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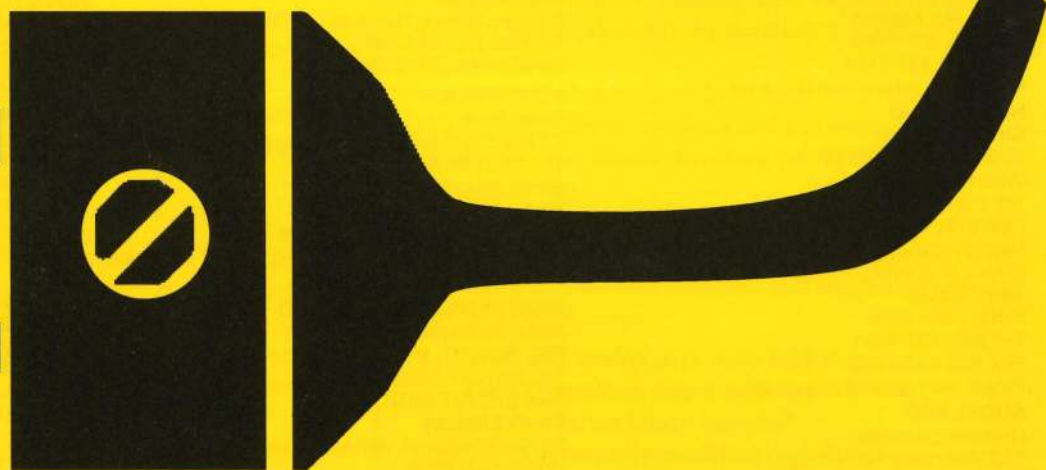
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Is It Time To

Pull The Plug?

NBA



In this issue:

- NBA Adrift
- Our Frank's a National Name
- Risk analysis for import bees
- Australian bees in GM debate

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MAF continues hive surveillance to check varroa mite invasions



South Island surveillance

Surveillance in the South Island has been underway since March and is now well past the halfway mark.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry would like to thank the many beekeepers involved in the testing process. Authorised Persons having difficulty completing their allocated sites should advise AgriQuality New Zealand. Queries about the South Island surveillance programme should be directed to David McMillan (03 489-0066).

Lower South Island surveillance

Sampling is also underway in the lower North Island, targeting about 500 apiaries identified as high risk. In most cases, beekeepers have been sent a sampling kit and asked to test their own hives.

For those unable to self-test, an AgriQuality staff member or an Authorised Person will test the hives. Queries about the North Island surveillance programme should be directed to Byron Taylor (07 838-5845).

Wanganui results

On May 23, 2002, varroa was confirmed in a hobby beekeeper's hive near Wanganui. Other hives in the immediate vicinity have now been tested with no further varroa detected. Sampling is still underway (see above), and beekeepers should be aware that very low level infestations (less than 10 mites per hive) are difficult to find.

MC Line

The Varroa Management Group will consider the future of the movement control line when more lower North Island sampling results are available. Early this month, the group is finalising a process for seeking input from affected parties on the future of the line. That will be communicated to members in the industry as quickly as possible.

MAF is prepared to support continuation of the line as long as it is technically justifiable, and there is substantial industry support for its retention. MAF does not believe it is feasible to progressively move the line south to Cook Strait in small steps.

Thymol

MAF has identified oxalic acid, formic acid and thymol as the three most promising "organic" treatments for varroa. Unlike the two acids, thymol has not yet been approved for use in New Zealand because the thymol residue data available from overseas – especially relating to its use in the spring – does not meet New Zealand registration requirements.

HortResearch carried out trials on the efficacy of thymol last season. Over the coming season, samples from those trial hives will be collected and analysed for residues. This should provide sufficient data for the application to be reconsidered, but any decision is likely to be at least six months away.

US bee scientist visit

MAF has funded the visit to New Zealand of Dr John Harbo, a bee researcher with the United States Department of Agriculture.

Dr Harbo's studies on the varroa reproduction on bees have demonstrated the rate of reproduction is influenced by the

bee colony the varroa are invading. Further work showed the factors which inhibit varroa reproduction are heritable, thus raising the possibility of breeding colonies which suppress varroa reproduction.

- **As well as speaking at the National Beekeepers Association Conference Seminar in Auckland, Dr Harbo will address a meeting in Canterbury on Monday, July 22, at the West View Room of the Hornby Working Mens Club. It will start at 11 am. Further information can be obtained from Canterbury Branch President Tony Scott, on (03) 384-1162 or (03) 315-7549.**

Toss out the crew, but who steers the ship?

Provisional results from the recent Commodity Levy ballot (see page 13 for summary) means there will be no funding for the National Beekeepers Association to carry on in its present form.

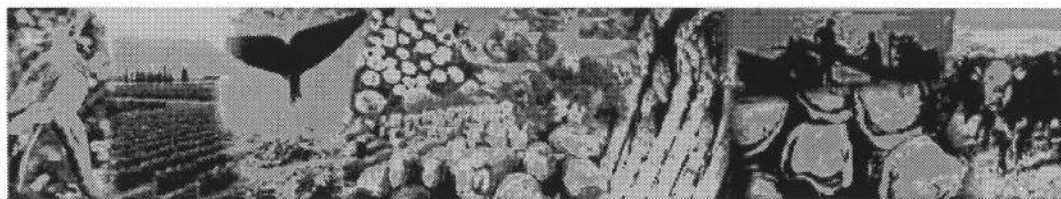
Discussions on what happens next must be a focus of this month's annual conference in Auckland and some of the remits may influence the future direction of the New Zealand beekeeping industry.

Although branches may have already held their remit voting meetings, the executive urges members to share thoughts with their delegates so informed comment and suggestions can be brought to the conference.

- **Who will beekeepers have lobbying Government on issues such as:**
 1. Western Australian honey imports?
 2. Release of genetically-modified organisms?
 3. Changes to food regulations e.g. requirement for a nutritional information panel?
 4. Codes of Practice and Risk Management programmes?
 5. Export protocols
- **What will happen to varroa management – Phase III – (possible PMS)?**
 1. Who will bear the costs?
 2. Who will liaise with beekeepers, and how will this be done?
- **Will product and bee research be continued?**
 1. How will this be funded?
 2. How will this be co-ordinated?
- **What will happen to the American foulbrood pest management strategy?**
 1. What will happen if the NBA is no longer the management agency?
- **What will happen if there is another exotic incursion e.g. the small hive beetle, or European foulbrood?**

On behalf of the NBA executive
– Jane Lorimer and Lin McKenzie

Life in the frontline of biosecurity challenges



Protect New Zealand Week July 8 - 14 2002

Frank Lindsay has a thinly disguised love for the “amazing” life of bees, above and beyond his job as a Johnsonville apiarist.

