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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

by Lin McKenzie

The actioning of last year's remits should be well under way now, I would like to address myself to two from the South Island that were referred to their originating branches.

Canterbury, in remit 7 suggested that "the apiary rating system be reviewed with a view to improvement where necessary" and noted that smaller sites, such as are common in Canterbury, attract a higher cost. In the notes to the remit they also question the date of Levy payment, asking whether the date of 20th February/30th March is the most appropriate for the beekeeper? The Remit was referred back to Canterbury for further input.

Addressing this last question first, I am sure it is not the best time of year for a beekeeper to have to find these moneys. The only problem I see with shifting this to, say August 31st is one of timing of cash flow. If we shift it forward the NBA will have a gap of approximately six months in income flow. How about moving it back? The NBA would gain six months and the flow of income from Levy payments would start in August rather than the following February. I suggest this would solve a lot of the current financial problems the NBA Executive is wrestling with but...

Moving on to the actual Levy system. I attended a meeting of the Canterbury branch last month where the suggestion was put forward that the "First Apiary" be charged at maybe \$500 (or was it \$800?) and the rest of the apiaries be charged at a lower rate commensurate with that increase. This would mean in effect a fee to become a beekeeper would be imposed (with access to our disease control system and marketing support) and that the minimal site charge would balance the difference in size of operations.

Now, obviously this is a simplistic suggestion but it certainly seemed to have merit as the basis of a fair solution, or so it seemed to the three Exec members at the meeting. We suggested the branch continues to discuss and work on the idea and I believe something can come from it. I can hear the questions from here. What about the 400 hive operation? Or the 40 hive operation for that matter? Needs some fine tuning doesn't it? Certainly it has a lot going for it as the basis of discussion. Let Canterbury be hearing from you.

I was somewhat nonplussed to see that the only thing to turn up from the meeting on the Email posting list was an attack

on me for a light-hearted remark regarding the PMS that I never made.

While talking of the PMS, I have a great concern that the current Levy system places the PMS at some risk. I am not of the opinion that evasion of the Levy by non-declaration is rife out there. However, if an apiary is not declared and a problem arises in that area then our PMS contractors are maybe starting from behind scratch.

There appear to be one or two anomalies in the register anyway and we do not need more. There is a suggestion that someone with some experience of electronic data-bases be commissioned to do an audit of the register to ascertain the reliability of the data. I hope to see this progress in the near future.

Code of Practice

Southland, in remit 11, suggested a committee should "formulate a national code of practice for the beekeeping industry, as a matter of urgency." Well, the committee appointed by the Exec is Southland Branch and I noted when attending their last branch meeting that they are getting on with it and asking for input via the "net".

So what the heck is a "Code of Practice" anyway? It certainly doesn't have much to do with not siting hives in the same paddock as your neighbour, that's a "Code of Ethics" and we have already been there.

It refers to the practises employed in producing, processing and handling our product. Such basic things as not placing full supers (or empty ones) on the ground, covering loads (particularly on dusty roads), controlling vermin in super storage sheds, good hygiene in your extracting facility, having a current Food Premises Licence and keeping to the terms of it. Sticking by the terms of your "Food Safety Programme" (You do have one don't you!).

In the great heap of stuff on my desk which all requires attention yesterday, I have, from MAF RA, two Policy Information Papers (PIP's) referring to the Animal Products Bill 1998. What, never heard of it? I would suggest you make it your business to alter that. Copies are available from Mrs Jackie Hill, Manager, MAF Information Bureau, Box 2526, Wellington. Phone: (04) 474-4100, fax: (04) 472-9071.

The point of all this is that in the "PIP" to do with Risk Management Programmes, on page 5, clause 6 states that "the Risk Management Programme may also take

into account any relevant industry code of practice". I believe the implication is that, if there is no code in place then we may very well find one could be written for us. So get your suggestions off to Southland, their contacts are on the inside front cover of this Journal and, as Carne is away for a month or two, Don Stedman is your man.

I commend Bruce for his effort.

DISCLAIMER:

The NZ BeeKeeper takes reasonable care and diligence in the publication of material but cannot accept liability for any losses arising.

Views expressed in articles published are essentially those of the contributor and do not necessarily reflect the views of the NBA Executive or the industry.

National Beekeepers' Association of New Zealand (Inc)

Notice is hereby given that the 1999 Annual General Meeting of the National Beekeepers' Association of New Zealand (Inc) and Conference of Branch Delegates will be held at the Hotel Ashburton, Racecourse Road Ashburton on Wednesday and Thursday 14 and 15 of July 1999 commencing at 9am on Wednesday, 14 July 1999.

Please note that the Special meeting to consider proposed Rule changes will be held on Thursday, 15 July at 8am, same venue.

Harry Brown
Executive Secretary

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Cover photo: Ashburton, 1999 Conference Venue.
Acknowledgement Ashburton District Tourism NZ.

The glue that binds

There has never been a better time, financially speaking, to be a beekeeper than at the present. If you produce a good crop then the chances are that you will be able to sell it and at a good price. If you produce a crop of rubbishy feed honey such as manuka, or one of the other unwanted darker reject honeys then the chances are that you will not only be able to sell it, but you'll get an even better price for it.

Think about that statement and remember just what it was like or ask someone that's been around a bit longer than you (it's not ancient history, ten or fifteen years should be plenty).

Any of the slightly more chronologically advanced beekeepers will be able to tell you the heartbreak of producing honey that nobody wanted to buy and if you go back a few more years the frustration of not even being allowed to sell to a willing overseas buyer.

Of course you've still got to be able to produce a good crop and the vast areas of bush and manuka that we used to have are just not there anymore and if they are still there then there is a lot more hives around all vying for the available nectar sources, but on the plus side we have much better strains of bee than we used to have, quieter, more productive, far less inclined to swarm, and more disease resistant. We also have far better techniques for manipulating our hives and I think that it pays sometimes to remember just how short a time bees have been kept in moveable frame hives. It wasn't until 1851 that Langstroth discovered the beespace, knocked up a frame and set us on the road to where we are now, such a simple development, from such a seemingly simple observation and yet so vital to all modern beekeeping practices. Mind you I bet the development of moveable frames wasn't met with as much

joy and adulation as when the first woman sewed up the first bee proof veil.

"Honey I love honey Ug", "Woman, pull out stings". "No pull out stings, Woman like swelling, very nice swelling". "Pull out stings or Ug thump". "OK Ug nose too big anyway, Ug get more honey if Woman make net for face?" "OK Woman". "Only face mind Ug"..... Sorry my mind tends to wander when I'm writing, Harry will probably cut that bit out in the interests of editorial standards in any case.

So why is it such a good time to make money from bees, excluding those who have had terrible crops and of course it's always better to get \$2 for an awful crop than 50c, it's not just the modern management skills and our ability to control AFB, if AFB control fell apart I for one have no doubt that the best beekeepers would soldier on with the benefit of reduced competition from the poorer ones and lots of cheap second hand boxes, it's also the marketing, which I (and I'm by no means the only one) figure is getting me at least \$1 a kilo more for my honey. All of this, research disease control and marketing is now more than ever under our control via the NBA, it is the propolis that glues the beekeeping industry together and keeps it healthy. In the past, back in the days of the HMA, marketing nearly split us apart, while foul brood kept us together, now it seems to be swinging a little the other way. So even if you don't like the current direction of the industry, at least it's a democratic organization we belong to, so you can always try to change it at the next election. But lets try to keep it friendly and profitable, Foul Brood and Marketing, it's a funny sort of a marriage, but along with the friendships made at conference and branches, it's the glue that binds.

Peter Berry

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Attention all NBA members

We are looking for nominations
for the
Roy Paterson Trophy
for the 1999 Conference

Do you know of someone who fits
the criteria below?

The main theme of the award is "Innovation" and at the same time bring recognition to Roy Paterson. It can be for gadgets, inventions, science and technology that assist the beekeeping industry.

Nominations close 5.00pm
Monday, 14th of June 1999.

All nominations to:

Vice Chairman Mr Terry Gavin.

Phone: (09) 433-1893

Fax: (09) 433-1895

Judge's
decision is
final and no
correspondence
will be
entered into.

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 350 words, if longer they will be abbreviated. Letters not for publication should be marked NOT FOR PUBLICATION. "Opinions expressed in the magazine are those of the writer and are not to be regarded as representing the opinion of the Editor or Publisher."

Dear Sir

It deeply concerned me to notice the anti PMS feeling in the correspondence column of our previous magazine. It seems there are people (lonely voices) out there who even don't want to give it a chance.

Where are their alternatives. How do they want to control AFB. How do they want to protect our exports, how would they think of keeping foreign honey out of the country in future, etc. I thought our country has an excellent record on being 'democratic'? I would say 80% is more than a convincing majority. What other system than the democratic one do they have in mind.

Our President quotes in his opinion (March *BeeKeeper* page 11 and not in the correspondence column): 'I am a great believer in education, discussion and common sense'. I agree on this but only if you are prepared to be educated and show the willingness to discuss it and also want to use common sense. Too often these words are spoken and not acted upon, other than sounding good at the time. In particular, I am a great believer in education, so let us, all 80% of us, pull together and try to educate these lonely voices.

Our PMS is just underway and it would be very imprudent to try to undermine it. What a waste of money and effort it would be, if it was all to no avail. No disease control anymore. Bring in the antibiotics and accept lower honey prices and also loose our 'clean and green' image.

As our President is a great believer in common sense. Isn't it time, that also for these lonely voices common sense prevails, instead of firing cheap shots at our PMS Review Committee Chairman.

So get on with business and stop the division.

**Gerrit Hyink
Katikati**

Dear Sir

My name is Thomas Murrle, born on 27 July 1960, in Munich, Germany. As a qualified glazier and bricklayer, my first contact to bee-keeping was during my time as a "journeyman" in France. My apprenticeship-beekeeper, I finished in Austria, in a big professional apiary, after that time.

Back in Germany, before and during my studies of architecture, I had my own

bee-keeping in Bavaria. Wishing to become a well experienced architect, after having finished my studies in 1995, I had to stop bee-keeping because of hard work, lack of time and my move to Berlin.

Now, after having finished my current building site, end of April, and not yet too old to realise childhood dreams, I would be very happy to find my way back to the bees by means of a practical training period in a big professional apiary in New Zealand.

I will be free for a period of about half a year, beginning in August 1999. My English-knowledges, which I brushed up last year in Ireland, are quite well, so there will be no problems of understanding. I am convinced, that my lack of routine in practical work, after a few years of theory, will be easily surpassed by my motivation and love of beekeeper's work.

Now my question:

If you could give me the address of a professional apiary, hiring trainees from time to time, or advice as how to find one, I would be most grateful. I would of course be willing to supply references and any further details you may require.

Yours faithfully

**Thomas Murrle
Kaethe-Niederkirchner-Str.18
10407 Berlin
e-mail: muerrletom@aol.com**

Dear Sir

Colin McLeans' article on EFB resistance has a number of good points. However, I would disagree on the need to consider importing resistant queens or drone semen from Australia.

New Zealand bees have a wide gene pool and selection for resistance is quite feasible within New Zealand. For instance it only took a couple of seasons to select chalk brood resistance. In many ways selecting for resistance to a fungal disease is more difficult than selecting against a bacterial disease.

Hopefully we will maintain our present disease situation and will not have to put it to the test.

Beekeepers travelling from overseas should take care not to bring contaminated materials, clothing etc back to NZ.

