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**ADVERTISING RATES ON
REQUEST**

The New Zealand BeeKeeper is published eleven times per annum; February to December. All copy should be with the Editor by the 1st day of the month of publication except for December when copy should be received by **25th November**.

Exotic Bee Disease

Exotic bee disease confirmed in South Auckland

The honey bee mite *Varroa jacobsoni* was confirmed in three beehives on a property in South Auckland. Hives on three other properties have been inspected, and are showing signs of infestation. A full-scale survey to determine the extent of the spread of the mite has begun.

At this stage it is unknown how the mite arrived in New Zealand. The evidence suggests it may have been present and undetected for up to five years. Spread is commonly by live bees, and there have been no live bee imports permitted into New Zealand for at least 40 years to protect our bee health status. The mite spreads by natural means very slowly, at a rate of 5 km a year. When first affected, hives have low numbers of mites that are not easily seen. Numbers build up over several years until the hive dies.

Controlled Area

A controlled area will be declared under the Biosecurity Act, and will include Rodney District, North Shore City, Waitakere City, Auckland City (excluding Great Barrier Island), Manukau City, Papakura District, Franklin District, Waikato District, Hamilton City and Hauraki District.

The controlled area will mean that the movement of any bees (live and dead), beehives, supers of honey intended to be extracted, used beekeeping equipment and appliances will be prohibited within the area, or from the area to other areas. This will remain in force until the survey has determined the mite's distribution. There will be further controls on movements of these items from the North to South Islands.

Surveillance

From tomorrow, teams of apiarists led by MAF authorised persons will be visiting and inspecting beehives within the controlled area. MAF and the National Beekeeping Association (NBA) are working together to determine how far the mite has spread and options for control.

MAF and the NBA are requesting the cooperation of all beekeepers throughout New Zealand to inspect their hives for signs of the *Varroa* mite.

What to look for

Infested hives may show the following signs:

- Unexpectedly low bee numbers
- Sacbrood-like symptoms in brood frames
- Small bronze mites on the bodies of bees, and on uncapped drone pupae

- Weak crawling bees, possibly with deformed wings
- Sudden hive crashes.

Background

Varroa jacobsoni is a small, bronze-coloured oval mite 1-2 mm long, which is found on the outside of adult honey bees. It can be seen with the naked eye if bees are examined carefully. It is also visible on honey bee pupae, and appears as a dark reddish-brown dot. It is most commonly found on drone pupae. The mite does not affect humans, and has no known host other than the honey bee.

The mite originated in eastern Asia and spread into Europe via Russia. Since the 1980s it has been carried into most other beekeeping regions of the world, killing thousands of colonies. Until now New Zealand and Australia have been considered the only major beekeeping countries free of the mite.

The mite lives by feeding on bee pupae. Infected pupae fail to survive, or may be born with deformed wings. Eventually, the mite population increases to a point where all the bees in the beehive die. This can take up to three years from the original infestation.

The mite spreads naturally from hive to hive by bee contact. However, the rapid spread of the mite worldwide is due to human activities. Modern beekeepers shift their hives long distances to pollinate crops, or gather honey. This enabled the *Varroa* mite to spread over the whole North American continent within five years of being introduced. Some European countries, which have strictly controlled the movement of bees, have managed to greatly slow the spread of *Varroa*. Another means of spread is the international trade in live bees. Queen bees are shipped worldwide, and are believed to be responsible for the spread of the mite from Europe to both North and South America.

New Zealand has prohibited the import of live bees for the last 40 years to protect our bee health status. This has led to New Zealand becoming a major exporter of live bees and queens to the Northern Hemisphere. This annual \$1.8 million trade is threatened by the discovery of the *Varroa* mite.

Contacts

Matthew Stone, Programme Co-ordinator Exotic Disease Response, MAF Biosecurity Authority.
Phone: 025 332-509, (04) 498-9884.

Lin McKenzie, National Beekeepers' Association Executive Member:
025 357-970.

Gita Parsot, Communications Adviser,
MAF: (04) 498-9806.

MAF field teams begin beehive inspections for *Varroa* mite

Five field teams of apiarists led by Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry authorised personnel are out in South Auckland inspecting beehives for the honey bee mite, *Varroa jacobsoni*.

A field operations headquarters was made operational. Policies have been developed to ensure that such a large-scale survey proceeds, with high priority tasks attended to at the earliest opportunity.

The survey got underway after the proposed controlled area, which was put in place by the Ministry, after the *Varroa* mite's presence was found on three beehives on a South Auckland property. Three other inspected properties also showed signs of infestation.

All the suspected infected premises were non-commercial operations with small numbers of hives, totalling 14, within a 10km distance from each other. Eight of these hives were dead, with others showing low populations and other typical symptoms of *Varroa* mite infestation. Two hives on the first property identified were immediately destroyed by the owner.

The pattern emerging suggests that the natural dispersal through bee movements (abandoning and robbing of crashed hives) is the likely means of dissemination amongst these properties. Tracing forwards and backwards from these premises, and identifying high-risk movements such as bees, hives and equipment, is taking place.

MAF and the National Beekeepers Association (NBA) are working together to determine how far the mite has spread and options for control. The survey is to be undertaken within the controlled area. High priority has been assigned to visiting and inspecting beehives in the area immediately surrounding the

The New Zealand BeeKeeper

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infected premises, in particular commercial premises; the outer perimeter of the controlled area; and high risk traces from infected premises. Reports in response to a MAF request that beekeepers nationally inspect hives looking for signs of Varroa infestation will also be investigated.

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.

Hawke's Bay Branch Club Apiary Working Bee's

These are held on the Sunday after our monthly meeting unless otherwise stated at the meeting.

All welcome to come along and help, learn, experience and ask questions.

The day starts at 9.30am at the Pakowhai Park.

For more information contact Bob Wotherspoon or Bill Eddy.

Trade implications

Exports of live bees out of New Zealand have stopped, even though some of our major markets of bee products (Canada, Korea and Europe) have Varroa present. Because of this, bee exports are not expected to be halted for long. New Zealand has a large live bee export market with 17, 500 packages of 1kg of bees exported to Canada and Europe in 1999. All bee exports usually go through Auckland International Airport and special requirements, which meet OIE specifications will be required, for the export certification of the products.

Once MAF is aware of how far the mite has spread within the controlled area, the Ministry will be looking to reopen exports.

Notice of Movement Controls

MAF is establishing a controlled area under the Biosecurity Act 1993, in order to impose movement controls on things that could cause the spread of the mite.

The things that MAF is controlling the movement of are:

- Honey bees (meaning Apis mellifera), including package bees, queen bees, and the whole or any part of any dead honey bee.
- Beehives (meaning any thing that is being or has been used for the keeping of honey bees), including nucleus beehives.

- Any part of any beehive, including frames, boxes, lids and bases, and supers of honey.
- Used beekeeping equipment (meaning any thing that is being or has been used in connection with beekeeping).

There are two levels of control that will apply. The highest level of control applies to Rodney District, North Shore City, Waitakere City, Auckland City, Manukau City, Papakura District, Franklin District, Waikato District, Hamilton City, and Hauraki District. The controlled items may not be moved into, within, or from these areas without the permission of an officer under the Biosecurity Act 1993.

The lower level of control applies to the rest of the North Island, and any other parts of New Zealand other than the South Island. The controlled items may not be moved from these areas to the South Island without the permission of an officer under the Biosecurity Act 1993.

Any person who wishes to obtain permission to move one of the controlled items should phone (09) 265-9395. The controlled area will remain in force until the survey has determined the mite's distribution. There will be further controls on movements of these items from the North to South Islands.

For any concerns telephone the MAF Exotic Disease Hotline at 0800 809 966.

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Letters to the Editor

Dear Sir,

Please Support Your NBA Executive and Sub-Committees

New Zealand beekeepers are very fortunate to have so many fellow beekeepers prepared to stand for executive or its sub-committees, giving their time cheerfully and voluntarily, often at the expense of their own businesses and family life, for the benefit of all New Zealand beekeepers.

We should thank these people for their very substantial contributions to our Industry and treat them with the respect they deserve. We may not always agree with them, but surely we should not discourage people from allowing their names to go forward for these positions, by being unreasonably critical of our current Executive and sub-committee members in the public arena. We should actively support and encourage them to do even greater things for New Zealand beekeeping. I know that helpful suggestions will always be appreciated when made in the correct manner.

It appears Mr Wallingford may be selecting submissions made to Government on the PMS (which he thinks could discredit the individual concerned) and releasing them on his website at a time he deems appropriate. Like prior to an election. I believe probably legal, but not very ethical. He released my submissions on the PMS to the Minister, dated 13 August 1997, when I was President of the NBA, and now released Graham Cammell's submissions on the PMS to the Minister made during 1997.

Perhaps to give some balance to the information he is releasing, Mr Wallingford should release his own submission through the Journal. Indeed, why not release all the submissions on the PMS made to the Minister during 1997, to the NBA, for them to release on the official NBA web site for us all to look at. I suspect Mr Wallingford will have most of the submissions already in his possession. I appeal to him, in the interest of fair play, to release them to the NBA.

Mr Wallingford appears to me to be trying to change our current NBA by selectively and publicly releasing information about members of our sub-committees and our Executive who do not go along with his thinking and generally making it difficult for them to get on with their job. This has got to stop otherwise we will soon have no Industry left, because nobody will want to stand for these positions unless they have the full support of Mr Wallingford.

God, help the New Zealand Beekeeping Industry.

Mr Wallingford, please release all the submissions in your possession, I will certainly be recommending to Executive that they do so. This is the only way that fair play can be brought about. You state, "Some members of this List have repeatedly complained to the Executive that stacking the PMS Review Committee with opponents of the PMS is not the best direction to go".

Graham Cammell, I believe is very much in favour of the PMS, like every other member on the PMS Review Committee. Give these committee members a chance to make progress with the PMS. They certainly have not been given much of a chance during the past year. I even understand that at least one major contract has been signed without most of the members of the Review Committee or the NBA Executive even seeing the content of the Contract.

Mr Wallingford stated on his website, about an Executive meeting held in Wellington, "Oh to be a fly on the wall." Beware! I suspect the Executive has just enough money left to buy a fly-swat!

Russell Berry

President's Notes

Executive elections are with us again with nomination forms being printed as part of this magazine. This year we have the unusual where we have a vacancy to be filled for one year only, owing to the resignation of Gerrit Hyink in late September. This position was left vacant by Executive.

Tony Taiaroa and Lin McKenzie retire at the end of their two year term. Jane Lorimer, who was appointed to replace Bruce Stevenson, who had resigned mid-September, also retires. I must place on record my gratitude to all these people who have given generously of their time in an endeavour to make beekeeping a better and more prosperous occupation.

Nominations for Executive positions close on Thursday, May 25th at 9.00am. Executive voting closes on Thursday, June 22nd at 9.00am.

I specially request that members look seriously at serving their industry at Executive level or on the various committees of Executive. However, whoever you elect to fill Executive positions can do very little without the support of the membership that Executive is endeavouring to serve.

Terry Gavin

FRANKLIN BEEKEEPERS CLUB MAY MEETING

- Date: 23 May 2000, Please calendar this date to avoid Mothers Day
- Time: 10.00am Open hives
- Venue: Club hives, Anselmi's Stock Yards, Pukekohe East Road
- Direction: Take the Pukekohe to Bombay Road and 300m past the Goldings/Begium/Puke East Road intersection on the left is the Anselmi Yards. It will be signposted.
- Programme: Closing down for winter. Various methods demonstrated.