If anything, the respect he has for the versatile insect that does its bit to see we live in a ‘land of milk and honey’, has strengthened with the challenges presented by the varroa bee parasite uncovered in the North Island two years ago.

Now a small-to-medium scale commercial apiarist working 480 hives near Wellington, Frank can look back on more than 20 years as a hobbyist before leaving his computer job with Telecom in the early 1990s to keep hives full-time.

“I learnt most of what I know from visiting beekeepers and attending meetings of the National Beekeepers Association (NBA),” he said.

It was in his present role as secretary of the NBA’s Wellington branch that Frank found himself at the centre of a biosecurity scare earlier this year, when an infested wild hive was found in a load of logs at nearby Pauatahanui. In the ensuing wave of public interest, he literally put himself on the line - the phone line that is - when Wellington’s *Evening Post* listed his phone number under the apt heading, Beeline.

“It certainly resulted in a number of phone calls and follow-ups,” he recalled. “But all in a good cause”.

The varroa at Pauatahanui hadn’t spread and all the signs are it didn’t establish, meaning the lower half of the North Island can still be considered free of varroa. Even so, Frank and Mary-Ann Lindsay know their business will involve a lot more work when varroa inevitably moves further south.

“We regard the impact of varroa on honeybee hives as a kind of cancer – it becomes an ongoing battle to keep the hives alive,” Mary-Ann said. “To its credit, the beekeeping community operates like an extended family, so we’re all working together to learn to live with the impact in the sad knowledge that beekeeping in New Zealand will never be the same as it was.”

Because beekeeping is a relatively scattered activity and heavily based on nature’s seasons and without a career structure as such, the sense of community is different to that understood by rural farmers.

“We definitely appreciate the support we’ve had from a relatively small band of scientists and we recognise how dependent we are on bigger lobby groups to help put our case,” Frank said.

Unfortunately, progressive governments have reduced the number of state-paid field workers and scientists struggle to maintain research funding for more than a year. “[Beekeepers] follow all of these issues very closely and e-mail has also given us more contact with each other, as well as other parts of the world.”

People who flout biosecurity laws and bring “risk goods” into New Zealand threaten trade contacts with other parts of the world. The Lindsays question whether laws against such behaviour are tough enough.

“Although we’re not planning on leaving this industry, it is so annoying to think of people who flout the biosecurity laws by bringing in risk goods and to think of the odds against inspecting every type of risk pathway. It really does make us wonder if New Zealand is being tough enough,” Frank said.

As far as future biosecurity concerns go, Frank and Mary-Ann know the risk of another bee pest or disease - like European foulbrood or the small hive beetle - is always lurking somewhere offshore. The prospect of any of these in New Zealand doesn’t paint a pretty picture. Mind you, one of New Zealand’s most famous beekeepers was Sir Edmund Hillary and, like today’s beekeepers, he displayed a knack for getting on top of things.

- **Frank Lindsay was nominated as one of the “biosecurity advocates” for Protect New Zealand Week (July 8-14).**

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BK93

NZFSA chief director announced

Dr Andrew McKenzie has been appointed executive director of the New Zealand Food Safety Authority (NZFSA), which comes into existence on July 1, 2002.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF) director general Murray Sherwin said the appointment recognised Dr McKenzie's leadership role in food safety in New Zealand.

Previously the chief of MAF's Regulatory Authority, Dr McKenzie managed the establishment of an integrated food safety agency in 1999 and since then has been overseeing the MAF Food Assurance Authority.

With wide-ranging experience in domestic and international food safety and a background in New Zealand's primary processing of animal products and their export, he has also helped set international food safety standards, particularly with Codex Alimentarius, where he currently chairs a meat and poultry hygiene committee.

Recently, Dr McKenzie chaired an international expert group looking at ways to improve international animal health and food safety standards across the food chain.

Although attached to the MAF, NZFSA will be a separate organisation, aimed at protecting and promoting public health and safety. It will also facilitate market access for food and food-related products.

New Zealand exports nearly 80% of the food it produces, earning more than \$14 billion per annum.



Dr Andrew McKenzie



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BK61

New trans-Tasman food safety authority

More consumer protection and less bureaucracy are two of the benefits promoted for of the New Zealand Food Safety Authority, Te Pou Oranga kai O Aotearoa, launched on July 1.

Executive director Dr Andrew McKenzie said the new authority would combine the functions of MAF Food and the Ministry of Health in one agency, bringing a more integrated approach to food safety. At present, the Ministry of Health administers the Food Act, covering food sold domestically, while MAF administers legislation surrounding primary production, processing and exports.

The New Zealand Food Safety Authority will be a semi-autonomous body attached to MAF.

“Bringing these functions together under one agency will enable New Zealand to provide consistency in the management of food safety from the beginning of the food chain to the end,” Dr McKenzie said.

“Our vision is to have a world-leading food regulatory programme that has the confidence of all stakeholders, while at the same time protecting consumers from food-borne illness and enhancing New Zealand’s position as a trusted food supplier.”

The authority will set and enforce standards and, over the next few years, aims to streamline all regulations and requirements for food production, meaning one set of rules for the food industry whether products are provided for local or export markets.

A Food Safety Advisory Board will provide independent advice to the Minister of Food Safety, currently Annette King, and a free phone line, (0800) NZFSA1 or (0800) 693-721 has been set up for consumers as the first point of contact for food safety concerns and information.

The authority’s head office will be at 68 Jervois Quay, PO Box 2835 Wellington, telephone (04) 463 2500, fax (04) 463-2501.

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BK92

Comment invited on dietary supplements standards

The Australia New Zealand Food Authority (ANZFA) has invited the public and interested organisations to comment on proposed changes to the Food Standards Code, including new requirements for food-type dietary supplements and the irradiation of tropical fruits.

The authority’s managing director, Ian Lindenmayer, said as ANZFA became Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) on July 1, 2002 future invitations for public comment on food matters would come from the new authority.

“FSANZ will maintain and build on ANZFA’s approach of being open and transparent in consulting the public about all possible new food standards,” Mr Lindenmayer said.

Decisions would be based on data and scientific analysis.

Food-type dietary supplements are covered under the new authority. That includes any products presented as foods that contain, in a concentrated form, nutrients and other bio-active substances, and/or herbs and other botanical substances. They might be available as juices, snack-type bars, breakfast cereals, confectionery, yoghurts and other foods.

