hive that needs it next to the brood nest. Or it can be used of incorporation into pollen patties.

Also, don't forget that pollen is a beneficial supplement to our own diet. So if there is any to spare make good use of it.

Recently there was an interesting article about another aspect of pollen gathering. We all know that when a bee enters a flower pollen grains adhere to the hairs of the bee, she then grooms the grains off and packs them into the pollen baskets. One can observe them arriving home with those pollen balls on their legs. But this does not seem to be the full story. During flight the hairs on the bee's body become in some way electro statically charged (same with a plane and car). Then when entering a flower the fine pollen grains are in first instance attracted onto the body hairs. In other words it works like a magnet. Combing the pollen off the hairs and packing them away into the pollen baskets then become the second stage of the pollen gathering. (British Bee Journal, November 1997, JE Heads, pp 190/1).

It is a well known fact that bees become harder to handle and sometimes real crabby when thunder storms arrive. Could well have something to do with a higher than normal rate of electro static.

When finding a colony with laying workers you have a problem. It is especially in the spring when opening up after the winter period that this problem may arise. It can happen at other times of the year but that is less likely. Laying workers develop in hives which have not been able to raise an emergency queen after becoming queenless. That is to say that at the time of becoming queenless no brood younger than 72 hours was present in the hive.

If laying workers are present in a queenless colony one will find a haphazard brood pattern, egg laying is irregular with often more than one egg per cell and these are not properly placed. Many of these eggs will come to nothing and if they do they will turn into drone brood.

Such hives have been queenless for a fair while and are often pretty weak. Easiest way out is uniting. That is all very well for beekeepers with more than a few hives. But it is tough on the beekeeper with a small number of colonies. Especially when that laying worker hive is still reasonably strong and well supplied with stores. Plain heart breaking to have to scrap it.

Giving it a few combs of brood in the hope that the bees will raise a queen is usually a waste of time. Trying to introduce a queen, caged or otherwise, is very risky, she will probably get balled and killed.

Carry the brood box (es) with the bees a distance away from the apiary, 100 metres or more but not too far. Place an empty super temporarily on the place the hive come from to catch any bees homing to where the hive was. Shake all the bees off the combs on the ground and remove as many of the eggs from the cells as possible by tapping the combs on the edge of a super. Return the empty box (es) to the original place and shake the bees which have gathered in the temporary super back into the hive. Place a couple of combs with brood in the centre with bees from the donor hive adhering. Between these two combs introduce a caged queen. The bees shaken off a 100 metres or more away will soon come flying home but for a few handfuls which stay behind. Those are the laying workers you want to get rid of. Because of the physiological and behavioural changes that have taken place they have become disoriented and cannot find their way back to the hive. Feeding a hive like this some syrup will raise morale, reduce the entrance. Use some smoke when introducing the brood combs and the queen. This operation only to be done when it is warm enough for the bees to fly. Worth a try if you can lay your hands on a laying queen at the time.

And now friends, enough is enough, I am going to call it a day. It is high time someone else take care of these Notes. A different style, some fresh thoughts and all that.

I have enjoyed writing these notes and learned a good bit while doing it. I hope to have given some little value mainly to those who are entering the world of beekeeping. Some others may have been bored to tears by my ramblings, sorry, but remember we have all been beginners.

Love your bees, take good care of them, up to a point try to be a perfectionist.

See you.

Yes... the same lads today
John and Peter Berry

Replacing combs to control Honey-bee Diseases
- results from a New Zealand comb replacement survey

by Dr Louise Malone, Dragana Stefanovic and Dr Heather Gatehouse, HortResearch, Auckland and Palmerston North

"Periodic renewal of brood combs is doubtless one of the most effective disease-preventive measures" but one *"widely neglected in modern beekeeping"* - these words are Brother Adam's, from his 1975 book on beekeeping at Buckfast Abbey[1].

There is some evidence to support Brother Adam's view[2,3]. Nosema is a very common disease of adult bees. It is hard to detect, as it has no obvious visual symptoms, but it significantly reduces the honey yield and pollination efficiency of the colonies it infects[4,5]. It is thought to be transmitted from bee to bee in the hive via soiled comb[6]. In a Swedish study[2], bee pathologist Ingemar Fries compared nosema disease levels, brood rearing and honey yield in three sets of colonies over five years.

In Fries' study, colonies had brood comb replaced annually with foundation in the autumn or the spring, or were left untouched for five years ("old wax group"). Fries found that spring nosema levels were highest in the "old wax group" and lowest in the "autumn group". However, there was no difference in autumn nosema levels. Honey yield and brood area were the same for all colonies too. Fries concluded that comb replacement could lower nosema levels and he suggested that overwintering bees on foundation would produce the best result.

It would be interesting to know if a similar study under New Zealand conditions would produce a similar result with nosema levels and with American foulbrood (AFB) and chalkbrood. Before undertaking such a study, however, we thought we would check out how often New Zealand beekeepers replace comb. A beekeeper recently suggested to me (jokingly, I think) that "40 years or until broken" might be the average age of a frame in a New Zealand hive. We also needed to know whether beekeepers would be willing to increase their rates of frame replacement if given some scientific proof of economic benefit.

Thirty-five beekeepers (mostly commercial) from Milton to Mangonui answered questions about their comb replacement practices.

Figure 1 shows how often these beekeepers open their hives in a year. It varies quite a bit, but mostly it's about six times per year. The second most common practice is to open them 12 times a year.

Figure 2 shows how many frames they replace per box per year. Two frames per year is the most popular option with one or three frames the runners-up. This translates into an average life for each frame of about 4.5 years, ranging from two to 36 years, depending on the beekeeper concerned!

Thirty-three respondents said they replaced frames in the spring. Five said they also replaced frames in the summer, six in the autumn and two in the winter. Of the two remaining beekeepers, one said they replaced frames in the summer only and the other did not give a reply to this question.

When asked how important they thought the age of comb was for colony health in general, 18 beekeepers said "very important", 13 said "important" and three said "not important". In relation to honey quality, seven said "very important", 13 replied "important" and 12 said "not important". For effect on honey yield, eight thought that frame age was "very important",13 thought it was "important" and 11 thought it was "not important".

When asked to estimate disease levels in their hives, 21 did not know if they had nosema, five said they didn't have nosema, five said they had between 0.1% and 10% of colonies infected and the remaining three said 95-100% of their hives were infected (based on the idea that nosema is ubiquitous, rather than on actual tests).

Not surprisingly, our beekeepers had much better data on their AFB levels. Eighteen had no AFB. The others had levels ranging from 0.0002% to 2.5%, with an average incidence of 1.05% of colonies.

Estimates of chalkbrood varied widely (from 0 to 100%), but were mostly less than 20%. Twenty beekeepers thought they had between 0 and 5% of colonies affected by this disease and 10 estimated their chalkbrood incidence as between 6% and 20%.

Thirty-one beekeepers said they would change their frame replacement policy if it would improve profitability. Two said they wouldn't and two did not reply. When asked to predict the maximum number of frames they could replace each year, answers ranged from 3/4 of a frame to nine frames per box per year, with an average of just less than four frames. This would reduce the average lifetime of a frame to about 2.5 years.

Would it be worth the effort in terms of reduced disease levels and improved honey yield?

A scientific study, set up in New Zealand and run for over several years could give us the answer to that. We could set up a series of colonies under different frame replacement

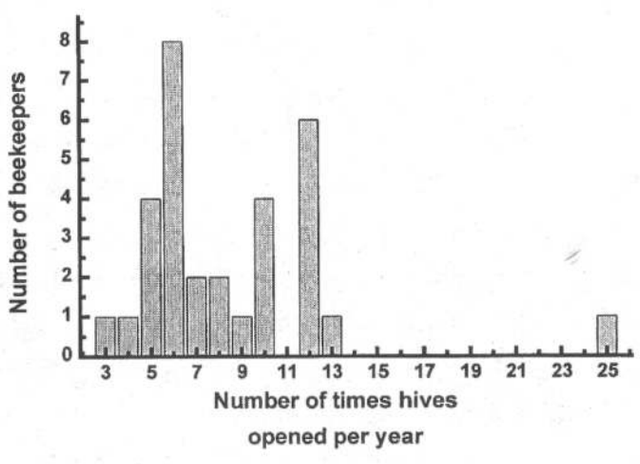


Figure 1

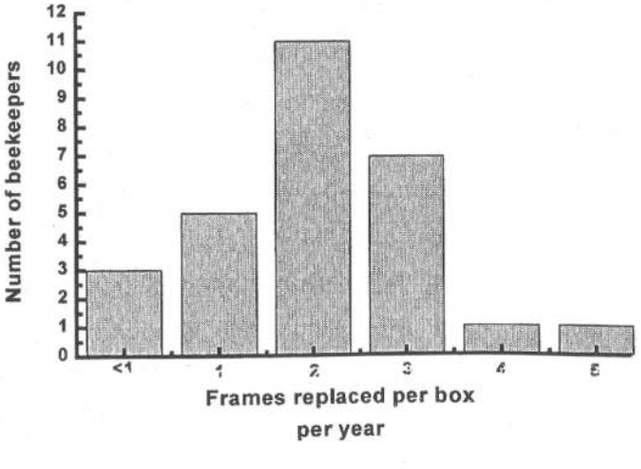


Figure 2

regimes (different numbers of frames replaced per box per year and also frames replaced at different times of the year) and measure disease levels (nosema, AFB and chalkbrood) and honey yields from these. Ideally, it would be good to repeat the experiment in different geographical locations. Statistical tests on the data obtained will tell us if the different regimes lead to any real differences in colony health or productivity. A cost-benefit analysis will tell us if a change in frame replacement practice would be worthwhile in dollar terms. We are interested in undertaking a study of this sort and are exploring funding options for it at present.