CANTERBURY BRANCH AGM

- Date: Thursday, 27 April, 2000
- Venue: Hornby Workingmens Club, 17 Carmen Road, Hornby, Christchurch.
- Programme:
1. a. Dinner 6pm to 7.30pm
 - b. Guest Speaker: Barry Donovan;
Topic: Do bees really have a language.
 2. 7.30pm AGM Canterbury Branch NBA
 - a. President's Report
 - b. Treasurer's Report and Balance Sheet
 - c. Election of Officers
 - d. General Business
 3. General Meeting
 - a. General Business
- NB: 1. The AGM is on Thursday night, not the Tuesday, because of ANZAC Day on 25th April 2000.
2. Please make bookings for dinner with Canterbury Branch Secretary, as soon as possible which is necessary to plan the catering requirements for the evening. 3 choices of main course, with lots of choices for sweets \$12.95 each, partners most welcome.
- Telephone/Fax: (03) 314-6836.**

Keith McCready Herron

12th July 1940 - 21st December 1999

Keith was the only son of Mr Bill and Mrs Daisy Herron, deceased, a loved brother of Elaine Styles and a close friend of many New Zealand beekeepers.

He was a Life Member of the National Beekeepers' Association, he served on the National Executive for 14 years and he attended our Conferences for 50 years.

Keith McCready Herron was a man of great stature, strength, wisdom and honesty. A man who had a great understanding of nature and of mankind, all with a very dry sense of humour. He had the ability of going straight to the heart of a problem, giving down to earth common sense answers.

Keith was a craftsman at or reading, but by listening and after a long quiet period either setting could all see the answers, or indeed His life revolved around game of bowls or a drive into the new ideas, comb honey and vertical forever finding innovations and beekeeping operations at Zealand's top quality honey - bar Keith and his father, Bill, have had beekeeping, particularly the lower practices in use at the Greenvale surrounding beekeepers, many of Herrons.

On a more light hearted note, Keith's roads will be remembered by many of the vehicle sliding on the stones (almost complete contrast to his slow deliberate walk, think.

Keith was well known as a man who could hold a meeting in absolute silence - with all of us just waiting on his next word, whether it be knowledge, assistance or humour. He was an expert at the slow, humourous delivery with that Southland drawl. He will be remembered for his ability to openly discuss his cancer. His road was a rough one.

Never have I seen so many people showing so much emotion as at the July 1999 conference at Ashburton, where he told everybody that this would be his last conference as he was having a change of address. It took tremendous courage to do that Keith and we hope that after the long battle with cancer fought so bravely, you are resting in peace.



communication, not by E-mail, letters understanding the spoken word. Then, out the problem so clearly that we giving us the answers.

beekeeping, with the occasional country. He was willing to try out two queens to name two. I am gadgets around his extensive Greenvale. He produced New none.

a great influence on South Island half. Many of the beekeeping operation are also being used by the whom were employed by the

love of driving at speed on shingle us. He drove very fast - he loved the feel like a born skier, which he wasn't) - in which he always told us gave him time to

Russell Berry

Got Cavities? Mind Your Beeswax!

Winnie the Pooh may have been onto something when he dipped into his big pot of honey because he's never been known to have cavities. In fact, a spoonful or two of honey or beeswax may have even helped him prevent cavities.

The Academy of General Dentistry, an organisation of general dentists dedicated to continuing education, recently reported the anticavity causing effects of honey and propolis - a resinous wax-like material that is used by the bees as a glue-like material in their hives.

"Honey and propolis have long been known for their therapeutic properties in other medicinal areas, and this research in dentistry is promising, but not definitive," says Howard S Glazer, DDS, FAGD, spokesperson for the Academy

of General Dentistry. "Cavities are generally caused by a build-up of bacterial agents, so if you have a product that has an anti-microbial effect, the result would be healthier teeth."

Volunteers were given less than a quarter ounce of honey and asked to swish it in their mouths for four minutes and then swallow. Additional volunteers were given less than half an ounce of a propolis solution, which they swished in their mouths for one-and-a-half minutes and then spit out. Cavity-causing bacterial counts of the volunteer's saliva samples were taken before and after they received the honey or propolis.

Research found that despite the fact that honey contains about 70 percent sugar, honey taken in higher concentrations had an anticavity causing effect. Ten

minutes after the volunteers had swallowed the honey, a 60 percent reduction in total cavity-causing bacteria counts was found. Similar results occurred with the propolis.

"While the researchers were excited about the results, they couldn't definitively state with confidence that a spoonful of honey a day would help people avoid cavities," says Dr Glazer. "But they were confident about the fact that honey and propolis increased the salivary flow of the participants, which could account for the decrease in anti-cavity causing bacteria.

*Mouthpiece
Regency Dental, Omaha, NE
via The Hive Tool
Tennessee Beekeepers Association
January/February 2000*

Effect of Clipping Queen Honey Bees' Wings

Abstract

Honey bee colonies headed by clipped and unclipped queens were compared during three seasons for the equivalent of 124 colony years.

Clipping did not increase queen supersedure or affect honey production.

Introduction

Beekeepers sometimes clip the wings of queen bees to prevent their leaving with swarms. Clipping also identifies the queen, so allowing the keeping for reliable records that may be particularly important in experimental work.

Clipping for swarm control is recommended by Manley (1948), Root (1959) and Eckert and Shaw (1960); Winter (1948) is noncommittal about the practice; Grout (1963) states that clipping at best, only defers swarming; Butler (1946) and Wedmore (1946) consider it worthless as a means of preventing swarming. Whatever the opinion of these authorities on the efficiency of clipping as a means of swarm control, none regards it as harmful to the queen, or likely to have an undesirable effect on the hive.

Some beekeepers consider that clipping impairs a queen's egg-laying ability, and that she becomes more prone to injury through being unable to balance herself properly or to use her wings to break a fall. Supersedure is thought to occur more readily among clipped queens.

The effect of clipping on queen supersedure and honey production was studied for three seasons.

Experimental

Clipping was carried out by picking the queen off the comb by her wings with one hand, then transferring her to the other hand, where she was held lightly with the index finger under and the

thumb over the thorax, while both wings were clipped to about one-third of their original length. Queens were marked with white bicycle enamel, being held on the comb by pressing a thumb and forefinger lightly on either side of the thorax where the enamel was applied.

In an experiment (trial 1) 12 hives were requeened with sister queens in the autumn of 1967. In the spring the wings of six queens were clipped and the others marked. A second experiment (trial 2) involving 60 hives was started in November 1968. The hives were requeened with sister queens, 39 of which were clipped and 30 marked.

Colony performance and queen supersedure, involving a total of 124 colony years, were measured for the seasons 1967-68, 1968-69, and 1969-70. Queens which superseded were not included in subsequent studies because their presence would have caused the groups to lose homogeneity.

Brood areas and combs of honey were recorded. A full comb was estimated to contain six lb of honey.

Queens were located each September, the supersedure rate for the previous season being estimated from the number of unmarked or unclipped present.

Results and Discussion

There was no significant variation in honey production between hives headed by clipped and unclipped queens. Clipping did not lead to increased supersedure. The clipping of queen bees' wings is unlikely to affect them adversely.

Acknowledgments

Help in planning the project and presenting results was given by Mr T Palmer-Jones, Wallaceville Animal Research Centre; statistical analysis was

provided by Biometrics Section, Department of Agriculture; and Messrs F Hore, Oamaru, and HG Knibb, Geraldine, made apiaries available.

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IW Forster

Trial 1									
Queens	Brood per hive (average number combs)					Honey per hive (lb)		Supersedure	
	7 Nov 1967	28 Nov 1967	18 Dec 1967	22 Oct 1968	18 Nov 1968	67-68	68-69	67-68	68-69
Clipped	7.5 (6)	7.8 (6)	8.8 (6)	5.7 (4)	6.5 (4)	105 (6)	118 (4)	1 (6) 17%	1 (4) 25%
Unclipped	8.4 (5)	8.0 (5)	9.4 (5)	5.4 (5)	7.0 (5)	94 (5)	122 (5)	1 (5) 20%	1 (4) 25%
Trial 2									
	12 Dec 1968	14 Oct 1969	4 Nov 1969	15 Dec 1969		68-69	69-70	68-69	69-70
Clipped	9.7 (29)	4.2 (26)	5.2 (26)	5.9 (24)		160 (29)	108 (24)	3 (29) 10%	7 (24) 29%
Unclipped	9.2 (29)	4.5 (21)	5.0 (21)	6.0 (21)		154 (29)	98 (21)	7 (29) 23%	5 (22) 22%

Brood and Honey Production and Queen Supersedure
(Figures in brackets = number of queens studied)

Police Arrest 150 Ethiopian Farmers

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia (AP) - Police have detained nearly 150 farmers for allegedly starting fires that have destroyed more than 86,500 acres of forest in southern Ethiopia, a newspaper said on Wednesday.

The farmers failed to put out the fires they had lit to smoke out bees from their hives and collect honey, the Ethiopian Herald quoted police as saying.

No charges against the farmers have been filed, the newspaper said.

About 9,000 people have been mobilised to fight the fires, which broke out 18 days ago and were still raging out of control, the paper quoted Kasso Morka, an Agriculture Ministry official, as saying.

"It will take at least 10 years to replace the forest destroyed by the fire," Morka said.

Last week, the government requested aid from non-governmental organisations to help extinguish the fires.

March was sunny and warm but nights are now distinctly cooler indicating that winter is almost here. The countryside looks fairly dry with only a covering of short green grass. From a bee's eye view, everything looks bleak with very little flowering so they have settled into winter mode.

However around the cities it's a different story and nature seems to be playing games with them. The warm settled March weather has stimulated a number of scrubs and trees to continue flowering. Kermadec Island Pohutukawa (and even some of the New Zealand species have the odd bunch of flowers), Bottlebrush, Grevilleas, Eucalyptus, the odd Magnolia, and all the blue flowers such as Lavender and Rosemary are flowering. This has in turn triggered some hives into a massive build-up, converting winter stores into brood.

No doubt these hives will winter well provided they are given additional honey to winter over on. An alternative is to feed sugar syrup now so they can convert it into stores.

To feed a hive, replace an outside frame with an internal division board feeder. Put a good handful of dry pig fern inside to prevent the bees drowning in the liquid. Mix the sugar solution as thick as possible (two white sugar to one of warm water by volume) and fill the feeder as well as dribbling a trail of syrup over the top of the frames so the bees follow it to the feeder. The bees can take up two to three kilograms a day, so continue to feed until most of the honey super is full. Likewise, one can use a top or Miller feeder.

If you do not have a feeder, place a mat (sacking or similar) over the top super and cut a 75mm hole in the centre. Take a jar or a honey pail and punch six to eight tiny holes in the lid, fill with syrup, and place the upturned container over the hole in the mat. Initially a small amount of syrup will dribble out until gravity and the vacuum within the container, equalise. Place an empty super on top to enclose the feeder within the hive, place a few matches on the top edges of the spare super to give top ventilation and pop the lid on top to seal the hive from robber bees.

If you don't have any feeding devices at all, pour the syrup into a plastic bag and seal it tightly. Lay this on top of the frames inside the hive and make a small hole in the upper surface of the bag. Press down until a small pool of syrup has formed. The bees will find this and as they climb over the bag, more syrup will be released until very little is left. After that they tend to chew at the bag so it will have to be replaced if more feeding is necessary.

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It's not a good idea to use a Bodman external feeder (a jar at the entrance) as the syrup cools too quickly and the bees will not take it in during the cold nights.

Feeding is best done in the evening as it tends to excite the bees and they will fly everywhere looking for the source of nectar. If you have to feed during the day, dribble a little syrup at the entrance to stop the bees flying but not too much to encourage robbing.