At present, food-type dietary supplements usually cannot be manufactured in Australia, although they can be prepared and sold in New Zealand and imported to Australia for sale.

The authority is examining the feasibility of developing new regulatory measures for food-type dietary supplements for the new Food Standards Code that will apply to both Australia and New Zealand. Proponents say harmonisation between the two countries brings more equal trade opportunities, greater consistency in label information and possibly a greater range of products.

Submissions

Individuals or organisations wishing to lodge submissions with the authority should do so by August 7, 2002. Check the ANZFA Website at <http://www.anzfa.gov.au/foodstandards/informationforsubmit1129.cfm> Assessment reports associated with the above applications and proposals can be accessed from the ANZFA Website at www.anzfa.gov.au, <http://www.anzfa.gov.au> or www.anzfa.govt.nz or <http://www.anzfa.govt.nz>.

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Could GE spell end for NZ honey industry?

New Zealand's honey exporting industry could be irreparably damaged if it becomes contaminated by genetic engineering, says certified financial planner and potential Green Party candidate Charles Drace. He shares the following concerns.

- The current Labour government has promised to lift the ban on the commercial release of genetically engineered organisms in October 2003. When genetic engineering was introduced to Canada, that country's honey exports to the European Union was halved in two years, dropping \$4.8 million (or 55%) between 1998 and 2000 to the lowest level in more than 10 years.

Recently, the EU banned all Canadian honey (\$5.3 million per annum) because honey producers were unable to guarantee the absence of pollen from genetically-modified (GM) plants. (Source: "Genetic threats blowing in the wind: Scientists warn modified crops are escaping and going rogue" by Margaret Munro, *National Post*, June 7, 2002.)

- Wayward pollen and seed from genetically modified crops have cost Canadian honey producers and organic farmers millions of dollars, according to researchers who call for better control over controversial GM crops and their novel, genetic machinery.
- "Current gene-containment strategies cannot work reliably in the field," according to the journal, *Nature Biotechnology* (June 2002).

"This action by the EU has driven down domestic honey prices in Canada and cost the industry a market that has on average earned more than \$5.3 million annually over the past decade," according to agricultural economist Peter Phillips, and his colleagues at the University of Saskatchewan in a paper that is part of the journal's special report on GM plants and trees.

Modified crops and their pollen can be carried up to 25km on Prairie winds, destroying the "growing, albeit limited, market for organic canola," Prof Phillips and his colleagues claim. "Because of the likelihood of out-crossing and pollen flow, buyers have shown increased reluctance to buy organically produced Western Canada canola because it might contain transgenes." (*Nature Biotechnology*, June 2002)

"Canola plants resistant to three herbicides have emerged in just two years as a result of cross-pollination," the journal's editors claim. In Alberta, resistant plants developed when a farmer planted different varieties of GE canola too close together.

Only toxic herbicides like 2,4 D will kill the rogue plants now, further endangering farmers and the honey industry. If New Zealand honey was contaminated by G.E. pollen or more toxic herbicides like 2,4 D, it would also lose its European export market.

Ohio State University ecologist Allison Snow calls for more research on gene flow from GM crops. A transgene used in GM crops to promote insect resistance can result in an unexpectedly large boost in seed production in wild sunflowers, she said.

An editorial in the journal predicts strategies to prevent gene-containment will be unreliable in the field.

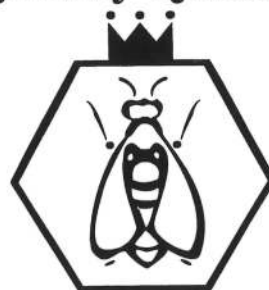
"Seed companies will continue to confuse batches, and mills will continue to mix varieties." Farmers will almost certainly stumble when following planting rules aimed at controlling unwanted genes from GM crops slipping into non-GM crops.

"Most seriously, gene flow could result in GM material unintended for human consumption ending up in the human food chain," says the editorial, raising the spectre of "biopharmaceutical" GM crops (designed to produce drugs) contaminating food.

☎ For more details contact: Charles Drace, PO Box 3833, Christchurch; ph (03) 364-9140, Fax: 03-364-9132 or e-mail: charles@cdrace.co.nz

He can be approached by branches to give a talk on the economic risks New Zealand faces with the commercial release of genetically engineered organisms.

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BK 34

Australian farmers may sue over GM crops

A legal war between farmers is brewing in rural New South Wales over the possible release of genetically modified canola crops as early as next year, the *Daily Telegraph* reported last month.

Organic farmers have appointed a team of lawyers who are threatening to sue any GM farmer who contaminates their chemical-free crops.

Scott Kinnear from the Biological Farmers of Australia said no action would be taken against properly-controlled GM crops. "But we have legal advice that contamination is actionable under negligence, trespass and nuisance. We are prepared for legal action at the first sign of contamination."

With commercial applications for the release of the first genetically-modified canola crops now being assessed in Australia, some farmers fear any contamination of conventional crops may ruin their businesses.

Many producers rely on their ability to claim they can provide GM-free crops to customers, especially in Europe and some parts of Asia which have rejected GM produce," Scott said.

Honeybee producers and packers have been forced to take the extraordinary step of supplying signed forms to their customers certifying their bees have not knowingly been placed in or near a GM crop.

There is evidence now that bees pollinating a GM crop – for example, canola – could carry the GMO (genetically modified organism) into the final honey product.

"By and large we will try and deliver on GM-free produce," Australian Honeybee Industry Council executive director Steve Ware said.

"But if you put bees down somewhere and you find out later that they come down on GM crops, what can you do?"

"You don't find the GMO in the honey, it is in the pollen in the honey and it would only be minor contamination. But those issues are of concern. We are between a rock and a hard place."

Almond farmers, who rely on bees for pollination, are also concerned about contamination.

Scientists have begun one of the first studies into the possible side effects and environmental threats posed by GM crops. One of the threats is bees transporting GMOs from GM crops to conventional ones.

"Gene technologies have the potential to improve our health, create safer foods, generate prosperity and enhance ecological sustainability, but there are community concerns about possible unwanted impacts," a spokesman said.

"They may also carry some risk of unwanted side effects on both production systems and on the environment."

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BK 69

Pesticide prime suspect

Researchers try to unravel cause of bee die-off

By Richard Foot

Charlottetown: Jim Kemp keeps the strangest things in his office freezer at the University of Prince Edward Island: sacks of soil, clear plastic bags filled with wildflowers, and thousands of little frozen bees – each one painstakingly collected from farms across the island in the hopes of solving an international, entomological mystery.

