

ISSN 0110-6325



The New Zealand BeeKeeper

FEBRUARY 2000
VOL 7. No. 1

The Official Journal of the National Beekeepers' Association of New Zealand (Inc.),
C/- PO Box 21, Waipukurau, Hawke's Bay, New Zealand. Freephone: 0800 42-42-77



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1999 Subscriptions:

NZ \$38.00 (GST Incl).

Overseas Airmail US \$38.00.

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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 **25th November**.

Notes from the Executive

In the Executives' notes of the December magazine my concern was in the area of the Association's finances and general governance. Important as these issues are they are not the only ones to occupy the attention of the Executive during the last three months. I feel that one of these in particular is close to the heart of the NBA and the industry which it supports and so should be identified.

As I have spoken to beekeepers from all over the country during recent weeks it has become obvious to me that many are concerned about an apparent lack of industrial input coming down from the Executive. There is clearly a concern that the domestic affairs of the Association have assumed a disproportionate share of the Executive's time and effort at the expense of wider industrial or commercial challenges. The perception is that these issues are put on the backburner and the industry is disadvantaged as a result.

Both the Executive and I have had thoughts in similar vein of late and this has been the subject of recent review.

I had intended to make a full presentation early in the New Year after the matters of a Service Provider for the management of our affairs and the appointment of an Executive Secretary were resolved. I now believe however that this is the right time for me to open the subject and outline what the Executive is doing about it.

Clearly the question of balancing the demands on the Executive generated by the Association against those generated by the Industry are of concern to many members. In many respects the Executive's position on this issue is a difficult one.

On the one hand it must be remembered that the Executive Committee is constituted under the Governing Articles of the National Beekeepers Association to which it is primarily and constitutionally responsible. With this of course goes responsibility for good governance and the conservation and wise use of resources.

Equally of course it is clear that the Association is largely dependant upon there being an industrial and commercial element in place, because this is where the majority of it's financial resources and membership is derived.

This industrial element effectively underpins the Association, something not always readily acknowledged.

As I see it this industrial role can and should be removing obstacles by advocating on behalf of the industry in the political arena, and recognising and encouraging the technical input and commercial opportunities which contribute to the health and prosperity of it's beekeeper members. Not forgetting of course, those important allied commercial enterprises whose livelihood is tied to the beekeeping industry as we know it.

The future of the NBA as an association is indivisible from the existence of a healthy, prosperous industry existing alongside it.

If the NBA were to fall over for whatever reason, the industry would survive. This because it is the industry which represents the input, the output and the opportunities by which some seven hundred plus beekeepers derive a major part of or all of the income which supports them and their families, and

which secures the capital investment in their enterprise.

The dilemma faced by the Executive is the question of to what extent they should pursue the industrial aspect? Clearly this role cannot be taken to the point where the future of the Association is in jeopardy and it cannot in any respect compromise the administration and implementation of the Pest Management Strategy. So it must come down to striking an appropriate balance between industrial matters and the affairs of the Association.

In acknowledgment of this I had earlier asked the Executive to prepare some sort of "game plan" or "strategic pathway" which would recognise some of the more immediate needs and concerns of the industry. This, you understand, to include any current commitments, to be achievable and not some sort of wild wish list. To reflect the current financial constraints and to be within the scope of the administration provider's ability to action.

To this end a schedule of twelve issues has been prepared. It has been discussed with the Executive Secretary and agreement that it should progress has been reached. These issues are listed at the end of the document.

Clearly not every question facing the Association and the Industry has been included. To attempt to do so would be a nonsense. In the main only current issues or those known to be pending have been included. The intention is that the plan should be under constant review and regularly updated in full consultation with the membership. I believe it is possible to work our way down this "strategic pathway," with some confidence. We will have the support and advice of the Federation's Policy Research Group under Catherine Petrey and I believe the end result will be worthwhile.

New Zealand Beekeepers

Important Levy Notice for 2000

The Minister of Agriculture has approved the following levy rates for 2000:

Class 1: A rate of \$54.00 plus GST payable for each beekeeper's first apiary site; and

Class 2: A rate of \$26.00 plus GST payable for each additional apiary site.

The levy for 2000 is calculated for a beekeeper on the basis of the number of the beekeeper's apiary sites on 1 June 1999.

A beekeeper who owned or controlled fewer than 11 beehives and had fewer than 4 apiary sites on 1 June 1999 is exempt from paying the levy for 2000, provided he/she supplies a statutory declaration to that effect to the association.

For further information please contact Tim Leslie, NBA Secretary, P O Box 715, Wellington. Telephone: (04) 473-7269. Facsimile: (04) 473-1081.
Email: tlestie@fedfarm.org.nz

The New Zealand BeeKeeper THIS ISSUE

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While the project is not an end in itself it is a beginning and over time and with more input from members it has the potential to go some way to ensuring a balance between the Association and the Industry enabling them both to function in a more productive manner.

Clearly the Executive cannot hope to implement this initiative alone. The project is dependant on enlarged sub-committee input. This week two new sub-committees have been formed, for

which, along with the existing Exotic Disease Committee, terms of reference have been developed and actioned. Members of these committees will be contacted in the next week or so.

The Schedule is a short term initiative which I hope will pave the way for greater individual participation and long term planning. If the membership gets in behind it we should see the industry go from strength to strength as further concerns are identified and addressed.

Both I and all Executive members will be happy to receive your calls and letters discussing these matters. Please feel free to contact any of us at any time.

For the executive

Yours faithfully

Terry Gavin

President.

Strategic Pathway Schedule

1. Animal Products Act and the implications thereof.
2. PMS implementation.
3. Market Access. In conjunction with External Affairs & Trade
4. Health Standards involved with the importation of hive products.
5. Genetic Modification.
6. Pesticides and surfactants.
7. Food safety regulations.
8. Strategic relationships with other industries.
9. Honey Bee status in New Zealand (sub-committee appointed)
10. Exotic Bee disease investigation. (existing sub-committee)
11. Organisational structure review (sub-committee appointed)
12. Regular scheduled reviews of R & D programmes (refer to Goodwin report of last year).

Important Notice:

Federated Farmers of New Zealand (Inc.) now provide the Association's secretarial services. Tim Leslie is the new secretary and first point of contact. His contact details are:

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National Beekeepers Association of New Zealand (Inc.)
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From the Colonies ...

Snippets from the Franklin Beekeepers Club Newsletter
February/March 2000

Sadly, I report the passing of our old friend and member, Wilf Harper after a short illness.

At 87, Wilf appeared to be in excellent health and was still able to do the heavy workload he had set himself in manufacturing and supplying his own invention of a backing chain for Rotary Cowsheds which were in sheds throughout New Zealand.

As most of us know, Wilf was in his younger days, a keen beekeeper, and for the past 13 years has been the judge at our annual honey show. As someone who could be called one of Nature's Gentlemen, Wilf will be sadly missed.

Taking off Honey

Several methods of removal will be demonstrated at our next field day. Brushing - Escape board - Benzaldehyde Fume Board and possibly Blower.

However, we must ensure that no American Foulbrood exists in the hive as this is transmitted through feeding larvae with infected honey. While infected honey will in no way harm us, any honey discarded such as bread crusts from honey spread sandwiches, or empty cartons etc, can be picked up by foraging bees, returned to their clean hive and so reinfect.

For the new chum, this brood check needs to be done at a previous opening of the hive, as the trauma of robbing your hive is enough without disturbing the brood chamber.

Preparation should also be made by fitting a Porter bee escape, being the most reliable, to a hive mat if this method is to be used. A bee brush or a leafy branch is excellent in emergency. It is unlikely, but if Benzaldehyde (artificial oil of almonds) is used a fume lid must be built. Blowers and Benzaldehyde are used more by commercial beekeepers. President Bob may like to demonstrate his blower.

Honey Flow

Good reports are coming in from Northland and Waikato with their revival of clover producing nectar. The weevil must be in recess. Crossing the Hauraki Plains last week, I was pleased to see masses of clover flowering after its absence for so long, a reward for those who retained their sites. However here in Franklin, a traditionally slow starter, although bees have worked clover, it has been for pollen rather than nectar. We will just have to wait patiently to see what the weather brings forth.

My forestry site immediately above the Waikato River near the mouth, is producing better than it has for several years. However, Des tells me that the club site which is never a good producer, is unlikely to give us much to sell for the A&P Show display. There are good local reports of Penny Royal which can be seen on a higher plain than the usual lower swampy areas.

Manipulation

Towards the end of March, our efforts should be put into restricting the Queen's egg laying area, for in 6 weeks, when that offspring becomes a field bee, there will be no nectar to be found in her neverending search and it is so important to conserve those winter stores. Bring down those same stores and pack around her brood area. An excluder can help.