The easiest way to mix white sugar into a syrup is to fill a container 7/8 full of sugar, then pour in boiling water stirring all the time until the container is full and the sugar dissolved.

If you use Fumidil B, add a level teaspoon to 2.5 gallons of syrup to help control Nosema. If you haven't, then don't worry about it. The rotation of three brood frames each year plus good, dry, sunny, sheltered apiary sites will minimise the affect of the protozoa.

For the odd hive that feels a bit light, I also add an additional 2kg honey container of raw sugar into the top feeder. The sugar takes in moisture and provides an emergency store for the bees. If they don't require it, they will ignore it until spring. I also add the odd frame of granulated honey I have held back in the garage to supplement some hives. These are okay, provided the bees have easy access to water to break down the glucose crystals otherwise they are tossed out the front of the hive.

Wintering

Before putting your frames away for the winter it pays to clean them up. Old dark brood frames should be put aside for melting down. As a rule when you hold a frame up to the sun and can't see light through it, render it down. Any with broken lugs, badly distorted wax should also be put aside. I don't believe in eliminating all of the drone comb from my hives for two reasons. I breed my own queens and therefore need quite a few drones in each apiary and with drone comb in the hives, you can quickly get an indication of the nutritional levels in a hive. That is, when there is an excess of pollen and nectar, they start to produce drones. Some hives seem to produce drones well ahead of the rest in an apiary. These hives quite often are the first to swarm, so I mark them and then split before they have a chance to do this.

Back to sorting frames. I also clean all the propolis off the frames. Propolis from the top bars is kept separate from that from the sides of the end bars as it contains less wax and is therefore worth more. Apart from gaining additional revenue from the propolis, frames that are to go into the brood nest next year should be clean. They are designed to give 33mm spacing between the centers of frames. Propolis and wax on the edges of the end bar increases this distance, therefore more bees are required to fill the bee space and keep the brood warm.

Frames in the brood nest should be cramped together to form a close unit. It's more economical for the bees. However, I have also read that spacing them out requires more bees to keep the brood warm and therefore helps to discourage swarming. I prefer that the extra bees cluster on the two outside frames in the brood supers (nine to the super). Take your pick as to what works for you.

When stacking away frames for the winter, I sort the individual frames in each super by putting the lighter coloured frames to the outside of the super. That way, if a moth lays its eggs along the outside of the stack, the young larvae have to travel a long way in before find dark frames to feed on. This also means I don't have to sort frames when they are put on again for next season's flow. Darker frames (those that have had one or two brood cycles) are more attractive to bees and encourages them

up into the honey super. I do not scrape off the wax along the bottom bars, as this tends to form a bridge to encourage the bees up into the super as well.

If the supers are put away before the first frost, add a little PDB to kill moths as explained last month's article.

April Management: winter down hives, BL check, slope of bottom boards for water drainage (three degrees sloping to the front) and restrict entrances to prevent mice entering. Check hive foundations, replace any rotten or damaged supers and floors, check fences, store extracted honey supers and fumigate for wax moth. Control the grass around the hives and keep an eye out for wasp nest.

Time to plan for next season. Order spring queens, and woodware early and avoid disappointment. However, be aware that no matter how hard the queen breeder tries in the spring, if the conditions are not right, (three days at 20°C), the queens won't mate and can hang around for weeks. Not like February when conditions are warm and settled and they will fly and mate within three days of emerging.

Now when all the work is done, sit back and review the season. Where did you go wrong? Hives swarmed, hives built up on the flow instead of before it. Get everything right with basic management (young queen, lots of bees) and food (pollen is essential), add supers before they are needed and then its down to timing.

Learn what triggers swarming. For some it's broom after rain, for me it tends to coincide with the flowering of the cabbage trees. Act to prevent it. Cutting out cells just upsets a hive. Hives should be artificially swarmed (by creating a nuc) if they look likely to swarm. Learn the dates of your main flow and work back from that date. Maximum production of brood should have started 9-12 weeks before the flow starts. If nothing is flowering at that time, then consider stimulating the

hives with sugar syrup and feeding pollen frames. It takes a few years to learn an area. Conditions can also vary within a few kilometers as microclimates come into play.

Once you know the local conditions, then you overlay the La Nino/El Nino weather conditions and how each of these affect your area. One produces more westerly winds with rain on the west, drought on the east. Hives on North slopes don't do as well as those on southern sheltered sites and when the oscillation changes the opposite can happen. It's important for beekeepers to know in advance what the weather will be like in the September to December period. This is the most critical time of the year when hives are building towards swarming, queens are getting mated and food stores reach a minimum. If we have an idea of what might happen in the spring, we can change our feeding and swarm prevention plans to match weather conditions. Sometimes it's all a bit of a mystery.

Some of my city hives swarmed in February after they had already produced a crop (probably because they were under-supervised as I had already put all my supers out). It's inconvenient to neighbours and a slur on my beekeeping to have hives swarm, so I'm considering clipping the queen's wings in these apiaries and extracting the crop off these apiaries a little earlier. At least if they try to swarm, they won't be able to without a queen, so the bees will return to the hive. Hopefully I'll be around in the next few days to discover this before the bees try again, or I will have been informed by the landowner that something was amiss with the hives. So I have hunted out some New Zealand research on the topic to stimulate the brain cells.

Frank Lindsay

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New Zealand Queen Breeders Association members and other interested folks

Many queen breeders are aware NZ Post recently prohibited the export of queenbees via courier post after their carrier DHL decided to implement a rule they already had that "they do not carry live animals or insects".

Because of the lack of a suitable alternative this left many breeders without a choice for small shipments but to decline the shipment. Indeed this inability to export was a great loss to many of our members.

After considerable discussion with NZ Post, DHL, Tradenz and anyone else who would listen, it was apparent NZ POST could not at the time offer any alternative to most countries. However they have now, thankfully, come up an offer to carry shipments of queens via Air International with Track and Trace (you can buy insurance too) to all countries.

I have a six-page fax with some very detailed instructions, which I will mail out to NZ Queen Breeder members who

request it. Non members can still acquire it of course for the cost of copying etc or maybe they would like to become members as it only costs \$10.00 per year with two or three newsletters supplied and free entry into our meeting at conference which has interesting guest speakers.

**Mary-Anne,
Secretary NZ Queen Breeders,
Email: kintail_honey@xtra.co.nz,
phone: (06) 855-8038, fax: (06) 855-8137.**

From the Franklin Beekeepers Club Newsletter President's report

That time of the year has come around again, when everything in the beehive is winding down and there has been a noticeable change since the last heavy rain and the change back from daylight saving. Several reports have come in of robbing, and I have had a similar experience with my own queen raising hives being challenged by robbers who came off second best, trying to get the nightly two cups of sugar syrup.

March meeting was the AGM and Des Carter was voted in as Vice President and Gwen Whitmore as Secretary with Liz Brooks, Lynne Yates, Chris Denton and Trevor Bassett elected to the committee. Thanks to the outgoing officers for their service to the club and to Des in his first year as honey judge, also to Jim and Elsie for the use of their lounge, which was at capacity.

Proposed bus (coach) trip: Waitomo Honey is willing to host our club for a commercial visit on Sunday June 11 at their new honey house overlooking Te Kuiti. The coach list is already started and will be open to all members and their families with cost to be finalised.

April/May in the hives: We now reverse the spring build up manipulation so as to reduce the number of bees within the hive, thus conserving those winter stores. This can be accomplished by packing your stores around the brood in the bottom super giving the nurse bees ready to use honey and pollen as well as an insulation against the coming cold weather. Ideally the queen should be restricted to a rugby size and shaped ball. A queen excluder is sometimes used to force Her Ladyship down where you want her but the former is easily managed as you pass through autumn to winter manipulations. From now on, the egg the queen lays will arrive at the nectar gathering age after most floral sources have concluded for the season.

Although some floral sources may still produce in April and May the quantities of nectar are too small to warrant

maintaining large numbers of field bees, which in their constant search for hard to find productive flowers, consume more energy than the colony is able to store. This constant search can sometimes bring your healthy bees to the site of a weak hive. A return with reinforcements from the home hive can start a robbing frenzy which can lead to a disaster if the reason for the robbed hives weakness is because of American Foulbrood. So the robbers carry back to their strong healthy hive, honey containing the AFB spore which is then fed to healthy young larvae. A deadly food source which in turn changes the strong hive to a weakened hive which will wither and die or be robbed in its turn.

How much honey should we leave for winter stores? Most Hobbyists leave eight to 10 full frames which will produce a fairly strong hive in spring. For every frame less than eight sugar can be fed at 3kg per frame. Fed now as a stiff mix, the bees will store it. It can be fed as a weak mix next spring which will incite the queen into increased egg laying in the belief that a flow is on, but once started it must be kept up to keep pace with the increase in brood.

Within the hive: The worker bees will soon be preparing to conserve stores by getting rid of all those drones. These is no mating in the bee world in winter, and so the drones who would consume lots of stores for no return, are disposed of to be replaced in spring by the queens laying of infertile eggs which produces more males. The honey those drones would consume is more important to the survival of the hive than they are.

For the same reason, care must be taken whenever handling the hive from now on to take care not to damage the queen as she will be irreplaceable. A queenless hive in winter will die out before the new season's queens are available. However, if you have a second hive, it is possible to keep the queenless one going by sharing the brood, say a frame of brood every three weeks.

The queen will slow down her rate of egg laying so that in mid winter, only a few eggs will be laid each day just to keep things ticking over. The brood becomes known as the winter cluster, reducing to about a kiddies rugby ball size and shape, surrounded by ready to use honey and pollen. This is not only for convenience of feeding brood but also as a means of insulating the nursery area. You can help to conserve warmth in the hive by reducing the entrance to about a 50mm or less gap in May. I must remember to demonstrate this at our May meeting.

The winter cluster warmth must be maintained at 34 degrees and comes from the nurse bees bodies and can be replaced by eating honey.

NOTICE OF REMIT FORMING MEETING

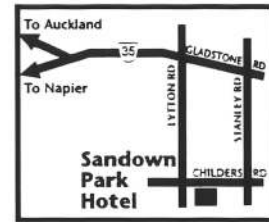
Date: 23 May 2000, Tuesday
Time: 7.30pm sharp
Venue: Federated Farmers NZ Building
78 Armagh Street, CHRISTCHURCH
Programme: 1. Preparation of remits for 2000 conference
NB Typed, prepared remits would be appreciated
2. Nomination of conference delegates
3. General Business

**NB: This meeting is on the 4th Tuesday of the month,
not the last!**

Supper cost \$2.00 each

Poverty Bay Branch

National Beekeepers' Association Inc.
Annual Conference
Gisborne 2000
17th-21st July
at the Sandown Motor Park Hotel



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The National Beekeepers annual conference is coming up and the Gisborne committee are pleased to be able to welcome delegates and partners to the First City to see the New Millennium and share in the four days of conference in East Coast style. Although some 500kms from either Wellington or Auckland, Gisborne has seen itself very proactive in the beekeeping industry with the strength of the environment offering ideal conditions for the honey industry. We look forward to having you join us in Gisborne on the 17th July and are positive you will find the conference programme extremely informative and entertaining.

Programme

Mon 17 Registration
Trade Displays
Speciality Groups
Mix & Mingle & Meal
Tues 18 Seminar Day
Keynote Speaker
Wed 19 AGM & Conference
of delegates
Dinner & Entertainment
*Partner Programme
Thurs 20 Conference of Delegates
Election President & Exec



Partner Programme

**Eastwoodhill Visit and
Ngatapa Valley Experience**
9.00am Collect Bus or shuttles
Drive to Ngatapa
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EWH Lunch provided
Tour Arboretum
Depart
4.00pm Arrive Gisborne

Registration Form

Registration: Please help by registering early using the accompanying form.