Honeybees have been dying in alarming numbers around the world since the mid-1990s. More recently, the problem has surfaced in North America, where the honeybee is not an indigenous creature, but was imported from Europe many decades ago.

Beekeepers in the Maritimes announced two years ago that they, too, were suffering high losses among their hives. While a five percent to 10% annual loss of bees is expected in the industry, beekeepers on Prince Edward Island and in New Brunswick began reporting mortality rates of between 30% and 90%. Similar complaints have since emerged in Nova Scotia and Southern Ontario.

‘Every bee that flies through an orchard is like a \$20 bill flying by’

Dr Kemp, a University of Prince Edward Island botanist, was enlisted by the provincial government to find out what is killing Canada’s bees. Solving the riddle is crucial, he says, not because of the honey the bees make – a sweet by-product – but because of the plants they and their wild cousins pollinate.

Nature, and farmers, both depend on bees to propagate much of what sprouts from the earth. Without these busy insects, clover would not flower and strawberry fields would not bear fruit.

The plants that bees pollinate make up about 80% of the food Canadians take home from the grocery store.

“You aren’t going to have anywhere near the blueberry crops, the canola crops, or the apple crops you want without bees,” Dr Kemp said. “Every bee that flies through an orchard is like a \$20 bill flying by, because of the amount of apples that its work will produce.”

“And whatever is affecting honeybees,” he added, “could be affecting bumblebees and other wild bees native to this country.”

Many in the beekeeping industry are blaming pesticides for the problem. Most apiaries, or hives, with high losses in recent years are located in or near potato fields, where, since 1999, farmers have been applying a pesticide called Admire. The

chemical is sprayed on the oil to protect spud crops against the Colorado potato beetle.

Bees do not forage on potato plants, but beekeepers frequently place hives in potato fields so the bees can feed on and pollinate clover – a common rotation crop farmers grow between yields to put nitrogen back into the soil.

Admire is a long-lasting pesticide that could endure for years in a field, and some beekeepers complain that the chemical is finding its way into the clover, and being fatally ingested by bees.

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SPECIAL

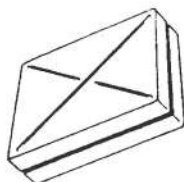
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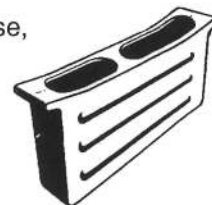
F.D. 5 litre – replaces 2 frames

F.D. 3 litre – replaces 1 frame

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MORE SPECIALS

Note: All specials on these pages valid until 27th August 2002

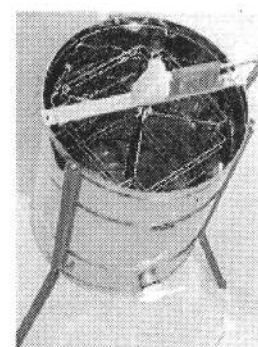
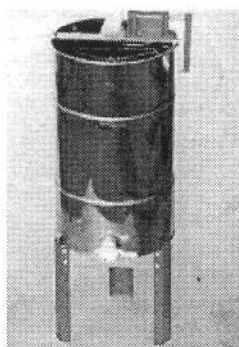
- Hive Strappers: Emlock Type, bare \$490 + GST per 100 (usually \$560 + GST)
- Liquid Bee Smoke: \$40 + GST per 10 (+ \$4 p&p) (usually \$6 + GST each)
- Practical Beekeeping in New Zealand \$20 (+ \$4 p&p) (usually \$34.95)
- C.D. Rom – Honeybees \$25 (+ \$4 p&p) (usually \$67.50)
- Honey Bee Diseases & Pests \$15 (+ \$4 p&p) (usually \$24.95)
- Jenter Queen Rearing System \$99 (+ \$5 p&p) (usually \$168.00)
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Be varroa-alert – year round

Dr R.M. Goodwin

HortResearch Ruakura

Next month (August), it will be time to think about varroa control yet again. That is assuming you have ever stopped thinking about it.

Probably the first thing to be done is to get an idea of what has happened to varroa numbers over the winter. If your hives have been in an area where there hasn't been any brood, then varroa numbers will have declined over the brood-less period. However, if your hives have had brood all through the winter then varroa levels will have been increasing during this time.

Judging from the results of a trial carried out by HortResearch in the Waikato this autumn, there may be some unpleasant surprises for beekeepers who haven't been sampling during the winter. The trial looked at ways of using Apistan® and Bayvarol® (results to be reported later) and higher levels of invasion were encountered than expected.

- In six weeks following the end of the treatments in mid April, an average of 1519 mites was invading the colonies (i.e. 36 per day). The worst example had 9232 mites (219 mites a day) and some colonies had twice as many varroa six weeks after treatment than immediately before treatment.

We gave the hives another six-week treatment, finishing at the end of May. If we hadn't, these colonies might not have survived the winter. The lesson then, is to sample your colonies as they are going into winter so you are not caught out by invasion. Beekeepers who didn't check varroa levels after their autumn treatments should do so as soon as possible.

Don't take risks

Having talked to many beekeepers about varroa control and the best and least effective control methods, I see a significant and worrying shift in the way people are thinking about the mite.

For beekeepers yet to get it, there is a degree of fear and trepidation when considering what is about to happen to their hives. The worrying trend is when this turns into complacency soon after beekeepers get their first taste of having to manage varroa.

Complacency may be a suitable emotion when managing varroa after 10 or so years, but it is inappropriate after just six months or a year's experience. The advice we give (to anyone who will listen) is: Take no risks with varroa control until you have a good deal of experience on how to manage it.

A number of beekeepers I have dealt with over the past year, however, have decided they do not need to follow some basic rules.

- 1) Sample in mid summer.
- 2) Check mite levels before deciding treatment can be delayed or avoided.
- 3) See if a second pre-winter treatment is needed, following an early-autumn application.
- 4) Examine colonies for mite levels after an organic treatment.

Keeping track of varroa levels in your hives at all times doesn't mean continually checking all hives. But inspect enough each month or two so you can follow the rise and fall of varroa numbers. You must know they are low enough, and will be the next time you see your hives, before deciding not to treat hives at any particular time. Deciding not to treat for any other reason is putting your hives at risk.

Treating varroa is like feeding sugar syrup. The times you don't feed syrup or control varroa are the times you know that you do not need to. Getting either wrong means dead colonies.