Yours truly

Gary Jeffery

Dear Sir

The word "cornerstone" has now appeared in two consecutive "*BeeKeeper's*" - March and April. Russell would like the "cornerstone" of the industry to be "liberty and self determination"; in April Bruce states that: "the PMS is now the 'cornerstone' of the industry". In the face of a possible reorganisation of the Association I think there should be some understanding of what the "cornerstone" of the association is.

The idea of cornerstone is coined from the Bible. It was the first and most excellent stone laid: beginning the construction of buildings. Christ described himself as the chief cornerstone that was rejected. The stability of the building is dependent on the cornerstone. Crooked cornerstone - crooked building; and a flawed cornerstone would eventually crumble bringing the building down with it! (same idea as the foolish/wise man building a house on rock/sand). Therefore the cornerstone of the association is that thing which is firstly chosen, then laid, and upon which the whole structure depends!

I contend that the cornerstone of the association is "compulsion" i.e. compulsory membership of the association for all beehive owners. Liberty and self determination, with such a rule in place, it never can be! Take compulsory membership away and the association falls over!

By definition, the cornerstone cannot be added after the event! So the PMS cannot be the cornerstone of the association either. The PMS can be a very strong support to a crooked or cracked "building" but again, as an addition, it cannot be "it"!

The association, which has been built - and added to - on a chosen cornerstone, is showing signs of topple. The storms of life (time and change) are beginning to do their work - testing the builders! A major indicator of this is of course the budget blow out! Another symptom is the factions that exist within the association: the power struggles (currently on the wane but shortly to wax strong again.. I think).

The "cornerstone" of the association, whatever it is, will ultimately be its saviour or its destroyer! The die was cast long ago; time will tell.

Stephen Lee

Letters to the Editor

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Dear Sir

Last year Russell Berry, NBA President, played "brinkmanship" with our exports to the EU. A residue testing scheme was required, and plenty of time was available to work out both the process and who would pay. When questioned about the costs at Conference, he assured us that it would be the exporters or the Government, and not the NBA that would pay for the scheme. He was so certain that he made no provision for it in the budget he presented to Conference.

After a scathing rebuke from the Minister, and the threat that MAF Qual would have to turn the account over to a debt collection agency, the NBA Executive did end up paying the \$20,000.

This expenditure contributed to the deficit for the year of about \$70,000. And before the misguided arguments start again, the financial result wasn't due to the PMS. Disease Control showed a \$19,000 surplus.

The NBA is lacking effective management and financial controls. The \$50,000 of grant/loan from the Honey Industry Trusts was not even reported in

our accounts for about six months. The money was deposited in an account that was not included in the financial reports provided to the Executive.

I have twice called on the Executive to set up a Financial Committee that would report to the Executive. This group would provide the analysis and scrutiny that our finances require. The fact that the Executive did not notice the missing \$50,000 explains why such a committee is required.

Vote carefully in the current Executive elections. Select an Executive that will stop trying to 'creatively re-interpret' what the PMS says we must do. It took a lot of effort and will for our membership to insist at last Conference that the 'NBA option' that was being pushed by several on the Executive was not the option of the NBA at all, but of a few selfish individuals.

Choose Executive members who are able to accept advice, listen to concerns and treat activities of the Executive and the NBA as something other than a personal 'secret society' - let's have some communication!

Nick Wallingford

Dear Sir

I thank the Editor for the opportunity to respond to Mr Wallingford's letter.

If brinkmanship means negotiating strongly with MAR Regulatory Authority to obtain the best possible results for beekeepers and exporters, that is fine. All exports proceeded as usual to the EU - The outcome, no exports put at risk. Unfortunately MAF did not give the NBA the means to reimburse itself \$20,000 paid out to MAF and its laboratory. The NBA had no means of identifying who the exporters were. MAF would not tell us who the exporters were, or collect the fee for us. This year, AgriQual (formally MAF) recently rejected collecting a compulsory fee to cover sample collecting and testing for the EU.

The Budget is the collective responsibility of the Executive, not an individual. Sorry, we thought commonsense would have prevailed and the cost of collecting and testing honey samples not be put onto our membership.

Mr Wallingford states, "The NBA is lacking effective management and financial controls". I would remind Mr Wallingford that all Executive members have owned, or do own and manage

substantial beekeeping operations and the Executive utilises professional secretarial, accounting, legal and other services.

I ask why the Executive should notice Mr Wallingford missing \$50,000, which was not missing at all! Executive knew we had received a \$25,000 loan and a \$25,000 grant from the Trustees. Some of us noticed the error in Draft accounts. However I do think it out of order for Mr Wallingford to go directly to our Secretary's accountant (who is paid by our Secretary and who produces our NBA accounts), to obtain financial information without even speaking to the Secretary.

Mr Wallingford implies the current Executive is creatively re-interpreting what the PMS says we must do. We are trying to do the best for our members on all fronts including disease control and keeping costs down.

Please give us your support and let us get on with managing the NBA. If we were selfish individuals, I believe commercial beekeepers would never stand for Executive.

Russell Berry, President

Dear Sir

With regards to the furore in the industry at the present time and as one person who has seen twenty three years inside the industry I feel qualified to have a say. Friends of mine are on at least the two sides of this stupid litany of arguments, and it is easy to get a little sick of it all.

Having witnessed the demise of the HMA and the subsequent attempts by the Co-operative to fill its shoes and of course this ongoing history of the NBA all this time I can state that without a radical intervention, the NBA will suffer total collapse within two years. The PMS will be in ruin and we will have a Hobbyist's Beekeepers' Association and a Commercial Beekeepers' Association with the latter in rapid decline.

Now forget all the arguments that have occurred openly between members of the industries executive. Forget the negative comments about the PMS as some people make it a scapegoat for the ills of the NBA. What is the real problem is the NBA levy. Never popular, industry levies are always necessary.

However this is an interesting one. I am paying just under four dollars per hive, other commercial beekeepers I know are paying between seventy seven cents per hive to around one dollar sixty per hive. A far cry from the just under two dollars per hive paid by everyone just two seasons ago.

And in the last *BeeKeeper* Harry Brown is calling for deferrals. Well. People who happily spend around sixty dollars per hive annually as a business expense renege on paying their dollar per hive for services rendered by the NBA and the NBA Executive let them. What absolute nonsense.

I guarantee that most commercial beekeepers pay well under two dollars per hive and most hobbyist beekeepers pay well over two dollars per hive. Fair and equal? - hardly. So very soon we will see the demise of the NBA as we know it.

There is but one way to halt its demise. Immediate return to a much revamped hive levy. For instance, start with a compulsory fifty five dollar fee plus between two dollars and three dollars per hive. End of problems.

Richard Secombe

Today I am only moving clouds... tomorrow I will try mountains

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 350 words, if longer they will be abbreviated. Letters not for publication should be marked NOT FOR PUBLICATION. "Opinions expressed in the magazine are those of the writer and are not to be regarded as representing the opinion of the Editor or Publisher."

Dear Sir

Lonely voices against the cost of the PMS strategy, "what is the cost"? If you have read the National Pest Management Strategy, June 1997, which is the base of the commodity levy, you will find only 30% of the collectable levy is to be spent on disease control. On the issue of voting only 72% of beekeepers voted for the PMS, 28% voted against the PMS.

I am one and still one who is against the cost of this strategy. I believe we should have a strategy in place, this one is costing our business 25% extra in levy increase, and the cost does not stop there, (as it has already been pointed out in the last *BeeKeeper* magazine).

Why am I against this strategy?

1. I do not own the land the beehives are on, THE FARMER OWNS THE LAND "I own the beehives".
2. The farmer can ask me to move the beehives off his land, I have lost my registered "apiary site" BUT I still own THE BEEHIVES.

Did you know that in 1996 there were 24379 registered apiary sites and in 1998 only 23027 apiary sites were registered? Maybe we have to take a step backward before we go forward again.

AR Taiaroa

Dear Sir

Recently, the Auckland Branch had a branch meeting with Graham Burson, a local traffic officer. Among other things that were discussed was log books. The following in regard to the use of log books were confirmed.

- 1] if the vehicle and load is under six tonnes, then there is no need at all for using a log book, even if the truck is rated higher than six tonnes. Once you go over 6 tonnes, then the 10 day driving period restrictions will apply.
- 2] bee sites (ie apiary sites) are regarded as part of your farm (place of work) and hence the 50km radius exemption applies around all these sites.
- 3] all depots that you use, as long as they contain bee hives, are still regarded as part of your farm, and the 50km exemption radius still applies.

Brian Alexander, Branch President

Wee reminder

To avoid penalties your deferral is due 31st of May.

Dear Sir

The seemingly co-ordinated and orchestrated response (note the geographical spread) to letters critical of the PMS in the April issue of the *NZ BeeKeeper* was quite expected. Right through the process of the formulation of the PMS, any criticism has never really been listened to - even that the cost of the PMS was being underestimated.

The argument that because I referred to Bruce Stephenson's article by name, and hence started to personalise the argument is surprising. If somebody writes and signs an article, then it makes sense to refer to it by name. Personalising an argument would be more akin to what Rob Muldoon did to Colin Moyle years ago.

To refer to the long hours of work that somebody has put into a project, and then by inference, that the result should not be questioned, reminds me of the three days I spent (over twenty five years ago) designing, building and then proving that the machine I built would draw a straight line (albeit a slow and

shaky one). I very quickly went back to using a rule.

Many people believe that this "magical 80%" support of the PMS is ongoing and permanent. Gerrit Hyink (or should I say the gentleman from Katikati who wrote another letter to the April issue of the *NZ BeeKeeper*) might be surprised that I am part of this 80%. I believe that there should be a disease control programme in place. But I do not believe that this programme should bankrupt the NBA, nor do I believe there should be a levy increase. The PMS is a pest management strategy for AFB - it is not a strategy to protect our exports, nor is it a strategy to keep foreign honey out of this country - these are quite separate issues.

Peter Sale's (member of the PMS Review Committee) article (April, *NZ BeeKeeper*) shows that in the last six years, there has been a reported steady decline in AFB. This is happening before the PMS has started. Perhaps, with some modifications, things have been on the right track.

B Alexander

Supplementary Order Paper (SOP) 168 relating to the Animal Products Bill

The above supplementary order paper (SOP) provides the means for industries and businesses, which in the future will operate under the Animal Products Act, to make the move to the new Act during the transitional period of up to three years. It contains transitional provisions and other provisions ancillary to the main Bill. The SOP has been circulated by the Minister for Food, Fibre, Biosecurity and Border Control and adopted by the Primary Production Committee to be considered with the Animal Products Bill.

You may wish to make a submission on this (SOP), copies of which can be obtained at Bennetts Bookshops. The closing date for submissions is Monday, **24 May 1999**. Therefore, if you intend to make a submission you should forward 20 copies of the submission to me before this date.

Please indicate clearly on your submission if you or members of your organisation wish to appear before the committee to present your submission. If this is the case, you should provide names, addresses and daytime contact telephone numbers for all persons wishing to appear.

A submission received by the committee generally becomes public when it is released by the committee, or when it is presented orally before the committee, or when the committee makes its report to the House. If you do not want your address and telephone number released, such details should be omitted from your submission and provided in a separate covering letter.

You may apply for any or all of your evidence to be heard in private or secret. Committees normally require reasons before agreeing to such requests. Please contact me if you wish to make such an application. Should the committee decide to hear submissions orally, hearings will be arranged at the committee's discretion. You will be contacted regarding dates for the hearing.