Please return this registration form to: Barry Foster, Conference Secretary, 695 Aberdeen Road, Gisborne. Telephone/Fax: (060) 867-4591, Email: bjfoster@xtra.co.nz

Name:

Address:

.....

.....

Phone: ()

Fax: ()

Registration Fees

Registration Fee	\$30
Seminar & Lunch	\$40
Mix & Mingle & meal	\$20
Dinner	\$45
TOTAL	\$135
Partner Programme	\$40
Late fee payment (after 14 July)	\$15

Cheque attached - receipt please



Kintail Honey Staff who all passed their Decca's in December.



From left: Glen Bidlake, Brendon Holden, James Ward, Mary-Anne Thomason, William Gyde, Damien Ward, Robert Moore and Jonathon Francis.
Absent: Bob Hall and Tony Swanson Wairarapa branch.

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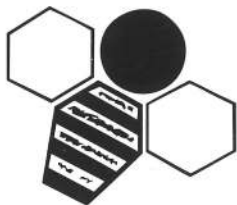
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P-plater stung with fine after run-in with bee

Melbourne - A provisional driver lost control and crashed her car while trying to remove a bee from her windscreen, a court was told.

Kellie Ceddia, 19, was driving along the Calder highway, near Nunga, when the offending bee landed on the outside of her windscreen on November 19 last year.

Sergeant Tony Burns said that Ceddia, fearing she would be stung by the bee, reached out the driver's side with a tissue. She tried to remove the bee from the windscreen, but lost control of the car, veered across the highway and rolled several times before the car burst into flames. Ceddia received minor injuries, but her car was destroyed. She pleaded guilty to careless driving, told police she did it because she did not want to get stung. Mandy Fox, defending, said Ceddia feared the bee at the time, but now realised her actions were not appropriate. Ms Fox said it would have been better if Ceddia had let the bee sting her rather than crash her \$A4000 (\$NZ5175) car.

Magistrate Jane Patrick agreed and placed her on a two-month good behaviour bond without conviction and ordered her to pay \$A150 to the court fund.

(Article from Motor Today, Friday, February 25, 2000)

Sawfly buzzing through willows

An imported pest that had spread from Auckland to Wellington in three years was stripping hectares of willow trees of their leaves in Gisborne and Waikato a scientist said. The sawfly, *Nematus oligosphilus*, could cross Cook Strait soon and head south, HortResearch Mt Albert scientist John Charles said.

The worst damage from the sawfly had been recorded in Gisborne and Waikato. In some cases, willows stretching for more than a kilometre along riverbanks had been defoliated. It was not yet known how long the trees would last if repeatedly attacked, Mr Charles said.

The sawfly is attacking one of the most important tree species used for stabilising river banks. If many willows are wiped out, the cost would run into millions of dollars and the erosion would be serious, scientists have said. They are trying to find a biological control to limit the sawfly's destruction.

The sawfly, a relative of bees, wasps and ants, was discovered in Auckland in 1997 but is now widely spread throughout Poverty Bay and Bay of Plenty, and has made inroads on Hawke's Bay.

Mr Charles said it reached Wellington last year but there has been no reports so far of it in Nelson.

(Thank you to Milton Jackson for this article)

The Unwelcome Visitor

Once I bought a set of Dairy Company platform scales that had been used for weighing tins of milk powder. They were ideal for weighing sixty pound tins of honey that I was sending to the Honey Marketing Authority. It was a very accurate set of scales so I valued this machine. Those days if you weighed one tin under-weight all the other tins of that tank-full of honey would be recorded as under-weight even though the rest could have been accurate. Behind the platform scales was a closed in piece of metal about eighteen inches high with a glass window in front covering the indicator dial that measured honey to the nearest half ounce.

One day I was sitting on a super weighing off a ton of honey to be sent to Auckland. The scales seemed to be sticking as if there was some oil wanted somewhere. I was tapping the top of the tin with one hand and with my nose about one inch off the glass window, when to my horror a large rat came into view with its two front paws clinging to the indicator hand. I got such a shock that I fell off the super. I picked myself off the floor and seized a broom and went after that rat, but it seemed to be one jump ahead of me. Every time I brought the broom down with a crash on the floor it would be somewhere else like under drip trays where I had to chase it out with the broom handle. This went on for some time until at last I got it out in the open and hit it so hard that it was squashed all over the floor. It was not a pretty sight and certainly most unhygienic. Eventually I found an old shovel and scooped it up off the floor then ran outside and threw it around the shed corner over into the long grass.

It occurred to me some year's later that if our Apiary Advisory Officer, who used to visit me at times, and was never known to use bad language, had stopped that shovel-full of squashed rat just what his reaction or language would have been like. Over the years I have known quite a few Advisory Officers, they all seem to have been cool and calm and never lost their tempers although they must have been sorely tempted to do so at times. They must be a special breed of men because I have never heard of an Advisory Officer going to a beekeeper's

meeting with a shillelagh in his bag so that he could knock a bit of sense into some obstinate beekeeper.

After I got rid of the rat I had to shift a lot of supers to find the rat's hole and block it up, then give the floor a scrub out. When building a honey house it pays to build it from some material that rats have trouble chewing their way through, like fibrolite or concrete and to use lots of rat poison outside the buildings.

Ron Mossop



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Argentine Honey Exports: Their impact on World Honey Trade (Part I)

I am sure that the Argentine honey situation is a very hot topic among both American and Canadian beekeepers. Most US beekeepers blame Argentine honey exports for dramatically reducing the price they get, and they are right.

During 1997 Argentina became - for the first time in beekeeping history - the world's largest honey exporter. We shipped over 154 million pounds abroad, while China exported only 106 million pounds. During 1998 Argentina stepped back to the second place when we exported 150 million pounds, while China exported almost 164 million pounds.

Ten years ago Argentina had about 1.8 million colonies; now there are

approximately 2.5 million colonies. Total honey production is close to 180 million pounds, domestic consumption is next to nothing - about 13 million pounds (7% of total production). Our total population of 35 million people means that per capita consumption is less than half a pound. It's obvious why we export most of our production, our population is not large and besides we are not used to eating much honey.

The US consumes approximately 350 million pounds of honey per year, while it produces approximately 200 million pounds. That means you have a 150 million pound deficit. China can ship approximately 45 million pounds according to the Antidumping

Suspension Agreement. This leaves 105 million pounds of honey that US honey packers need from other sources (like Argentina).

Okay, where do we go from here? We have learned in recent years that our markets can handle \$1 per pound to the producer. We must figure out how Argentine beekeepers can make more money on their honey and not depress prices in US because depressed prices in the US will depress prices in Argentina. Are we in agreement?

I am almost certain where the problem lies. Our Argentine honey exporters are telling us that we must sell our honey cheaper, so that it may be sold in the US. I believe that our Argentine exporters and your US importers are making all the money and driving prices down with their greed. (Editor's note: Many honey packers are telling us that they are not making much money either because competition has forced their margins down in both the retail and industrial honey markets. Who are reaping the benefit? - honey retailers (grocery stores) and industrial users of honey.)

Since the exporter/importers have such a large profit margin, they can continue to offer our honey from Argentina at lower and lower prices. Even to the point that Argentine honey has replaced US honey. Therefore, US producers must sell their honey so they will match Argentine prices. The market continues to drop and both US and Argentine beekeepers suffer.

What can we do? I think that I have the answer. Argentina producers must demand more for their honey. Why not 85 cents per pound? Add freight, duties, and commissions and the price will be around \$1 in the US. We can all be happy with \$0.85-\$1.00 per pound for honey.

How do we get more money for the producers in Argentina? We must give serious competition to our buyers. I assume no one has been giving these buyers any competition! There are at least two ways of raising honey prices: One is not to sell and keep our warehouses full of honey (I don't know many Argentine beekeepers with the financial capability to survive without selling their honey.)

Secondly, we can promote domestic consumption of honey in Argentina. At the end of February 1999 a group of concerned Argentine beekeepers met to discuss this issue. There were, of course, different perspectives. A group of them (including myself) met with the Chairman of the Agriculture Committee at our House of Representatives in the

ARGENTINE HONEY EXPORTS: 1970/1997

Year	Million Pounds	Total FOB Price (US\$ million)	Cents per pounds (FOB)
1970	46.23	5.08	11.00
1971	31.38	3.00	12.70
1972	42.57	8.90	20.90
1973	39.33	11.13	28.29
1974	24.12	8.92	36.98
1975	49.69	16.49	33.18
1976	65.38	20.69	31.64
1977	54.21	18.97	34.99
1978	78.88	29.33	37.18
1979	51.70	21.81	42.18
1980	42.86	19.12	44.61
1981	61.62	26.56	43.10
1982	65.49	26.69	40.75
1983	64.21	25.26	39.33
1984	56.69	19.65	34.66
1985	93.36	26.07	27.92
1986	67.65	23.78	35.15
1987	79.78	27.56	34.54
1988	91.65	28.87	31.50
1989	74.47	22.98	30.85
1990	82.55	28.05	33.97
1991	104.00	42.33	40.70
1992	121.35	51.76	42.64
1993	121.00	50.15	41.44
1994	137.34	53.78	39.15
1995	139.72	70.45	50.40
1996	117.81	90.64	76.93
1997	153.26	107.00	69.81
1998	149.62	88.04	58.84

*Source: USDA
INDEC- Argentine National Institute of Statistics*

Congress. His name is representative Juan Carlos Passo.

We asked representative Passo to introduce a law that would tax Argentine honey exports. These funds would be devoted to an institution similar to your National Honey Board. Our aim is to promote domestic consumption in Argentina. Representative Passo and other members of the Agricultural Committee outline a preliminary law where all export of beekeeping products (honey, pollen, etc) would be taxed 1.5% of the FOB price.

Considering that the total dollar amount of 1998 Argentine honey exports was more than US\$88 million, this fund would be financed with at least US\$1.3 million. So far, there have been two meetings in Congress to debate Representative Passo's proposal. As you might imagine, there has been strong opposition from our honey exporters. And, surprisingly, some beekeeping organisations have also opposed this project. Why? Well, Argentine honey exporters have warned that if this law is passed and enacted, they will automatically reduce our prices by the same proportion. This is not a surprise. However, some Argentine beekeepers who are close to bankruptcy fear this will worsen their situation.

Why are honey prices so depressed?

To understand this, we must first know why honey prices went up between 1994 and 1996.

Back in 1996 the prices that we Argentine beekeepers received for our honey were the best ever (82 cents per pound). And for the first time there was an 'international price' for our honey. I mean, never before had the price paid to us been the same price paid to US beekeepers. Right now (end of June '99), there is a notorious gap in prices. While a US beekeeper gets about 54 cents/lb for white honey, we get paid 37 cents/lb. These differences have existed for several years, except during the period between January 1996 - June 1997. During those 18 months Argentine beekeepers sold their honey at almost the same price US beekeepers did.

What was the reason for such unusually 'good' prices? Well, the US more than doubled their total honey imports between 1990 (75 million pound) and 1997 (160 million pounds), an actual increase of 109%. At the

same time, the US has fewer hives than 10 years ago. In 1989 the total number of hives was 3.4 million; now there are 2.6 million (a decrease of 800 thousand hives in 10 years!)

Simultaneously, US domestic consumption grew significantly. According to National Honey Board figures, the increase was about 30% since 1988, reaching 350 million pounds in 1997. If the US eats more honey, but produces less, the gap will be offset by imports from honey exporting countries. Actually, close to 50% of US domestic consumption is imported honey, the other half is US honey.