It is worth noting that comb and frames can be heat-sterilised to kill nosema spores as an alternative to comb replacement. A temperature of 49°C for 24 hours destroys or renders spores inviable, provided the combs contain little or no honey or pollen[7]. The temperature must not exceed 49°C.

We thank the beekeepers who took the time to participate in our survey and also those who helped us by distributing the questionnaires in their regions. We welcome your comments on this subject - our fax is (09) 815-4211 and email is lmalone@hort.cri.nz.

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Figure 1. This graph shows how often the beekeepers surveyed opened their hives in a typical year. The majority open them six times a year, with 12 times a year being the second most popular option.

Figure 2. This graph shows that most of the beekeepers surveyed replace two frames per box each year.

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Annual Report of Telford Rural Polytechnic, Apiculture Unit to the National Beekeepers' Association 1998 Conference

(Waitangi - 22 July 1998)

Courses offered

A number of courses in Apiculture are now offered at Telford Polytechnic. The **Advance Certificate in Apiculture**, is a one year, 38 week full-time course aimed at producing graduates to work in the commercial beekeeping industry. It concentrates on the practical aspects of running a semi-commercial beekeeping operation.

The **Certificate in Apiculture** by correspondence, is a two-year course offered to students who cannot attend Telford and is structured to provide the theory of beekeeping with limited practical experience. Students undertake practical competencies in their local area with a competent commercial beekeeper. Both these courses follow the same 15 theory modules and include a collection of 40 plants and a major project related to a bee product from the hive.

The **Diploma in Land Based Industries (specialising in Apiculture)** is offered to graduates with the Advanced Certificate in Apiculture or in special circumstances graduates of the Certificate in Apiculture. The course concentrates on the business administration side of running a rural business, in the case of apiculture students, running their own commercial beekeeping enterprise. Students complete the Diploma in Land based Industries' requirements but all projects and case studies are undertaken with a local commercial beekeeper.

The **Certificate in Queen Rearing** is a new course that will hopefully be offered for the first time in 1999. This course can either be undertaken full-time over three months or by correspondence for 3-6 months and then a 4-6 week block course at Telford. This course was approved for 1999 at an academic board meeting on 5 June 1998.

The **Certificate in Apiculture** course offers students a week with the Apiculture Unit during which time the students have the opportunity to complete Unit Standard No 17 "Perform elementary beekeeping practices". Students undertake both a theory and practical component. All agriculture students leave Telford with some appreciation of the beekeeping industry and its value to the agriculture sector from the role bees play in pollination of crops.

The cost of the courses in 1998: (NB: Study right is for students 21 years and under on 1 January of the year of study, or if they have been on a benefit for more than 26 weeks).

Advanced Certificate in Apiculture and Certificate in Apiculture: Study right $2250, Non-study right $2800.

Certificate in Apiculture (correspondence): $375 per annum.

Diploma in Land Based Industries (specialising in Apiculture): Study right $1500, Non-study right $1950.

Scholarships

Following a request form Telford Polytechnic, the NZ Honey Industry Trust recently advised that they would provide a different funding arrangement to students. The current system of providing up to $2000 to be awarded on a four-term basis to the student who shows effort and promise in beekeeping will be changed to awarding two scholarships of $1600 each. The criteria as to how these scholarships are to be awarded will be at the discretion of Telford.

Current situation

There are currently 18 students enrolled in the correspondence course (July 1998) this compares with 22 correspondence students enrolled at the same time last year. Four full-time students started at the beginning of 1997 and two graduated. This year only one student is enrolled in the full-time Apiculture course and one student is specialising in Apiculture in the Diploma in Land Based Industries. Despite the opportunity to enrol during the middle of the year in the full-time course, there have been no further enrolments. The numbers in the full-time course are well below the teaching potential of the Apiculture Unit and place additional pressure on the need for better advertising and marketing which in turn detracts from the main role of teaching and providing up to date information for students.

Graduates in 1997

Timothy Samani, a CITEC scholarship student from the Solomon Islands, was awarded the Airborne Honey Bursary of $300 for the best overall student, the Ecroyd Beekeeping Supplies prize of a smoker for the most improved beekeeping student and the Graeme Clark Cup for the most successful queen bee breeder. Karen Bassett was awarded a total of $2000 from the NZ Honey Industry Trust on a four-term basis for a student showing effort and promise in beekeeping and a Wrightsons Educational Trust Bursary of $1000.

Both students graduated on 11 December 1997 with Advanced Certificates in Apiculture. Karen is beginning beekeeping employment in the Bay of Plenty in August and Tim has returned to Telford to complete a Diploma in Land Based Industries specialising in Apiculture. Tim worked for Telford during the summer period after graduating to gain experience in managing the Telford hives unsupervised.

During their year at Telford, both students participated in a study tour which included attending the NBA Conference in Nelson and they each published a report on their study tour in *"The NZ BeeKeeper"* journal (September 1997 Vol 4, No 8 and October 1997 Vol 4 No 9).

Apiculture Unit activities in 1998

Telford Rural Polytechnic and the Otago and Southland Branch of the National beekeepers' Association organised a combined Southern Field Day on 14 February that was attended by 90 people. The venue at Telford provided a great opportunity for exchange of ideas during the conference sessions, trade displays and practical outdoor demonstrations, which included rearing queen-bees and two queen hives.

Mercury TV, from Invercargill, filmed a video on the Apiculture course on 17 March. This video is now available as part of the package provided to students inquiring about full-time courses at Telford.

Forty-two members of Probis visited the honey house on 17 February, 16 children visited from Knapdale School on 9 March and a large group of around 50 students visited from Otautau Primary School on 16 March. Third form South Otago School students visited the honey house as part of their science course on 26 March and the tutor spoke to a group of Kings High School students in Dunedin on 30 March.

Holiday programmes for 50-60 school children have included introductory beekeeping and candle making on 20 April and 7 July. Careers Advisers Day on 13 May and the Telford Open Day on 24 June provided opportunities for

teachers and around 250 students to inspect the Apiculture facilities and meet students.

The Apiculture tutor set up a promotional display of Telford courses as part of the Canterbury Branches honey promotion week at the Eastgate Mall in Linwood, Christchurch from 17-21 June. This was well attended particularly by primary school children. Some of the members of the local hobbyist beekeepers club expressed an interest in the correspondence course.

Student activities in 1998

Students on the full-time course have been involved managing the 320+ beehives since the beginning of the first term (26 January). This has involved rearing and requeening the majority of hives with queen cells, removing the honey supers, extracting honey and wintering down the hives. This year the 320 hives yielded 5400kg of clover honey, 1400kg of blue borage, 450kg of manuka and about 50kg for cut comb. This was a total of 7300kg and an average of around 23kg per hive.

Four hives were detected with American foulbrood during the 97/98 season and these have been removed and destroyed. All boxes and frames are numbered so as to minimise the risk of infected frames ending up on disease free hives.

Students have also been involved in participating in a two-day food handling course (6-7 May) qualifying in NZQA 167 producing safe food and 168 preventing food contamination and a "Growsafe" course in handling agricultural chemicals (25-36 June). Demonstrations on cut comb production, grafting larvae for cell raising and wiring frames, as well as theory lectures on crop pollination have been provided to all 60 Certificate in Apiculture students.

There are a variety of special projects that students have been involved in during the full-time course, these have included: making resin paper weights to include various stages of the honey bee life cycle; making a video on beehive management for beekeepers in the Solomon Islands; coating English sole in beeswax to prevent sea lice from eating crayfish bait; producing cut honeycomb and marketing this at local stalls and combining crushed Telford deer velvet and manuka honey into a new product.

Honey house

A visit by the Environmental Health Officer on 9 May for the purpose of obtaining Medical Officer of Health approval for the local council to register the premises, resulted in a number of recommendations for upgrading especially in regard to the lining of all areas where honey is processed. Such items as an extractor fan in the extracting area, covering of fluorescent lights, wearing disposable plastic gloves and cleaning of all equipment and walls have been undertaken. Other items such as fly screens on windows in the extraction room, separate washing basins for hands and tools, a cleaning schedule, rodent control and plumbing to allow continuous hot water will be implemented during the winter term.

The future

The New Zealand Beekeeping Industry needs to play a more pro-active role in attracting students for full-time study in Apiculture to help meet the ever increasing demand for young people to supersede the retiring commercial beekeepers in the industry. Failure to do so may result in a demise in the calibre of potential employees available to the industry and result in loss of many viable businesses and eventual decline in the overall viability of the industry.

Dr David Woodward, Apiculture Tutor and Head of Department

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For further information, contact:

Apiculture Tutor, Telford Rural Polytechnic, Private Box 6, Balclutha, New Zealand.

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Supering Up

The time has come for the honey flow, it can be either a chore or a pleasant exercise.

Be prepared, have all your gear ready well in advance.

It is no use rushing round from mid November trying to construct supers and assemble frames. Get everything ready during the quiet winter months and wax and embed the frames from mid September to the first weeks in October, any earlier and the new foundation loses is lovely fresh smell and isn't as readily accepted by the bees. The same applies for your drawn out comb stored with wax moth crystals, get them aired well before they are required. A few hours put aside in early October to get all your small jobs done will pay dividends and make supering up less of a hassle.