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Dues and overdues

Our yearly reminder, and hopefully the committee will not increase fees this year. \$12.00 reduced to \$10.00 if paid before March 31st. If last year's fees were not paid you won't be getting this newsletter. Or shouldn't.

March Meeting

Date: 12/3/2000

Time: 10am Cuppa and register for honey competition.

Hosts: Jim and Elsie Thompson, 125 Queen Street, Pukekohe. Opposite baths. Sign posted.

Programme: Annual General Meeting. Honey Competition. Big sting trophy to be won. Bob will report on the DECA course.



Southern North Island Branch:

Production through our area is patchy. A reasonable Kamahi flow was followed by cloudy, cool wet weather during which time the hives went backwards. The on again off again conditions caused the bees to pack what little honey was coming into the brood nest.

Christmas week, the weather suddenly warmed which stimulated massive swarming over most of the region. Those that haven't swarmed have produced well.

Hives on Manuka have produced an average to above average crop making up for last year's failure although some areas were washed after a week.

All the wet weather in the north of the district produced masses of clover bloom in the paddocks but the rain and cool weather has delayed the clover flow, which is just now underway and looks promising.

The further south you travel the dryer it gets. Coastal Manawatu (Wanganui to Levin) has only produced stores.

Acknowledgement

Elaine Styles, with Ian and Alison Spence, would like to thank all those beekeepers who gave them support and help during the time of their brother, and cousin, Keith Herron's illness. The visits, messages and phone calls from fellow beekeepers were much appreciated by Keith and the family.

Sincere thanks to those who sat with Keith during his final three weeks in hospital.

Thanks also to those of you who attended Keith's funeral service. The number of beekeepers who formed the guard of honour at the conclusion of the service showed the respect that Keith was held in by the beekeeping industry.

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Sweet success in the Bay

By John Hart, HB Today

Hawke's Bay could be heading for one of its best honey seasons in recent years.

Hawke's Bay Beekeepers' Association president Tom Taylor said honey production in Central Hawke's Bay was excellent.

"The clover seems to be good throughout most of Hawke's Bay. The rain earlier helped the clover develop and now the heat is bringing the honey on," Mr Taylor said.

"For me, it is shaping up to be one of the best honey seasons for a long time."

Manuka honey was well above average, James Ward, of Takapau-based Kintail Honey, said.

Kintail has 6000 hives between Central Hawke's Bay and south Wairarapa and Mr Ward said manuka honey was well above average.

The clover honey was just starting and was shaping up well.

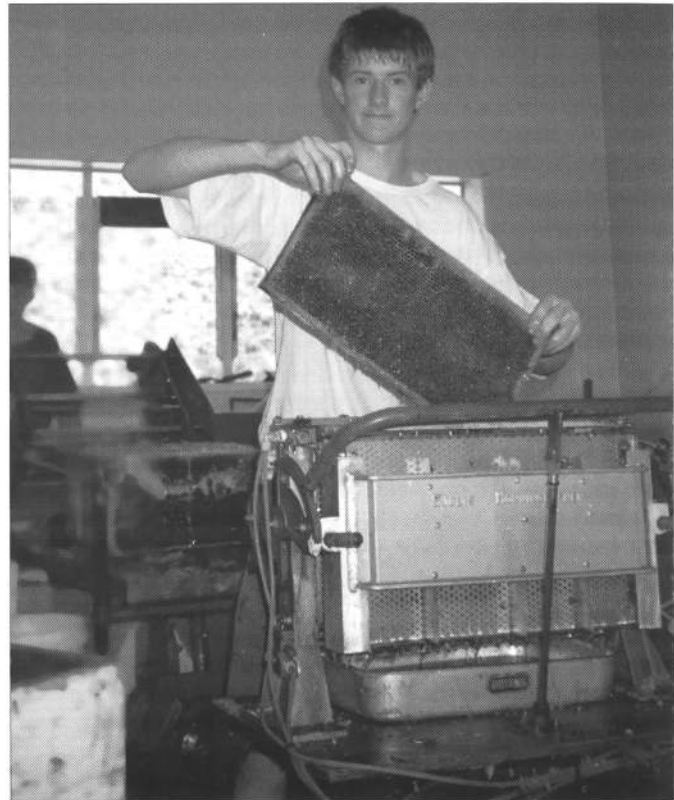
"It's looking really good and looks like being as good as it has been for many years," Mr Ward said.

Kintail packs honey for the New Zealand market and for export. Its Takapau factory is working 20 hours a day extracting and packing honey.

Ian Berry, of Arataki Honey, said honey production from nodding thistle was especially good this year.

"Although the farmers don't like it, nodding thistle produces beautiful honey. It is light and the quality is premium."

Mr Berry was optimistic about the season "although things can change overnight."



Malcolm Moore with frames of manuka honey to be extracted at Kintail Honey, Takapau. The season has produced good quantities of high-quality manuka honey.



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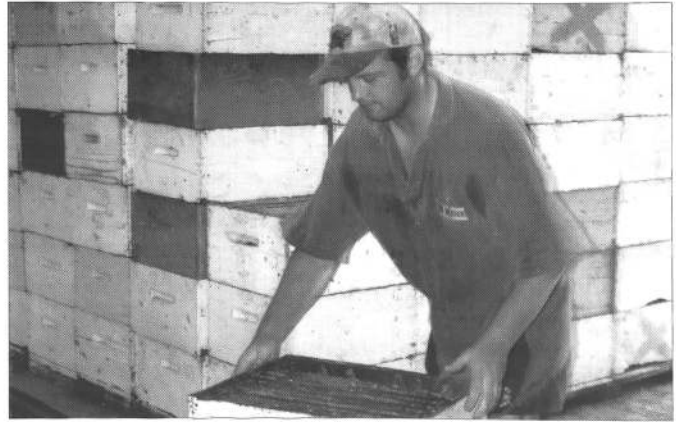
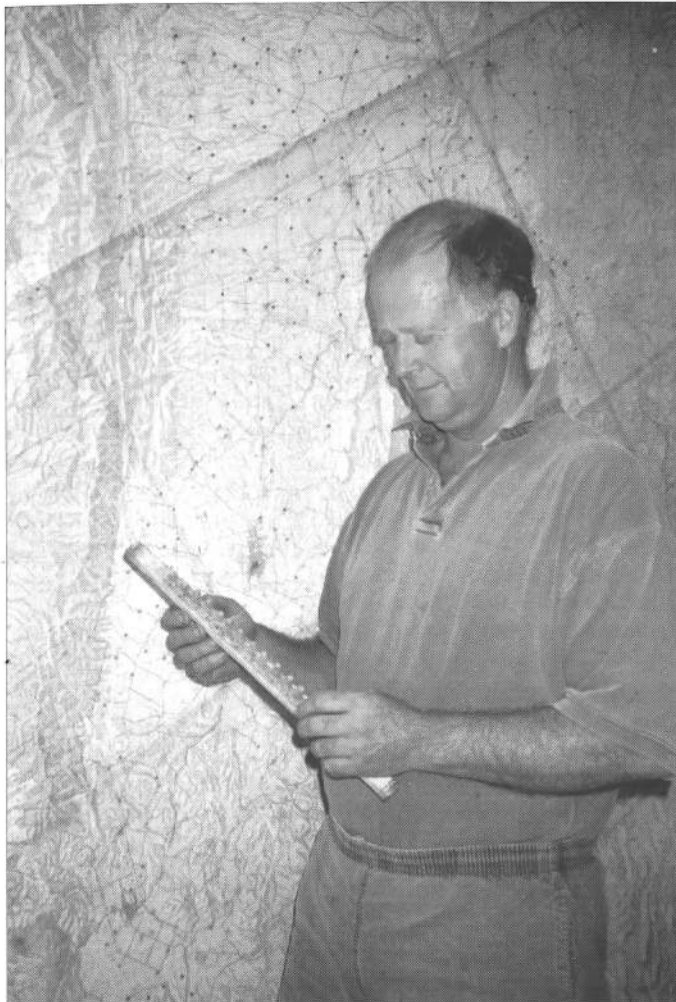
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ABOVE: Brendan Holdem unloads boxes of honey at Kintail Honey, Takapau. Each hive contains up to 40kg of honey.

Left: James Ward, of Kintail Honey, with the queen bee cells he has raised for placing in hives. Kintail also has a thriving business exporting bees to Canada and South Korea.

HB Today pictures: John Hart.