**RJ Bunch, Clerk of the Committee,
Primary Production Committee**

Exotic Bee Disease Seminar

Frank Lindsay and I recently attended a seminar on exotic pests and diseases of honey bees as representatives of the NBA exotic bee disease subcommittee along with groups of people from AgriQuality Apiculture staff and HQ Controllers and Technicians from MAF's National Centre for Disease Investigation (NCDI) at Wallaceville.

We had various presentations on the exotic bee pests and diseases that are known to be a possible threat to New Zealand beekeeping. Covered were EFB, Varroa, Africanized Honey Bees, Acarine and Tropilaelaps. The seminar covered the pests and diseases themselves and also strategies for preventing them coming into the country, finding them if they get here and what we can do once we find them.

And what came out of our discussions? Well I think the main points to come out of it are that our surveillance and testing procedures are just not good enough to detect an outbreak of any of these problems (except perhaps for Africanized honey bee) early enough to do anything useful about it, unless we are lucky. I'm not knocking our lookers and testers either, it's just that government restraints, not to mention cutbacks and restructurings have put a few cracks in the system and there are a whole raft of new worries cropping up, all of which need time spent on them from a sinking budget and workforce. In fact were it not for our dedicated band of border surveillance, apicultural scientists and especially our MAF-AgriQuality Apiary staff there is no doubt that we would already have at least some of these problems. Especially as all these very damaging and expensive to control organisms are coming at us from an ever increasing infected area of the globe coupled with an ever increasing flow of people goods and transportation devises.

You might have noticed that I said very expensive and difficult to control, in the last paragraph and not very expensive and difficult to eradicate because perhaps the other main point to come out of the seminar is that NONE! not one single solitary one of these major problems has ever been eradicated or even slowed significantly by even the most draconian of control

measures. BUT, and it's a big BUT, let us not be deterred in trying, NONE of them has ever been picked up early enough to have had a realistic chance of doing the job properly either. We still have, in spite what I have written above, arguably one of the best, if not the best, groups of people working to prevent and control exotic bee diseases in the world, here in New Zealand. More than this we have a huge amount of information on the lifecycles and spread of these problems from overseas and what's more we're the best beekeepers in the world and if we pull together we can beat just about anything.

So what can we do about it, apart from smoking the old lot out of the beehive and installing a new bunch of short-sighted drones. First read the AgriQuality pamphlet on Honey Bee Exotic Pests and Diseases, then put it somewhere safe and read it again every spring before you start working your bees. Remember you can call your local Apicultural Advisory Officer or MAF's free phone 0800 809-966 for help if you have any suspicions. The only way we can stop these things is quickly. You can also help check for parasitic external mites by examining the exposed drone larvae that you often see in the summer when you crack two brood supers apart. It's very easy, all you have to do is look to see if there are any darker 1mm spots on the otherwise pearly white larvae. It isn't a very sensitive test but it takes no time costs nothing and will greatly increase the chance of picking up Varroa and or Asian mites in time to do something about it. Keep your eyes open too for anything unusual such as deformed bees or unusual numbers of dead bees outside the hive entrance and call the 0800 number. And if you do find something and think about not reporting it because of all the associated problems that it might cause you. Just think for a minute about your fellow beekeepers and remember that if we get it quickly enough we will beat it and if we don't, well, Varroa will cost you a minimum of \$40 a hive per year to treat with Apistan strips plus possible lost production. And the Asian mite we're not so sure about, but I do know that Ted Roberts once told me that he suspected that it wouldn't be a problem for long, because we wouldn't have any hives left to worry about. Don't be put off either in

Asian paper wasps - are they still on the move?

In 1989/90, we did a postal survey of the distribution of wasps. These maps show where Asian paper wasps occurred then. We would like to see how far the wasps have spread. For example, nests of the Asian paper wasp were first found in Nelson about 10 years ago and for a number of years they were restricted to the Port Hills area. Now nests are commonly found throughout Nelson and they have moved into the surrounding suburbs. However, we do not know how much further afield they have gone, or if they are still on the move in the North Island.

We would like your help to update this map. If you are outside the areas with dots and you have Asian paper wasps, we would like you to send us a specimen so we can confirm the identity. Collect a wasp from the nest at dusk using fly spray. Please do not send live wasps - the postal workers were a little cross with us last time. Asian paper wasps are yellow and black, thin waisted and have long dangly legs. The nests are small (no bigger than the palm of your hand). They hang from small shrubs and trees, stalks of vegetation, fences and walls, and often under the eaves of houses.

Send samples with your name, address and where the wasp(s) were collected (with a grid reference if possible) to: Asian wasp survey, Landcare Research, Private Bag 6, Nelson.

Asian paper wasp 1990



Richard Harris, Landcare Research,
Harris@landcare.cri.nz

reporting an unusual occurrence if the symptoms that you see don't match those that you've read about in the pamphlet, if in doubt get it checked. There are more things in the world than we are currently aware of, as evidenced by the recent

introduction of the Small Hive Beetle to Florida. It may well be true that no man is an island in today's world, but we can be truly thankful that New Zealand is a group of them.

by Peter Berry



Sex, drugs and rigmarole



Colin's article on EFB brought up some interesting thoughts to add to those that we took home with us from the exotic bee disease seminar. We do need to decide if we are going to bring in semen, eggs, queens, or some combination of these things and where from. We need to decide what drugs we would like to use to control EFB in the interim, while we get in, or breed up some resistant stock. Worse than this we need to get the official protocols in place to allow us to do these things, some of which may require government approval. None of this is simple and some of it may be extremely slow to implement if it is not done ahead of time. We also need to decide as an industry whether we are prepared to feed drugs, what countries we would be prepared to accept resistant stains of bees from and what races of bees we would be prepared to bring in.

On top of all this we, or I at any rate have no idea if any of this is going to do any good, EFB is such a poorly researched and understood organism that it is difficult to know if for instance,

EFB is decreasing in Australia because their bees are developing resistance, or because EFB spread like a typical epidemic, quickly reaching plague proportions and is now declining because for some reason it has become less virulent. We don't know if it's worse in some parts of Australia because of climatic conditions, different pollen sources, more resistant bees, or just cause.

So what are we going to do about it, well along with Agriquality, we are going to try to work through the issues involved in using drugs and bringing in resistant strains of bees, along with surveillance, testing and response issues. At the same time we are going to try to collect as much information as we can on the Australian experience of EFB in an effort to avoid if at all possible the need to use any drugs or chemicals and or the importation of foreign bee stocks.

And I'll end with a request, please could anyone out there who knows anything about the Australian experience and would like to help. Send me any information or experiences to pb@clear.net.nz or to 14 Lucknow Road, Havelock North.

Peter Berry

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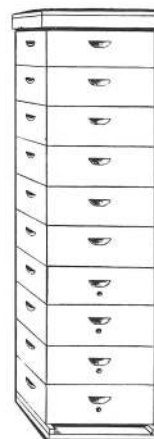
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A Paradigm Shift of the First Order!

Call me fickle and overly defensive but I've always viewed the Waikato Branch with a certain amount of trepidation. (As a Branch they've been a strong critic of generic marketing over the years.)

So being one of the speakers at their March Field Day had me feeling apprehensive.

Wow! So wrong. Intelligent, friendly people that were a pleasure to mix with and talk with. (After the enjoyable Southland Field Day as well you'll excuse me for believing that the industry is, overall, in a good positive and professional mood!)

The Waikato Field Day was at the Bassett's: what a tremendous site for a Honey house... overlooking the fields and hills of Waitomo and the Waikato area. And what a well-planned and well-run processing operation the Bassett's have.

Unfortunately the entire event was almost overshadowed by some of the best baking I've ever tasted: Pauline Bassett's homemade breads and buns are brilliant... especially the honey-based Easter buns.

Breakfast at the Bassett's was a leisurely wander down the farm to the fig tree... and (cowardly) watch from the shadows while John wrestled super-ripe, sweet figs from thousands of honeybees... then back to the house for figs and homemade bread and fig jam and honey... it was delightful! The Tawari honey a perfect partner to the delicious toasted bread. A great start to the day.

The Branch enjoyed the marketing presentation: some good robust discussion on Standards and the role of packers and brands.

The blind-honey tasting used Southland Clover; Canterbury Honeydew; Southland Kamahi; Nelson Manuka; Otago Thyme; West Coast Rata.

A beautiful selection of South Island honeys that shows the incredible diversity in the NZ honey crop. (In future I'll be using South Island varieties for tastings in the North and North Island varieties in the South... spreading the good spreads both ways! And both Islands have brilliant honeys to be proud of!)

The barbecue afterwards was great... and overall a good chance to mix and talk with beekeepers about the issues of the day. Some unusual honeys tasted in the after-match function too!

That's two very enjoyable Field Days so far this year! Thanks industry.

Stunning Cake Recipe

April's Style magazine has a superb cake recipe (uses a full cup of honey!). We've reprinted it here permission of Style magazine. If you try it let me know which honeys you use and the result... I think it would best suit a light Clover (which rules out some supermarket national brand "clovers"!), Tawari, or Rata... let me know.

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Standards gets Greenlight From Executive

The NBA Executive has confirmed the introduction of a Manuka Honey Standard based on Pollen Analysis (but with an industry Peer Review Group able to make a final assessment in the event of any claimed anomaly in the Pollen Analysis).

There are some other factors that have developed since the draft Standard was produced in 1997: the UMF and Glucose Oxidase values.

Right now the Marketing Committee is looking at the whole Manuka Honey issue and the values that need to be protected and promoted.

At Conference we'll be calling a special meeting of manuka-producing beekeepers and look to getting manuka honey samples from skilled and professional beekeepers: beekeepers who have used their knowledge of their territory and their bees, to collect honey that is predominantly from manuka flowers. Those samples will be analysed and used to create a Manuka Organoleptic "Norm". That 'norm' will then be used by the Peer Review Group as part of the assessment criteria for certifying honeys as manuka. ("Organoleptic means ' what the sensory organs perceive: ie colour/flavour/aroma/mouthfeel). If you aren't attending Conference but produce manuka that you know to be 'the real thing' make sure your Branch delegates have your name details and can pass them on to me.

The development of a Producer-governed, voluntary Standard is, we believe, a world first. We intend to get it right. That means a system that is affordable; simple and reliable... and a system that is fair on everyone but the cheats. By being producer-governed it means that we can create a level playing field for the activities of the marketers of our honey.

The Marketing Committee appreciates the commitment of the Executive to make the Standards a reality. It all fits within the NBA's ambition to lead the world in creating opportunities for beekeepers. Exciting times ahead. Watch this space.

The New Zealand honey marketing model on the world stage. Reprinted in this issue of the Beekeeper is the summary of the speech I'll be giving at the World Honey Conference in Vancouver. My presentation is part of a Plenary Session sponsored by the USA's National Honey Board.

The NBA's overriding objective is, simply, to have more people competing to buy honey produced by NZ beekeepers... because the only way for beekeepers to have the chance to improve their selling price, in a free-market, is to have more people wanting to buy our various honey types for various reasons. (Reasons that allow different honeys to have different prices!)

The NBA also believes that the potential value of our different honeys can't be fully exploited within New Zealand... the marketplace is just too small... so creating demand from off-shore is essential to our producer-goal.

Favourite Honey this month:

Been a few good ones... but at the end of the day I'm thoroughly enjoying more than anything else right now a delicious Blackcurrant honey... light colour... chewy texture to the creaming... absolutely no bitter aftertaste... just a clean fresh blackcurrant fruitiness... and a nice touch of 'astringency' to it. Yum!