Until 1994 the bulk of American honey imports were from China. The US imported a record of 75 million pounds of Chinese honey back in 1994. In 1995 the Antidumping Suit and Suspension

Agreement established a quota and minimum price for Chinese honey exports.

During 1995 US honey packers couldn't find a large supply of American honey to meet the needs of the US domestic market. Given their limitations to import Chinese honey, they had two options: To import honey from Mexico or from Argentina. Why was Argentina chosen instead of Mexico?

Have you ever wondered why US buyers came to Argentina in the first place? Why didn't they choose Mexican honey? Why didn't US honey packers absorb most of the Mexican honey exports? Bear in mind that Mexico is the third largest honey exporter. Mexicans used to export 110 million pounds back in 1991, but after the arrival of AFB and varroa mite, they reduced their exports to an average of 55 million pounds.

Indeed, it is more expensive for US packers to import honey from Argentina than from Mexico. Freight expenses are one of the major costs of importing Argentina honey.

It is because Mexican honey exports are monopolized by a few German traders, that US buyers couldn't steal anything from them except a very small share of Mexican exports. It is not a matter of the quality nor of the colour of Mexican honey. Considering the fact that US buyers used to purchase so much poorer quality Chinese honey, then any honey is good for them. They can't argue Mexican honey is not good.

I don't know any US packer willing to accept the fact that competition from German buyers in Mexico was and is so strong that they couldn't step into Mexico. What do you think? Most Mexican honey exports have been regularly absorbed by Germany (about 65% to 70% of its total honey exports), while the US has ranked third or fourth as a customer for Mexican honey. Does this make sense?

Until 1995 (before the quota and minimum price for Chinese honey), Argentina used to export most of its honey to Germany. When US buyers could not import more than a limited amount of Chinese honey, they discovered that Mexico was a difficult market because of the traditional role played by German traders. Then, they looked into Argentina as an alternative supplier of cheap imported honey. Although Germany

USA HONEY IMPORTS - First Quarter 1999

Supplier	Volume (million pounds)	CIF Price Total (US\$) (millions)	CIF Price (cents/lb)	Supply Percentage
Argentina	16.76	8.74	52.1	47.63
Canada	7.77	4.43	56.9	22.09
China	7.76	3.99	51.4	22.06
Mexico	1.80	0.871	48.1	5.13
Australia	0.52	0.303	57.5	1.49
Vietnam	0.32	0.171	52.5	0.92
Others	0.22	0.304	134	0.64
TOTAL	35.15	18.80	53.54	100

USA HONEY IMPORTS - First Quarter 1998

Supplier	Volume (million pounds)	CIF Price Total (US\$) (millions)	CIF Price (cents/lb)	Supply Percentage
Argentina	19.24	11.90	61.8	77.42
Mexico	1.80	1.02	56.6	7.27
China	1.39	0.932	66.8	5.60
Canada	1.30	0.955	73.5	5.23
Others	1.10	0.845	76.0	4.46
TOTAL	24.83	15.65	63.0	100

Source: USDA

USA HONEY IMPORTS - 1990-1998 (million pounds)

Supplier	Argentina	China	Mexico	TOTAL
1990	15.90	32.64	15.81	64.35
1991	21.39	45.14	8.63	75.16
1992	30.42	54.51	4.86	89.82
1993	36.96	73.67	5.81	116.44
1994	39.00	62.17	4.54	105.71
1995	28.55	28.46	6.49	63.50
1996	68.20	42.70	12.05	122.95
1997	106.87	25.24	14.56	146.67
1998	69.04	30.23	8.77	108.04

Source: USDA
(This chart does not include other US Imports, such as Canada, Australia, etc.)

regularly absorbed the largest share of our imports, the relationship between Argentine exporting companies and German traders was not as close as in Mexico. US buyers had to compete with German buyers for Argentine honey. At the end of 1995 and beginning of 1996 this competition was so strong that honey prices in Argentina skyrocketed in a matter of months.

Between 1996 and 1998 Argentina exported most of its honey to the USA. The Chinese lost an important part of the US market, but found alternative destinations for their honey in Germany and Japan.

Now we can start to understand the circumstances that made prices go up so abruptly in 1996. It was a combination of several factors: US quota system and minimum price for Chinese exports, drop in US colony numbers, increase in US domestic consumption, US increased imports and finally an intense competition between US and European packers for the supply of Argentine honey.

Returning to the first question: Why are honey prices down? Why do American beekeepers produce only half of US domestic consumption and still have plenty of unsold honey in their warehouses from the previous 1998 crop?

A recent USDA report stated that by January 1, 1999, inventories of unsold honey in the hands of American producers were more than 80 million pounds. I have a surprise for you. The most recent statistics on US honey imports show that during the first quarter of 1999, total honey imports were up 42% in volume (35 million pounds) compared to US imports of first quarter 1998 (24.8 millions pounds). Argentine's honey share decreased 9%, but both Canadian and Chinese imports rose about 500%.

Who controls the world honey trade?

The value of Chinese, Argentine and Mexican 1998 exports was only US\$209 million. Indeed, that's a lot of money, but not much in the perspective of a true agricultural commodity such as corn, wheat, and sugar. But can we say the same thing about honey? My belief is that honey is far from being a commodity, because of both its scarce nature and its volume.

When an economist talks about market, he/she distinguishes several different kinds of market. There are two big groups. Perfect Markets are those in which there are so many buyers and sellers, that all have very little power to push prices either up or down.

On the other hand, we have Imperfect Markets. A market is imperfect when either the supply or the demand side can manipulate prices to its benefit.

Examples of this kind of market are: monopolies, oligopolies, etc. In these cases, it is the supply side who has most of the power.

But, the imperfect market where beekeepers interact with honey buyers has another name. In economics it is called Oligopsony. An Oligopsony occurs when the demand side (honey buyers) is concentrated in only a few companies who have a great deal of purchasing power, while the supply side is dispersed into many individuals. This is exactly what happens to beekeepers in both Argentina and the USA.

Who buys honey in the US? More than likely the companies that belong to the 'National Honey Packers and Dealers Association' (NHPDA). This organisation represents the largest group of honey buyers in America. These people not only buy American honey, but also import honey from Argentina, China and wherever. In Europe there is a similar group. Its name is 'European Federation of Honey Packers'. It is evident that competition among buyers has a limit. They have some common interests to defend.

Now I would like to introduce the readers of the ABJ to a more enigmatic and low profile group that plays a major role in world honey trade. I am talking about the IHEO. 'International Honey Exporters Organisation'. If you believe this group is formed by beekeeping associations, you are wrong. The IHEO was founded 16 years ago at the Apimondia Congress held in Budapest-Hungary (1983). Members are not beekeepers, but honey exporting companies. During the first six years of its existence IHEO members met every year. From 1991 on they have met every second year at each Apimondia Congress, where they hold a parallel meeting. Every month they exchange a honey market report that is sent by fax to all its members.

Paradoxically, some IHEO members are not only exporters, but also importers. A more detailed explanation of this group was published in the June 1998 issues of the British journal Bee Biz. Do IHEO members defend the price of honey? I am sure they do it, but for their own interest.

What happens in any economic relationship where a one party sells and the other buys? The buyer wants to pay the lowest possible price and the seller wants to obtain the highest possible price. That's the way any business works. IHEO members are not the exception.

Part II will appear at a later date.

Martin Braunstein

Malka Bee Co, Argentina

email:malka@webnet.com.ar

<http://www.beekeeping.com/malka/>

“Water Water Everywhere...”

If you own a pet cat or dog then it is a safe bet that your pet has a water dish in or close to your home. But all too often little thought is given to providing water for our bees. Bees need water for a number of reasons.

Egg hatching; The relative humidity in the cells must be 90-95% before the egg will hatch. Water is required to produce that humidity.

Brood rearing; Brood food is mostly water. 80% on the first day for larval growth reducing to 55% on the sixth day. The bees produce the larval food from glands in their bodies but to do this they are eating honey which has a maximum water content of 20%. Some water is produced by the bees own metabolism but as soon as the bees can fly they are out collecting water to dilute the stored honey and to provide moisture for the larvae and the queen.

Air conditioning; in warm weather, bees use water to help to control the hive temperature. Evaporating moisture has a refrigerating effect and helps cool the hive.

Providing a close source of good clean water has advantages to the beekeeper too. If bees do not have to travel a great distance to collect water and bring it back to the hive, fewer of them will be required to do this work. Thereby freeing up more bees to collect nectar. Scientists have recorded an increase in honey production from colonies with in hive waterers, consider the fact that an experiment in Tucson, Arizona, in a 24 hour period bees in one hive collected over 2 litres of water. That's a lot of bee hours of work.

Another advantage of providing water to the beekeeper is that the water will be of proven quality and not contaminated with pesticides and other agricultural chemicals. Bees have been known to collect water contaminated with arsenic when it is the only water available to them. Providing a close source of water can reduce the risk of your bees visiting nearby bird baths, wet laundry and swimming pools to obtain moisture and thereby reduce the potential to complaints from angry neighbours.

**(Borrowed from the Manawatu
Beekeepers Club Newsletter -
November '99)**

A Slightly Far-Fetched Bee Story - From An Amateur

I looked into the brood boxes of my ever productive bee hive on a warm day in late October. I was concerned about over crowding as per last year at the same time. I found an empty house! Not a brood cell anywhere. The frames were so well cleaned out, spick and span, ready and empty - at the height of the busy season!

I phoned Colin. I trekked out to his place in a mood of contrition. Did I loose my queen when I went through the hive in late September, when there were already two half deck supers full of honey. Did I tread on the queen at the time?

I'll never know. I brought home a new heart for my hive. She was resplendent with her white dot and she was squirming furiously in her little cage. I popped her and her entourage prayerfully into my hive. I tiptoed around the hive for 10 days. When I plucked up the courage to look in again there was brood, capped brood. What sort of miracle was this?

How to get bees back into your garden

Frequently we are told that there aren't as many bees about these days - and perhaps you also find there are not too many bees in your garden.

When we were younger, it was common for many people to have one or two hives in the back of their quarter acre section and so we saw many bees on the fruit trees and flower gardens. Since then the Ministry of Agriculture has become more strict about the registration of hives, inspection and hive management, so there are not so many "backyard beekeepers" and consequently fewer bees around.

Another reason is the change in our gardens. As a child, I lived on a half acre section which included a large orchard, hedges of Privet and rambling roses and beds of old fashioned daisies, forget-me-nots, wall flowers, candy tufts and other flowers attractive to bees.

The modern garden is more likely to have green shrubs and plants, neatly mown lawns and few fruit trees. Not exactly exciting from a bee's point of view.

If you would like to have more bees in your garden, (if you have fruit trees, they are very necessary for a good crop) then plan your planting with bees in mind. They are very partial to blue and mauve flowers so herbs and ground covers which are frequently covered with masses of small flowers, are very attractive.

Rosemary, Catmint, Verbena and Lavender are always popular with bees and the low growing Cotoneaster will make them really excited. Native shrubs can be very valuable - Lacebark and Koromiko are particularly good. For long lasting bee feed, the Bottlebrush is hard to beat and Banksia flowerheads will entertain bee for hours.

As commercial beekeepers, my husband Ben and I have no shortage of bees but most of them are located on farms in blocks of 30 to 50 hives. The farmers are pleased to have the hives because of the improvement in their pastures. In springtime most commercial beekeepers contract to kiwifruit and other crop growers to improve the pollination of their plants and increase the subsequent fruit crop.