The main honey flow varies from area to area, so timing is critical, adding supers is not only for honey collection, but also to relieve congestion in the hive, thus reducing the tendency to swarm. Honey supers provide the space required for ripening and storage of honey. Remember that incoming nectar contains 50-80% water, and therefore requires more room while the bees are processing it, than while stored in its processed state as honey with a 18% water content.

Presuming you have done the last major brood chamber manipulation in mid November, by the end of November the queen should be moving up the hive filling the empty cells with eggs as she goes. But before she reaches the top it is likely the brood there will all be gone and the cells filled with honey. With nectar coming in faster the upper portion of the second super will not be available to the queen, therefore she has to restrict her laying to the bottom box, which is the last place the bees want to store honey.

This is an important factor, remembering that it takes six weeks from egg being laid, until the worker has progressed through its duties in the hive, to become a field bee. You need to keep in mind that eggs laid from the beginning of the flow will produce forages and the flow is practically over by mid January, these foragers will barely bring in enough to support themselves. In a poor season they will eat up honey already in the hive. They are more of a liability than an asset.

New Zealand's main honey flow is such a short time good housekeeping is important to take advantage of what's available and to get the maximum crop possible.

With the basics out of the way it's now time to get on with supering up.

For most of the larger operators the first honey supers will need to be placed on the hive before the main honey flow starts, particularly if the area usually has an early significant honey flow. Putting supers on early, (mid to late October in most regions) also helps to prevent swarming.

The first honey super should contain drawn combs if possible, as foundation does not provide the bees with any more room until the cells have been drawn. High temperature and a good honey flow are required for this, and any combs drawn during an erratic honey flow will not be drawn out properly and are usually not attached to the bottom bar correctly, causing problems later on, during extracting. Additional supers should be added before the bees require them. This maintains the momentum of the colony, and the addition of additional space seems to activate the bees to gather more nectar. The old idea was that you added supers only once the bees have started white waxing the top bars. In fact the white waxing is the latest stage that you should add the supers. Ideally the supers need to be placed on the hive earlier than this in a honey flow, before white walling occurs.

Supers are usually added on top of the previous super, this is the easiest way to put on supers as less lifting is required and you can easily check the existing super to see if another is required. Bottom supering involves lifting one or more nearly-full supers off and adding the new super directly above the brood nest. It demands a lot more work, which is only warranted if supering has been delayed and combs in the top super have been completely capped over.

It is almost impossible to state how often or how many to super a hive, as honey flows vary from year to year and region to region. A general rule is to add enough supers to last until the next planned visit. This may be one, two or even more supers depending on the flow. In a good honey flow strong hives can fill a super in one to two weeks and even in two days but this is rare. Depending on the flow you may need up to four of five supers above the brood chamber. In a rare, once in a life time situation you may need to take a ladder to put on box number six and seven.

If in doubt about how many supers to put on, be generous as the bees can not fill supers that are still in the storage shed. The hives will not suffer from having too much room during the honey flow. Some trials suggest that no harm is done if supers are added earlier and all at once, and that total crop yield is likely to be heavier if the bees always have a large amount of space available. Shortage of space on the other hand is an inhibiting factor. All that happens if the honey flow stops before the supers are filled is that you may need to rearrange some frames to get full boxes of honey.

For the smaller beekeeper remember the general rule - is that the bees should never be using all the comb available to them. As soon as they get to this stage another super must be out on the hive. Keep in mind that the aim is to draw the bees from the brood chamber into the super fairly quickly.

If only foundation frames are available the bees will often NOT go quickly through a queen excluder to get to a super of foundation. This is remedied by putting the super on without the queen excluder. (Simply place the excluder under the hive mat/inner cover). At the next inspection the bees should be established in the new super and drawing out the wax into comb. The queen can then be found and if she is in the super replace back down into the brood chamber and the excluder put back into place above the brood chamber and beneath the super. After the first year the beginner should have some drawn comb and be able to mix this with foundation in the supers. The drawn comb should be placed on the outside against the super walls and the foundation in the middle, where the heat from the brood chamber is the greatest. This arrangement encourages bees to enter the super and the warmth gives those pulling foundation considerable help.

Foundation is drawn out properly only on a good honey flow, so it is inadvisable to use it at other times unless you have no drawn out comb. Unless a honey flow is particularly good, supers of foundation should be "baited" when they are put on a hive. Pull out two partly capped honey frames from the top super and place them in the middle of the box of foundation, separate by a couple of new frames. Put two other frames of foundation down in the middle of the top super to make up the spacing. This stimulates the bees to move up more quickly to start drawing comb, and helps keep the momentum of the colony.

Whatever you do make sure that you keep records and you can compare the results over several years of different methods. Do not be deterred by Joe Bloggs 40 years experience. Often it is one year's experience repeated 40 times! - with no records kept apart from memory. Remember also that one or two successes or failures do not establish a principle, they may be due to factors other than the method of supering.

PJ Ferris

From the Colonies

Auckland Branch Members

A summary of our last Remit discussion and Dog Section meeting will be sent out to all that attended our recorded apologies.

Other than emergencies, the Branch Executive will handle business for the remainder of the season. Don't forget to keep in contact.

Secretary Jim

Canterbury Branch

Notice of Meeting

September Evening Meeting

Date: Tuesday, 29 September 1998

Time: 7.30pm sharp

Venue: Burnside Cricket Clubrooms, Burnside Park, Avonhead Road, Christchurch

Programme:

1. Discuss Field Day 98
2. General Business
3. Gust Speaker - John Smith from Pest Irradiation Control talking on pesticides and how they affect bees. All interested welcome.

Please Note: John Smith was going to speak to our August Meeting but is now booked for our September Meeting, so make the best of this opportunity to hear him speak.

Supper provided at $1.00 per person.

TW Corbett, Secretary

Camp Rangi

"Buzz" Weekend, Basic Beekeeping

The drive from Masterton to the camp was in itself an experience to remember, through the "Totara Reserve", finally arriving at the camp and seeing fourteen beehives set up in the well kept domain opposite, reminding us of why we were there.

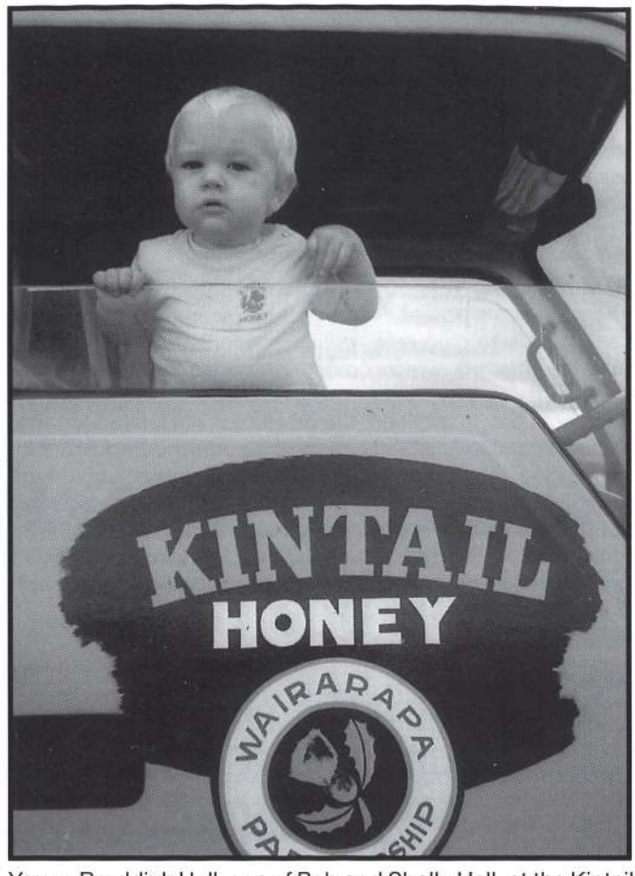
This was an extremely well organised weekend and those responsible did a wonderful job. I will name only three working organisers, P.J., Lottie, and Mrs Lindsay (Camp Mother).

The first talk was on the biology of the bee, the last on regulations and documentation. Between these two just about every facet of beekeeping was covered. It always amazes me how many angles any specific beekeeping subject can be looked at from, and the main value of these talks was, for me, the questions and discussion which followed. Also, swapping experiences with other participants. Sometimes management methods which work for one don't work for another. Beekeepers seem to be eclectic people, picking up tips from here and there until they find a system which works for them.

It is most satisfying to see the variety of equipment that can be pressed into service for everyday beekeeping, and the originality of some solutions to beekeeping problems.

I was pleasantly surprised at the number of people using 3/4 frame boxes and doing their backs a favour. It was also nice to see so many women apiarists present. All speakers aimed their talks at the hobbyist and small commercial apiarist and answered all queries patiently and well.

Neale Braithwaite



Young Braddick Hall, son of Bob and Shelly Hall, at the Kintail Honey Wairarapa Partnership loves to "drive" and go beekeeping.

Kintail's future looks good with Braddick ready to roll.

He will be helping Kintail Honey celebrate 50 years in business this year too.

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What is the Year 2000 problem?

The problem arises from a deceptively simple issue - computers may malfunction when they encounter a date involving the year 2000. Computer programmes and systems have tended to be written using only two digits to represent the year, for example, a programme would use 98 instead of 1998. For most applications in the twentieth century this is fine, however as the year 2000 approaches, systems now have to interpret 00. Many may read this as 1900, the year 0, or not understand it at all, causing problems in validation, display, calculation, storage and printing, or complete malfunction. The only effective countermeasure is the detection and removal of any problems in advance.