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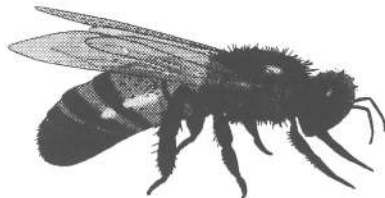
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Worker bees

By Nikhil Hutheesing from Forbes Global, 26th July, 1999
Microchip Backpacks Turn Insects into Minesweepers

Remember how miners once carried canaries to give them early warning of dangerous fumes? Now scientists are preparing bees to do a similar good deed, by seeking out toxic chemicals, even forgotten land mines.

The man behind the bees is Jerry J Bromenshenk, an entomologist with the University of Montana in Missoula. In the early 1990s he demonstrated his bees' prowess by scattering hives across south-eastern Idaho, near pine trees that were suffering from a mysterious plague of brown needles. When the bees returned to the hive Bromenshenk froze them solid and shipped them home for analysis. It turned out the bees had inhaled fluoride, which came from nearby industrial plants.

Since then, Bromenshenk's bees have become more technologically advanced. For one thing, they don't have to die to do their jobs.

The US Army has given them a chance to be all they can be, by monitoring military landfills for toxic fumes. Bromenshenk sets up hives nearby and tracks the bees as they go in and out. The same statically charged hairs that normally snag pollen also bring back dangerous chemicals, which are detected by an electronic system that sucks air from the hive onto an absorbent material. The material is then analysed.

At the Old O-Field landfill, on an Army base north of Baltimore, the bees detected gas, diesel fuel and solvents from dry-cleaning fluid. The Army capped the landfill with sand and gravel, then Bromenshenk repeated the process to make sure the landfill was safe.

Now comes the bees' biggest mission yet: detecting land mines. "We anaesthetise the bees with carbon dioxide and then glue tags onto their back," explains Ronald Gilbert, who is testing the technology at the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, in Richland, Washington.

The tags contain radio-frequency-emitting chips, much like the ones stores put on clothes to thwart shoplifters. The laboratory's workers shrank the tags to half the size of a grain of rice. Antennas at the entrance of the hive pick up radio frequency signals from the tag. A computer analyses the data to tell whether the bees are coming or going.

Upon returning to the hive, each bee is identified by its tag and greeted with a puff of air. The air sweeps molecules into a mass spectrometer, which measures their atomic weights and compares the results with those for TNT. If the explosive is identified, the computer system updates its map of known

minefields. Police then post warning signs for as long as it takes sappers to remove the mines.

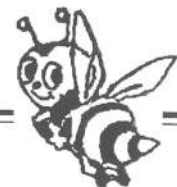
One of these days, though, Bromenshenk would like to do away with chips and electronics. "We have proven that bees are excellent samplers of their surroundings," he says. "What I want to do next is see if bees can use their visual and olfactory senses to find things."

It's anyone's guess whether that is possible. But Bromenshenk is giving it a shot. He's training his bees much as you might train a dog to search for drugs - through positive reinforcement. By giving the bee a little TNT dipped in sugary syrup, for instance, he conditions it to love the smell of the explosive.

The Defence Advanced Research Projects Agency, the research arm of the Department of Defence, is spending \$3 million over the next three years on bee research. If it turns out that the bees can discover land mines, DARPA expects to make it all back by selling the bee reconnaissance system to armies around the world.

So far, insect rights activists have not protested this research.

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Hastings, New Zealand.

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The new kid on the block

Now Finitron is available, we could be expected to stop research into controlling wasps with baits. However, we will not rest while research can improve the level of control achieved by baiting, or can increase the range of situations where baiting can be used.

We are currently trialling a new wasp bait, "X-stinguish", for the agrochemical company, Rhone Poulenc. X-stinguish contains the insecticide fipronil, which has low toxicity to vertebrates. The new product shows considerable promise because it is fast acting, and much smaller amounts of bait are needed compared with toxic baits we have trialled previously. As a result, the effectiveness of a control operation will be apparent within a few days.

Because large quantities of bait per nests are not required for effective control, baiting could be used earlier in the season or where the bait is only mildly attractive.

Last summer, the Department of Conservation used X-stinguish in their Mainland Island at St Arnaud. Poison bait was placed out once in the 300 ha site. There was no pre-feeding. Half the site had bait stations spaced at 100 x 50m, the other half at 50 x 50m. For both spacings, all wasp nests within the poisoned site were killed within a few days.

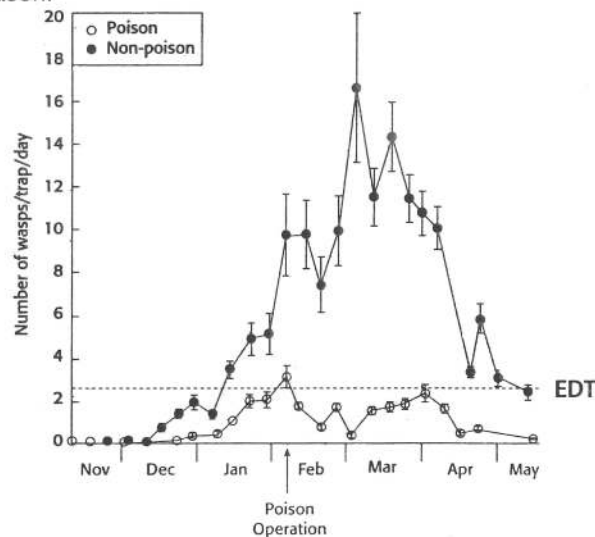
The number of foragers in the site was kept very low compared with the non-poisoned site (see figure). This is the first time a poisoning trial has been able to keep wasps below estimated ecological damage thresholds (EDT) for beech forest.

This season, further trials will be conducted to determine the best bait to use in a commercial product. A product may be commercially available this time next year - if all goes well.

Richard Harris

harris4@landcare.cri.nz

Poisoning reduced wasp abundance below an estimated ecological damage threshold (EDT) for most of the wasp season.

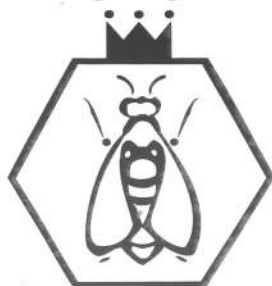


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Quinn Q4 in operation.

Handle those bees with ease

"A specialised handling machine designed for the bee-keeping industry", is how Alex Quinn of Quinn Baleboys Ltd, Paeroa, describes their new 'Q4' 4 wheel drive skid steer loader at a field day for BOP beekeepers recently.

Powered by a 13HP petrol engine with joystick hand controls, the 'Q4' is an ideal operators machine. The hand controls operate the speed, direction, lift and tilt operation of the forks. A separate foot control will operate another auxiliary operation, such as a beehive clamp.

The Q4 will turn in it's own length and with a lifting capacity of over 300kg makes this machine ideal for handling anything from hives to 200 litre drums. The 4 wheel drive gives incredible traction in the worst conditions.

"With more awareness of the OSH requirements, it is important we all look at ways of operating safely and productively" Mr Quinn said to the group.

Weighing in at approx 600kg the Q4 can be easily carried on a standard car trailer or across the deck or drawbar of a tandem trailer.

Features of the Q4 include; 4 wheel drive, easy access on and off the machine, dual joystick controls, compact turning radius, good reach for truck loading, optional forks or bucket attachment, parallel lifting arms, auxiliary hydraulics, two speed controller (up to 13kph).



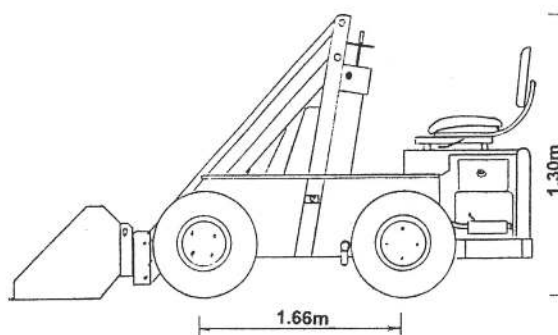
Bay Of Plenty Beekeepers at Field day for the Q4.

Working with a beekeeper in the development of this machine, Quinn's believe they have improved on the design features of other products that have been used in the industry over the years. The beehive clamp is just one of those features that has been designed to suit a range of hive configurations being used by beekeepers.

Finance is available to approved purchases if required.

The Q4 is New Zealand made from a company with over 30 years experience in the manufacture of materials handling equipment.

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NATIONAL BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

CANTERBURY BRANCH

PRESIDENT - RICHARD BENSEMANN - FAX/PHONE 03 324-4410 13 SPRING PLACE, LEESTON
SECRETARY - TREVOR CORBETT - FAX/PHONE 03 314-6836 80 GLENMARK DRIVE, WAIPARA, NORTH CANTERBURY

FEBRUARY EVENING MEETING

Date: 29 February 2000 Tuesday

Time: 7.30pm sharp

Venue: Rumpletums,
Avonhead Tavern
20 Withells Rd
Christchurch

Programme:

- 1: First meeting of the new year
- 2: General Business
- 3: Guest speaker

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Secretary

The restaurant we are meeting in serves a really good buffet meal, at \$13.95 per head. To take advantage of this meal and meet with members before the meeting, you will have to be there an hour before hand.