Assessing mite numbers

A variety of methods are being used by beekeepers in varroa areas. Some are reliable, others should be avoided. One unreliable method is where beekeepers check the drone brood that is exposed when separating the brood supers.

Unless you have about 200 larvae to look at, this method should not be used to base treatment decisions on. You might get an idea of whether there is varroa in the apiary, but you will not know how many.

We've also heard of beekeepers using the parasitic mite syndrome as a gauge for treating varroa. The presence of the



The ether roll technique

syndrome is useful in telling you whether you SHOULD have treated, not whether it is now time to treat. By the time your hives have syndrome symptoms, the damage has occurred.

Another method to avoid is the ether roll technique (see picture on previous page). Although one of the most popular methods overseas, it is not very sensitive and two samples from the same hive may give different results.

How many hives to test?

When sampling colonies, do enough to get a real feeling for the varroa levels. Figure 1 (right) shows the varroa levels found in 16 hives in the same apiary. As you can see, there is a large, hive-to-hive variation. Samples from only three hives in this apiary could have given a false idea of varroa levels. If samples had only been in the 1 – 7 group of hives, you may have decided not to treat, meaning the 8 – 16 group of hives would probably be dead when the apiary was next visited.

Until we have analysed all our trial data, we recommend sampling **at least 5 hives** or 25% of an apiary, whichever is the largest.

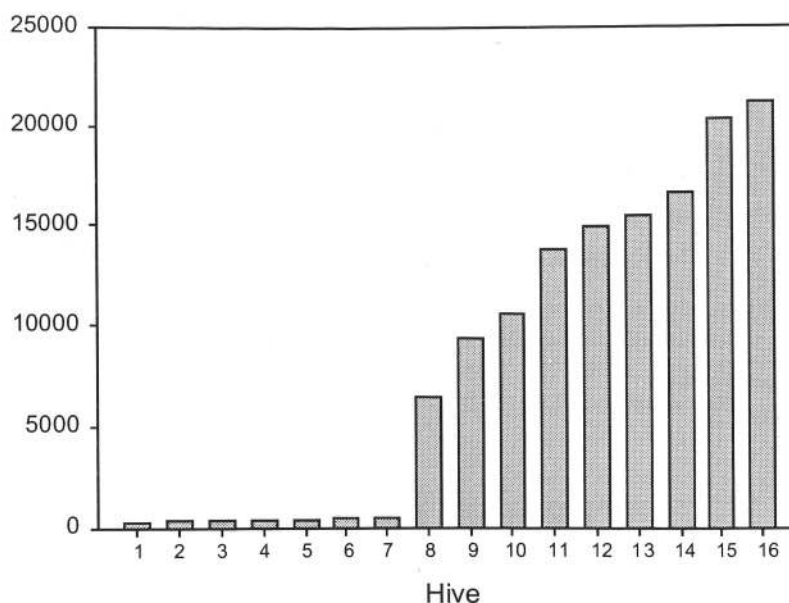


Fig 1 Number of varroa in 16 hives in the same site in late autumn

Voters in survey too few for ballot to count

In the recent National Beekeepers Association Commodity Levy postal ballot, 940 papers were sent out. Of these, 313 were completed and posted to the returning officer.

In order for the Minister of Agriculture and Forestry to agree to a levy, more than half of those able to vote must support it. Voters in support must also control more than half of the total hives controlled by the levy. Because both conditions of the requirement are not met, the result of the commodity levy ballot is a “no”. Provisional figures reported by the returning officer are tabled below:

Results	Invalid Votes	No. of Papers Received	Percentage	No. of Hives Controlled
Yes		174	55%	88,006
No		121	39%	106,746
Hive Numbers omitted	4			
Hives not commercial or below 10	6			
No declaration signed	1			
Abstained from Voting	1			
Received Late	6			
		18	6%	
		313	100%	194,752
The full and verified result will be advised in due course.				

Invitation

To those who will miss him at Conference **Dr HARBO** of U.S. Dept of Agriculture will be speaking on 'Breeding for Varroa Resistance' in the West View Room at The Hornby Workingmens Club CHRISTCHURCH.

11am Monday 22 July 2002

Enquiries please contact

Canterbury Branch NBA
Tony Scott 03 315 7549/03 3841162
Rae Blair 03 315 6615

CANTERBURY BRANCH MEETINGS

JULY MEETING

DATE: Monday 22ND July 2002

TIME: 11am-Guest Speaker
2pm-General Business

VENUE: The Hornby Workingmens Club
West View Room
Christchurch

GUEST SPEAKER:

- Dr Harbo - 'Breeding for Varroa Resistance'

AUGUST MEETING

DATE: Tuesday 27th August 2002

TIME: 7pm

VENUE: Federated Farmers Building
8/35 Sir William Pickering Drive
CHRISTCHURCH

GUEST SPEAKER:

Suzanne Ruzicka - MiteGone Canada

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BK 40

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Library additions

Some new books and a video have been purchased for the National Beekeepers Association library. The following titles can be added to your catalogue.

Rearing queen honey bees (2nd ed.) MORSE, Roger, 1994
Queen raising and bee breeding, LAIDLAW, Harry & Robert E. Page Jr. 1997

The natural history of bumble bees, KEARNS, Carol A & James D. Thomson 2001

Instrumental insemination of honeybees, (video) 25 mins, COBEY, Susan W. c.1998 (The video was very expensive so a loan fee will be \$8 and, if lost, replacement will be at full cost.

The magazine posting system continues to go well, with *Hivelights*, the Canadian Honey Council publication added to the collection. Many thanks to the borrowers who return things on time.

Any feedback on the magazines/posting system would be appreciated.

A small display of new books can be viewed at the conference in Auckland this month.

- Chris Tairaoa
Hon. librarian

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BK6

From the colonies



Canterbury

Some honeydew producers have experienced good autumn crops and have just finished extracting for a buoyant export demand, but most beekeepers have completed wintering after a very poor season.

Early indications point to an El Nino weather pattern emerging, resulting in a mild winter and a dry spring with unpredictable snowstorms in between.

Our branch participated in a one-day seminar on strategic planning and leadership in Christchurch, organised by the Sustainable Farming Fund's support project for beekeepers. Most Canterbury participants considered the seminar valuable for both their businesses and the branch. Congratulations to NBA vice president Lin McKenzie and his team for organising it.

The branch held its remit-voting meeting with instructions to branch delegates. Members are concerned about the future of funding for the National Beekeepers Association, its form and future management structure. Hopefully, the required restructuring can be initiated at the Auckland conference.