No Marketing Column next month (ie June)

Off-shore work for other clients means we'll be away in May and so won't have an article ready for the June issue... so will be updating you in July... and will be seeing many of you at Conference. Looking forward to it!

Wee reminder

To avoid penalties your deferral is due 31st of May.

Cake Recipe

This recipe appeared in the Autumn 99 issue of Style magazine the recipe is created by Sarah and Peter Wren, from an adaptation of a recipe in the Edmond's Cookery Book.

Honey Cake with Lemon Syrup

1 cup of liquid honey
1 cup water
50g butter
1 tsp vanilla essence
2 cups baking powder
4 tps baking powder

Syrup

3/4 cup water
1/2 cup raw sugar
juice of one lemon

To serve: 1 lemon, peeled and finely sliced with Ginger passion fruit ice cream.

To prepare syrup, place all ingredients in a saucepan over a low heat. Simmer for a half hour or until the syrup thickens. This can be reheated at any time for serving.

To make the cake, heat oven to 180c. Put honey, water and butter in a saucepan over a medium heat. Stir gently until all the butter melts. Remove from the heat and leave to cool for a few minutes. Stir in vanilla. Sift flour and baking powder into the saucepan stirring to combine. Then, gently hand whisk to eliminate any flour lumps. Pour mixture into 8 well greased mini-cake tins.

Bake for 10-15 minutes or until golden and cooked through. Serve with two lemon slices on each cake and warm syrup over the top. Garnish with scoops of ice cream.

Bee Diseases 'Threat to \$8b industry'

The agriculture, horticulture, and bee industries, worth up to \$8 billion a year, would be at grave risk if bee diseases entered New Zealand.

The president of the Beekeepers' Association, Russell Berry, said that if, for instance, the varroa mite reached New Zealand, it could devastate the agriculture, horticulture, and bee industries to the same extent as foot and mouth disease could cripple the livestock industry.

Mr Berry said the jailing of Warren James Stewart and his son, Evan Kerry Stewart, of Christchurch, recently, reflected the seriousness of the situation. They bypassed biosecurity checks by claiming 500kg of Chinese bee pollen was cornflour. Judge Christopher Somerville told the pair that they could have destroyed New Zealand's position of being one of the few countries in the world not be afflicted with European foulbrood disease.

Mr Berry said New Zealand had a good quarantine service and border control which prevented diseases coming in.

"We don't want European foulbrood. Australia has it and it has to be controlled with antibiotics. Not many people here would like that," he said.

The bee industry also had to ensure that New Zealand bees were not used in the production of genetically modified food, in view of public concern in that area.

Because of its unique position in having few bee diseases, New Zealand was able to export more than 300 million live bees a year. The industry generated about \$50 million of business a year.

New Zealand had the American foulbrood disease but had a programme to eliminate it. It also had the minor diseases of chalkbrood and sacbrood.

"But we do not want any other disease. We don't want people to do silly things so that we put our unique position at risk," Mr Berry said. New Zealand has not imported bees since 1954 and it was estimated that the value of its disease-free bees to pollination for agriculture and horticulture and the bee-honey industry ranged from \$3b to \$8b year.

Acknowledgement: Press

What do New Zealand experts think of this?

Honey, it's a hive of insect anarchy

An Australian biologist has exploded the myth that honey bees are a hive of order, finding them to be scheming and factional.

Dr Ben Oldroyd, 40, a senior lecturer from the school of biological sciences at the University of Sydney, is a finalist in this year's Eureka Prize for Scientific Research for his discovery of "anarchistic" behaviour in bees. He has found a genetic mutation can make usually sterile female worker bees rebel and lay "counterfeit queen bee eggs", causing chaos and destruction in the colony.

The mutant trait occurs in about one in 2.5 million bees and Dr Oldroyd's finding has created much scientific excitement. In a normal bee colony, the queen is the only one allowed to lay eggs. If a worker does lay her own eggs, they are quickly eaten by "policing" workers. In certain

"anarchist" colonies, certain rebelling workers are able to lay eggs indistinguishable from the queen's, causing the eggs to survive, thrive and reproduce.

The colony continues for about three to four months until all the workers start laying eggs, the queen's power is marginalised, the workers stop working and the colony rapidly disintegrates. "It's really weird to watch," said Dr Oldroyd, who is now breeding mutant colonies in observation hives. His biology students, who have been helping with the project since he began in 1994, find the bees' behaviour "as intriguing as a soap opera". "It's a scheming mass of conflict with various factions trying to outdo each other and being held in check by mutual obligation."

**Acknowledgement,
Adelaide Newspaper**

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For most small beekeepers the season is over, hives have been prepared for winter and honey supers stored away. Apart from one cold snap, we have experienced a very mild autumn of clear warm days. The bees have been flying and bringing in a little nectar. Queens are now producing their last brood cycle before winter and drones are being crowded down on to the baseboards ready to be ejected out of the hives. While the warm weather and nectar flow persists they are tolerated. A few hives have unsuccessfully tried to supercede and have become queenless, (they roar when opened up - ie the bees all fan and don't settle down). Late queens are still available from some breeders or you can unite the queenless hives with a good queen right colony (place the good colony on top of the queenless unit). Place two sheets of newspaper between and allow the bees to unite slowly. You should also do this with small or weak

hives as stronger hives have a better chance of surviving the winter. In the spring when queens are available, the hives can be split and you are back to numbers again.

Now is a good time to reflect on the last season and plan for the next. Weather forecasters are predicting a similar winter to the last: warmer, wet with dry periods between (if that makes sense). This means that the bees could have periods where they will be able to go out and collect nectar from mid-winter sources on the bush and around the city areas. Consequently they could begin to build up earlier than normal, store early sources (such as rewarewa) and like a lot of hives this year, swarm early. How do you prevent this? Timely intervention.

Keep an eye on the level of stores in the hives and consider adding another super in September if your area experiences an early flow. Hives showing signs of swarming should be split. Order a few queens now so these hopefully will be on hand when your hives are showing signs of swarming. If they arrive a little earlier than planned, select your strongest hive, give it a good feed and then take a split of it a day later. This should help with queen acceptance.

Had a good year so I'll increase my hive numbers. Order new or replacement woodware now, so you can make them up during the winter. Its easy to increase hive numbers, swarms are collected, spits made are not used, someone going out of bees gives you a hive. However it's not always a good idea to have too many hives in a suburban area. Councils and neighbours are not as tolerant as they used to be and should they complain, you will be asked to remove the hives. It is a good idea to keep only two hives on a small section, (one you inspect every week to learn about bees, the other is left alone to produce the house hold honey), provided they are away from neighbours and their washing lines. One must remember that a good hive can have as many as 40,000 bees flying at the height of summer. This is an awful lot of bees.

Some find it best not to draw attention to their hives. Planting scrubs or growing runner beans close, or in front of the hives can provide a number of benefits. It forces the bees to fly high (above fence level - Most people don't notice bees once they are above head height). As the hives grow in height, so do the beans, which tend to hide their presents.

Had enough supers. If you are not going to be continuously extracting during December/January, it's a good idea to have up to four honey supers per hive. Don't wait until one is full

before putting the next one on, try supering two at a time.

Have trouble getting foundation frames drawn? Try interspacing foundation frames with drawn comb next season. Bees are sometime slow to go up into new supers, try lifting a frame of honey from the super below to encourage them.

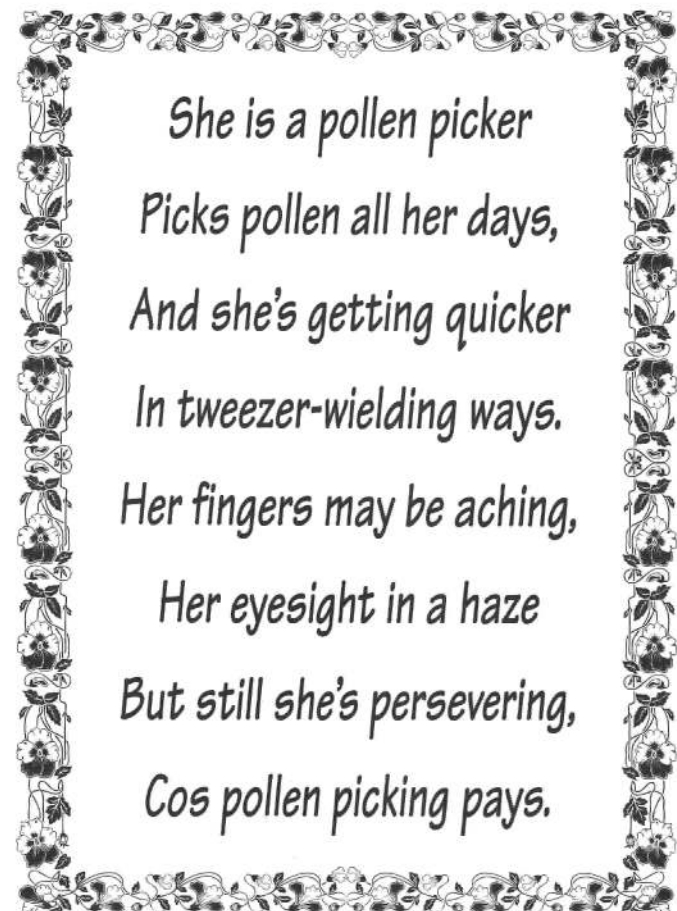
Titchy bees? Some bees just don't like movement in the area surrounding the hive and will buzz and hit anything that moves, sometimes stinging. Ormond and Harry Aebi in their book *Mastering the Art of Beekeeping* have a very good idea to get around this. They put up a wave cloth fairly close to the hives.

These consist of some old item of clothing on a pole that flaps around in the breeze. The bees investigate this and try to move it on. Having no luck they soon get used to it. This then allows you and your neighbours to move around freely without drawing any attention from your bees. If of course they

persist, then the queen should be replaced. You can get some very nice tempered bees that are a pleasure to have around. Some are not even disturbed by the lawn mover. Too many hobbyists leave queens to replace themselves. Learning how to find and replace queens is at the heart of beekeeping.

For those who have their bees away from their property on a rural block, beekeeping practices are a little different. Look around and see what pollen plants are available to support your bees. This is a subject often overlooked by many. Farming practices have changed in the last few years. Every bit of land has to be brought into pasture, which means the odd patches of gorse, broom and blackberry have been sprayed or removed.

Autumn



If your hives are surrounded by pasture, have a talk to the farmer and see if he /she will set aside a small corner around the bees. Look at planting tree lucerne (in relatively frost-free areas), pussy willow or hawthorn (away from orchard areas). See what survives in your area and plant accordingly. These plants give early nectar and pollen, which is vital to kick-start the hives into sustained brood rearing. These plants have an additional advantage for the farmer in that animals in drought conditions can graze them.

Now is the time to collect seeds and take cuttings. Root them into a sand/soil mixture in your garden. Once established, they can be planted out in your apiaries in the spring. You should be able to see the results within a couple of years. Early drone production and even brood pattern without missed cells are an indication of sufficient pollen in hives; (early drone production can also be a sign of early preparations for swarming).

Wasps are now making their presence felt. In and around the hives, coming into the honey house and they do hurt when one goes down your neck. Nests are concentrating on queen production so now is the time to kill them. It's fairly easy to destroy a nest. Two tablespoons of an insect powder, flicked into the hole during the day or a coke bottle of diesel pushed into the hole after dark generally does the trick. In our area we now have mostly common wasps, (the ones with the wider black bands with the dots joining the bands). Over the years I have noticed that these wasps have gradually taken over from

the German wasp. The advantage of these is that they don't seem to attack hives in numbers. Now we hardly lose a hive to these predators. However we still kill every nest we come across. Why not do your bit to help keep these pests in check. Go for a walk; look along drains, riverbanks and bush areas carrying a small bottle of insecticide powder. Ted Roberts used to pay children \$2.00 for each wasps nest they found. It all helps to keep our environment in balance.