How big is the Year 2000 problem?

The problem is potentially huge. Any computer function that uses a date to calculate, initiate action, schedule or record may be affected, which could then cause severe problems for firms trying to process orders, dispatch invoices, calculate payments etc. In addition, the problem is not limited to dates in computer systems and programmes. Many computer chips embedded into equipment have dates hard wired into them if they perform date related functions. Potentially the problem could effect inventory and production control equipment, lifts, automatic locking systems, safes, cars, VCRs and other home appliances, banking systems, navigation systems and ticket booking systems.

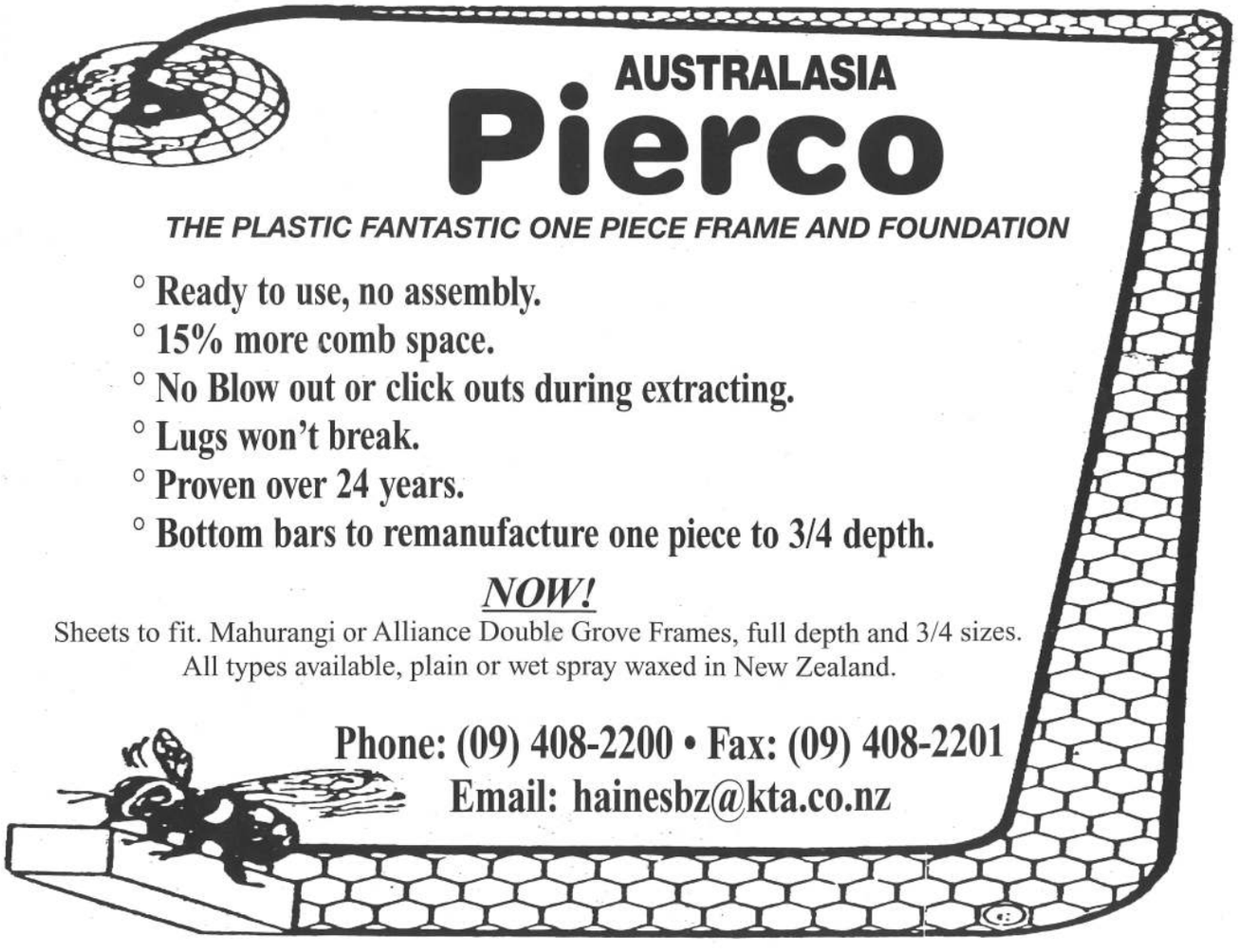
What should I do about it?

Clearly it depends upon how big your business is and how dependent it is upon computer technology. But it goes further than that, for example, if your business depends upon supplies from one particular source, is that source dependent upon computer technology? What contracts do you have to ensure continued supply? There are a number of such potential problems.

The following 10 questions were produced by the Y2K Committee, a group of organisations brought together by ITANZ and the Ministry of Commerce to raise awareness of the Year 2000 problem. By answering the questions you will be able to judge how prepared your business is and be able to take action if necessary.

10 questions for every Director and CEO to ask

1. Do we have complete inventories of our information systems and anything else which might contain computer chips?
2. What is the extent of our Year 2000 problem and the likely impact on our business?
3. Do we have a programme in place for raising awareness about the problem?
4. What steps have we taken to ensure that the Year 2000 problem will not arise in any new systems we introduce?
5. What is our risk from the Year 2000 problem of the other organisation and infrastructures on which we depend?
6. What is our risk from the impact of our Year 2000 problem on them?
7. Do we have contingency plans that cover our own and other's failures to fix the problem?
8. Do we understand our legal position under our contracts with our suppliers and customers?
9. When did or will the Year 2000 problem first strike us?
10. Have we drawn up a programme of remedial work which



reflects our business priorities and does it have enough funds, time and other resources?

Further information

The June/July 1998 edition of Business Development News featured the Y2K problem in detail and useful articles on the responsibility of directors and some additional questions to ask are contained on pages 4 and 5.

Copies of Business Development News can be sent to anybody making enquiries. Alternatively these two articles are repeated further on.

Finally the Y2K problem is widely known about. Your equipment supplies, accountants and lawyers should all be able to provide professional assistance.

Some further questions to ask about Year 2000 compliance.

1. Have we assessed all our information systems' exposure to the Year 2000 problem including preparation of a complete inventory of all hardware, software, systems and programme documentation?
2. Have we checked all our processes that may rely on embedded computer chips for their compliance with the Year 2000 date?
3. Do we know what possible impacts there might be on our business if our support technology fails?
4. What steps have we taken to fix and test our systems where Year 2000 problems have been discovered? Have these been documented to ensure the problem will not be reintroduced by new systems?
5. Have we set aside adequate funding, other resources and approval processes to deal with problems?
6. Have we undertaken business continuity planning for our key business areas in the event of our own or other's failure to fix the problem in time? Do we plan to test our business continuity measures?
7. Do we have contingency plans ready for our important remedial tasks in case any of them fails?
8. Do we have a programme to evaluate the Year 2000 progress of the businesses, suppliers, vendors and customers on who we depend? Have we assessed our Year 2000 risk as a result of our position in the value chain and the flows of money, information, goods and services between our organisation and others?
9. Have our infrastructure suppliers - telecommunications, power, water and sewage, transport, banking etc - been contacted to ensure their services will continue to be supplied and have we assessed our risk from their failing to supply these services?
10. Do we understand our legal position under our contacts with our suppliers and customers? Are we ensuring that our customers and partners are aware that they may have a Year 2000 risk from us?
11. Have we examined the taxation liabilities and potential financial options relating to the Year 2000 programme?
12. Do we have a complete audit trail of all our Year 2000 actions and decisions?
13. Does everyone in our organisation understand the importance of our handling the Year 2000 problem properly?
14. If we have checked and tested our systems and products and they are fully compliant, are we using this as a competitive advantage when selling our products and services to prospective customers?

Thanks to the Hawke's Bay Business Development Board.

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A bee-line for Germany

New Zealand's clean, green, pest free reputation led to the export of 7.5 million Hawke's Bay and Bay of Plenty bees and their queen to Germany. The bees are about to finish their first season's work at various apiaries in Bavaria.

The two trial shipments of 500 1.5kg containers of package bees and queen were exported to Germany by James Ward of Kintail Honey in Takapau in association with Steve Weenik of Apiflora NZ in Tauranga. Ward says the success of the trial was due to a joint effort by MAF and Peter Vial at the NZTDB in Hamburg.

"There were various obstacles not least bureaucracy, import regulations, transport and communications and language barriers."

He says reports from the importer have been positive and he is confident the German beekeeper will be ordering more stock from Kintail, one of only three New Zealand live bee exporters.

"Germany is losing bees to a mite which is a recurring problem in other countries but not in New Zealand and the buyer was keen to replenish with pest free stock.

"We worked closely with our freight forwarder Air Transport World Freight and Korean Airlines and transhipped on Korean over Seoul. Bees are highly perishable and will die in an instant in the wrong temperature so correct packaging and temperature control is vital," says Ward.

Running 7500 hives between them, Kintail and Apiflora export about 14 tonnes of live bees each year primarily to Canada where apiarists suffer high stock loss over the cold winter months. The company also exports bees to Korea and Ward says while that market has dropped off, the signs are positive for a return next season.

While live bee export is a growth area for Kintail the company's prime business is producing and packing more than 400 tonnes of honey a year for both domestic and export markets.