Kim Van Vuuren held a Focus group meeting with 12 branch members to discuss her interim report on the ability of South Island beekeepers to cope with the costs of treating varroa.

An interactive discussion followed, which may assist Kim with her final report. We wish to thank her for her concise and professional appraisal of our situation – as well as the many beekeepers who provided her with confidential, financial reports and beekeeping advice.

– Tony Scott

Christchurch

- President Tony Scott's phone number has been incorrectly printed in past issues of the *New Zealand Beekeeper*. The number he can be reached on is: (03) 384-1162, and also (03) 315-7549. Both lines are connected to a fax.

Hawkes Bay

Our harvesting has finished and our hives are closed down for the winter, except that feeding is required in the inland areas for those hives that didn't make winter stores during the past, doleful season.

A few hives produced some manuka honey, but those were the exception with owners rubbing their hands because of the high prices.

Everyone is now busy getting equipment ready for next season – or at least thinking of doing so. Don't leave it until the spring pressure hits you and your bees! Think, also, about how you are going to alter your operations once the mite gets here, as it must.

Branch president Milton Jackson is making a great effort to ensure all members with a right to vote are aware of the proposed rule changes and remits. There are not many but they are contentious.

Happy conferencing to those lucky enough to be attending and don't forget there are some very worthwhile presentations to augment the social side.

– Ron Morison
Taradale

Marlborough

"Motivation" was one of the key words 23 members of the branch executive came away with after attending a Sustainable Farming unit, held in Nelson recently.

Taken by Eric Livingstone, the course encouraged participants to discard the traditional approach of organising meetings and branch activities which will cater for everyone. Instead, he said, focus on those people who want to be involved and want to learn something.

Surveys around the region for the varroa mite are proceeding slowly.

– Will Trollope
Blenheim

West Coast

Ongoing varroa surveillance and a "very wet" past two months are the main news on the coast this month.

Bees have wintered down well, thanks to a reasonably dry autumn, allowing them to seek out available honey dew supplies and collect pollen off the rata vine, where it's available.

Membership is dwindling, with one member moving to the North Island to take up another, non-beekeeping business, and long-time stalwart, Sandy Richardson, retiring.

- Lindsay Feary
Dobson

"Northland Branch and Whangarei Bee Club Combined Winter Field Day

Saturday 3rd August

Topics Include:

1. Dr. Mark Goodwin talking about the latest results of varroa research being conducted by HortResearch as well as the need to change the way beekeepers go about running their businesses to be able to pay for varroa treatment and still make a living.
2. John Gavin talking about the do's and don'ts of using miticide strips.
3. Terry Gavin talking about how to manage your hives for spring build up.
4. Sarah and Simon Peacey demonstrating how to use formic acid for varroa treatment.

There will be a cover charge of \$5 per person. BBQed sausages will be available for lunch.

A special invite to the Far North and Auckland branches, but everyone is welcome.

Venue is yet to be confirmed (but will be held in the Whangarei area), so contact Terry Gavin on (09) 4331891 or Simon Peacey on (09) 4346344 for more details. If you need accommodation, please also contact Terry or Simon.

New Zealand Honey Crop for 2001-2002 Season.

YEAR	Northland, Auckland, Hauraki Plains	Waikato, King Country, Taupo	Bay of Plenty, Coromandel, Poverty Bay	Hawkes Bay, Taranaki, Manawatu, Wairarapa	Marlborough, Nelson, Westland	Canterbury North Otago Southland	South & Central Otago,	NEW	Yield per	ZEALAND	Hive (kgs)
1997	766	829	933	1112	919	2339	1639	8537	29.7	Hives 97	287458
1998	1014	1404	1314	1230	598	1238	1283	8081	27.0	Hives 98	298921
1999	615	1617	1800	1416	770	1782	1069	9069	29.9	Hives 99	302998
2000	982	1434	1300	1323	705	2310	1555	9609	30.0	Hives 2000	320113
2001	869	672	794	1735	606	2743	1725	9144	29.4	Hives 2001	310865
2002	593	708	319	750	300	921	1091	4682	15.0	Hives 2002	312658
6 yr ave	807	1111	1077	1261	650	1889	1394	8187	26.8	6 yr Av hives	305502

Source.. AgriQuality NZ Ltd 30 May 2002

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Overseas Trade Statistics
Prepared for National Beekeepers Association
Ref No: 4482901A