(Written by Dot Rawnsley and published in the NZ Gardener May 1987)

I was talking to my husband at teatime the same day. I was explaining that the laying queen might not be the one with the white dot, she might have met her death at the sting of a not yet laying resident virgin. With my not very exceptional powers of observation and the usual huge population in my hive, I didn't like my chances of ever finding out.

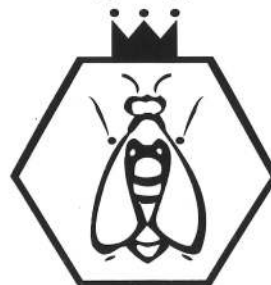
We went out to look at the hive soon after that conversation - as dusk was approaching. It had been a very hot day. Some bees were still flying out for a last sip while others were sitting on the porch telling one another stories about how once upon a time they had lost their mother - when all of a sudden a bee with a white, luminescent dot popped out. She was very brief, out and back in but we both saw the dot.

Was it, could it be, that that bee said hello?

THE LITTLE BEE

This is a story of a little bee
Whose sex is very hard to see
You can not tell a he from a she
But he can tell and so can she
The little bee is never still
And hasn't time to take the pill
So that is why in times like these
There are so many blessed bees

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2000 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ELECTIONS

National Beekeepers' Association of New Zealand Inc

The Executive is seeking nominations to fill the vacancy (North Island member) caused by the resignation of Mr Gerrit Hyink who was elected to the Executive as a North Island member in the 1999 Executive Committee election. This election takes place in accordance with the provision of Rule 16f and the person elected will hold office for the balance of the unexpired term of the vacating member ie: - 1 year.

Election of a member to the Executive Committee to be domiciled in the North Island.

NOMINATION FORM

We the undersigned members of the Association hereby nominate:

NAME IN FULL: _____

ADDRESS: _____

With his/her consent as a candidate at the election of three members to the Executive Committee of the Association

NOMINATED BY: _____ SECONDED BY: _____

FULL NAME: _____ FULL NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____ ADDRESS: _____

SIGNATURE: _____ SIGNATURE: _____

SIGNATURE OF CANDIDATE: _____ DATE: _____

Nominations, which close at 9.00am Thursday 25 May 2000, are to be addressed and forwarded to:

The Returning Officer
National Beekeepers' Association of NZ (Inc)
PO Box 715
WELLINGTON

NOTES FOR GUIDANCE OF CANDIDATES AND MEMBERS

1. Everyone receiving a nomination form can be nominated or can nominate and/or second a member's nomination.
2. Any member can nominate and second another member as a Candidate for election to the Executive Committee.
3. **Candidate's Biographical notes in support of their Candidature.** The Association will include with voting papers up to 200 words of Biographical Notes submitted by the Candidate **with his/her nomination.**
4. A copy of the roll of members will be supplied to the Secretary of each Branch.
5. **Scrutineers:** A Candidate may appoint a person to act as Scrutineer. The Returning Officer must be advised of the name and address of a suggested Scrutineer before the poll closes at 9am Thursday, 22 June 2000.

BEE ENTERPRISES



Manufacturers and Sole Suppliers of

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 - New Way Pollen Traps
 - Tin Clip on Lids
 - Tin One Piece Internal Feeders
- Phone
Brian or Christine
(09) 235-8585
Fax: (09) 235-0001

BEEKEEPER WANTED

The Wilderland Trust is seeking a volunteer to take on our beekeeping and related activities.

We presently have 240 hives.

We are a charitable educational trust.

For further information please write to:

Wilderland Trust

RD1

Whitianga

2000 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ELECTIONS

In accordance with the Association's Rules, three members of the Executive Committee retire in rotation each year. This year they are Mrs J Lorimer for the North Island and Messrs L McKenzie and T Taiaroa for the South Island.

National Beekeepers' Association of New Zealand Inc

Election of three members to the Executive Committee - one member to be domiciled in the North Island and two to be domiciled in the South Island.

NOMINATION FORM

We the undersigned members of the Association hereby nominate:

NAME IN FULL: _____

ADDRESS: _____

With his/her consent as a candidate at the election of three members to the Executive Committee of the Association

NOMINATED BY: _____ SECONDED BY: _____

FULL NAME: _____ FULL NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____ ADDRESS: _____

SIGNATURE: _____ SIGNATURE: _____

SIGNATURE OF CANDIDATE: DATE:

Nominations, which close at 9.00am Thursday 25 May 2000, are to be addressed and forwarded to

**The Returning Officer
National Beekeepers Assn., of NZ (Inc)
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AFB Competency Test

The AFB competency test has now been running for 4 months during the busiest time of year for beekeepers. We have received, tested and marked over 130 candidates. The current pass rate is 85%.

My wife, Julie Hatfield, undertakes the actual data entry and clerical duties. Julie is not a beekeeper, therefore cannot answer questions on content of the test. The computer system marks the test in accordance with the data supplied by the NBA.

Statistics

As at the end of February the status was:

1. There have been 17 exam events.
2. There have been 134 candidates where 122 completing the test, the rest waiting for a test.
3. There are 42 trainers registered.
4. There have been 105 passes.

Applications

We regularly receive applications that are incomplete or do not have the payment. The particular areas that seem to be missed are:

1. The Proctor details including address and date of the exam are not included. These must be filled out for the exam to be generated by the computer.
2. Payment is not made out to "Richard Hatfield" but the NBA or something else. We will not send out an exam without the correct payment being forwarded.
3. Applications sent in too late to be processed. We send out the test four days before the exam. We have to have the test back within 5 days of the test being taken otherwise it is invalid.

The application form and details can be found on the internet at www.nba.org.nz/pms/deca1.htm.

If a club or branch is organising an exam with more than 10 candidates then please send them in as early as possible so that we can ensure that the papers are sent to the Proctor on time. If there are public holidays between submitting applications and the test please allow additional time as NZ Post does not normally operate on these days.

The questions and exam papers

As a result of feedback, the NBA has revised all of the questions and the exam papers. A number of improvements in readability have assisted in making sure the test is a test of AFB recognition and destruction and not English.

Any comments about the content of the exam or the answers should be forwarded to the PMS review committee. The Competency Test Administrator does not set the questions or answers.



Richard Hatfield collecting a swarm in February that was 20ft up a tree (felt brave that day!) After the swarm completely missed the box Richard had to 'sweep' them up which took all night! The last remnants are entering the box.

Frequently asked Questions

Q. Why does it cost \$25 for the exam?

A. The Competency Test Administration is a commercial activity contracted out by the NBA. This covers postage, printing, labour, database development and profit. \$25 is a reasonable cost for a one off test.

Q. Do I have to take the test?

A. All DECA holders have an obligation under their agreement with the management agency to demonstrate competency in AFB recognition and destruction. The NBA has determined that the most appropriate way is to have a test that is independently administered. For all other beekeepers it is optional to take the test. It is worthwhile noting that only DECA holders that have passed the Competency Test may sign the annual disease return.

Q. What can I fail on?

A. Two ways to fail the test. Firstly, not achieving the 75% pass mark will fail the test. Secondly, not answering the mandatory question correctly. The mandatory question(s) are always photographic questions.

Q. What happens if I fail and what do I need to do?

A. You will receive a notice from the administrator indicating that you have failed the test with a list of revision points to assist you in improving your knowledge. You are then required to undertake an approved training course by an approved trainer if you have not already done so. The trainer will give you a certificate that you supply with your retest application. The retest fee is \$25.

Q. Who can be a proctor?

A. Anyone who is in good standing such as a trainer, GP, teacher, beekeeper club/NBA executive member, JP. It is the candidate's responsibility to find a suitable proctor. Clubs and NBA branches can organise proctors and test locations. Obviously candidates cannot be proctors when they are taking the test.

Q. Why can't I have my exam paper back?

A. As the exam papers are re-used the circulation of exam papers, questions or answers would compromise the integrity of the competency test process.

Q. I don't understand why I failed.

A. With all failure letters there is a list of revision points that will provide sufficient information to ensure that you are directed to the appropriate texts.

Q. I want to appeal the result of the test. How do I do it?

A. The process for appeals is as follows:

1. Write a letter stating your grounds for appeal and send it with a cheque for \$10 to the Competency Test Administrator.
2. The Competency Test Administrator will then copy the completed exam paper and forward it on with your letter to the PMS Review Committee.
3. The PMS Review Committee will then determine if the grounds for appeal are valid.
4. The PMS Review Committee will then inform the appellant of the decision.
5. The PMS Review Committee will then return the paper to the Competency Test Administrator with instructions on what to do next.

Common mistakes

The common mistakes in taking the test are:

1. Failure to read the instructions and confirm your understanding. The proctor allows time to do this before the test. Please ensure that you understand what to do before commencing the test.

2. Not checking that you have answered every question. We have had several tests back with whole pages not answered.
3. Circling more than one answer. We cannot mark questions with multiple answers. If you make a mistake, circle the correct answer and cross out the wrong one.
4. The pictorial question requires you to circle only the correct letter not the plate numbers. If it is not clear which answer you intended to mark then we cannot mark it.
5. Ensure that you circle the answer letter, True or False. Please do not tick, cross out or mark in any other way. Ticks and crosses are ignored.

We do check each paper where there is a potential failure to ensure that we have correctly transcribed your answer to the computer. We then reconfirm the result. The computer marks automatically and we cannot override the result.

Process

The process for completing the competency test is as follows:

1. Decide on where and when you would like to take the test. Many of the NBA branches and local clubs are arranging suitable venues and dates. Also AgriQual, other commercial operations, NBA branches and local clubs/Associations are likely to be offering competency test locations with or without training associated with it.
2. Fill out the form below. The Proctor is an independent person that will administer the exam on the day. Your local branch should be able to assist you with this. Send the form in to



Richard came back the following day to remove the very large bird box with bees and 30kg of honey! Only problem was the box was made of metal! Angle grinders and bees don't mix!

me at the address below with a cheque for \$25 as fee for the test. Send the form to the address below so that it arrives at least 5 days before the test. We send out the papers 4 days before the test so that late applications cannot be processed.

3. You will then receive confirmation of the exam with a GST receipt.

Application Form for Competency Test

Please write in Block capitals:

	Write details in this column
Name (full name with family name underlined)	
Beekeeper number if allocated	
Address for all correspondence	
Phone number	
Fax number	
Preferred Exam date	
Preferred location (address and if training provider then their name)	
Proctor name	
Proctor Address	
Fee enclosed (cheque number and bank)	
If a retest then registered training provider certificate enclosed	

Cheques to be made out to **“Richard Hatfield”** and crossed with **“account payee only”**.

Please send to:
 Competency Test Administrator,
 Blue Mountains Apiaries,
 Sierra Way,
 RD 1,
 Upper Hutt

You will receive confirmation within 10 days. If you do not please contact the Competency Test Administrator on (04) 528-7780 or fax (04) 528-7380.

4. Attend the exam, where the proctor will provide you with all of the materials except a pen! The proctor will return the completed exams to me.
5. Computer will mark the exams and the pass or fail notices automatically generated. This will then be sent to you directly. AgriQual will receive a list regularly of all of the successful candidates.
6. If you fail the test then you will need to take a course approved by the NBA and register to take the exam at \$25. The training provider will supply you with a certificate that you must return with the exam papers or the registration. You can take the exam as many times as you wish.

Confidentiality

All personal information remains confidential and will only be disclosed to AgriQual, the PMS contractor, when the person has passed the exam. Personal Information will be aggregated and depersonalised when reported for any other purpose.

You may request a copy of your personal information held by the Administrator by writing to the address below enclosing a cheque for \$5. You can have your information corrected by returning the form with the corrected personal information.

The personal information collected and test results produced to satisfy the requirements of the PMS Strategy. This information is only used to administer the AFB Elimination and Destruction Test and informing the PMS contractor when the candidate successfully completes the test.