Acknowledgement, Export News

For those who can dream, there is no such place as far away.

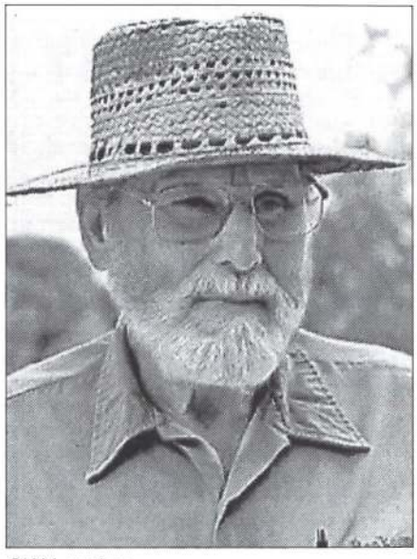
The buzz on mite-plagued bees

Chemicals, care save hives

For 300 years, Kentucky summers hummed with swarms of wild honey-bees — feisty, black German bees that escaped from colonial hives in the late 1600s.

Then, a decade ago, two persistent, deadly parasites, tiny blood-sucking mites, arrived in Kentucky as they spread across the country — virtually eliminating the wild swarms and devastating domestic hives,

That is a threat to agriculture because, besides producing honey, bees pollinate fruit and vegetable crops as they travel from blossom to blossom gathering nectar.



OW Landon

Beekeepers, by maintaining careful watch over their threatened hives and applying an effective pesticide, have fought the mites to a draw and stabilised their bee populations.

Now beekeepers and farmers have reason to hope that a new chemical ally, combined with new strains of resistant bees, will not only check the parasites in domestic hives but also eventually allow honey-bees to return to the wild.

"We came through last winter very well," said Tom Webster, a Kentucky State University entomologist and the state's leading bee authority. "It was almost like the good old days before the mites arrived."

There's a shadow across that bright future, though. Mites resistant to Apistan the pesticide beekeepers have come to rely on, have appeared in domestic hives in five states, including Pennsylvania and Michigan.

"We're very concerned," said Hachiro Shimanuki, research leader for the US Department of Agriculture's bee research laboratory in Beltsville, Maryland. "We can't say how fast it (the resistant mite) will spread across the country, but it will spread."

Shimanuki and his USDA researchers are completing work on a new chemical ally, a formic-acid gel, that will give beekeepers another option for controlling mites. It could be available commercially late this year.

Bee experts say formic-acid is a bit less effective than Apistan, but its use will slow development of resistant mites. "It's not the silver bullet, but it's something that would be very beneficial," said Purdue University entomologist Greg Hunt.

OW "Owl" Landon, a veteran beekeeper in Jeffersontown, welcomed the news of the new gel.

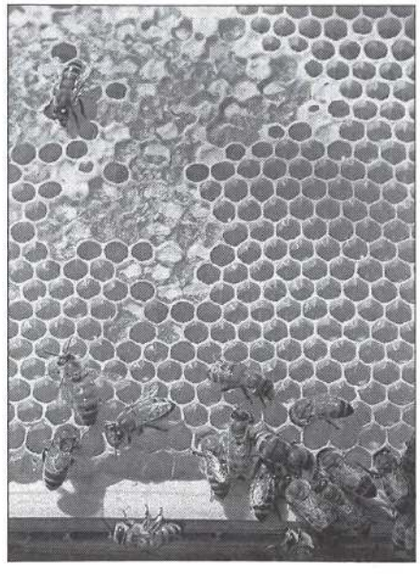
It's best value would be to give us an alternative," Landon said. "We must stop using one (pesticide) only."

Anything that keeps hived bees healthy is good news for farmers. That's because without wild bees to perform pollination, farmers have had to borrow or rent hives to do the job.

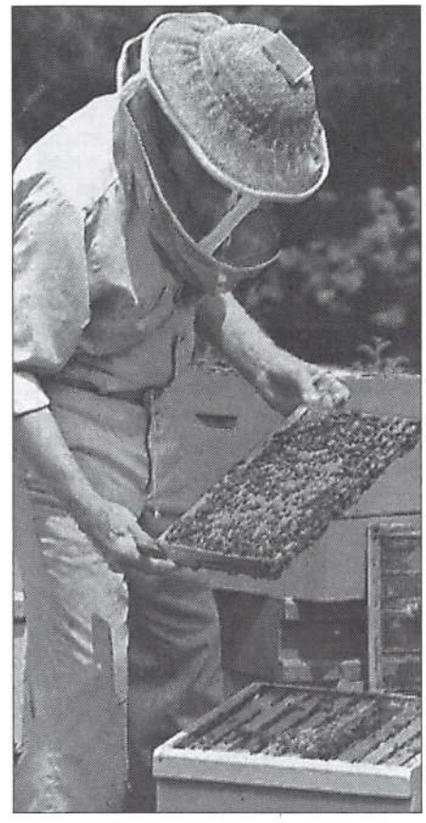
"I've received a lot of contacts from fruit and vegetable growers about getting bees for pollination, something I didn't get when I got here in 1987," said Webster, at Kentucky State. "My counterparts in the UK, who work with fruit growers, see it too."

Entomologists couldn't put a number on the loss in crop yields or farm revenues.

There are two mites that infest the bees.



Honey glistened on a comb in a hive of Middletown, Kentucky, beekeeper Ulyssus Key. Kentucky's wild bees were nearly wiped out and domestic hives devastated by parasitic mites that kill bees.



Jeffersontown beekeeper OW "Owl" Landon inspects his hives. He welcomed news of a gel that fights mites.

A tiny tracheal mite takes up residence inside the bee's windpipe and slowly suffocates it. The larger Varroa mite lives in the bee's fur and bores into its skin.

Weakened swarms are susceptible to disease, bad weather and healthy neighbour bees, which raid their hives for honey, picking up the mites themselves in the process.

Treating the hives with menthol controls the tracheal mites. Hanging plastic strips treated with Apistan (the chemical fluvalinate) kills most of the Varroa mites.

Neither is 100 percent effective, but they're good enough to control the infestation as long as beekeepers are vigilant.

Middletown beekeeper Ulyssus Key calculates he now loses just two percent of his bees to the mites, mainly because he spends a lot more time with his hives.

"We used to lose more bees when we didn't have the mites; we're with them all the time now," Key Said. "Before, we'd maybe go out in March some time to see if all the queens were laying; today we're in with our bees every week."

The mites aren't eliminated, though, just controlled, and if the resistant strain takes hold all that extra care might not help.

That's where the formic-acid gel comes in. If it works, beekeepers will be able to alternate its use with Apistan to delay the development of the resistant mites.

European and Canadian beekeepers have been using formic-acid for some time, but not in a gel form: They hang slabs of fibre board soaked in the acid in their hives. The vapours kill the mites.

That is effective against both strains of mites, but it's dangerous. The acid can cause nasty burns to skin and eyes and is hazardous to breathe. And it can be tricky to use. If the vapours get too strong, the bees react.

The gel should take care of those problems.

"It will probably be sold in packets, pre-mixed," Webster said. "The beekeeper won't have to do very much, just open it up and put it in the hive."

Even if the combination of chemicals is effective, it won't eliminate the mites completely, the experts say, and beekeepers will be dependent on the continued use of the controls.

The best hope for restoring the wild bee population lies in the development of mite-resistant bees. Bee strains that are resistant to the tracheal mites are already available, Hunt said.

Webster is beginning a new study to find out whether bees living in the wild in Kentucky have developed a resistance to both strains of mites or simply haven't been infested.

"We've gathered reports of about 20 hives around Kentucky that have survived without mite treatments," Webster said. "We hope that some fraction of these bees do have mites on them."

Between artificial breeding programmes and natural selection, bees eventually will develop enough resistance to survive without treatment, though their populations may rise and fall with the levels of infestation, Webster said.

"We will see, eventually bees that are going to repopulate the hollow trees and other choice swarming spots across Kentucky," Webster said. "We'll start to see this beginning in about five years; nature will be humming, but humming at a low volume, in five years."

Acknowledgement,
The Courier-Journal

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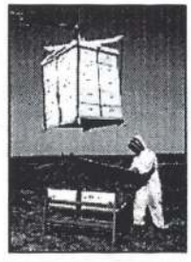

- The time saved in removing the bees from the honey combs and conveying the honey stacks to the honey extraction is 4:1 in favor of the rig.
- The rig is easily conveyed with the beehives by using a fork-lift or crane.

A professional beekeeper can realize great savings in daily labor costs as a larger harvest resulting from a stronger beehive and the treatments against setlement. Profits will increase by $400 for every four beehives.

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Beekeepers and the beehive;

How the law affects the beekeeping industry

Introduction

The New Zealand beekeeping industry has been regulated since 1906. The use of empowering acts in recent years means the nature of the legislative documents affecting our industry has changed. This article provides a frame work for beekeepers to better understand the parliamentary processes that impact on our industry.

History of Beekeeping Legislation

The Apiaries Act 1906 was a monumental piece of legislation for the beekeeping industry. It came about during the transition period between box hives and the moveable frame hives, and the transition from beekeeping as a sideline to farming to beekeeping as a substantial occupation in its own right.

The primary focus of the Apiaries Act 1906 was to provide a means of disease control. It required the destruction of colonies of bees found to have American Foulbrood. More importantly, it compelled bees to be kept in moveable frame hives so the brood could be inspected.