ATTENTION

CANTERBURY BEEKEEPERS DECA COMPETENCY COURSE AND TEST

In conjunction with the Christchurch Hobbyist Beekeeping Club the Canterbury branch NBA is running the above course and test. On Saturday 11 March, 9am at Rowley School Hall, 48 Rowley Avenue Hoon Hay.

If you wish to attend please register with Canterbury Secretary by 1/3/00. The cost will be \$10.00 to cover venue hire tea and coffee, etc. Please bring your own lunch, paper and pens.

The test is \$25.00 and can be sat without coming to the course. It will start at 2.30pm. To start the registration process contact Trevor Corbett phone/fax 03 314-6836 no later than 1/3/00. Late registration will not be accepted. Cheques for test only are to be made out to Competency Test Administrator-Richard Hatfield and crossed Account Payee only.

To attend both course and test the cost is \$35.00. Cheques or cash can be made out to Canterbury Branch NBA. Test only is \$25.00. Both must be paid for on registration.

Canterbury field day - November 1999

Mary-Ann and I took the opportunity to travel south to the Canterbury Branch's field day at Hawarden. On the way we stopped overnight at Hamner and enjoyed a few hours in the hot pools. It was nice resting in a hot pool with gentle rain falling on your head. The rain continued but we didn't realise the effect in the high country until next morning, the surrounding hills were covered in snow.

Eighty-five beekeepers from all points came, dressed for winter, to Bruce and Ross McCusker's honey house. Their property backs on to the high country and nestles on the terrace in the bend of the Waikari River. Most of their land is taken up with their ostrich farm where they maintain breeding stock.

The basis of the programme was 'Alternative Products from the Beehive' and to this end they had lined up some impressive speakers.

Cliff Van Eaton and Andrew Stratford from Comvita NZ talked on the production, preparation and analysis of propolis. Propolis comes from sap and resins from a tree's immune system mixed with special ingredients from the bee's salivary glands. The more we learn about this fascinating product, the more amazing it becomes. Current research shows that it can kill bacteria, fungi, protozoans and viruses. Propolis is unique in that it acts with a synergistic affect to boost the immune system with no side affects. It has been found to be effective against cold, flu and associated illnesses, plus can be used to assist with healing but can also act as an anaesthetic for toothache.

Comvita had developed a world standard line of propolis products that stand out on the shelf.

Julian Blackett from Rheem Container Products was very interesting. Rheems have developed a new drum for the Dairy

market: 230 litre that fits nicely, (four wide) into a container. The normal 200 litre was still available but beekeepers should order early as the factory had to be set up to produce them.

There was considerable discussion on drums. The reinforcing ripples, how many, what size. How should we be lifting them? Did you know there are three types of lid produced, each made for a different lifting system? He recommended drums should be placed on a pallet and moved with a forklift.

Lining came in for some debate.

Beekeepers like to reuse drums, however the clear lining used in most drums is made for one use only. Moisture degrades the lining very quickly so drums have to be thoroughly dried after washing. Small creases are ok but dents usually cause the lining to break down.

The pink or tan linings are for multiple use but cost more to produce. These are tougher and will take a dent without damaging the lining. Exporters are now demanding to know what type of lining is used in the drum. They must be FD&A approved. If you are using overseas produced drums, make sure the lining is up to standard.

Tony Scott gave an interesting presentation on pollen collecting and how this had improved his skill as a beekeeper. The best pollen collecting hives were the best honey gathers and those not up to the mark were quickly identified as needing attention. Failing queens were identified well before there were visual signs in the brood nest by a drop in production and hives could be attended to before there was a collapse in bee population.

Traps went on in mid-September and were removed in early April without any adverse affect on the hives (North Island beekeepers had noted a drop in honey production). The minimum requirement before a trap was put on was 5 frames



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of brood and growing. Ventilation (front and back) was the only critical thing to watch. Bees hanging out of the hive were an indication more was required. Canterbury beekeepers had another advantage over us North Islanders as the north-west wind being such a dry wind meant that during summer, pollen could be left on the hives for 10 days between collection rounds without any adverse affect in quality. Ideally, the more pollen traps on your hives the more economical the operation. Beekeepers could expect to gather 5 - 6 kg per hive, which equates to 3 - 4 kg dry pollen at \$18 to \$25 per kg

That was the good news but the bad news was that pollen sales had a fickle history of boom and bust. He recommended that nobody go into this until they had a contract to sell. A group of beekeepers were co-operating together to stabilise the NZ market and would invite others into their group as this and exports grew. One interesting comment to come out of this was that they had a problem with possums and had to routinely trap them for if they got a taste for pollen, they would damage the traps getting at it. Perhaps we do have a type of bear problem in NZ.

Brian Lipscombe is now the agent for 'Gera Propolis Mats', pollen traps and the other products Les developed before his untimely death. He displayed several that had recently come off the hives, how to clean them and how these fitted into the everyday operation of his business (which encompassed pollination, collecting pollen and propolis as well as honey). More is being learnt about the habits of bees and when is the best time to collect propolis. He is producing a newsletter that he sends out to interested beekeepers to keep them up with advancements.

Peter Little from NZ Beeswax showed examples of how not to prepare your wax and recommended that it only be processed once and not to overheat it. Most overseas buyers preferred wax that had not been reheated and compared it to a good steak. Adulteration was a problem overseas and standards are getting more stringent. Beekeepers should try to keep dark and light coloured cappings separate and not to blend these. Wax mould sizes were discussed and he indicated there was no standard but preferred those sizes that easily stacked on a standard pallet. The egg pulp tin or 2/3 of the old 60-lb tin were an ideal size.

Bill Floyd, our marketing guru gave us a quick presentation of the talk he gave at Apomondia and asked the question, "with all the value added products in a drum of honey, why do we sell it at commodity prices of around \$US1.00". He reiterated that 'cheaper is not better' and that customer's perceive quality by price. There were many ways to present our product and some beekeeper/packers were actually doing this. He

recommended that beekeepers in a region should get together and market their regional honeys as a separate line.

The sponsors and trade display participants all had an opportunity to show off their bargains for those last minute sales.

Canterbury President Richard Bensemman thanked all those who came and said the they were trying to make their field days the best in the South Island and indicated that they would continue to bring in overseas speakers (North Island and further afield) to expand beekeepers knowledge. Special mention - lunch was great - ostrich kebabs, steak, pies and sausages with salads.

After the formal sessions, beekeepers mingled and talked. I mentioned that there seemed to be clover flowering everywhere. Some paddocks were like those seen in old pictures, but I was advised that looks aren't everything. In fact the clover needs a bit of warmth to stimulate the nectaries to secrete. The damp wet years (this year) are the ones the beekeepers most fear as you can't predict what sort of crop you are going to get or when its going to come in.

Another thing I noticed while travelling south was bees being killed just as we were leaving Blenheim, five bees were killed on the windscreen within a hundred yards. If this happens every time a vehicle passes, imagine the carnage. If hives have to be placed next to a main road, consider planting a screen between the hives and the road to force the bees up out of the path of traffic.

Apparently this sort of thing happens in Canterbury quite a lot. The Norwest wind forces the bees to fly low, a few feet from the ground. If hives are close to a road, the bees use them as their main arterial routes where they really get slaughtered by traffic. Hence beehives in Canterbury are generally placed well back from the roads and away from public view. Travelling through Canterbury, there's hardly any hives to be seen, but stop and look around and you're sure to see a bee loaded with pollen working a nearby flower. In fact the area is full of hives which forces the beekeepers there to maintain small apiaries of 8-10 hives to maximise production.

Only problem going south was that it took another two days to get home owing to cancellations of Cook Strait ferries due to high seas.