HS Items Code	Description	Country of Destination	Unit	Quantity	Net Month of April 2002		4 Months Ending April 2002	
					FOB (\$NZ)	Quantity	FOB (\$NZ)	Quantity
0106.90.00.11	Animals; live, queen bees in packages	Canada	NMB	6,444	330,852	7,113	372,589	
0106.90.00.11	Animals; live, queen bees in packages	Germany	NMB	956	61,960	3,022	188,460	
0106.90.00.11	Animals; live, queen bees in packages	Japan	NMB	400	8,000	3,208	60,100	
0106.90.00.11	Animals; live, queen bees in packages	Korea, Republic of	NMB	7,800	400,812	2,368	228,000	
0106.90.00.11	Animals; live, queen bees in packages	TOTAL HS ITEM				15,711	849,149	
0106.90.00.17	Animals; live, queen bees other than in packages	Japan	NMB			1,700	24,400	
0106.90.00.17	Animals; live, queen bees other than in packages	TOTAL HS ITEM				1,700	24,400	
0409.00.00.01	Honey; natural honey, extracted, in bulk	Australia	KGM	9,615		9,615	171,466	
0409.00.00.01	Honey; natural honey, extracted, in bulk	Bahrain	KGM	175		175	5,630	
0409.00.00.01	Honey; natural honey, extracted, in bulk	French Polynesia	KGM	600		600	2,180	
0409.00.00.01	Honey; natural honey, extracted, in bulk	Germany	KGM	43,062	227,833	168,469	721,241	
0409.00.00.01	Honey; natural honey, extracted, in bulk	Hong Kong (Special Administrative Region)	KGM	3,020	53,527	78,300	252,727	
0409.00.00.01	Honey; natural honey, extracted, in bulk	Japan	KGM			75	2,327	
0409.00.00.01	Honey; natural honey, extracted, in bulk	Korea, Republic of	KGM	2,970	6,467	2,970	6,467	
0409.00.00.01	Honey; natural honey, extracted, in bulk	Singapore	KGM	81,379	81,379	20,657	90,724	
0409.00.00.01	Honey; natural honey, extracted, in bulk	South Africa	KGM	20,035		20,130	70,454	
0409.00.00.01	Honey; natural honey, extracted, in bulk	United Kingdom	KGM	4,360	21,366	32,724	366,922	
0409.00.00.01	Honey; natural honey, extracted, in bulk	United States of America	KGM	1,345	2,665	4,682	32,902	
0409.00.00.01	Honey; natural honey, extracted, in bulk	TOTAL HS ITEM		74,792	393,237	266,801	1,548,813	
0409.00.00.09	Honey; natural honey, extracted, in retail packs	Australia	KGM	2,749	62,668	43,376	541,675	
0409.00.00.09	Honey; natural honey, extracted, in retail packs	Bahrain	KGM			600	4,399	
0409.00.00.09	Honey; natural honey, extracted, in retail packs	Canada	KGM			3,534	33,724	
0409.00.00.09	Honey; natural honey, extracted, in retail packs	French Polynesia	KGM			1,176	6,447	
0409.00.00.09	Honey; natural honey, extracted, in retail packs	Germany	KGM	63,360	269,809	63,624	272,620	
0409.00.00.09	Honey; natural honey, extracted, in retail packs	Hong Kong (Special Administrative Region)	KGM	2,968	35,975	27,990	276,100	
0409.00.00.09	Honey; natural honey, extracted, in retail packs	Japan	KGM	8,437	149,398	37,426	631,539	
0409.00.00.09	Honey; natural honey, extracted, in retail packs	Korea, Republic of	KGM	12,962	123,433	67,960	426,742	
0409.00.00.09	Honey; natural honey, extracted, in retail packs	Macau	KGM			550	9,000	
0409.00.00.09	Honey; natural honey, extracted, in retail packs	Malaysia	KGM	1,728	19,457	9,202	56,501	
0409.00.00.09	Honey; natural honey, extracted, in retail packs	Norfolk Island	KGM			218	1,115	
0409.00.00.09	Honey; natural honey, extracted, in retail packs	Samoa, Western	KGM			63	578	
0409.00.00.09	Honey; natural honey, extracted, in retail packs	Singapore	KGM	21,392	139,608	82,874	561,936	
0409.00.00.09	Honey; natural honey, extracted, in retail packs	Taiwan, Province of China	KGM			2,160	9,795	
0409.00.00.09	Honey; natural honey, extracted, in retail packs	United Arab Emirates	KGM			3,665	32,078	
0409.00.00.09	Honey; natural honey, extracted, in retail packs	United Kingdom	KGM	42,892	290,365	64,133	592,360	
0409.00.00.09	Honey; natural honey, extracted, in retail packs	United States of America	KGM	1,245	24,300	9,612	75,117	
0409.00.00.09	Honey; natural honey, extracted, in retail packs	TOTAL HS ITEM		157,733	1,115,013	418,163	3,531,726	
0409.00.00.11	Honey; natural honey, in the comb	Hong Kong (Special Administrative Region)	KGM			1,005	15,408	
0409.00.00.11	Honey; natural honey, in the comb	Japan	KGM	3,761	61,910	11,284	159,225	
0409.00.00.11	Honey; natural honey, in the comb	Netherlands	KGM	816	10,000	816	10,000	
0409.00.00.11	Honey; natural honey, in the comb	Singapore	KGM	158	3,000	262	4,646	
0409.00.00.11	Honey; natural honey, in the comb	United States of America	KGM	1,800	19,638	1,800	19,638	
0409.00.00.15	Honey; natural honey, honeydew	TOTAL HS ITEM		6,535	94,548	15,166	208,917	
0409.00.00.15	Honey; natural honey, honeydew	Germany	KGM			20,619	70,349	
0409.00.00.15	Honey; natural honey, honeydew	Japan	KGM			399	2,009	
0409.00.00.15	Honey; natural honey, honeydew	TOTAL HS ITEM				21,018	72,358	
0409.00.00.18	Honey; natural honey, (other than extracted, comb or honeydew)	Australia	KGM	93	482	93	674	
0409.00.00.18	Honey; natural honey, (other than extracted, comb or honeydew)	Cook Islands	KGM			1,000	482	
0409.00.00.18	Honey; natural honey, (other than extracted, comb or honeydew)	Japan	KGM			8,332	8,332	
0409.00.00.18	Honey; natural honey, (other than extracted, comb or honeydew)	Korea, Republic of	KGM			2,142	30,585	
0409.00.00.18	Honey; natural honey, (other than extracted, comb or honeydew)	Norfolk Island	KGM	84	450	84	450	
0409.00.00.18	Honey; natural honey, (other than extracted, comb or honeydew)	Singapore	KGM	120	1,542	120	1,542	
0409.00.00.18	Honey; natural honey, (other than extracted, comb or honeydew)	United Kingdom	KGM	1,200	15,279	2,900	40,965	
0409.00.00.18	Honey; natural honey, (other than extracted, comb or honeydew)	TOTAL HS ITEM		1,497	17,753	6,432	83,030	
1521.90.01.00	Beeswax; whether or not refined or coloured	Australia	KGM	300	2,418	2,040	19,960	
1521.90.01.00	Beeswax; whether or not refined or coloured	Fiji	KGM	60	651	300	2,418	
1521.90.01.00	Beeswax; whether or not refined or coloured	French Polynesia	KGM			60	651	
1521.90.01.00	Beeswax; whether or not refined or coloured	Israel	KGM			600	10,000	
1521.90.01.00	Beeswax; whether or not refined or coloured	Japan	KGM			20,209	150,733	
1521.90.01.00	Beeswax; whether or not refined or coloured	Singapore	KGM			600	5,600	
1521.90.01.00	Beeswax; whether or not refined or coloured	TOTAL HS ITEM		360	3,069	23,809	189,362	
TOTAL ALL CARGO					2,024,432		6,507,755	

Source : Statistics New Zealand, Overseas Trade

MAF starts import risk analysis process for *Apis mellifera*

An import, risk analysis for honeybee (*Apis mellifera*) genetic material is being carried out by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF).

It produces risk analyses to identify and manage any disease risks associated with the importation of live animals and animal products. The risk analysis process involves. –

- 1) Possible hazards identified;
- 2) The ways such diseases can be introduced and spread are analysed;
- 3) Appropriate measures are recommended, to minimise risks, where appropriate.

Four forms of genetic material are considered in the *Apis mellifera* analysis:



- Honey bee queens
- Queen cells
- Semen collected from honey bee drones
- Eggs laid by mated queen bees

Currently, the draft, honeybee genetic material risk analysis is undergoing an internal review within MAF. The next step will be a scrutiny by international experts. Once reviewers' comments have been considered, the risk analysis and draft import health certificate will be made available for public consultation. This is likely to be mid-late September.