The Apiaries Act 1906 was amended a number of times in the next two decades, and was rewritten completely to form the Apiaries Act 1927. Again, multiple amendments added and changed provisions before the next major rewrite created the Apiaries Act 1969.

Other important legislation provided the legislative framework for the industry's marketing activities. The Honey Marketing Authority Regulations of 1953 were created under the Primary Products Act 1953. Through the next 30 years, the Seals Levy money was collected under the authority. The Honey Marketing Authority Regulations 1975 marked the change to a 'hive numbers' based levying system initially for the use of the HMA. With the passage of the Hive Levy Act 1978 the method of levying on a declaration of hive numbers was used to fund the National Beekeepers' Association activities.

The early 1990s heralded the use of the legislative process that has necessitated the changes that have involved and to some extent confused beekeepers. Rather than creating specific acts (such as the Apiaries Act) and using regulations, the New Zealand parliamentary process has moved to the use of 'enabling' or 'umbrella' legislation. The act, then, becomes a series of general statements that can be applied by a variety of industries in a number of different ways. The Commodity Levies Act and the Biosecurity Act are the two acts that have had most impact on the beekeeping industry.

Terminology of the Legislative 'Instruments'

An Act of Parliament begins life as a lowly **bill**. The ones most likely to affect beekeeping are generally sponsored by a Minister on behalf of the government. A bill will generally, after being introduced to the House, be sent to a **Select Committee**. The bills likely to be important to beekeeping will tend to go to the Primary Products Select Committee.

Select committees call for written submissions from interested parties, and may allow for the hearing of evidence. The beekeeping industry has made some significant contributions to the shaping of the acts that affect it through this stage of the legislative process.

After refinement by the select committee the bill is reported back to the House. After a series of further 'readings' (actually, debates) by the House, the bill is then voted upon. If passed it becomes an **act** (or **statute**) of Parliament after being given the Royal Assent by the Governor-General.

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The Governor-General also has the ability to make statutory **regulations**, the machinery provisions necessary for the administration of an act - such matters as forms, fees and procedural requirements. The authority to create the regulations are contained in the act itself. The regulations are made by Order in Council. That is, by the Governor-General 'acting by and with the advice and consent of the Executive Council' (the Prime Minister and other senior Ministers). Orders in Council, then, are a form of proclamation, or announcement. Such orders are not voted upon by the entire House, but generally are provided to the Governor-General to sign after being approved by the cabinet of the government currently in office.

The Change to Empowering Acts

The beekeeping industry went through the 1980s primarily regulated by the Apiaries Act 1969 (disease control, feeding of drugs, restricted zones, registration of apiaries) and the Hive Levy Act 1978 (compulsory levy to fund the NBA).

The passage of the Commodity Levies Act 1990 spelled the end for the Hive Levy Act. Rather than a specific piece of legislation with specific requirements, the Commodity Levies Act (and its various amendments) provided the ability to create a number of compulsory levies for a variety of industries.

After consultation and discussion, the industry ultimately applied for and received an Order in Council - the Commodity Levies (Bee Products) Order 1996. It is this order that provides the details of the levy the NBA currently operates.

Similarly, the Biosecurity Act 1993 (and its various amendments) will soon 'sunset' most of the clauses of the Apiaries Act 1969. The significant feature, the one of such importance to the industry, of disease control regulation will cease to exist on 30 September - about two weeks after you get this magazine!

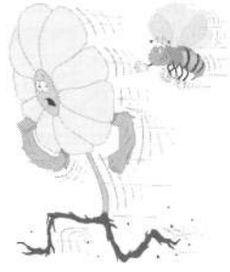
The work the industry has done under the general heading of 'the Pest Management Strategy' has all been carried out in anticipation of this loss. The Order in Council sought by the Disease Control Committee (now known as the PMS Review Committee) will be the enabling order that will allow for a disease control programme with the backing of regulatory authority.

The Current Situation

While the industry no longer has specific acts of Parliament detailing the matters of regulation, regulation still exists. The use of the enabling acts has allowed the beekeeping industry to maintain most services considered essential to the industry. It has not been without some degree of expense, effort and concern, but the industry retains the aspects of regulation considered necessary for orderly development and the maintenance of a healthy industry.

The various Orders in Council that now describe the specifics of regulation are designed to expire at regular intervals - they don't have the 'long life' of an act of Parliament. This will provide opportunity for change and improvement, but will be an on-going expense to the industry for which we must plan and anticipate.

Nick Wallingford



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The Laboratory will be closed between the following dates:
October 9th-16th.

Honey

Har, our grandfather, kept bees. He had three or four hives sheltering under the plum tree on the east wall of the dairy, and sometimes another hive or two elsewhere in the garden. They were palatial dwellings for bees with all mod cons - upstairs and downstairs, landing strips, ventilators, and removable tops so that they could be coddled - or robbed. Brood frames and sections for honey were hung inside them, with thin sheets of wax in the middle to start the bees off with a suggestion of what was required.

Our bees seemed to be fairly tolerant of human presence, though we did get stung now and then.

On a summer's day the sky above the garden seemed crisscrossed with black lines, which were the bees coming and going. It was no wonder that our plum tree was always well fertilised, and the garden was something of a no-go area for us children, though Har wandered in it fearlessly enough. "They can smell when ye're feard o them," said Har. "If ye're no feart they'll no tich ye. An dinnae wave yer airms at them if they come bizzin roond yer heid, or ye'll hae a dizzen o them at ye instead o ain." It seemed to work, for him.

In the summer, if a hive got overpopulated, the bees would swarm. You could usually tell when swarming was imminent; there would be a crowd of bees about the hive entrance, examining the state of the weather. Then one of us would be detailed to keep a watch on them. If the weather stayed fine then quite suddenly, as the queen emerged, the bees would come pouring out of the hive like spectators after a football match or children let out of school. Gradually they would form a sort of loose cloud, hovering about the garden as if uncertain where to go. Usually they would settle on a nearby tree, while the reconnaissance party looked for a new home. If not caught and rehoused then, they would take off again, and travelling like a low cloud might go quite a long way to the site selected by the scouts. But Har nearly always managed to forestall them. If he was expecting a swarm - and he always knew because the bees were a bit excitable for a few days before - he would try to arrange to be working near home, while we kept watch on the hive.

I remember one swarm that came tumbling out of the hive when I was on sentry duty. In a minute the sky was black with bees. I was a little bit frightened, but Har had told us, "bees in a swarm are no gaun tae sting, they're owre excited and happy". Gradually the cloud thinned, and I could see that they were settling on a low branch of the rowan tree that grew at the side of the garden. Soon they were hanging on the branch like a brown football, but buzzing with life. I couldn't understand how, with the weight of bees, they all managed to hang on. Some of them did fall off, but they just buzzed round for a bit and then resettled. I thought they would be there for a while, so I went to fetch Har.

Har came out of the house wearing a wide-brimmed hat and a green veil over his head, but otherwise unprotected. He brought with him his bee smoker, a miniature bellows with a metal funnel attached. Into this funnel he put an oily rag, and after a little difficulty in getting it smouldering he puffed out a few experiment rings of smoke. Then he asked mum for a white sheet, which he folded lengthwise, and laid along the path under the tree.

"Whit for is the sheet?" I asked, but all he said was, "Ye'll see."

Then he gave the branch a gentle shake and the mass of bees fell down onto the sheet. They took it remarkably calmly. Some buzzing around, but Har's smoker took the fight out of them. With gentle puffs of smoke he shepherded them along the sheet towards a skep which he had positioned a yard or so away. I was amazed at how easily he got them to do what he

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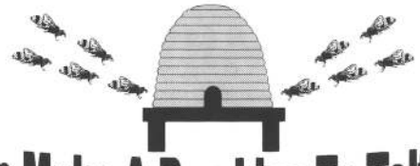