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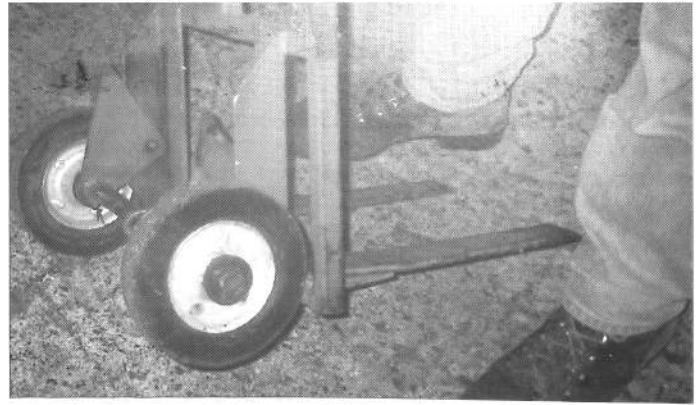
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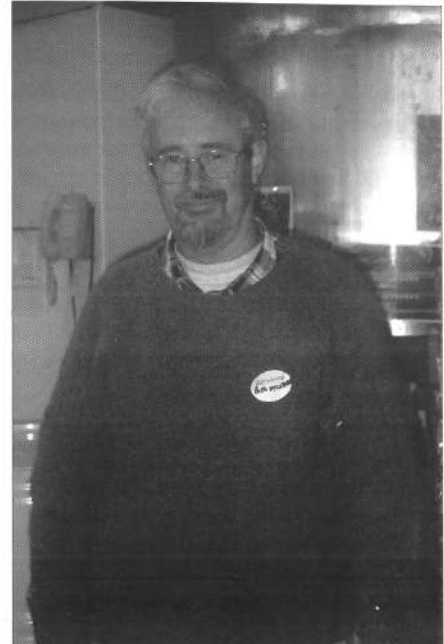
Photos from Canterbury field day



Floating axle on barrow to ease lifting.



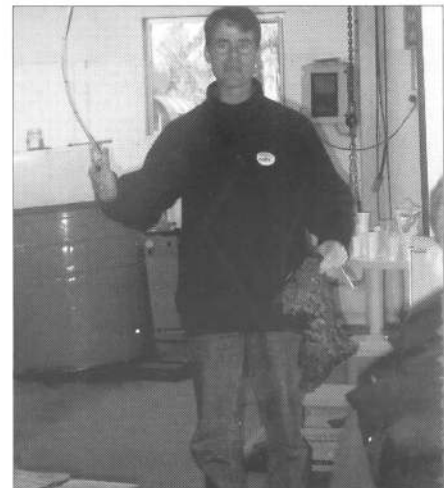
Bill Floyd sampling manuka honey.



Ross McCusker



Brian and Heidi Pilley, Beeline Supplies, Dunedin.



Andrew Stratford, Comvita.



Julian Blackett discussing drum differences.



More discussion on drums.



Modification to hold drum.

Asian paper wasp still spreading

Results of our recent survey of the Asian paper wasp show that it is still on the move. Many of the specimens we were sent were found outside those areas recorded in our 1990 survey. All except one of the samples were identified as Asian paper wasps.

New records were received from East Cape, Taranaki and the south of the North Island. This includes specimens from Whakatane to Cape Runaway, Mokau, New Plymouth, Marton, Bulls, Pipiriki (near Raetihi), Palmerston North, Wairoa, Upper Hutt and Wellington. The wasp has spread from Hamilton, and is now found in Morrinsville, Hinuera and Matamata.

Several farmers report these new invaders are a considerable pest. The Asian paper wasp is still spreading in the Nelson region; where it is found from Mapua/Richmond through to the Glen, east of Nelson. We have previously had a few records of Asian paper wasps in Blenheim. This is the most southerly location. We would like to confirm that it is still found in Blenheim and determine if it is spreading into the surrounding district. We would welcome specimens of paper wasps either from this region, or other areas where we do not have dots on our map. Many thanks to those who have already helped.

Send samples with your name, address, and where the wasp(s) were collected (with a grid reference if possible) to:

**Asian wasp survey, Land Research, Private Bag 6, Nelson.
Jo Rees,
reesj@landcare.cri.nz**



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January has just finished and from reports I have received from around our area, some beekeepers are pleased and some are a little down, still waiting for a crop that has been quickly burnt off by the hot dry weather.

Around here things are humming along. Manuka and Pohutukawa had a prolonged flowering. Four frame nucs made in October should produce two supers of honey. Clover is in the fields and with all the rain we have been having, it should continue to flower.

Now it's time to think about extracting honey. For the new beekeepers try and work with an experienced beekeeper for a few days to get the hang of it. It's a sticky job and you'll only be able to mess up the kitchen once, so get some experience and save yourself a big clean-up job.

First job is to get the capped supers off the hive. There are many ways to do this: shaking, brushing, blowing, fume-boards, or escape boards.

Shaking bees off a frame is very slow, labour intensive and is used if only a few frames are being removed from a hive.

Brushing (using a goose wing) was the method used in the early days. Brushes are dampened, the super is put on a stand and the outside frame removed to make room to work. The side of each frame is quickly brushed to remove the bees while still in the super. This method is not recommended for urban areas, as some bees tend to get a little upset with this procedure.

Blowing is the main method used today by most commercial beekeepers. A stand is placed in front of the hive. The super is placed in a frame and a bar holds the frames in the super

while it is turned upside down. Air from a fan is forced between the frames blowing the bees into the entrance of the hive. Some don't invert the supers, they remove a frame and as the frames are spaced, blow the bees out from between them. A very quick method but you do tend to get clouds of bees flying everywhere.

Fume boards are essentially a crown board with raised sides with a black metal covering. Paper or a cloth is held in place underneath. A repellent chemical is sparingly sprinkled over the absorbent material. Two or three boards are used to clear an apiary. Each board is left on the hive for one or two minutes only, just long enough to clear the bees from the top super. These work best on hot days but be careful not to splash the chemical on the frames or edges of the board as it could taint the honey. Also Benzaldehyde is combustible so the paper or cloth should be disposed of before storing these boards.

Most systems work well when there is a flow on but bees can be a problem once the main flow has finished as they will rob honey from exposed supers. Robbing quickly develops into a feeding frenzy with defenders stinging everything and everyone in sight. This must be avoided at all costs if you want to continue beekeeping in the area. Control of the bees is everything. Keep supers covered as much as possible. If you get into this situation, cover all the hive entrances with wet grass and if at home, turn the sprinkler on. The bees will quickly settle down and should be left for a day or two before trying again. Often its easier to work bees very early in the morning before they are flying. (Give some honey to the neighbours to quieten their nerves).

In fact this is the one thing that most upsets farmers. The



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beekeeper goes in, collects the honey and takes no notice of a few stinging bees. The beekeeper is out of there in a short time but the farmer has to carry on working in the area and is often stung. I have been offered several good apiary sites because a farmer is not happy with the way the present beekeeper is working the hives. Basically it's a communication problem and with a little time and care by the beekeeper, can easily be sorted out.

Select a nice warm morning to remove the honey. For somebody whose bees are away from a built up area and if the bees are working a flow, simply remove the supers, stand them on end and wait 10 minutes for all the bees to fly out, returning to the hive. They can be hurried with a little smoke. While waiting, remove all the supers down to the brood nest and inspect the brood for disease. Depending upon your disease history and what you signed for your DECA, you'll inspect all brood frames or just a few. Shake off most of the bees so you get a good look at the capped brood. Look for the odd cell in the area of emerging brood that has a tiny hole in it or that looks different - sunken or off coloured. Flick off the capping and look at the pupa underneath. It should be white or in the final stages of pupation. Anything you are not sure about, ask another beekeeper.

For those in urban areas, the best method is to use an escape board. Twice as much work but hives can be worked quickly with very little disturbance to the bees. Basically an escape board is a crown board with one or two, one-way escape devices in it. Puff a little smoke into the entrance and under the lid and wait a minute. For some reason, the bees have been very bitchy when removing honey this year. You have to use a little more smoke than usual. However, be aware that too much smoke will taint the honey.

Lift the lid and place it on the ground beside the hive. Remove the honey supers and as you go select those fully capped or 3/4 capped frames to be extracted. Note, they must not contain any brood otherwise the bees won't leave super, (odd cells of drone brood should be scraped off).

Check the brood for disease, then reassemble the hive leaving one super of partially capped honey above the brood nest and any other partially full above this. Put on the escape board hole side up and then place the selected super/s above this followed by the lid. It's also important to make sure the supers are in good condition and that there are no cracks or open knotholes. These should be filled with foam plastic or open material or sealed over with tape. Exposed honey supers can be completely robbed out in a day.

Next evening, remove the selected honey supers and shake or brush out any bees that remain. Keep covered and remove to the honey house.

Not all escape boards work every time and you can return to find all the bees still in the super. Brood or the queen above the escape board will cause this. An escape can get blocked with burr comb or a drone can clog the escape preventing the bees going below. The springs in the Porter bee escape might

be too wide allowing the bees to re-enter the super/s or they can get propolised up preventing them from working. If this happens check everything and repeat the operation in a few days.

Just a little tip, scrape off the burr comb from the frames above and below where you intend to place the escape device.

This allows free access for the bees.

If you can't extract immediately, supers of honey can be kept warm by placing them above a 60-watt incandescent light or in a warm room.