It's also been a great breeding year for rats and mice. Mice are making their presence felt having gained entry to hives with wide entrances and making nests in the top corners or in the top feeders. Rats tend to gnaw holes in the woodwork in the spring when there is little food for them. I prefer to get rid of these before they can create a great deal of damage by putting out four Talon baits in plastic tubes under the hives. Generally you only have to replace these once or twice to clean up all the rodents.

This Month's Work: Winter down hives, dispose of honey crop, grade and sort combs into brood, extracting and damaged, fumigate for wax moth, check wasps, control growth around hives.

Wee reminder

To avoid penalties your deferral is due 31st of May.

Transitional Provisions for the Animal Products Bill 1998

Food and Fibre Minister John Luxton, recently announced the release of the transitional provisions for the Animal Products Bill 1998.

'These provisions allow for industries and existing businesses to come under the Animal Products Bill over a three year period.'

'During the transition, the Meat Act 1981 and the Animal Products Bill will operate in parallel except in certain key areas where only one regime will operate. For example, a single regime will operate for export certification (official assurance under the new Bill), for cost recovery, and for homekill.'

The transitional provisions are contained in an additional five Parts to the Bill (summaries attached). The intention is for these Parts to be split out into a separate Ancillary and Transitional Provisions Bill during Parliament's consideration of the Animal Products Bill following its report back from Select Committee. This leaves the main Bill uncluttered by provisions that will effectively expire at the end of the three year period.

Ensuring a smooth transition to a single regime is an important objective of the transition provisions.

'These transitional provisions provide the all important link between the current system and the system for the future. It is vital the transition proceed smoothly in order that the international reputation of New Zealand is preserved, that access to foreign markets continues, and that our competitiveness remains high,' Mr Luxton concluded.

The Supplementary Order Paper containing the transitional provisions has been referred to the Primary Production Select Committee and submissions are due by 24 May 1999.

For more information contact:

EmmaReidPressSecretary (04) 471-9707 or (025) 433- 716

Summary of parts containing transitional provisions

Part 11 - contains a general outline of Parts 11 to 15, provides for the parallel continuation of the Meat Act 1981 and contains some general definitions.

Part 12 - provides for the amendment of the Meat Act 1981 during the transitional period and its repeal in November 2002. Provides for the consequential amendment of a number of other Acts and regulations.

Part 13 - provides for:

-existing businesses to have until November 2002 before risk management programmes become mandatory;

-new businesses to be required to operate under risk management programmes from the outset except for foreign-owned fishing vessels which will have a 12 month period of grace before risk management programmes are mandatory;

-clarification of precedence for regulated control schemes and animal product standards and specifications;

-exporters to have a 6 month period of grace to register and homekill and recreational catch service providers to have 6 months to be listed;

-a range of interim charges and fees together with Part IIIA of the Meat Act to apply until comprehensive cost recovery regulations can be implemented to establish a single cost recovery regime;

-consultation for regulations undertaken before the Bill enacted to be treated as consultation for the purposes of the Bill;

Part 14 - sets out a range of amendments to the Meat Act 1981 to remove conflicts between the two regimes during the transitional period.

Part 15 - sets out provisions relating to the Apiaries Act 1969 to apply during the transitional period.

Schedule 3 - contains consequential amendments to other Acts.

Schedule 4 - contains consequential amendments to Regulations.

Schedules 5 and 6 - contains interim fees, charges and levies to be applied by MAF for the operation of the Animal Products Bill from the outset.

Healthcare in New Zealand

Where are we going in New Zealand as far as healthcare is concerned?

For all New Zealanders this is a question they should really know the answer to because the answer to this question helps us to make decisions about how to maintain or improve our future lifestyle or even how to survive.

It seems to me that it will not matter which of the main political parties is in Government or what these parties say in public, the reality is that the Government will take the view that this country can no longer afford the comprehensive and relatively free healthcare we have had in the past.

The Government has indicated by its actions and the very long waiting lists for hospitals and specialists that if we wish to maintain our lifestyle and, in some situations be able to continue in our work, we will have to provide for our own healthcare. Except in life threatening situations or where there is extreme and continuous pain we can no longer have the certainty of immediate entry into hospital.

As an example of the reduced availability of healthcare I will use my own case. When I was about forty I developed kidney stones. I was sent immediately to hospital and was operated on straight away. Fifteen years later (recently) I developed kidney stones again. This time I had to wait a year before I was operated on. During that time I was in extreme pain and

had to have very powerful painkillers which affected my ability to work.

According to recent figures there are now over 85,000 people on the waiting lists. Over 22,000 of these will be waiting more than two years before they are attended to. This does not include over 20,000 who were removed from the waiting list and sent back for their doctors to monitor.

Recent examples of waiting lists according to type of illness are as follows:

- * Orthopaedics: 18,000 (Bones, hips etc.) **This can stop you working.**
- * Ear, Nose, and Throat: 10,000 (Glue ear etc.) **This could affect your child's education.**
- * Ophthalmology: 10,000 (Cataract etc.) **This can stop you working or driving.**
- * Urology: 5000 (Prostate, kidney stone etc.) **This can affect your sex life.**
- * Gynaecology: 8000 (Hysterectomy, cancer etc.) **This can end your life.**

How do we protect ourselves from the increasing uncertainty that the Government will provide us with comprehensive healthcare when we need it?

There are three options:

1. Firstly to save as much money when you are young as you can and hope that nothing happens until you have enough. Unfortunately young people need healthcare too.
2. Secondly have a large family who can and are willing to contribute to the cost of your healthcare. I know a man who needed a heart operation and used this system. The family is now saving so that the wife can have an operation as well.
3. The third, most practical, and least expensive option is to have a health insurance plan in place. The most cost-effective way to obtain health insurance is to be part of an organisation or business that has a group health plan in place. This costs less and often has other advantages as well.

Fortunately the National Beekeepers Association has a group health plan in place. Not all New Zealanders are fortunate enough to have this opportunity to guarantee good healthcare when they need it at a reduced cost.

**Adrian Robinson, Mortgage,
Insurance, and Investment Consultant with Advance
Financial Services Limited.
Freephone 0800 114-516 to join your Association Health
Scheme or for more advice.**

Bay of Plenty Branch Autumn Fieldday

Date:	Saturday May 22
Where:	Steve & Lorraine Weenink's Honey shed. 1502 State Highway 29 Lower Kaimai near Tauranga
Directions:	For safety reasons, please approach downhill and turn left into their driveway Venue will be signposted
Time:	9.45am - 3.45
-10.15	Morning Smoko
10.15-10.20	Welcome
10.20-10.30	Opening Remarks - Paul Bolger
10.30-11.15	Recent Developments from the HRU Dr Peter Molan, Waikato University
11.15-12.00	Final days of the Apiary's Act, Introduction of the Animal Products Bill, how it will affect us. Speaker: Carole Inkster, MAF-Policy
12.00-12.30	Discussion: Revolving Barrel Strainers led by Cliff Van Eaton
12.30-1.30	Lunch (barbeque sausages available at nominal cost)
1.30-1.45	Trade Display Presentations
1.45-2.15	Honey Dehydration & NZ Honeys Speaker: Ross Ward
2.15-2.45	New developments in honey processing Speaker: Peter Boutelje
2.45-3.15	Cerepress: A new answer to the Problem of Wax Cappings Speaker: James Ward
3.15-3.45	Discussion: Bee Removal Devices led by Cliff Van Eaton

National Beekeepers' Association of New Zealand (Inc)

Notice is hereby given that the 1999 Annual General Meeting of the National Beekeepers' Association of New Zealand (Inc) and Conference of Branch Delegates will be held at the Hotel Ashburton, Racecourse Road Ashburton on Wednesday and Thursday 14 and 15 of July 1999 commencing at 9am on Wednesday 14 July 1999.

Please note that the Special meeting to consider proposed Rule changes will be held on Thursday 15 July at 8am same venue.

**Harry Brown
Executive Secretary**

From the beehive to the milkpail to the wineglass... The key to the renaissance of honey

"THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOX"... the National Honey Board's title for this first plenary session of Apimondia 99 is apt: especially if we acknowledge that the 'box' refers to the wooden beehive.

Because if honey is to achieve its potential as one of the most valued natural food resources of the new millenium, we need to stop thinking of it simply as honey... we need to think 'outside the beehive!'

We need to explore and understand the potential consumer values of myriad honeys... (note the plural)... that we as the world honey industry produce.

Within the honeys produced around the world there are honeys with special nutritional values, honeys with amazing nutraceutical values, honeys with pharmaceutical values, honeys with special compounds within them that can be extracted and processed, honeys with extraordinary sensory aroma and flavour values, honeys with amazing functionality values when used in food and beverage processing... the reduction of all of these honeys and values into a commodity traded basically on whether it is light or dark, mild or strong... is a sad loss of opportunity!

And not good business. Not for the beekeeper... not for the buyer... not for the customer and certainly not for the consumer.

Because when honey is produced and traded in the most simplistic of commodity forms... in the same manner as drums of soybean oil or barrels of molasses ... it denies the consumer choices they could have made and it denies every link in the market chain, from beekeeper to agent to buyer to exporter to distributor to retail seller the chance to have increased their own profitability.

Being treated as a commodity by industry and accepted as a commodity by the consumer also increases the chance of economic adulteration, of the development of such "oxy-moronic" products as that potentially fraudulent absurdity... honey analogue. These distractions simply 'steal' the potential value from everyone, including the beekeeper and the consumer.

The marketing strategies developed by the New Zealand honey industry have been in place now for six years. They were designed to **create an environment** where beekeepers **have the opportunity** to improve the profitability of their own business's.

Seven years ago New Zealand beekeepers agreed, collectively, to invest in creating opportunities in the marketplace, but then to compete between themselves for those opportunities.

88% of New Zealanders eat honey regularly... around 2kgs per person per year.

So the question was how to increase business opportunities in a market which was, by most definitions, saturated.

And we decided to think outside the honey-box!

Instead we looked to the milk-pail and the wine glass!

At Apimondia 99 we will present the New Zealand model: we will look at the milk-pail strategy... how the dairy farmer turns a pail of liquid milk into exciting industrial compounds that are used in making everything from scarves and tv screens to snooker balls... and we will show how honeys have their own compounds and incredible potential... and we will show how looking into a wine-glass gave us the inspiration to transform the way that chefs and gourmet consumer groups perceive our honeys...

But we will also show how gaining an understanding of our products through these alternative paradigms is not enough... and why the New Zealand beekeeper is now exploring ways of finding and creating new marketplace champions... why we are disrupting the comfort zones of our existing Distribution channels... why we believe that, for the New Zealand beekeeper to get a better return on their investment and their effort, we need other people making better money from our honeys.

In relationship to other food groups we, the world's honey producers, are an exceedingly small industry... but in the same way that the tiny honey bee and its sting commands a respect far greater than its size... our honeys and their wonderful potential values can have the same impact on the larders of world's marketplace of the new millenium.

Ours is one of the oldest of foods... but if we, as the world's honey producing industry, can cooperate together...and gain the synergy of that... we can spearhead a Renaissance of Honey... a rediscovery of the wholesomeness and goodness, of the excitement and enjoyment of our crop, by the world's consumers.