That is when those involved in the honeybee industry can have their say. The risk analysis and the import health certificate will dictate what (if any) forms of honeybee genetic material are allowed into New Zealand and what the conditions of importation will be. This has the potential to affect everyone in the beekeeping industry.



The document will be posted on the MAF web site and copies will be sent to National Beekeeping Association regional branch secretaries. Beekeepers are asked to contact them in mid-September if they wish to see a copy.

- **Helen Beban**
National adviser
MAF Biosecurity international animal trade



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BK94

Honey may be natural antioxidant, US chemistry scientists find

By Jim Barlow
Champaign, Illinois:

Studies showing honey's antioxidant qualities preserve meat without compromising taste is sweet news to honey lovers.

A recently-published study from the University of Illinois, says that according to work done on human blood in the laboratory, honey slows the oxidation of low-density lipoproteins (LDL), a process leading to atherosclerotic plaque deposition.

Like a study at the same university in 1999, researchers found that dark-coloured honey provided more protective punch than lighter-coloured honeys.

"It still is too early to say definitively, but honey seems to have the potential to serve as a dietary antioxidant," said principal researcher Nicki Engeseth, a professor of food chemistry in the university's College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences.

The newest study, partially funded by the National Honey Board and published on line in the *Journal of Agricultural & Food Chemistry*, April 6, is the first to look at honey's effect on human blood. It found, using a more precise method than the one used in 1999, that honey's antioxidants are equal to those in many fruits and vegetables in their ability to counter the degenerating activity of highly reactive molecules known as free radicals.

In the January issue of the same journal, Prof Engeseth and another researcher, Jason McKibben, reported that honey was more effective than traditional preservatives (butylated hydroxytoluene and tocopherol) in slowing oxidation in cooked, refrigerated ground turkey. While meat being cooked browned more extensively than traditionally preserved products, taste was not negatively affected.

For the recently-published study, Prof Engeseth and Nele Gheldof, a doctoral student in the department of food science and human nutrition, measured the antioxidant and phenolic contents in honeys taken from seven floral sources.

Using the oxygen radical absorbance capacity (ORAC) assay, a tool that for the past decade has been widely used to analyse the same components in fruits, vegetables and wines, the researchers looked at a range of honeys including acacia, buckwheat, clover, and soybean. The darker ones had the highest values.

"We got ORAC values ranging from 3 to 17," Prof Engeseth said. "Commonly consumed fruits and vegetables generally range from 0.5 to 16, based on a per gram basis. This finding is significant, because it clearly shows that there are antioxidants in the honey."

The idea that honey packs healthy quantities of antioxidants strengthens the idea of using honey as sugar substitute, he said.

Blood samples from healthy human volunteers coming off a 12-hour fast were used in the study. The scientists added the various honey varieties to the blood in an experiment to watch

honey's impact on LDL, the so-called bad cholesterol. In test samples, they also added copper to stimulate lipoprotein oxidation.

Using a spectrometer, they found that honey - the darker the better - dramatically slowed the rate of formation of conjugated dienes, products of oxidation related to LDL in blood.

Follow-up studies, either in progress or undergoing data analyses, will shed more light on the exact phenolic compounds in honey and on how effectively honey that is consumed naturally prevents oxidation in the blood of human subjects.

Phenolic compounds are phytochemicals, which are non-nutritious compounds in foods that may carry specific disease-fighting abilities. University of Illinois researchers have also found a significant correlation of phenolic content and antioxidant capacity of honey.

• Life Sciences



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**NORTH CANTERBURY BEEKEEPING
CLUB**

Meets the second Monday of April, June,
August and October.

Contact: Mrs Hobson

Phone: (03) 312-7587

SOUTH CANTERBURY BRANCH

Peter Lyttle

Phone: (03) 693-9189

CANTERBURY BRANCH

Meets the last Tuesday of every month,
February to October.

Field Day November.

Contact: Trevor Corbett

Phone: (03) 314-6836

CHRISTCHURCH HOBBYIST CLUB

Meets on the first Saturday each month,
August to May, except in January for which it
is the second Saturday.

The site is at 681 Cashmere Road,

Commencing at 1.30pm.

Contact: Fiona Bellet "Oakwood"

Bradley Road, RD 5

Christchurch. Phone: (03) 347 9919

DUNEDIN BEEKEEPERS CLUB

Meets on the first Saturday in the month
September - April, (except January) at
1.30pm. The venue is at our club hive in
Roslyn, Dunedin.

Enquiries welcome to club secretary,
Dorothy, Phone (03) 488-4390

FRANKLIN BEEKEEPERS CLUB

Meets second Sunday of each month at
10.00am for cuppa and discussion and at
10.30am open hives.

Secretary - Liz Brook

187E Clarks Beach Road,

R.D. 4, Pukekohe

Phone: (09) 232 1111

Mobile: 025 720 761

Fax: (09) 232 1112 Email: liz@pageset.co.nz

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

contact Will: (03) 570-5633

MANAWATU BEEKEEPERS CLUB

Meets every 4th Thursday in the month at
Newbury Hall, SH 3, Palmerston North.

Contact: Joan Leckie, Makahika Rd,

RD 1 Levin

Phone: (06) 368-1277

NELSON BRANCH

Phone: Michael (03) 528-6010

NELSON BEEKEEPERS CLUB

Contact: Kevin

Phone: (03) 545-0122

OTAGO BRANCH

Phone: Mike (03) 448-7811

POVERTY BAY BRANCH

Contact: Barry (06) 867-4591

WANGANUI BEEKEEPERS CLUB

Meets on the second
Wednesday of the month.
Contact Secretary: Neil Farrer
Phone: (06) 343-6248

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**

George Jonson

195 Carrington Street

New Plymouth

Email: honeyhouse@clear.net.nz

Phone: (06) 753-3320

WAIKATO BRANCH

Contact Tony: (07) 856-9625

Jan Klausen: (07) 386-0111

Next meeting will be in 2001

(date yet to be confirmed).

**WAIRARAPA HOBBYIST
BEEKEEPERS CLUB**

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

Convenor: Arnold Esler.

Phone: (06) 379-8648

**WELLINGTON BEEKEEPERS
ASSOCIATION**

Meets every second Monday of
the month (except January)
in Johnsonville. All welcome.

Contact: John Burnet,

21 Kiwi Cres, Tawa,

Wellington 6006. Phone: (04) 232-7863

Email: johnburnet@xtra.co.nz