Place an empty full depth super (or two 3/4 supers) on a drip tray and put a light inside it. Place a queen excluder on top and cover nearly all the excluder's surface area with three sheets of newspaper. This prevents direct heat from the bulb melting the middle frames but allows the warmth to go up via the edges. Cover the stack of supers with a crown board to keep the heat in. This works well for a few days but tends to dry the honey out if left longer.

What type of honey have you got? Most hives in urban areas will have a mixture while those further out into the country will have basically one or two different types (early and late flows). Try and extract them separately. Most honeys will extract easily except for Manuka, which will require a different approach.

Basic extracting consists of removing the wax cappings with a hot knife. Heat a serrated bread knife in hot water, dry and saw down the frame with the knife at a slight angle so the wax capping drops off. This is easier than cutting upwards.

If you are using an electric knife, keep it sharp but don't dip it in water, (it's not a sealed unit). Prolong the knife's life by turning it off when not in use. If the thermostat fails, wire up a stove simmerstat in series to provide just enough power to keep it hot.

Put the uncapped frames into the extractor, top bar to the inside of the wire basket and rotate in the direction of the

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bottom bar. Take half out of one side, reverse and spin all the honey out of the other side then reverse again and complete the extraction of the first side. If using a hand cranked model, take up the speed until the honey starts coming out and maintain that speed. Over cranking will split new frame foundation. Don't worry if the frames crack during extraction, as the bees will fix them when it's returned to the hive.

Manuka is a little different. It is thixotropic (jelly-like) and won't come out of the frames using normal extraction methods. It has to be agitated beforehand using a roller or a honey loosener. Even after this, some honey will remain in the frames. An alternative method is to scrape the frame down to the foundation mid-rip and then put the frames back on the hive to be drawn out again. A fork or a special plane is used to do this. European beekeepers use a press and wax the frames each year.

After extracting get the supers back on again quickly as the bees could fill them up again in a few weeks if the flow continues. Put supers on after dark in the city otherwise the bees get excited and will fly all over the neighbourhood causing alarm to the uninformed. If you make this mistake, dribble a little honey at the hive entrance. The bees set to cleaning this up and soon stop flying everywhere.

Filter the honey through fine nylon mesh filters designed for the purpose, a stocking or just leave the honey in a warm place and the wax will rise to the top and can be skimmed off (except for Manuka, which is hard to filter). A hair dryer can be used to warm the last of the honey in the filter. Add a little starter (last year's finely granulated honey) stir in, cover and store in a cool place. Stir twice a day for a few days until a bloom appears through the honey and then bottle. Commercial beekeepers have it easier. They just add starter, turn on the re-circulating pump for a few hours, pot up and store for two weeks in a cool room at 14 Deg C. Result, nice fine-grained creamed honey.

Cappings can be put in the top of a hive or in a feeder where the bees will remove all the honey and you can recover the wax for recycling into foundation.

Hygiene is very important. You are processing a food. Clean overalls, cover your hair. Clean the extracting gear thoroughly and sterilise before use and wash your hands continually.

Honey is an acid and with it's osmotic effect (draws in moisture) will not support the growth of bacteria. The bees do their bit to keep it nice and clean but you will also have to do your bit. Don't put full honey supers directly on the ground. Cover supers when being transported to prevent dust getting into the honey. You will be surprised what a recent survey of honey in an American Beekeeping Magazine turned up.

If you are extracting honey for sale, it must be done in registered premises.

SWARMS We are still getting late swarm calls. These are not much use, as they will not have time to store a reasonable amount to winter over on. Best to kill the queen and unite the bees with another hive.

TIP: Quite a few of these late swarms are headed by virgin queens and will not readily settle into a nuc box. All seems well but next day they will swarm again. Add a frame of brood to the nuc box and shake the swarm in on top. The bees quickly settle down and will not leave the brood.

Another tip: What to do with the remains of a swarm. If they are put in front of a hive, they will be attacked as they try to enter. Spray air-freshener on the bees, into the entrance and under the lid and the bees will all be accepted as they have the same smell.

REQUEEN: Spotty brood, hive swarmed, hive didn't produce well? Now is the best time to requeen your hives while the honey flow is still on. Make a nuc or kill the old queen and introduce the new one. If the flow has finished, splash a little sugar syrup over the brood frames when introducing the caged queen. The bees set to cleaning up the mess and forget about

the new queen. This isn't the best way, as sometimes the older bees in the hive will kill the new queen. Best to get her laying in a nuc and then swap the brood frames between nuc and hive. If your not happy with this method, wrap the frames in a sheet of newspaper and put in the main hive. The bees take time to chew through the paper and mix slowly. Put the old queen with a few frames of brood and bees back into the nuc as insurance. The bees from the nuc will protect the new queen and she will be accepted straight off. If everything goes well, requeen the nuc again and carry it through the winter as a spare.

BEE HIVES AND NEIGHBOURS. Last month two hobbyist beekeepers had to move their hives away from the city. Once the Local Authority receives a complaint, they must act and generally pick on the nearest beekeeper. Typical complaints are defecating on washing, house or windows. My child stood on a bee. I'm allergic. The bees are visiting my swimming pool and I got stung. Swarms keep coming into my garden.

Generally this happens when a new neighbour moves into the street. Things have changed. Backyards have got smaller, in-fill housing means neighbours are closer, people don't have garden any more and they don't appreciate what good the bees do. There are now 70% less beekeepers in Wellington City than there was 30 years ago.

What can you do? Neighbours should always be sweetened with honey. Offer to wash their windows. Ask them to put the washing out a little later. Complaints should always be challenged. If it's not a near neighbour, a feral swarm in a shed or house close-by could cause the problem.

Sometimes it's just the sight of a beehive that caused the complaint. Trellis them off. Plant climbing beans in front of the hive. Get them to fly high into the air before heading for their nectar sources. Place them well away from clothes lines. Provide an alternative water source close to the hive. Chlorinate the water to stop the bees collecting water from the poolside. Work them when your neighbours are not in their garden, perhaps earlier or late in the day. Place a wave-wand (an old piece of clothing that moves around in the breeze) in your garden close to the hive so the bees get used to movement. Use a queen excluder between the first and second super so the hive's population doesn't get so big.

Requeen the hive every year with gentle stock.

We silenced one complaint by moving the hive away but left a stack of empty supers in the place. The complaints continue but nothing further was heard after the Council Officer was shown the empty hive.

If complaints persist, move the hive/s more than 2.5 km away from the original site otherwise the flying bees will return and create a greater problem searching for their hive. Keep your hive/s as the situation is generally a short term one and things settle down in a few months.

Frank Lindsay



Marketing...

Christmas and January are not traditionally holiday times for New Zealand beekeepers: its long hot work and the peak of the season for many. But we hope you were able to get some quality time with family and friends. And it's good to be 'talking' with you again.

Goodbye to One Helluva Nice Chap

When I first started meeting people within the NZ beekeeping industry there was a quiet (most of the time) and reticent (most of the time) chap with a slow drawling burr of a voice whom I quickly learned was acutely observant (all of the time) and intelligent (all of the time).

Keith Herron.

Keith took an intense and positive interest in what we were trying to achieve. And I've had a number of very long phone discussions with him over the years: where he gave me exceptionally sound advice.

Sandee and I were lucky to have visited Keith at his apiary. We tasted his clover and kamahi honeys, and brought home a couple of jars of his finest. Beautiful honey Keith!

In every way Keith was an honourable, likeable person.

Many of us met Keith for the last time at Conference in Ashburton. Keith took the chance to speak to us as a group. We all knew he was severely ill. He knew we knew. It was very poignant moment

So long Keith. And thanks for the help and advice and friendship you gave me. Whenever I enjoy a good Southland Kamahi honey I'll think of you.

Last Year's Honey Crop and Market

The 1999 crop was slightly above average, around 9000 tonnes, and exports look like they will be average, at around 2000 tonnes. And based on our supermarket stats, domestic honey consumption is being maintained (or so slightly down its not significant at this stage).

So all is well in terms of supply and demand (or should be). However, some beekeepers and packers had built up stocks over the last few years and so we're likely to see a fall-off in demand from buyers until they know the crop expectation for this summer (2000).

We're getting mixed messages on the 2000 crop at present. I see in the Christchurch Press that Bruce McClusker is concerned at the late flow in North Canterbury, and I understand that Northland is down. Will be interesting to see what happens across New Zealand. I have heard that some areas are looking forward to very good flows.

So, let's assume an average or slightly above average crop.

Domestic consumption should remain the same, although I'm concerned at the amazing growth in jam brands on the supermarket shelves: very classy packaging too. We need to see some packaging innovations from our local packers to maintain our 'fashionableness' as a food. (I'll come back to that.)

So, expect production to be average-ish and domestic consumption average-ish: the answer to increased sales and values lies in the export market!