New Zealand believes that Apimondia 99 could be the birthplace of such a Renaissance... it will take a passion

and a vision beyond that of any one country... but it is an opportunity that is waiting for us to seize.

In this Plenary session we will look at the options available to us... at how it can be made to happen!

Thank you

Bill Floyd

A Summary of the paper to be presented at Apimondia 99 by Bill Floyd, a partner in the company that contract manages the NZ Honey Advisory Service and the NZ Honey Research Unit for the National Beekeepers' Association of NZ.

Importance Notice to Manufacturers and Distributors of Food and Food Ingredients

Under the current New Zealand Food Standard, the sale of genetically modified food that has not been approved by the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Council (ANZFSC) by 13 May 1999 will be illegal.

The ANZFSC has agreed to amend the existing Standard to allow genetically modified foods to be exempt, for a limited time, from the general prohibition from sale as long as certain conditions are met.

For each genetically modified food, manufacturers or distributors must ensure:

- * a comprehensive application for a safety assessment of their foods is submitted to the Australia New Zealand Food Authority (ANZFA) by 30 April this year
- * evidence is provided that the genetically modified food is lawfully permitted as a food, by a national food regulatory agency in a country other than New Zealand or Australia.

The responsibility for advising ANZFA of any potential or known problems with products rests with the food industry.

Guidance on making an application can be obtained from the Canberra office of ANZFA phone: 0061-2-6271-2222 or fax: 0061-2-6271-2278.

Acknowledgement, The Dominion

A night in the life of a beekeeper...

A cool, crystal clear night in Motueka - September 23. Pipfruit orchardist and beekeeper, Peter Hobson has completed his night-plan and is ready to pick up the first of the 55 hives to be shifted onto pipfruit orchards before morning.

He says a well-organised night plan is imperative, particularly as the season gears up and demand for his 1,200 hives increases. At peak time he will have two utes loading and unloading all nights and will place up to 300 hives in orchards over an eight-hour period.

Peter's wife Sharon takes the orders during the day and emphasises the importance of forward planning by orchardists. "If they ring me by noon they are almost guaranteed to get their hives the same night but it makes things fairly difficult to plan when they don't ring until 6pm."

Peter says the pollination season started about a week early this year with the first hives going onto Asian pear orchards on September 18.

"It's always unpredictable and there's really no such thing as a normal season. An eight to ten day variance for the start date is usual. The first hives always go into the Asian pears followed by Braeburn apples then European pears, but both the pears and the Braeburn are early this year and all are flowering at roughly the same time."

We drive 11km to Marahau to pick up the first 16 hives. With the temperatures hovering at around 5°C the bees are quiet as Peter hoists the 40kg hives onto the back of his Hilux ute. All 16 are loaded within the next eight minutes.

Over his 17 years as a beekeeper Peter has acquired sites throughout the district close to most of the orchards he services, but he stresses that the bees must be taken at least 2km from their permanent sites or they will try to fly back from their new position.

Each of the two-box hives has been carefully prepared for the pollination season over the past month and checked for disease. Each hive contains a young queen, six frames of brood (eggs, larva and pupa), three frames of food and between 15,000 and 20,000 adult bees.

The first hives are taken to orchards in Riwaka and the bees, cooled by their journey, are still acquiescent.

Peter explains that the bees have been bred for moveability. "They are bred specifically for pollination and are not honey producers, so we don't have to use smoke."

They are placed in positions beneath the trees where they will stay put for the next three weeks - three weeks in which the orchardists must withhold all insecticide sprays.

"Carbaryl, used for thinning, does the most damage. It will kill about a third of the bees - all those in the field when the spray goes on. The organophosphate insecticides Gusathion and Lorsban will also kill the field bees and we have to watch out for their residues which can also be a problem. We like to see them between five and seven days clearance."

Peter has had little problem with orchardist spraying insecticide at the wrong time over recent years, but says there is still no room for complacency.

The first delivery sets the pattern for the rest of the night. Hives are picked from one site and dropped at orchards throughout the district.

So how do orchardists know they are getting value for money from the hives?

"If the hives aren't working believe me I'll hear about it. The proof of their value is at harvest time - plenty of adequately-sized fruit and consistent shape.

"Orchardists might look at a hive and think it's not working but you have to check it two or three times a day to get the real picture and hives are active at different times.



Peter Hobson checks frames from his hives at the Moss's pipfruit orchard in Little Sydney Valley.

He says achieving adequate pollination in Asian pears and apples is not generally a problem but kiwifruit has proved more difficult.

"We have to rely on healthy male plants and there being enough of them."

Some orchardists see two-box hives and think they would be getting better value and more bees if the hives were bigger. But Peter says in terms of value that is just an optical illusion - "a bit like candy floss - a small amount of sugar taking up a lot of space. Our bee management is based on research work carried out at Hort Research Ruakura by Mark Goodwin.

"He has shown that the bees from small but growing hives need to collect pollen for brood rearing. As long as the hive is in the growth phase pollen collection continues."

Pollen collectors are usually more effective pollinators than nectar foragers.

Other research work by Mark Goodwin and Heather Haine indicates bees can also be encouraged to collect more pollen if they are fed with unscented sugar syrup inside their hives early in the day. The availability of sugar syrup discourages them from collecting nectar and they collect pollen instead. In kiwifruit, syrup feeding has been shown to increase the number of bees visiting the crop by up to 700 percent.

With Asian pears they showed the amount of pollen collected by bees fed sugar syrup increases by up to 160 percent.

In an average season Peter feeds his hives between six and eight tones of sugar in syrup form, "but in a wet season this can climb to 12 tones."

Another often asked question relates to beekeeping standards. Peter says he is a member of the National Beekeepers

Association but there is still a tendency for such organisations to concentrate on honey production despite the fact that 98 percent of bees are used for pollination only.

"We work closely with MAF and follow its recommendations."

Orchardists who wish to reassure themselves that hives are up to acceptable standards can invite MAFQuality Management apiary officers to audit hives on their properties on a contract basis at a negotiated price.

Top of the South apiaries officer, David Grueber, who is based in Blenheim, says that although the service has been available in the North Island for some time it has just been introduced in Marlborough, Nelson, Motueka, Golden Bay and the West Coast since the beginning of October.

"We look at things like the number of bees per hive - this should be between 20,000 and 30,000 depending on the crop. We make sure there is enough room in the frames for the queen to keep laying and for the hive to expand. We check feed supplies including nectar and pollen required for brood development. Obviously hives must have a viable queen and be disease free."

So far David has found all the hives audited in the Nelson region have been well above minimum standards.

In the North Island, the president of the 1400-member National Beekeepers' Association, Russell Berry, reports that the pollination season is shaping up as "fairly normal".

He and his brother currently have over 10,000 hives involved in fruit pollination throughout the Bay of Plenty and Hawke's Bay. He says the hives all came through the winter in good condition because it was so mild.

Russell says in the past they used to have a tremendous amount of trouble with their bees and insecticide sprays, but things have improved hugely over the past 10 years.

"A lot of the sprays are not so toxic and the orchardists understand our requirements a lot better than they used to."

Back in Riwaka, Peter Hobson completes the last of his night moves. Over the course of the evening he has lifted each of the 55 hives twice, a total weight of close to half a ton. It's been an easy night, he says, compared to what's around the corner in the kiwifruit season.

American foulbrood is the only disease of consequence currently found in New Zealand. Terry Gavin, a former chairman of the Disease Control Committee of the National Beekeepers' Association says the committee has developed a pest management strategy (under the Biosecurity Act) to eliminate it in New Zealand.

"We are producing a manual which we hope to have completed by the end of the year."

American foulbrood is found in about 0.4 percent of New Zealand hives annually. "The incidence has gone down (25 percent) but it is our aim to eradicate it altogether."

Tauranga beekeeper and past president of the National Beekeepers' Association, Nick Wallingford says this equates to one in every 200 hives each year.

Acknowledgement, The Orchardist, November 1998

FOR SALE

One to 10 painted hives on
two Brood in winterfeed
and in excellent condition with zinc roofs.

Please contact:

Phone-Fax: (09) 426-3456



Beekeeper Peter Hobson unloads the first of the hives at Soanes' pipfruit orchard in Riwaka.

New Zealand Honey

The Beekeeper's Journal has some excellent honey recipes but unfortunately I developed diabetes late in life and can now only drool over these recipes. There is no doubt that honey is good for most people, but it is not good for diabetics as it contains about 31% of glucose which happens to be the sugar that diabetics cannot handle. One of the symptoms of diabetes is a thirst that no amount of water (or beer) will quench, and another, is rapidly failing strength. These are complaints that many beekeepers experience after a hard day's work in the summertime. If you decide to have a blood test and find that you have diabetes then I would advise you to take the matter seriously unless you want to become as blind as a bat and get about like Douglas Bader.

Women also get diabetes. One day when I was testing my blood my wife wandered into the room. I offered to give her a diabetes test. She declined my kind offer and no amount of persuasion would change her mind. There is probably a law against a man slapping a half-Nelson on his wife and taking a blood sample so I refrained from doing so, as a consequence she left the room hurriedly. Within five seconds she was back again and triumphantly told me to test some blood on her leg. I did so and found her blood normal. She told me that after leaving the room she stopped to adjust some curtains but our playful kitten thought she was having a game and leapt out and latched on to her leg, hence the five second change of mind. I had heard that women change their minds a fair bit but five seconds must be some sort of record.

Beekeepers get a lot of free advertising for their honey. There must be dozens of romantic songs written about bees and honey. The word honey is a common term of endearment in this, and many other countries. When my wife calls me honey I get very nervous and wonder what new scheme she has in mind this time.

There was a time when Rewarewa honey producers got considerably less for their honey than white clover producers - it became a North Island versus South Island thing. On one of my trips to the South Island we were enjoying buttered scones and a cup of tea at a white honey producer's home. I had the audacity to suggest the Rewarewa honey would one day be worth as much as clover. This was too much for my host who choked on a piece of scone and if it had not been for

his wife leaping forward and giving him the back-thumping treatment he would have expired before our eyes. When he recovered I smartly changed the subject.

About thirty years ago Tauranga held a week long Trade Fair. The Bay of Plenty branch decided to participate and let the people of the Bay know about the many floral sources of honey produced in NZ. The Honey Marketing Authority packed a large range of honey in glass jars. We did a deal with the HMA and were given the honey at wholesale rates with the profit going to Branch funds. Not all honey was a pure line, when I questioned this I was told on several occasions that the honey was predominantly one type of honey as labeled. It could be composed of 51 percent of the labelled honey but the other 49 percent some other honeys that blended in well. We had Roy Patterson's ingenious mechanical beekeeper working, it seemed to draw children and their parents to our stall and helped sales. We used a wooden spatula to give everyone a taste of the various honeys. The beekeeper's wives did most of the work on the stall and seemed to enjoy themselves. When we tallied up our sales we were surprised to find that Kamahi was the top seller. The profit was one hundred pounds eleven shillings and eleven pence and for once our branch had a healthy bank balance.

Library News

ELIMINATION OF AMERICAN FOULBROOD WITHOUT THE USE OF DRUGS

by Mark Goodwin and Cliff Van Eaton, 1999, 78pp, NZ.

This is a practical manual for all beekeepers. Useful to the owner of a single hive as well as to the workers and manager of a large commercial beekeeping enterprise.

Good clear print with some diagrams and a series of colour photos also covering some other bee diseases. It has been published by our own Association as part of its strategy to ultimately eradicate American Foulbrood.