For Sale: Boom Loader for truck; New Pollen Traps \$45 each. Phone (06) 878-3479.

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From The Colonies

Pest Management Competency Training and Testing

The branch is underway with Foul Brood Training Sessions. These are of four hours duration followed by the examination. All those wishing to take the exam will have to complete the application form in the October 1999 NZ Beekeeper and post it, so that it's in our hands (Secretary/Treasurer), along with a cheque for \$35, 10 days before the course starts otherwise the individual examination papers will not be available in time. Payable to the Southern North Island Branch. The extra \$10 is for hall hire and incidentals.

Actually it is not really necessary for a competent beekeeper to take the course provided they have read the "yellow book" a few times, understand it and can identify AFB from the pictures. All that is necessary is to sit the exam (10 - 20 minutes-it's a tick the box examination) in front of a proctor (Librarian, JP, Trainer or a member who has already passed the examination). All courses will start at 8am unless otherwise stated.

Those with a reading difficulty can bring along a reader but we will need to be notified so arrangements can be made. Note the assistant should not be a beekeeper.

Courses

Dates	Location	Place	Close off
Application Date			
6 May	Palmerston Nth	AgriQuality Office	26 April
20 May	Taranaki	Ngaire School	6 May
21 May	Taranaki	AgriQuality Office	6 May
10 June	Wanganui	Polytech	30 May
10 June	Masterton	Opaki School	30 May
24 June	Masterton	Opaki School	12 June
24 June	Raetihi	Anglican Church Hall	12 June
1 July	Palmerston Nth	AgriQuality Office	21 June



WANTED TO BUY BEEHIVES

Preferably bush sites in the Hawke's Bay area
Phone: (06) 878-2040

One swallow doesn't make a summer, and one article doesn't make a trend; but when the article is in Martha Stewart's Living Magazine ... don't be so sure!

Martha Stewart is the hottest media person in the USA today: as a New Zealander imagine a combination of Maggie Barry's Gardening savvy blended with Alison Holst's culinary wizz and then a female version of Jim (the Weatherman's) outdoors and motoring passion coupled with Andy (of Changing Rooms) carpentry skills and ... put all of this into a very self-assured, attractive and composed woman: and you have the modern USA Superwoman media phenomenon: Martha.

Her TV programmes are very good: her magazines monthly best-sellers; and her company went public a few months ago: with astonishing success.

What does this have to do with New Zealand beekeepers?

When Martha Stewart says something is good: the whole of the USA mid-market (that huge and wealthy consumer block) accepts and agrees: partly because she is so good at presenting it: but more so I think because she has an acute sense of perfect timing: she knows when something is right for the market, or, more importantly, when the market wants something!

And so: get if you can a copy of Martha Stewart Living, March 2000 issue.

I've grazed the 4-page article and precised it with the following direct extracts:

"Honey is so miraculous that if it didn't exist it would be hard to imagine it ... Egyptians poured it in the Nile to placate their gods ... Assyrians drizzled it over the bolts used to assemble their temples ... until the Middle Ages honey was virtually the only sweetener in the world outside Asia ... beyond the reach of all but the wealthy ... the creation of honey is one of the more exhilarating demonstrations of the complexity of the natural world ... but when you taste the mass-produced honey found in the jars and plastic bear dispensers on supermarket shelves (they) are relatively bland and one-dimensional ... this is not surprising because they are blends ... which have been superheated and filtered ... but there is a whole world of very different honeys out there ... known to aficionados as "single-flower" honeys ... these are sweeteners with real personality ... as different from one another in flavour, colour and texture as one fine wine is from another ... the slightly bitter smokey tang of chestnut honey ... the dense highly aromatic orange blossom honey ... what makes this possible is the honeybees 'flower fidelity' ... like extremely fine extra virgin olive oils, artisanal single-flower honeys are best used in ways that show of their dazzlingly distinctive flavours and aromas. Drizzle them over cheese, mix them into marinades, or simply dip a spoon in a jar and let a small amount ... dissolve on the front of your tongue; as the honey flows through your mouth, you'll enjoy the full range of its early and late-developing flavours. It may not be a miracle, but honey this fine is definitely divine."

Wow! ... "artisanal single flower honey" ... New Zealand's 8 year old strategy is now surfacing bigtime in the USA!

The article shows a selection of these artisanal single flower honeys (mainly USA), they are: Buckwheat, Rosemary, **Creamed Manuka**, Tasmanian Leatherwood, Thyme, Orange Blossom, Raspberry, Lavendar, Acacia Flower, Alfalfa, Clover, Goldenrod and Aster blend, Cevannes Mountains.

(The Bold type on Manuka is mine, not the magazines)

An excellent article and one that bodes well for the uptake of varietal honeys with the USA consumer market: and that could have tremendous potential for our New Zealand honeys!

Australian Manuka Honey a World First! ... wha???

Sandee and I have just been in the States for 5 weeks, working with 3 major Chef industry groups. We were constantly amazed at the growing respect and positiveness that USA consumers are showing towards 'things New Zealand'.

But our exporters need to really work at growing the market. The potential is there: but it won't be handed to us on a plate: we have to go for it. And our honeys could be successful but not for our own exporters and packers! Here's why:

Australia already has a major Brand presence in the USA (from clothing to film to food, Australia is hot!). New Zealand industries need to work out how to use existing positive attitude towards Australian products and the very positive potential for New Zealand products: to gain a good foothold with USA consumers.

Americans don't have a problem with confusing Australia and New Zealand as 'sort of one thing': they do, and it doesn't matter to them! We have to work out how to use that to our advantage. We also have to be careful not to be swallowed up/lost, as an 'Australian Brand'.

CNN recently published a story about the incredible work being done in honey research around the world: star of the article was Dr Peter Molan and manuka honey! (But kiwis will cringe to hear that the story was about Australia's breakthrough research and Australian manuka honey!)

So NZ packers need to make sure they benefit from our honeys, and not see them sold to/through Australian Brands.

The New Zealand honey industry desperately needs a successful export drive (exporting premium added value honeys, not bulk commodity honey at world commodity prices) ... and that's the aim of the NBA's marketing drive this year ... to use the lessons we've learned from our internal strategies to excite overseas demand for our product.

The NBA's marketing resources are so small we can't adopt conventional international marketing strategies: but we have 3 unique strengths: and we'll use these the best way we can.

Strength # 1: NZ beekeepers really do (or can!) produce world class 'artisanal single flower honeys'.

Strength #2: Dr Peter Molan and the NZ Honey Research Unit and the 'manuka success story'.

Strength #3: The 'New Zealand' clean'n green healthy land of milk'n honey image the world has of us.

Prices to the NZ beekeeper used to be exactly linked to the world commodity price for light coloured clover-type honey. Over the last few years prices for some New Zealand honeys has been successfully dislocated from that world commodity price.

This has been the result of NBA prompted research (especially for manuka) and through the excellent marketing strategies of some of our exporters (eg Airborne and Arataki's Honeyland single flower honey exports come to mind and can be seen internationally).

But we need our successful exporters to be much more successful, and we need new exporters. We have to stop thinking 'sell what we can inside New Zealand and export what's left over'.

I've asked twice for people to contact me if they have any projects that want help with, that could be great export ideas: no one has!

Maybe our future champions know what they want and are doing it and don't need NBA help?

Honey Retail Prices in the USA

Some examples of USA honey prices were, for example at Stop'n Shop in Boston: Sue Bee 340gm clover \$2.39; Dutch Gold varietal 454gm \$3.29; Stop'n Shop Own brand clover \$1.50 for 340gm.

Honey Sales Down in Hot Weather and Up in Cold Weather

Most New Zealanders enjoy honey on toast and and crumpets; and usually on cold wintry days. That's great for 4-6 months of the year, but not during hot spells.

Marketing

Two thoughts that could be promoted by New Zealand Brands at consumer point of sale.

The first is Honey Smoothies! This is the biggest thing going in the USA (well, along with hundreds of other 'biggest things' ... but, it is huge: smoothies are everywhere!).

And honey added to a skim milk and fruit Smoothee makes the Smoothee creamier and more delicious, and I believe makes the whipped 'creamy body' last longer! And this is definitely a summer hot weather thing!

One of the Conferences we attended was for the USA Research Chefs Association. The National Honey board was there promoting Honey Smoothies. And they were absolutely delicious!

The other thought is the idea of people keeping their honeys in the fridge and eating the honey chilled on fresh bread. No one drinks beer warm or sweet wine warm. Sweet wine is not enjoyable unless it is chilled. And the same applies to honey. And it really makes a difference! Chilled honey on a piece of fresh buttered French bread is exceptionally pleasant! A totally different foodie experience to eating warm honey on a warm day.

But the Smoothie idea is the one that could significantly increase summer honey consumption. Packers could add a shelf-talker to their honey displays or get the supermarket to put honey with the fresh fruit in the fruit and veg section along with a Smoothie recipe leaflet ... or go to the appliance store selling Blenders and get them to do a Honey display with recipe leaflets promoting how the honey makes rich creamy-tasting but low-fat Smoothies. They'll use more honey in the smoothie than on toast!!!!!!

I wonder which NZ honey varieties go best with which fruits? Manuka honey figs and ginger Smoothie? Waikato Amber and Kiwifruit Smoothie? West Coast Rata and Pineapple Smoothie? I'm interested in what's possible! Send us your Smoothie recipe for a future Beekeeper! Maybe we could have National Competition! ... the Search for the Ultimate Kiwi Honey Smoothie.

Project Crimson Red

I see this Project is really taking off! And a number of industry initiatives to develop possum fur products are resulting from it. Great opportunity for West Coast Rata Honey to become the food symbol for the project! ... maybe all West Coast Bush honey could be labelled and marketed as being part of the Crimson Red project ... good opportunity for a Coaster beekeeper or their packer looking for a point of differentiation!

Honey Beers

The demand for honey beers is developing slowly but surely in the States. Some years ago the NBA pushed hard for it in NZ: we approached brewers with concepts and recipes.

Good to see Montieth's got such a good response from their honey beer when they released it in 98/99 that they released it again for summer 2000. Montieth's master brewer says in an article in Food and Beverage Monthly that they wanted to "rediscover some flavour highlights of beer styles enjoyed during summer days of years gone by, and then bring them back to life in a contemporary fashion." The result was "Montieth's Glorious Rata Honey and Spice Flavoured Summer Ale".

"A perfect match for salads and stir fries," says Montieth's, "perhaps with a refreshing wedge of orange or a tart lime".

I tried it: the flavour surprised me at first. The spices and the honey are quite complex. Interestingly I found the final flavour similar to the tequila beers on the market: won't replace my standard ale, but very enjoyable in place of a wine for lunch. It does have a real empathy with Asian foods!

Honey Goes Gourmet At New Zealand's Most Popular Wine and Food Festival

The Marlborough Wine and Food Festival wanted to develop a range of food experiences to go with the wine classes they hold at the Festival. Gourmets (and budding gourmets) got to try our honey-tasting as a break from the wine tastings in special classes held during the day. Overseas visitors in particular quite stunned by the lovely clean flavours of our honeys. We did a totally Marlborough honey theme: choosing a Marlborough manuka, a Marlborough Echium and a Marlborough honeydew. Concept went well: and its something easily adapted to other areas: let me know if you want help putting it to a Festival in your region.

New Zealand Honey a Feature of the World famous Mystery Creek Field Days Exposition this year

The NBA is working with the Hamilton Branch to create a world class honey industry attraction at the Fielddays this year. We'll be promoting our industry champions and world class innovations there. If you believe your company should be part of the displays/features of the stand, contact Floyd Marketing immediately. (You'll have to share the costs of the venture: but it could be an excellent promotional vehicle for you!)