The world market for honey is looking confused at present: big export crops in China and Argentina are more than off-setting reduced crops in the USA and elsewhere.

Our major export honey has been clover: but there's a surplus of good light white honey in the world at present. So any significant growth will have to come from an increased focus on our world-unique honeys: and clearly that's where our future success lies as an industry. And of course, if we can do a 'cinderella' on our dark bush blends they'll be heading offshore and we won't have the absurd situation where good quality clover honey sales were being sabotaged within NZ by some of the dark blends being sold as white clover! Crazy situation: and hopefully packers doing that lost repeat business over the last few years.

We need to produce and export honeys that are not automatically priced as if they were a light insignificantly flavoured Chinese or South American honey. Manuka honey has shown what's possible: and we know that our other dark bush and pastoral honeys have similar nutraceutical values.

But we need a strong and sustained export market development.

I'm often told we should only export packed or 'added-value' honeys: that it's wrong to export bulk honeys. That's true: but it's not the responsibility of good beekeeper producers to refuse to supply overseas buyers of bulk honey: it's the job of the NZ packers to offer prices that are competitive with the overseas prices! (Otherwise the producer would be subsidising the packer.)

Our NZ-based honey exporters have done a good job over the years: 8 years ago we exported 200 tonnes a year in premium packs: that figure is now 500 tonnes a year.

But we need our exports to continue to increase. If our own packers can't build exports to the volumes we need on a long-term basis, then we producers have to encourage new overseas brands to 'invest in' the New Zealand honey image.

Attention Beekeepers ...

All adverts and editorial, photographs, Letters to the Editor, club reports, etc, please forward this material direct to:

Bruce Doran

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Email: chbprint@wilsonandhorton.co.nz

That's the argument we put to Conference last year: and we're talking with a major overseas company at present about developing a NZ honey product.

But despite the logic of us doing that, there's a part of me that feels we have to make sure we (as the producers) give every help to the NZ exporter to be successful.

It sticks in the craw a little that it was an Aussie company that has made the Manuka potential come alive on a big scale! We (NZ) had first chance: but it just didn't happen.

To that end the Marketing Committee has agreed that Floyd Marketing can and should work with any NZ exporter who has a significant honey export opportunity. The exporter pays for the time involved but gets our honey and food service network contacts and knowledge.

We know there will be some negative issues coming from this tack: and we're going to have to be careful not to look like we're favouring any such clients in other areas. But those are issues that can be addressed and monitored. They shouldn't stop us helping to kickstart some export initiatives: that benefits every NBA levy-paying producer.

If you want to use this service contact Sandee or I in the first instance. If we can see it's a project that will add real value to NZ honeys and could be successful offshore, we'd love to work with you on it.

(All inquiries will be treated confidentially. Because of the potential conflict of interest for some of the beekeeper Marketing Committee members it's agreed that Marketing Committee member Steve Olds will work with us on selection of projects.)

The Big Trends That Could Help or Hinder NZ Domestic Honey Consumption.

(We've taken this information from an excellent article in NZ Grocer's Review Magazine: Dec 99. The precis are in italics: my thoughts on how they affect this industry are under each.)

Alternative Breakfast Diet: New Zealanders are eating more cereal than ever before. In the past 12 months 34 million boxes of cereal have been consumed, nearly half a million more boxes than in previous years. (Chex, in its first 6 months sold 5 million servings. Chex are crispy lattices of corn with a hint of honey.)

This seems good for the honey industry; but the cereals containing honey have less per serving than if a person had a traditional honey on toast. Plus the honeys are usually manufacturing grade and the industry as a whole gets less per kg than if the honey had been purchased 'retail'. The change to cereals is only small statistically, at this stage: but I believe it's a hint of what's to come. Take a look at the packaging and the promotion of cereals. Blast it, they look exciting and yummee! Take a look at honey's packaging!!..yawn! Honey is going to have to come up with some new innovations if we're to stop consumers gradually switching their breakfast habits!

Globalism: Fewer and fewer companies are having a greater influence on what the consumers buy at the super market or local store. The next decade will see the evolution of 10 mega retailers dominating the international grocery trade. Global brands will dominate.

That trend is alive and well here in NZ. So few people control our major access channels to the consumer!

Honey has traditionally been marketed by small companies with limited resources for promotion and product development. We need a 'Watties' or similar to put some real dollar-energy into developing honeys as a high profile spread or fun food ingredient. (Come on Sanitarium)..come back to honey! (lead the industry again!)

There are 3 NZ honey brands that have the size and the skills to make a difference here: be good if they focused on real growth through innovation instead of cannibalising existing market shares. And I think it's starting to happen - although some smaller brands are going to get very hurt over the next few months.

A few years ago I predicted small 'me-too' brands being ignominiously removed from supermarket shelves: if your honey brand isn't special; if your honey isn't special: there won't be room for you!

Oils companies and alternative channels: Service stations and compact convenience stores are playing an increasing role, large format supermarkets by their very nature do not attract the shopper looking for urgent suppliers or top up purchases. In New Zealand the biggest move in the convenience store sector is the rapidly growing influence of oil companies. The big losers will be dairies.

Someone should be making things happen with these new convenience stores!

The Singles: Singles represent the next big demographic marketing challenge. By 2006 singles will be the largest household type in Australia.

And we can expect this trend to be the same in New Zealand. And singles (if the ones I know are anything to go by) are into convenience and fashionableness and, especially, instant gratification. Not many of these will do their own baking or use 'conservative' products, they want 'new' 'exciting' and 'not like their parents do'.

Honey has to come up with some packaging and functionalities that meets what these people want and do! The NBA shouldn't take the lead here: these are Brand/Packer opportunities. But no Brands, to my knowledge, are creating new generation products in meaningful volumes.

Maybe the Marketing Committee needs to take some concepts to Packers and help start the new wave of products. That has 'favouritism' implications: but the alternative is honey stagnancy.

Sandee's Recipe Corner

At our last Honey class at Christchurch Polytechnic one of the Chef tutors decided to match a unique NZ honey to some Greenshell mussels (he knew we had a bit of a soft-spot for mixing mussels'n honey: a potential NZ classic dish).

This recipe is simple and very moreish!

Chef tutor Bill Bryce says that the combination of the Waikato Bush Honey and the coriander give the dish a lovely aromatic quality.

Ingredients

12 Mussels
1tbsp Waikato Bush Honey
1 Clove crushed garlic
3tbsp Chopped chives

3tbsp Chopped coriander (including root)
1/2tbsp Sweet Thai Chilli Sauce
50ml Dry White Wine
Juice of Lemon
Lemon (cut in wedges)

Method.

Wash and debeard mussels.

Place wine, lemon juice and garlic in a pot and bring to the boil.

Add mussels, cover and steam open.

When open add herbs, honey and Chilli sauce, replace lid and remove from heat. Let stand for 1 minute to allow flavours to infuse.

Serve in a bowl plate with the cooking liquor poured over the mussels, garnish with lemon wedges. Serve with crusty bread on the side to soak up the juices.

Organics: The domestic demand for organics is growing at a fraction of the rate of demand offshore. It has gone mainstream in Europe. The demand in the UK tripled between 1995 and 1998. Imports now account for 70% of organic food volume sales, as the UK's 870 organic farms can no longer cope with demand. The main reason is the series of food scares. Organics should become a major growth category for exports.

We, the NZ honey industry, are perfectly placed to benefit from this. But we have to look at how to balance the concept of going for a generic NZ organic honey image against the problem of that allowing some price cutting producers to simply cannibalise the good work of existing Bio gro type honey producers. I personally favour maintaining a clear distinction between 'good clean NZ honey' and the special values of proper and formally certified organic honey. We shouldn't try to make all NZ honey organic unless it does 'walk the walk'.

But we should encourage and help our Bio gro type producers: they represent what I believe will be a key future opportunity.

Multicultural Society: New Zealand is a more multicultural society than ever before. We are becoming more accepting of foreign cuisines: Chinese, Thai, Malaysian, Indian and Japanese. Look at the growth of sushi bars and pasta. The meat and 3 veg diet is gone for good. People want bolder and brighter and more interesting cuisine and they don't want to spend hours preparing it. They'll demand more and more ready to eat, ready to heat and eat or kit set packs. We have to tap into this changing plate and look for opportunities not yet exploited.

The good news is that honey can be an exciting part of these new cuisines! We can be part of 'tomorrow's food': we have all the core values consumers are looking for and our NZ honeys are simply, 'bloody good', in terms of flavour and colour and aroma. There are honeys that suit creamy light herb sauces and honeys that suit rich and robust chilli dishes. We have so much culinary potential!

GM: This will be a major trend as academics start to advocate the technology, and the benefits are more readily recognised and accepted by consumers at large, or continue to strike the fear of technology in consumers.