High marks indeed to the authors and to the producers: Nick Wallingford and Cliff Van Eaton.

Another very valuable tool to reach that goal of AFB elimination, let us all make use of it. Don't think that you know it all anyway.

Please note: The librarian will be away overseas from the 7 June till early July. Please make any requests for items needed during that period in good time.

Southland Branch Report

Summer/Autumn 1999

Temperatures:	Cool to cold for Dec, then very hot for Jan-Feb-March.
Rainfall:	Dec above average, Jan-Feb well below; March average.
Ground conditions:	Firm and very dry for all the summer.
Crop prospects:	Kamahi produced the best crop for many years. Clover crop 50-60kgs av; Coastal Southland hives produced 100kgs.

General comments:

Summer arrived in early Nov creating swarming and superseding, then cool, wet weather in Dec meant virgins mated late. The wet weather in Dec was needed to put moisture into the dry ground, as Jan and Feb were extremely dry months. Fortunately the bees gathered a good crop before the drought closed in. Help was given to Central Otago beekeepers who shifted hives into Southland to obtain a honey crop when the prospects were for a nil crop otherwise. Bush sources produced a continuous flow of nectar, with flax, broom and cabbage trees continuing with a heavy flowering. Many new crops were planted this past summer, giving beekeepers promise for the future. A greater area of Meadow foam is being planted for this coming Nov-Dec, (a vanilla flavoured honey). Beekeepers are now wintering down and finding hives in good condition. After a pleasing season we are disappointed with the current price of honey.

Fiji - April 1996

We arrived in Fiji on the 15 April 1996. Within six days we had our company - McKenzie Beelines (FIJ) Ltd, Rakiraki. This being a Fiji record, as it can take months. The Fiji Trade and Investment Board were a great help to us. During this time we found a house with an open basement, which has since been built in, to provide our honey house and work-working workshop. Between travelling to Suva to work on the company's documentation and staying at Rakiraki Hotel to clean the house, it was pretty exhausting. After we had cleaned the house, repaired plugs, light switches etc - we asked the landlord if we could paint the inside of the house and he agreed - thank goodness! The kitchen had blue cupboard doors, chocolate brown shelving, pantry door and glassware cabinet and the walls were a lovely baby pink! The blue cupboards stayed but all shelving is now white and the walls are very pale lemon. The landlord visited two days after we moved in, saw the kitchen and was very impressed. The house had been sitting empty for three years and squatters had moved in. The following week I painted the lounge, dining room and main bathroom.

Our container arrived at Lautoka wharf and after much discussion with customs, it was finally cleared! We were asked lots of strange questions. "Why have you brought all that machinery to look after bees in boxes?" Good at asking questions, but listening skills could do with a polish. With the arrival of the container at our gate, followed by a taxi carrying a customs man and four labourers, another fun-filled day began. We have a good driveway in to our compound for normal traffic, but not heavy vehicles, so when the driver tried to cut through the paddock next door he hit a soft patch. I watched with my heart in my mouth, as the truck - with all our worldly possessions - nearly tipped over in the paddock, after coming safely all the way from Balclutha, by road, rail and ship.

Gavin had packed the container over a three month period and it was emptied in just three hours! The customs man was satisfied there were no hidden cartons of whiskey, the taxi driver awoke from his sleep under the mango tree and they and the labourers left after coffee and biscuits. While Gavin organised downstairs I took care of upstairs. By nightfall the place looked lived in and amazingly not one single article was broken in the container.

Gavin needed another set of hands downstairs to help him lift the wood-working machinery into place - and I am only a girl! He bumped into Sekove Koro one day on Lautoka and asked him if he knew someone who could give us a hand for a few days. (Sekove had twice been a student of Gavin's, when he was in Fiji teaching beekeeping - through Telford Rural Polytechnic - in December 1993 and June 1995). Sekove suggested one of his brothers, so next day we drove out to the village, an hour from where we live and met up with Sekove's younger brother, Solo Nabogi. He agreed to give us a hand and with his bed-roll tucked under one arm and a bag of clothes under the other, he climbed in to the truck - a 2.5 ton Isuzu Elf. Solo's mother looked a bit bewildered at her youngest son (18) going away with these white folks.

Solo was indeed a great help and ended up staying longer than the original few days - we joke that he came for a few days and three years later has not returned! He slept in the downstairs two-bedroom flat and joined us for meals. He asked if he could have his breakfast in his 'own' flat, so as not to disturb us, so we provided him with a hot-plate, kettle, cup, spoon, cocoa, sugar, powdered milk, and breakfast crackers (Sao). He was happy baching and continued helping Gavin, tailing out as Gavin cut timber for bee boxes. He started taking a real interest in the machinery. Gavin asked if he would like to learn the machines, but Solo, still a bit scared, said

"No" - holding his hands behind his back. Eventually interest won over fear and he is now our wood-working machinist. He has found his niche and loves it, having left school to help his family - milking the cow, gardening and planting cane in the village.

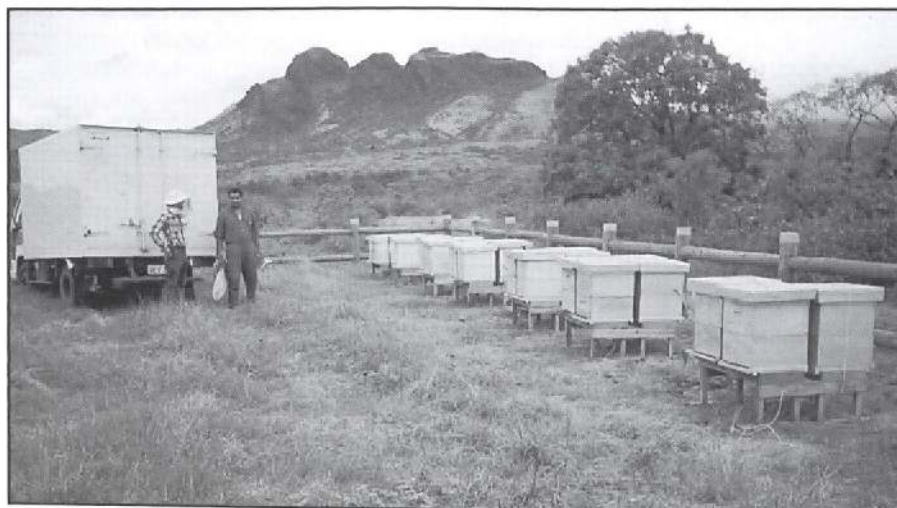
Now that we were building bee boxes, frames etc we had to get bees to put in them! We started with thirty nucleus hives - bees with an attitude! You made sure you put your overalls on before you left the vehicle! During Gavin's previous visits to Fiji, he met most of the beekeepers in Fiji and knew some of them had reasonably gentle queen bees and bred from those, giving the beekeeper back free queen bees. Most 'farmers' let their bees raise their own queens.

Sekove started with us in August 1996, having worked for two other beekeepers. He often tells us he has learned more in his time with us, than all his ten previous years beekeeping. He loves it because Gavin explains why he is doing a particular thing, explaining the big picture and doesn't just say do it! as he had experienced before. Sekove now owns 100 hives, making him one of Fiji's largest beekeepers. He lives in the flat with wife Una and their daughter Litia. Solo lived with them for a while, before we built him his own bedsit, under the balcony.

In the beginning, Gavin was told many, many times that beekeeping wouldn't work in Fiji. It has been tried before. Gavin had a point to prove - that it could be done and very successfully. It is amazing that in three years - the attitudes are changing - slowly, but they are changing.

Year One, we did not produce much honey, as we were continuously splitting hives, building up our numbers, as well as selling to other beekeepers. This was our bread and butter.

Year Two, was a bit of a disaster with Cyclone Gavin (!) paying us a visit. (Gavin was actually in Auckland Hospital when the cyclone hit and thought it was a bit of an insult that it was named after him). Cyclone Gavin taught us a valuable lesson though - bees do need feed in the tropics. Gavin had never experienced having to feed bees in the tropics before - and he worked in PNG for five years. Necessity being the mother of invention, we invented sugar feeding trays which are kept permanently on every hive as standard equipment, always ready for patches of bad weather - prolonged rain, flooding, high humidity, cyclones. 40% of the hives in Fiji died during or after Cyclone Gavin. Dry sugar = cheap insurance. All our hives are on hive stands, to stop the cane toads making

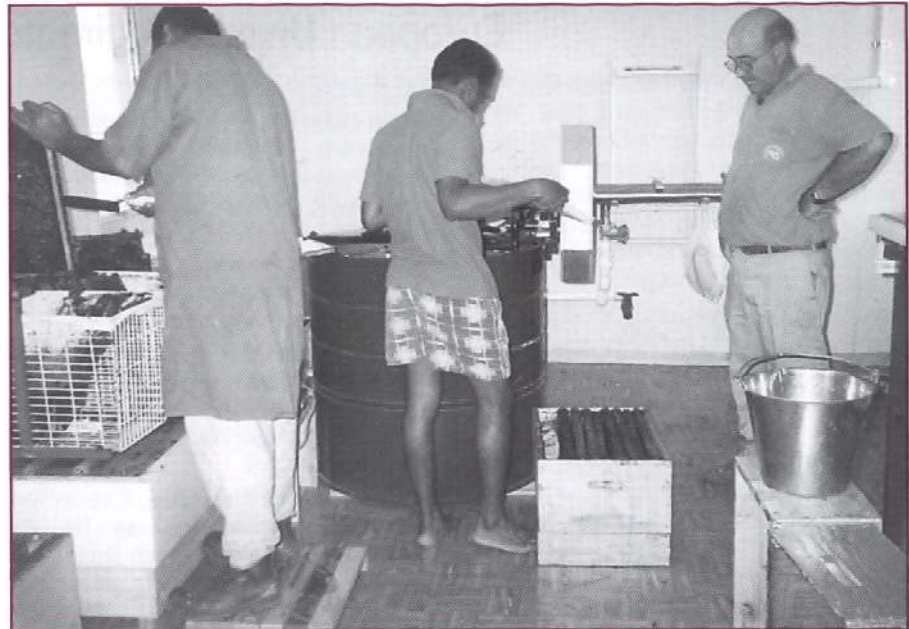


supper out of our bees, with the added plus the hives are easier to work. Also, through the experience of Cyclone Gavin, we have built hive stands that hold four hives, for stability, much sturdier than the previous ones that only held two hives. Our hives are permanently strapped down to the hive stand, thus making them cyclone proof! I also learnt how to cope during a cyclone, having no electricity for five days (thank goodness for gas stoves) even doing temporary repair to a window frame which partially blew inwards. I was so proud of myself! Once during bad flooding, where a bridge had washed away, Sekove and Solo drove out to the village, borrowed two horses, placed a 50kg bag of sugar on each horse and fed the bees.

From our original 30 hives we have now expanded to 800 - as well as supplying about 600 to other beekeepers - including several truck loads of live hives to Vanua Levue, by ferry - a first for Fiji. We have the largest beekeeping company in Fiji's history, producing and supplying nearly all beekeeping requirements - hive parts, live hives, wax foundation, queens, hive tools, smokers, clothing, extractors etc. What we cannot produce ourselves, we import.

Most beekeepers in Fiji are only beehive owners, getting any honey more from luck than skill, usually sending in someone else at night to 'steal' the honey. The majority of beehive owners have probably never seen inside their hives. We often get people come and ask questions, so Gavin says "Come out to the hives and I will explain". They stand twenty feet back and expect Gavin to shout to them. When Gavin explains that one man should be able to run 500 hives, it is met with gasps of incredulous disbelief. It is believed, if a man has fifty hives, he has a pretty large scale business.