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wanted. They stretched out in a stream along the sheet like a street of mill-hands on the way to the mill.
"Ye see that ane," he said, pointing to a bee bigger than the others. "She's the queen.
Noo, if I didnae want this swarm ah wid jist nab her. Bees'll no swarm wantin a queen."
"Weel, whit wid they dae then?" I asked.
"Och, they'd jist gang back tae thir auld hive," he said.
With the help of the smoker he encouraged them along the sheet.
"When the queen gaes in they'll aw gae in," said Har. And in a little while he had persuaded her into the skep, and the others followed, just like the Pied Piper and the children of Hamelin.
The next job was to get them housed in a proper hive. I wasn't there when Har did that, so I didn't see how it was done, but I knew that the main thing was to make sure the queen was in the hive, and content to remain there. Then her followers would all join her and settle down, to breed more bees and collect more honey.
In the autumn, before the bees were happed up for the winter, there occurred the rather sad ritual of throwing out the drones. All summer they had been tolerated, perhaps even pampered, within the hive, just to ensure that the young queen on her maiden flight would be properly mated. They did no work, but had their share of honey. But now their role was played out, and the industrious workers would tolerate them no longer. On the landing board of the hive I would see two or three workers dragging out a larger bee, despite his struggles and protests. They bit his wings so that he could no longer fly and pitched him over the edge into the flower border. Once I got a nasty shock to find a bee crawling up my leg. But Har just laughed.
"It's jist a drone," he said. "They cannae sting."
"They're a bit like yersel," he added, after a minute's thought. "They dae nae work, bit they're aye ready tae eat." I thought that was a bit unkind.
There came a very sad time when the bees caught the dreaded Isle of Wight disease. It is caused, I believe, by a mite which infests the bees, clogging up their breathing tubes. The housekeeping bees were kept busy throwing out the dead, and many sick bees crawled out of the hive to die. There was no remedy. The law said that infected colonies had to be destroyed, So Har, no doubt with a very sad heart, killed off all his bees. He put something inside each hive, then closed the door. There was a loud hum which quickly died away and then silence. Afterwards each hive was dismantled, scrubbed, and thoroughly disinfected. Soon Har had bees again. He said they were Italian bees, bigger and better tempered than British bees, but not so hard working.
Of course, Har didn't keep bees just for amusement, though I am sure he did enjoy exercising his expertise. I well remember him assuring two lady visitors that the bees were friendly creatures, while a cloud of bees buzzed round him, and he impatiently brushed off his arm a bee that was testifying against him. All this bee welfare work was undertaken so that we could steal their honey. With puffs of the smoker to keep them subdued, Har would take off the roof of the hive and lift out the honey combs, shaking off reluctant bees that clung to them. Then in the kitchen the combs were inspected. The best one might be sent up to Cloan, to 'the big house', others went to Gibson's or Christie's, the local grocers, and some Har kept for ourselves. Incomplete sections and parts of the brood combs which the bees had mistakenly filled with honey were 'separated' and the honey stored in jam jars. The wax wasn't wasted either. It was melted down to be used to polish furniture.
It was while this work was going on that I was stung by a dead wasp. Wasps were something of a nuisance during the honey harvest, drawn into the house by the sweet smell. One which had been swatted lay on the table unnoticed, and while helping with the jam jars I inadvertently laid my hand on it, squeezing out the sting into the edge of my palm. It was the worst sting I ever had. My hand swelled up, very white round the sting, and the pain was - well, it was pretty bad, but I got little sympathy.
"Ye should look whit ye're daein," I was told. "Ye're no deid yet."
It wasn't only at honey harvest that wasps were a nuisance. They would hover round the door of a hive and try to evade the doorkeepers and dive in. I thought it was suicidal. I have seen a wasp locked in combat with two or three sentinel bees, who were able to call for reinforcements to help dispose of the would-be intruder.
Har usually put back in the hive one or two inferior or partly-filled combs. In exchange for the rest mum made a syrup (or was it candy) from melted sugar, to see them through the winter. An extra blanket went over the frames in the top of the hive, and the sliding door was partly shut to keep out the draughts.
"There, they'll be snug an warm enough noo," said Har.

Thanks to Alex Waddell

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It is easy to feed, is non sticky, and user friendly. Being shaped into squares, each feed amount can be accurately assessed for each hive.

The BLD patties are moulded into flat semisoft biscuits approximately 100mm square and 10mm thick and are designed to fit between the broodnest and the hive. The product is not designed to be a complete pollen substitute, but as a supplementary source of feed to be used when deficiencies of natural protein sources are in evidence.

BLD patties contain balanced levels of protein and amino acids as well as sugars to enhance palatability and have been found to greatly improve hive strength and yield where natural pollen deficiencies occur.

The product is specifically designed to create optimum conditions for vigorous bee breeding to take place, as well as to condition bees in times of inadequate natural feed sources, and to build up strength and numbers in anticipation of a heavy flow or a pollination assignment.

Numerous field trials have been conducted in Australia and are now being conducted in New Zealand using BLD products, with excellent results. A recent scientifically controlled trial was carried out in NSW on a heavy iron bark honey. Iron Bark, (Eucalyptus sideraphoida), is notably deficient in pollen production as are many of Australia's major and most sought after nectar sources. Over a six week honey flow BLD BEEFEED was fed at the rate of 300gms per week amounting to a total of 1.8kg per hive over the foraging period. The same number of hives foraging in identical conditions was not fed, causing this group to rely solely on naturally occurring sources of feed.

The colonies fed on BLD BEEFEED experienced an average weight gain of 18.9kg per hive over those not subject to feeding, representing an increase in yield of 38.9%.

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Those who went to Conference this year at Waitangi probably saw these BLD high protein patties on display on one of the trade stands, and met the manufacturers representative and may have been lucky enough to have been given a free sample from him.

Supplies of this BLD High Protein Patties is now available from Mr Malcolm Haines, PO Box 284, Kaitaia, Phone: (09) 408-2200, Fax: (09) 408-2201 or Email: hainesbz@ktc.co.nz

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New Zealand Queen Producers Association

At the New Zealand Queen Producers AGM in Waitangi, exciting changes took place within our organisation. There will no longer be long drawn out uninteresting Conference meetings. Instead we have organised three guest speakers for our next AGM, speaking on subjects such as: How to avoid inbreeding in your operation; What is involved in artificial insemination; and breeder selection.

We hope to produce, probably, two or three newsletters a year of interesting queen breeding articles.

Membership is a minimal $10.00.

Already the membership has increased amazingly and includes beekeepers who do not raise queens for commercial sale, but for their own use.

The Association is being revamped into a more suitable group for today's needs. Formal AGM's at Conference are intended to be very short, with the time instead, allocated to interesting and stimulating quest speakers. Non members will be charged an appropriate door fee, which will assist in paying the speakers a gratuity.

Membership is available by sending $10 to the Secretary, Mary-Anne Thomason, C/- Kintail Honey, 15 Sydney Terrace, Takapau, Central Hawke's Bay 4176. Email: kintail_honey@xtra.co.nz. Telephone: (06) 855-8083. Fax: (06) 855-8137.

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Orange Honey Ham

1 ham
whole cloves
1 tbsp grated orange peel
1 cup orange juice
1 cup honey

Place ham, fat side up, in uncovered roaster. Bake in slow oven 300°F 25-30 mins per pound. 45 mins before ham is done remove rind and pour off most of fat in pan. Score the surface in diagonal lines with a sharp knife. Decorate with whole cloves. Blend the grated peel, orange juice and honey. Spread mixture over surface of ham. Return to oven and baste frequently with mixture in pan. Remove from oven when ham is glazed and brown.

Orange Honeyade

2 cups orange juice
½ cup lemon juice
½ cup honey
1 cup water

Combine ingredients and stir well to dissolve honey. Pour over cracked ice in tall glasses. Garnish with orange slices, mint sprigs and berries or cherries.

Cabbage Salad with Sour Cream Dressing

1 cup chilled sour cream
⅓ cup vinegar
½ cup honey
1 tsp salt
¼ tsp paprika
¼ tsp celery salt
½ tsp salt
3 cups finely shredded cabbage

Beat cream until thick. Add vinegar, honey and salt slowly. Beat again for 3-4 mins. Add paprika, celery salt and salt to cabbage. Add sour cream dressing. Mix lightly.

Honey Celery Seed Dressing (Delicious on fruit or vegetable salads)

1 tsp dry mustard
1 tsp salt
½ tsp paprika
½ cup honey
1 cup salad oil
¼ cup vinegar
1 tsp grated onion
1 tbsp celery seed

Mix dry ingredients together. Add honey and blend well. Add oil and vinegar alternately, beating well with rotary egg beater after each addition. Add onion and celery seeds. *Yield: About 10 cups dressing.*

Honey Ginger Cake

2½ cups sifted flour
2 tsps soda
1 tsp salt
1 tsp ground ginger
1 tsp ground cinnamon
½ cup shortening
½ cup brown sugar, firmly packed
1 egg, unbeaten
1 cup honey
1 cup sour milk or buttermilk

Sift flour once, measure, add soda, salt and spices and sift together three times. Cream shortening thoroughly, add sugar gradually, and cream together until light and fluffy. Add egg and beat very thoroughly. Add honey and blend. Add flour, alternately with sour milk, a small amount at a time, beating after each addition until smooth. Bake in 2 well greased 9-inch layer pans in moderate over 350°F for 45 mins or until done.

Remarks: Honey Ginger Cake may be baked in paper-lined cupcake pans in moderate oven 350°F for 35 mins, or until done. Delicious served plain, or topped with whipped cream and chopped walnuts.

Honey Raisin Bars

1⅓ cups sifted flour
½ tsp salt
1 tsp baking powder
3 eggs
1 cup honey
1 cup broken nuts
1 cup raisins, chopped

Mix and sift dry ingredients. Beat eggs well. Add nut meats and raisins. Add sifted dry ingredients gradually. Mix lightly, just to combine ingredients. Spread mixture in well-greased pan. Bake in moderate oven 350°F for 35-40 mins. When slightly cool cut into bars. *Yield: 4 dozen bars.*

Honey Oatmeal Cookies

½ cup shortening
1 cup honey
1 egg, unbeaten
1½ cups sifted flour
½ tsp soda
½ tsp salt
1⅓ cups oatmeal
4 tbsps sour milk
1 cup raisins
½ cup chopped peanuts

Cream shortening. Add the honey and blend. Stir in the egg. Sift together dry ingredients and add the oatmeal to this. Add dry ingredients alternately with milk to the shortening and honey mixture. Stir in nuts and raisins. Drop by spoonfuls on a greased pan or baking sheet. Bake in moderate oven 350°F 15 mins. *Yield: 3 dozen cookies.*

Honey Scotch

½ cup water
2 cups sugar
½ cup honey

Heat water and sugar stirring until sugar is dissolved. Add honey and cook, stirring gently just enough to prevent scorching. Cook to the hard crack stage. Remove cooking utensil from heat and pour candy into a buttered pan. When candy begins to set, cut into strips 1-inch wide. Roll into cylinders. Cut with scissors into pieces 1-inch long. *Yield: 500gms*

Honey Pecan Bavarian

1 package strawberry flavoured gelatine
1½ cups hot water
¼ tsp salt
2 tsps lemon juice
⅓ cup honey
½ cup light cream
½ cup finely-chopped pecans

Dissolve gelatin in hot water. Add salt, lemon juice and honey. Chill. When slightly thickened, place container in bowl of ice and water and whip with rotary beater until fluffy and thick like whipped cream. Fold in cream and nuts. Turn into mould. Chill until firm. Unmould. Yield: *6-8 servings.*

For some, nature is much more than just a buzzword

This is a connection to nature, and it's being lost'

Harold Gatlin, Beekeeper

We drove down a sunny country road, then through the gate of a hobby farm. There was an ostrich pen. The huge birds were loping on the hardening mud, long necks twisting to follow the car, brown eyes watching.