I was thrilled that this industry took such a strong stand against GM crops at NBA Conference 99. Who knows what will finally happen: but honey can and should be one of the good guys: fighting for informed and responsible science and food development.

Health takes over the diet: The population is becoming increasingly confused by the mixed messages of research from today and the last 10 years. They're now looking for Food with Function: Science is creating the mass market convergence of medicine and food.

This is the BIG window for us. And our co-research with the USA's National Honey Board will provide us with some very exciting 'ammunition' this year. They're working on the honey nutrition concepts while we (Peter Molan and his team) work on the honey therapeutics. Between the two - Bingo! Well, maybe! Because as Aussie honey giant Capilano has shown, (with the way they've springboarded off the NZ Manuka story), it's not enough to have the science done and published, someone has to invest in making a successful product in the marketplace. And this is where we (the NBA) may simply have to pick a potential champion and persuade them to make money from our research; even if its an offshore company. Our own 'team' (our own packers) may simply not have the size and resources to make them happen. But, I'd love it for one of the NZ packers to prove me wrong! (If these remarks have annoyed or goaded a packer..great: ring me and challenge me to give you the chance with the ideas: over to you!)

Meals in a Moment: Convenience foods have not peaked. There will be an increase in prepared foods and meal kits. Few New Zealanders spend longer than 20 minutes preparing a meal on a week day. The phrase 'home meal replacement' is really a

misnomer. It should be 'home meal preparation replacement'. And honey has to be part of the new product development in this area: somehow! We're working on it.

The era of Communications: The mass of information at our fingertips, will enable consumers to be transported anywhere in the world. It will allow companies to market direct to consumers. However the complexity of communications will mean they become more expensive and obsolete faster. This will create a technology and communications gap.

Got access to a website: try HYPERLINK <http://www.kraftfoods.com> www.kraftfoods.com. Amazing. Their computerised Recipe Recommender is simply amazing. Sandee asked it to search for recipes with honey and it provided her with a choice of 90 options. (We had some chicken breasts out of the freezer so asked for Chicken and Honey: got 5 recipes. Tried one..very good: easy and quick! (Will be in a future Beekeeper magazine.)

And that's all for this month: except, stay tuned to the TV when the Taste New Zealand programme comes back on: a well-known Marlborough beekeeper wowed them with his honeydew. They loved his wild pork sandwich lunch too!

And, my honey of the month: I took it in liquid form. A heather honey (North Island) but creamed with a difference! Mead enthusiast Mark Atkin has produced a Heather Gold Honey Mead Liqueur. Mark does a still mead, a lovely and fresh sparkling mead, and this Liqueur. Under the Valhalla Wines Ltd label. And the liqueur is stunning.

Wonderful clarity and colour: intense bouquet of very strong alcohol with huge honey beeswax aromas flooding your sinuses. But it's the intensely clean almost steel edged flavour and mouthfeel that got me. A very good drink. Not like the thickly sweet honey whisky liqueurs like Drambuie: more like the mouthfeel equivalent of a fine cognac, yet still incredibly sweet. (Just not cloyingly so!)

Highly drinkable: especially good potential as a ladies dram! (If you'll excuse what may seem like a politically incorrect and patronising thing to say: but it's true.)

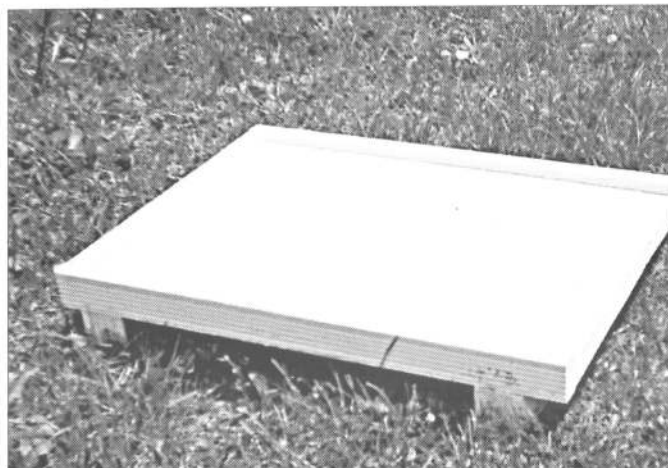
No column next month as we're away in the USA. Will have some hot news of food trends over there when we get back. (And if you are a Packer wanting to bend my ear over an opportunity: could you contact me end of March. I won't get back to you before then.)

Regards Bill Floyd.



Mussels Waikato: Chef tutor, Bill Bryce, shares his unique kiwi dish of Greenshell mussels and Waikato Bush honey with Sandee Floyd.

Bottom board



Over the years there is a gradual deterioration in hive floor boards. A number of years ago we developed a floor board that fitted our needs best. I think Barry Silcock came up with the final design.

These floor boards last indefinitely as use tanalised timber and fibre board which is everlasting unless jumped on by an irate cow.

Now days I use tanalised timber decking. The one I use is about 7cm wide. I first split it in half. Then groove it a little above halfway for the fibre board. The overall length is 22 inches and 16 inches wide for those of us who still think in the old measurements. This gives a two inch overlap to accommodate the lid length above making them stack perfectly for migration.

After assembling the rim then we use tanalised 2 x 3 inch runners which are fitted inside the rear rim and the front cross member.

The arrangement allows you to pick the hive up from front to back or from the sides. The rim helps you pull the hive across the truck deck.

The only catch is that the inside timber has to be painted to ensure the bees do not come in contact with the tanalising.

Hopefully the photos will be self explanatory.

Use galvanised nails to assemble the rim and runners. A single blunted nail holds the fibre board in place. It is easily cut using a hive tool to mark the cut and then bend to break.

Gary

Bee-friendly aphid control on white clover

Aphids and Mirids can cause substantial damage to white clover seed crops, resulting in up to 30% reduction in yields and more than \$500/ha in lost income.

Aphids feed both around and inside the seed head of white clover, sucking all of the goodness from them. Aphid numbers peak in early December while Mirid nymphs peak in November.

Good insect control is critical during the flowering period and this can be achieved with the application of Mavrik. It controls a wide range of problem insect pests, and one of its benefits is its relative safety to bees. Bees are important in a clover

seed crop because without bees, the pollination would be lessened and the seed production significantly reduced.

Mavrik is a contact insecticide, therefore good coverage is essential and the addition of a wetting agent is recommended. As some wetting agents are toxic to bees, Mavrik should be applied in the evenings after bees have stopped foraging.

Bee mortality was a major problem in some cropping areas last season, so before you spray any crop in flower, speak to your beekeeper first.

Bee decision shows merit of WTO

World Trade Organization (WTO) rules have helped New Zealand beekeepers win access to the British bee market, Trade Negotiations Minister Jim Sutton said today.

The Minister said two disease risk assessments undertaken by British authorities concluded on January 13 that there were no legitimate scientific grounds for blocking imports of New Zealand package bees, despite opposition by British beekeepers who cited disease risks as their primary objection.

Under WTO rules, countries are free to adopt measures they deem necessary for the protection of human, animal or plant health, provided the decision is based on sound scientific principles. Such trade-restrictive measures have to be transparent and must not be employed to protect domestic producers from foreign competition.

“Without such rules our beekeepers certainly would not be able to export bees to Britain,” Mr Sutton said.

“The British decision is a quiet reminder, among the ballyhoo from some groups, that the WTO rules-based system does benefit New Zealand, right down to the grassroots of our smaller, but still highly successful, export industries.”

New Zealand’s apia industry employs approximately 2000 people and last year earned just under \$12 million in export receipts.

“The WTO is indispensable to New Zealand exporters,” Mr Sutton said. “It provides a forum in which we can seek trading conditions that are at once more liberal and fairer. Despite sharp criticism in recent months, the WTO provides a reliable framework of rules to ensure consistency in access for our goods to world markets.”

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Contact: Mrs Hobson
Phone: (03) 312-7587

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Peter Lyttle
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Contact: Trevor Corbett
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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: Mr Lindsay Moir
33 Shackleton St,
Sth Brighton, Christchurch
Phone: (03) 388-3313

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We meet on the first Saturday in the month
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All welcome - Ring for venue.

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Meets on the second Monday of the
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Phone: Ron (06) 844-9493

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

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Newbury Hall, SH 3,
Palmerston North.
Contact: Andrew MacKinnon
Phone: (06) 323-4346

NELSON BRANCH
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(03) 528-6010

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Phone: (06) 379-8648

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Meets every second Monday of
the month (except January)
in Johnsonville. All welcome.
Contact: James Scott, 280 Major Drive,
Nelson, Lower Hutt.
E-mail: JLscott@clear.net.nz