Honey colours vary from very light through to almost black, although predominant honey produced is light amber, with a most delicate flavour. Fiji honey tends to have a very delicate flavour regardless of colour, as opposed to temperate climate zoned honey, where colour is synonymous with strong flavour. We are finding a ready market



for all the honey we produce within Fiji, and Fijians prefer Fiji honey. Along with honey, we also produce Propolis Extract, Pollen, Royal Jelly.

We get asked some funny questions. Do bees bite? If you scare them or don't feed them or they don't like their house do they run away? After we have sold someone a hive/hives, the buyer usually asks, "When are you going to come to my place and take out my honey"? Gavin is continually telling people, "I am happy to help you help yourself, but I am not going to do it for you". If someone comes to the gate they yell, "Do you have dogs?" When told, "No just millions of bees" - the look on their faces is priceless.

Gavin and Sekove were out checking an apiary one day. Gavin looked inside the box and said, "we are one short" (meaning it had swarmed) and Sekove answered, "No, it is coming in now" and Gavin looked up to a swarm coming in to land. Sekove has a wonderful sense of humour.

At present there are approximately 3,500 hives in Fiji - 1400 more since we arrived - whereas the potential is 50,000, so we have a long way to go. Fiji is perfect for large scale all year round queen rearing, although a lot of work is still to be completed in quarantine and bee disease status. Wax moth is the greatest pest we have to contend with. Apart from this, we have only experienced minor incidents of sac-brood virus, and although AFB is endemic in Fiji, having reported minor outbreaks over 30 years, we have not at this stage had an experience of AFB. This is probably due to the low number of beehives in the country, the relative isolation of individual beekeepers apiary sites and very little movement or transportation of bees from one area to another. Honey flows last six to eight months from April to October/November. Production of honey varies from area to area, year to year, with our

best hives producing 60+ kg and our worst 15kg, in spite of last year's serious drought.

Potential for future beekeeping is huge, but lack of skills and suitable 'hands-on' training is the most pressing need, along with infrastructure for bulk purchase of honey, packaging and marketing. Beekeeping in Fiji is different from New Zealand and also different again from Papua New Guinea. Hives get much stronger in Fiji needing 3 boxes, 2 boxes in PNG, and 4 in New Zealand. We hold workshops to teach practical beekeeping to prospective beekeepers, male and female and also to MAFF personnel. We are currently working with United Nations Development Programmes and successfully held a 'Hands-on Beekeeping Skills Workshop' in Sigatoka, 25-29 January of this year covering basics of beekeeping and marketing. 'Dateline Fiji' filmed the workshop and we have had good feedback since it was televised, as well as several newspaper articles, which, as he told us himself, the Prime Minister, Sitiveni Rabuka, found very interesting reading.

Fiji has Indian, Korean, German and Fijian beekeepers, several schools with their own hives, a Training School at Sigatoka with beehives (after our workshop) and FEA College has a bee unit as part of their Diploma in Agriculture. Fiji now has a Fiji Beekeepers' Association, incorporated in November 1998. President: Jonathon Kaliappa, Secretary: John Lewis, PO Box 16378, Suva, Fiji Islands.

It has been an exciting, challenging, frustrating three years, but extremely rewarding. It will be interesting to see what happens in the next three years. Beekeeping in Fiji has a long way to go, but it is great being part of it as it grows and matures.

Yours faithfully

Dot McKenzie, (Queen-Bee)

European Union Requirements

Some members may not know that the European Union demands that, any country wishing to supply honey into the Union States must comply with a "residual chemical testing programme" based on the testing of one sample of honey for every 300 tonnes of product produced in that country.

The NBA Executive was first appraised of this requirement in September 1997, and recognised immediately the imperative that steps must be taken, on behalf of the Industry at large, to ensure

that access to this market be protected.

Accordingly; For the 1997/98 season the Executive financed the testing programme at a cost of \$20,000. This with funds derived from its general revenue.

For the 1998/99 season the Executive, with the help of the Honey Industry Trust, undertook to underwrite the cost of collecting the 30 samples, taken randomly by AgriQual NZ Ltd, at a cost of \$5964. And similarly meet the cost of the testing by MAF Wallaceville at some \$6900.

At the same time the Executive undertook to ensure, as far as practicable, that these costs should fall equitably on those elements of the Industry which stood to gain as a result of the provision of an assured access to the EU markets.

This sought to recognise the fact that not all honey exporters were contributors to the NBA and, that not all those who exported honey from New Zealand did so into Europe.

At the same time the Executive entered into discussion with MAF RA over a series of proposals whereby the business of collecting the samples might be modified/simplified with economies of scale devolving from their implementation. At the time of writing

these investigations are proceeding.

In addition, Exporters, such as were known, were advised in mid February 1999 that a proposal to recover the costs involved would be established and, that this would likely be established on a per kilogram of honey exported basis. The intention being at that time that this be implemented as a "surcharge" and would be collected by AgriQual NZ, at the time of the issuing of an export certificate. This has proven to be more difficult to accomplish than it first appeared and, at the time of writing this report a "Memorandum of Understanding" is being prepared which it is expected will permit AgriQual to collect the "surcharge" in the manner outlined. This is being done in conjunction with those known exporters of honey working into Europe.

The NBA has spent many hours on this issue and expects to spend many more before the matter is fully resolved. However it can, and should, be said that as a consequence of the time put into this matter that at no time was there any suggestion that the access to the EU was in jeopardy. It remains now to introduce and formalise the "Memorandum of Understanding" and thus ensure continued access and that the costs involved are fairly distributed.

Terry Gavin

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Honey Punch

- 1-1/2 cups honey
 - 2 cups boiling water
 - 2 cups orange juice
 - 1 cup lemon juice
 - 4 cups cranberry juice
 - 1 qt. ginger ale
- Dissolve honey in boiling water and chill. Combine the 3 juices and chill. Add the honey and water. Just before serving add ginger ale.

Screwly Noodle Salad

- rotini noodles
 - chopped onion
 - diced celery
 - sliced carrots
 - jar of pimentos
 - sliced cucumbers
 - 3/4 cup honey
 - 3/4 cup oil
 - 3/4 cup vinegar
 - salt and pepper
 - 1/2 tsp celery seed
 - peppers - green or red chopped
- Cook and drain noodles. Cool. Add the vegetables (any amount desired). Mix together the dressing. Pour over other ingredients. Refrigerate and serve. It is a good keeping salad. Stir before serving to blend dressing, noodles and vegetables. It improves with age.

Shaker Potato Salad

- 5 med potatoes, cooked, peeled and diced
 - 2 tbs honey vinegar
 - sprinkle honey vinegar over hot potatoes
 - 2 eggs, slightly beaten
 - 1/3 cup vinegar
 - 1 tsp mustard
 - 1/2 cup salad dressing
 - 1/4 tsp celery seed
- Cook eggs, vinegar, honey and mustard over medium heat, stirring constantly until thickened. Cool. Add salad dressing and celery seed. Mix potatoes with dressing.

Flavourful Chicken

- 1 broiler - fryer chicken (2-1/2 - 3 lbs) cut into serving pieces or use breasts
 - 1/4 cup butter or margarine
 - 1/2 cup mild flavoured honey
 - 2 tbsps prepared mustard
 - 1/2 tsp garlic powder
 - 1 tsp paprika
 - 1 tsp salt
 - Fresh ground pepper if desired
- In shallow baking pan, melt butter. Stir in honey, mustard, and seasonings. Add chicken, coat on all sides. Bake skin down, at 350 degrees for 35 minutes. Turn chicken pieces. Baste. Continue baking until chicken is tender (about 15 min). *Makes about 6 servings.*

Honey Almond Chicken Salad

- 2 cups diced chicken breast
 - 1/2 cup mayo or salad dressing
 - 1/2 cups slivered almonds
 - 3 tbsps honey
 - salt, pepper, dillweed to taste
- Combine, serve on a bed of lettuce or as a sandwich filling.

Cherry Almond Quickbread

- 1/2 cup sugar
 - 1/2 cup butter or margarine
 - 2 cups flour
 - 1 cup buttermilk
 - 1/2 cup honey
 - 2 eggs
 - 1 tsp baking soda
 - 1 cup almond chopped
 - 1 tsp almond extract
 - 1/2 tsp salt
 - 1 6 ounce jar maraschino cherries drained and chopped
- In a large bowl cream sugar and butter. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Blend in extract. Combine dry ingredients. Blend into creamed mixture alternately with the buttermilk. Stir in the almonds and cherries. Pour into a greased and floured 9x5x3 inch loaf pan. Bake 350 degrees for 70 minutes or until loaf tests done. Remove from pan and cool on wire rack.

Honey Pumpkin Nut Bread

- 3/4 cup sugar
 - 1/4 tsp baking powder
 - 1/2 tsp cloves
 - 1/4 cup water
 - 1/2 cup chopped nuts
 - 3/4 cup honey
 - 1-1/2 tsp baking soda
 - 1/2 tsp cinnamon
 - 1 cup pumpkin
 - 1-2/3 cups flour
 - 3/4 tsp salt
 - 1/2 cup salad oil
 - 2 eggs
- Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Combine all ingredients except nuts in mixing bowl. Mix three minutes. Fold in nuts. Bake in greased 9x5x3 inch loaf pan for 1 hour 20 minutes or until tester comes out clean. Cool on rack for 15 minutes. Turn out to cool completely.

Honey Zucchini Nut Bread

- 6 small eggs
 - 3 cups flour
 - 1 tsp baking soda
 - 1 cup salad oil
 - 1 cup sugar
 - 5 tbsps flour
 - 1 tbsps vanilla extract
 - 1 cup nuts
 - 1 cup honey
 - 1 tsp baking powder
 - 1 cup zucchini ground
 - 1/2 tsp salt
- Beat eggs, add sugar, honey and beat again. Add oil and mix. Combine flour, soda, baking powder and salt; sift 4 times. Add to mixture, stir in zucchini, vanilla and nuts. Bake at 325 degrees for 1 hour.

Honey Roasted Nuts

- 2 cups nuts
 - 3 tbsps butter
 - 1/2 tsp grated orange peel
 - 1/2 cup honey
 - 1/2 tsp cinnamon
- Microwave combined ingredients on high for 4-7 minutes or until well done.

Acknowledgement, American Bee Journal

IMPORTANT DATES FOR 1999

BRANCHES SEND YOUR MEETING DATES IN FOR 1999. NO CHARGE.

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

COMING EVENTS...

EXECUTIVE MEETING DATES

17th, 18th, 19th May 1999 WELLINGTON
12th July 1999 ASHBURTON

1999 BEEKEEPERS CONFERENCE

JULY 12th to 15th 1999
AGM - 14th, 15th of July

Hosted by the South Canterbury Beekeeper Branch of the NBA at the Hotel Ashburton, Racecourse Road, Ashburton.

Hotel phone: (03) 308-3059 • or Peter on: (03) 693-9189

2000 Conference GISBORNE

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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 Margaret Cooper
Phone: (03) 383-0368

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

MARLBOROUGH BRANCH

Meets every second Thursday in every
second month.
Call Jeff on: (03) 577-5489

MANAWATU BEEKEEPERS CLUB

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

NELSON BRANCH

Phone: Michael
(03) 528-6010

NELSON BEEKEEPERS CLUB

Contact: Kevin
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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: James Scott, 280 Major Drive,
Kelson, Lower Hutt.
E-mail: JLscott@clear.net.nz