Then down a hill to a small hollow, between the fields of unplanted corn and soybean, a stand of trees, and wild growth, hedgerow and pasture and a thin creek. Wildflowers already were blooming — yellow and blue bits of colour against the countryside already turning from brown to green.

The hives were down there. Six of them. They were carefully set in the windbreak made by the small hills and the trees.

And the bees were working. Harold Gatlin's bees.

"It's ideal here for them," said Gatlin, a gentle man, quiet and reserved, an accountant for a south suburban meat packing firm who tired of subdivision living and moved out to a country house near Peotone. After scouting around, he found the right place and a neighbour let him place his hives.

He is using the hives as a family activity in which all can do their part, to teach his children about nature — and to pull down a few hundred pounds of delicious and fresh unadulterated honey each year from a hobby that has turned into a love.

There is no taste like it. The stuff you may buy in the stores and the cheap foreign imports whipped and mixed and sometimes diluted with corn syrup are not the stuff Harold Gatlin and his family eat.

"Most people think of nature as if it's a programme on public television," he said. "And that the meat in the grocery stores, the produce, somehow just happens by magic. They don't have an understanding of nature."

"I didn't want my children to miss it. I wanted them to understand the connections. I didn't want them to lose that."

Outside the car, he got his equipment ready. His wife, Susan, and April, his 15 year old daughter, helped him arrange things in the grass. They laid out the hard hats and veils, gloves, and the hand-held smoker.

With our equipment on, we approached the hives. I got to see something special:

A man who was precise in his work, who did everything just so, and for a purpose, training his children in the right and wrong of things; and the inside of the beehives, the combs and how they were set, the Italian honey-bees packed on the frames, thousands of them, looking up at us, brown bees humming, the incredibly vital insects that pollinate crops and improve yields of produce and flowers.

There were the worker bees speckled with yellow pollen, which along with nectar they turn into honey. Others were forming honeycombs and building egg chambers. A few buzzed around the mesh protecting my face.

To me, it looked like thousands of bees working on a brown, muddy-like substance on each frame. But to Harold, there were subtle differences. Yellow pollen and orange pollen, from flowers as many as two miles apart, egg chambers and honey chambers and bumps in the muddy stuff that would hatch and become useless drones. He scraped those bumps with a knife.

"The drones are just honey eaters," he said as he scraped. "At the end of the year, the workers just kick them out of the hive. You see a pile of them outside on the ground."

I can't do justice to harold Gatlin's bee knowledge in a few hundred words. He's spent years watching and learning, reading and asking questions of other hobbyists in the Cook-DuPage Beekeeping Association. His comb honey — a cut circle of juicy natural honey naturally sandwiched between layers of beeswax — won second place in the Illinois State Fair last year.

What concerns him, though, is that he's 46 — and at those beekeeper meetings, he's the kid. The old ways are being lost to time and Nintendo games. The Boy Scouts dropped their beekeeping merit badge in 1995 because of a lack of interest. Across the country, beekeeping is on the decline.

In the metropolitan area, for example, there were 1130 beehives registered in Cook County in 1982. By 1992, there were about 600.

"I'm worried that this isn't being passed down to the next generation," Gatlin said. "That's what concerns all of us. This is a connection to nature, and it's being lost."

He's right. But at least for April and her two brothers, and Harold and Susan Gatlin, nature isn't a public television documentary.

It isn't an abstract idea to be publicised by people who don't understand it, including the folks who hug the scrub trees in the forest preserves and think they're doing a service to the environment or the anti-hunters who don't understand that sportsmen and sportswomen are the ones who help preserve the habitat for wild things.

To the Gatlins, nature isn't an abstract. Instead, it's real. In the bees in those hives in the windbreak.

Acknowledgement Chicago Tribune

Thanks to David Penrose.

Handy hint

Galvanized iron

Tired of trying to cut flat iron for hive lids and division boards etc. with a pair of tin snips or a jig saw. Buy yourself a tungsten tipped cutter, the kind that are supposed to be for cutting Hardie Plank and other fibrous cement products. Sure they're not all that much use for their intended job, but they are brilliant at cutting flat iron. Simply stick a straight edge onto the tin and then score along the same line about four times, then fold the tin away from the line (so that the line is on the outside of the bend) and if you have a reasonably high tensile bit of tin it will snap cleanly with a beautiful straight line and no sprags or sharp edges. If the tin is a softer grade you may have to wiggle it back and forwards a few times. Corrugated iron can be cut the same way, just run the cutter freehand down the bottom of the trough a few times and fold it over, it works a treat, the cutters are under fifteen dollars in Mitre 10. To cut corrugated iron crossways when you don't need a perfect edge just nick it with your tin snips, stick your big foot on it and heave upon the end piece, it comes out wavy but always remarkably square. And if you need to sharpen the cutter get a diamond hone from any woodworking supplier, they are also brilliant for getting a razor sharp edge on your knives.

Peter Berry

SPRING QUEENS

We are now planning our queen rearing for the 1998/1999 season

Order early to avoid delays.

Phone: Chris (03) 388-9225
after 8pm weekdays

IMPORTANT DATES FOR 1998

BRANCHES SEND YOUR MEETING DATES IN FOR 1998. NO CHARGE.

MAGAZINE Copy/advertising deadline 1st of month. EXCEPT for DECEMBER issue. DEADLINE 25 NOVEMBER

COMING EVENTS...

EXECUTIVE MEETING DATES

7th-9th	December	DUNEDIN
1st-3rd	March 1999	NELSON
1999	Conference	ASHBURTON
2000	Conference	GISBORNE

—DETAILS AS SOON AS AVAILABLE—

★ ★ ★ BRANCHES... *PUT YOUR MEETING DATE IN HERE...* FREE ★ ★ ★

NZ QUEEN PRODUCERS ASSN
Call: Mary-Anne (06) 855-8038

AUCKLAND BRANCH
Call: Jim (09) 238-7464

AUCKLAND BEEKEEPERS CLUB INC
Editor: Colin Bell
Phone: (09) 818-4325

NORTH CANTERBURY CLUB
Meet the second Monday of every month March to November inclusive.
Contact Mrs Hobson
Phone: (03) 312-7587

SOUTH CANTERBURY BRANCH
Peter Lyttle
Phone: (03) 693-9189

CANTERBURY BRANCH
Meets the last Tuesday of every month. February to October.
Field Day November.
Contact: Trevor Corbett
Phone: (03) 314-6836

CHRISTCHURCH HOBBYIST CLUB
These are held on the first Saturday each month, August to May, except for January on which the second Saturday is applicable.
The site is at 681 Cashmere Road, commencing at 1.30pm.
Contact Peter Silcock
Phone: (03) 342-9415

DUNEDIN BEEKEEPERS CLUB
We meet on the first Saturday in the month September - April, (except January) at 1.30pm. The venue is at our Club hive in Roslyn, Dunedin.
Enquiries welcome to Club Secretary, Dorothy phone: (03) 488-4390.

FRANKLIN BEEKEEPERS CLUB
Meet second Sunday of each month at 10.00am for cuppa and discussion.
Secretary — Yvonne Hodges,
Box 309, Drury.
Phone: (09) 294-7015
All welcome — Ring for venue.

HAWKE'S BAY BRANCH
Meets on the second Monday of the month at 7.30pm.
Arataki Cottage, Havelock North.
Phone: Ron (06) 844-9493

MANAWATU BEEKEEPERS CLUB
Meets every 4th Thursday in the month at Newbury Hall, SH 3,
Palmerston North.
Contact Andrew McKinnon
Phone: (06) 323-4346

NELSON BRANCH
Phone: Michael
(03) 528-6010

NELSON BEEKEEPERS CLUB
Contact: Kevin
Phone: (03) 545-0122

OTAGO BRANCH
Phone: Mike (03) 448-7811

NORTH OTAGO BRANCH
Bryan O'Neil
Ph: (03) 431-1831

POVERTY BAY BRANCH
Contact Barry (06) 867-4591

SOUTHERN NORTH ISLAND BRANCH
Phone: (04) Frank 478-3367

SOUTHLAND BRANCH
Contact Don Stedman,
Ph/Fax: (03) 246-9777

TARANAKI AMATEUR BEEKEEPING CLUB
Phone: (06) 753-3320

WAIKATO BRANCH
Call Tony (07) 856-9625

WAIRARAPA HOBBYIST BEEKEEPERS CLUB
Meet 3rd Sunday each month (except January) at Kites Woolstore, Norfolk Road, Masterton at 1.30pm.
Convener Arnold Esler.
Ph: (06) 379-8648

WELLINGTON BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION
Meets every second Monday of the month (except January) in Johnsonville. All welcome.
Contact: Shauna Tate, 6 Martin Street, Porirua East.