And that's all for now ... except, my honey of the month: Rosemark Lavender Farm's Lavender Honey

I've always been a bit wary of Lavender honey (most is made from steeping Lavender in a mild honey). It can have a harsh edge to it, reminding me of a wardrobe perfume sachet rather than a pleasing food aroma. But this is the real thing! And it is a very subtle and elegant honey with the Lavender aroma in balance: the real thing really is better!

The honey is produced by Haddrell's for the Lavender farm: nice one you two. A very sophisticated product. Not just because of the Lavender: it's also a very good clean honey!

Marketing

AUCKLAND BRANCH AGM	
Date:	18.5.00
Time:	7pm
Venue:	Rob and Janie Johnston, Runciman Road, Drury. Phone: (09) 294-8320
Directions:	On Great South Road, between Bombay and Drury, turn west into Runciman Road, where you will find the Johnston Honey sign at about one and a half ks, on the northern side of the road.
Business:	Election of Officers, Planning Year 1 Millennium Programme, PMS and AFB Competency Test.
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World News

Russian honey bees for American hives

Hardy Russian honey bees that resist attack by varroa will begin showing up in American beehives within a year, thanks to scientists in Louisiana with the Agricultural Research Service, USDA's chief research wing. The Russian bees' genetic resistance will provide beekeepers with a tool - in addition to chemical pesticides - to control these mites.

Varroa are among the worst enemies of honey bees worldwide. In the USA, the mites have attacked bees in almost every state. Though only about 1.5mm (1/16 inch) in size, they can destroy a hive of tens of thousands of bees in as little as six months. The mites have also eliminated most of North America's wild honey bees.

Under a Cooperative Research and Development Agreement signed by ARS and Bernard's Apiaries, beekeeper Steven J Bernard is authorized to raise Russian honey bee queens beginning this autumn and winter. Queen breeders can use the queens that they purchase from Bernard's Apiaries to produce more queens for populating hives with mite-resistant offspring. These offspring will be fathered by drones from American hives.

Compared to domestic US honey bees, the Russian bees are more than twice as resistant to attack by varroa according to tests by geneticist Thomas E Rinderer and colleagues at ARS' Honey Bee Breeding, Genetics and Physiology Research Unit in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

The domestic US honey bee and the Russian honey bee are the same species, *Apis mellifera*, but the Russian bees have had to develop resistance to survive in their homeland, the mite-infested Primorsky region of far-eastern Russia. Rinderer studied the bees there then imported them under a federal permit.

Besides producing honey, honey bees pollinate dozens of crops from apples to zucchini, worth \$US8 to \$10 billion. An article in the August issue of the agency's monthly magazine *Agricultural Research* tells more. View it on the World Wide Web at <http://www.ars.usda.gov/is/AR/archive/aug99/bees0899/htm>

The Russian honey bees are generally gentle and produce honey at about the same level as commonly used commercial US stocks according to Thomas Rinderer of the Baton Rouge research unit. 'Our experience with hybrids of Russian and domestic stocks

during the past year has been favourable,' Rinderer noted. 'However, depending upon the drones that a beekeeper used to mate with the Russian queens,' he said 'the characteristics of the hybrid offspring may be highly varied. That's why we're asking everyone who buys a Russian queen to let us know about the performance of their bees. We can use that information in our ongoing programme to improve the performance of the Russian stock.'

'The Russian bees that we are working with are very good,' Rinderer said, 'but we think we can make them even better. We're hoping that beekeepers who end up with superior colonies of Russian bees will be willing to work with us, so that we can bring these top-performing bees into our breeding and selection programme.'

The lineage of Russian queens provided by Rinderer's laboratory to Bernard's Apiaries this year will differ from that provided next year and thereafter. 'That will help prevent inbreeding,' Rinderer said.

In addition, Rinderer and colleagues anticipate making additional expeditions to Russia to collect more Russian bees.



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NZ bees beat British ban

New Zealand bees and dairy products still have access to the United Kingdom market, despite British attempts to impose non-tariff barriers against them. Agriculture minister Jim Sutton says World Trade Organisation rules have helped the two products remain in that market.

British beekeepers had been lobbying their agriculture ministry to exclude bees and bee products from New Zealand. However, Sutton says the disease risk assessments carried out by British authorities concluded that there is no evidence of any disease in them.

Last year, New Zealand honey exporters were angered by "dirty tricks by the British beekeepers." A warning about the potential for botulism in honey was placed in the influential Sunday Telegraph newspaper. The warning was illustrated with a picture of a jar of New Zealand honey.

The New Zealand producers protested vigorously, saying there was not and never has been botulism in New Zealand honey. Sutton says this country is benefiting from WTO rules which stipulate that trade restrictions must be scientifically based and aimed at protecting the health of humans, animals, and plants.

This country earns more than \$3 million from the export of honey bees to colder countries such as Canada where the local bees are all killed off by the winter weather. New Zealand also exports honey and honey products to both the United Kingdom and United States as well as significant sales to Europe.

WTO rules were largely responsible for the decision last year that ended a three year dispute about the fat content in New Zealand butter. This ended with New Zealand spreadable butter being sold on the same terms as ordinary butter in Europe.

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Bee & Herbal New Zealand Ltd

AUTUMN SPECIAL

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Rice Krispies Goodies

- 1 cup honey
 - 1 cup sugar
 - 1 cup of creamy peanut butter
 - 6 cups of rice krispies
- Put first 3 ingredients in a saucepan and stir over low heat until melted. Put rice krispies in a large bowl; pour the honey mixture over the rice krispies and stir until mixed well. Pour into a 13x9 inch greased pan and mash down with greased fingers. Cover with foil until ready to use.

Chewy Oatmeal Cookies

- 3/4 cup butter flavoured crisco
 - 3/4 cup brown sugar
 - 1/2 cup honey
 - 1 egg
 - 1/5 cup milk
 - 1-1/2 tsp vanilla
 - 3 cups oatmeal
 - 1 cup flour
 - 3/4 tsp baking soda
 - 1/2 tsp salt
 - 1/4 tsp cinnamon
 - 1 cup raisins
 - 1 cup chopped nuts
- Mix ingredients in order. Drop on greased cookie sheet and bake at 350°F 12-14 minutes until lightly browned.
Makes about three-and-a-half dozen.

Honey Granola

- 4 cups old-fashioned rolled oats
 - 2 cups coarsely chopped nuts
 - 1 cup golden raisins
 - 3/4 cup honey
 - 1/2 cup butter or margarine
 - 2 tsp ground cinnamon
 - 1 tsp vanilla
 - Dash salt
- Combine oats, nuts and raisins in a large bowl; mix well and set aside. Combine honey, butter, cinnamon, vanilla and salt in a saucepan; bring to a boil over high heat and boil 1 minute. Pour honey mixture over oat mixture; toss until well blended. Spread on a lightly greased cookie sheet. Bake at 350°F 20 minutes or until lightly browned; stir every 5 minutes. Cool. Crumble and store at room temperature in airtight container up to 2 weeks.
Makes about 8 cups.

Peanut Honey Huggers

- 1/2 cup honey
 - 2 Tbsp butter or margarine
 - 1 tsp ground cinnamon
 - 4 cups roasted, salted peanuts
- Combine honey, butter and cinnamon in a 2-quart microwave-safe container; microwave at High (100%) 4 to 5 minutes or until microwave-safe candy thermometer reaches 235°F. Stir in nuts; mix thoroughly to coat. Microwave at High 5 to 6 minutes or until foamy; stir after 3 minutes. Spread in single layer on foil sprayed with non-stick vegetable spray. Cool. Break into small pieces. Preparation time: about 15 minutes.
*Recipe developed for 600 to 700 watt microwave ovens.

Byzantine Spice Cake

- 1 cup oil
- 1-1/2 cups sugar
- 3 eggs
- 1/2 cup yogurt or sour cream
- 1-1/2 cups flour
- 3 tsp baking powder
- 1/2 tsp each of cinnamon, ground cloves and nutmeg
- 1/4 tsp baking soda
- 1/4 cup orange juice

Topping:

- 1-1/2 cups sugar
- 1 cup water
- 1 cup Honey

Alternative Topping:

- 1-1/2 cups powder sugar
- 5 Tbsp water
- 1 tsp vanilla

Heat oven to 350°F. Beat oil and sugar together. Add eggs and one half of yogurt (or sour cream). Mix baking soda into orange juice and add to batter. Sift dry ingredients together and add to mixture. Stir in remaining yogurt. Mix well. Pour into a well-greased pan and bake for 45 minutes. Remove and cool. Prepare topping by boiling ingredients from honey syrup for about 15 minutes, covering the last 5 minutes. Pour hot syrup over cake. If alternate topping is preferred, mix until smooth and dribble a design over cake when cool.

Polish Christmas Tree Cookies

- 1/2 cup sweet butter
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 cup honey
- 2 Tbsp cream
- 1 Tbsp cinnamon
- 1 1/2 tsp ginger
- 1/2 tsp ground cloves
- 1/4 tsp nutmeg, freshly grated
- Grated rind of one lemon

3 1/2-4 cups flour, more if needed
Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease and flour backing sheets. Cream the butter with the sugar until light and fluffy. Add the honey, cream, spices, and blend thoroughly. Grate the lemon rind directly into the bowl so no aromatic oils are lost. Sift the flour and add it gradually to the butter mixture, beating well after each addition, until the dough is stiff enough to roll. Chill briefly. Roll out 1/8" thick on a floured surface and cut into desired shapes; dough may be somewhat sticky. Transfer the cookies carefully to the baking sheets and bake 10 minutes, or until just beginning to brown around the edges. Cool on a rack. Store in an airtight jar. To make cookies sturdy enough to hang on the Christmas tree, add up to 1/2 cup additional flour to make a stiffer dough. Before baking, make a small hole in each cookie with the tip of a paring knife. When cool, ice the cookies with white icing and candies, string yarn through the holes, and tie on tree branches.



IMPORTANT DATES FOR 2000

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AUCKLAND BEEKEEPERS CLUB INC

Editor: Colin Bell
Phone: (09) 818-4325

NORTH CANTERBURY BRANCH

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

Meet 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: Mr Lindsay Moir
33 Shackleton St,
Sth Brighton, Christchurch
Phone: (03) 388-3313

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.
Enquires 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
and at 10.30am open hives.
Secretary - Gwen Whitmore,
RD1, Tuakau.
Phone: (09) 233-4332
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

We are holding a Deca course and exam
at the end of April.
For application forms and
meeting dates contact
Jeff: (03) 577-5489

MANAWATU BEEKEEPERS CLUB

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

NELSON BRANCH

Phone: Michael
(03) 528-6010

POVERTY BAY BRANCH

Contact: Barry (06) 867-4591

NELSON BEEKEEPERS CLUB

Contact: Kevin
Phone: (03) 545-0122

OTAGO BRANCH

Phone: Mike (03) 448-7811

NORTH OTAGO BRANCH

Bryan O'Neil
Phone: (03) 431-1831

SOUTHERN NORTH ISLAND BRANCH

Contact: Frank
Phone: (04) 478-3367

SOUTHLAND BRANCH

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

TARANAKI AMATEUR BEEKEEPING CLUB

Phone: (06) 753-3320

WAIKATO BRANCH

Call Tony: (07) 856-9625

WAIRARAPA HOBBYIST BEEKEEPERS CLUB

Meet 3rd Sunday each month
(except January) at Kites Woolstore,
Norfolk Road, Masterton at 1.30pm.
Convener Arnold Esler.
Phone: (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