Volume 14 No. 3
April 2006

# The New Zealand BeeKeeper

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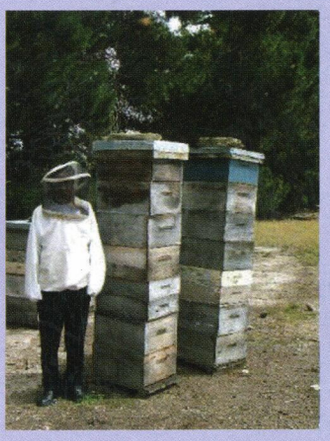

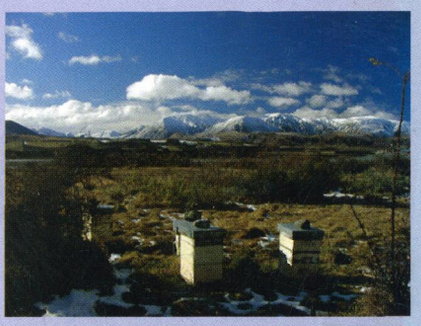

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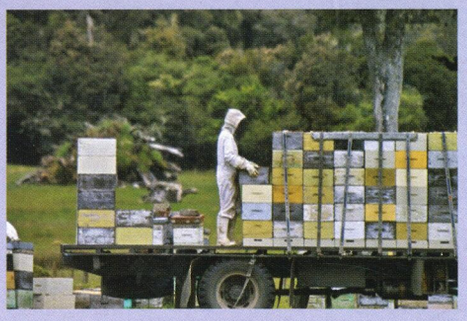

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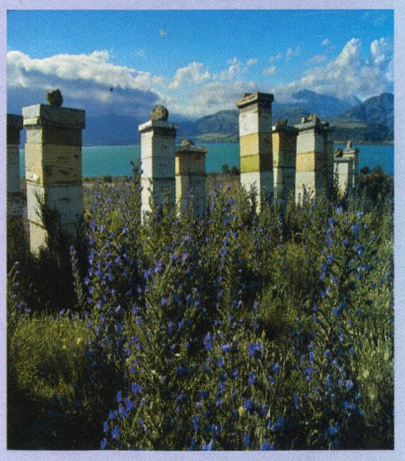

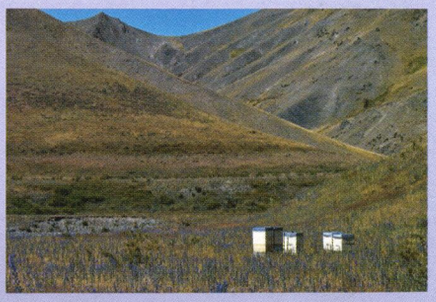

**IN THIS ISSUE:** *AFB and Varroa Information*

ISSN 0110-63325
The Official Journal of The National Beekeepers' Association of New Zealand Inc.

Published by South City Print
P.O. Box 2494
South Dunedin, New Zealand

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**Magazine subscriptions:**
**— 11 Issues —**
**NZ $66.00 GST inc**
**Overseas Airmail**
**US $55.00**

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**NZ Beekeeper Printed & Published by:**
**South City Print**
**P.O. Box 2494, South Dunedin.**
**Advertising: Allan Middlemiss**
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email: ckp@xtra.co.nz
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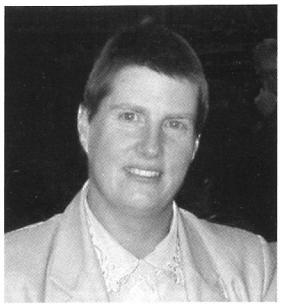
# President's Report

## Bee product imports



At the time of writing (8 March), we are waiting to hear from the office of the Minister of Agriculture about their response to our submissions and lobbying on bee product imports.

When Neil Farrer, Jim Edwards and I met with Minister of Agriculture Jim Anderton on 20 February, we came away feeling that we had covered our points well and that they had been received well. Consequently the long wait is frustrating, and meanwhile more beekeepers are expressing their concerns and wishes for action. Hopefully by the time this magazine has been printed, we will have received a positive outcome.

However, the main point I stress here is that the National Beekeepers' Association has been working very hard in the interests of all beekeepers, and it is through beekeepers joining our organisation that we can gain greater credibility when we are lobbying. The old saying "united we stand, divided we fall" may well come true. The stronger our beekeeper and funding base, the more our organisation can do for you.

The NBA is not only thinking of how to effectively lobby against bee product imports, but also what strategies we may have to consider putting in place for the future when the Director-General says 'yes' to imports. I only hope that this will not be in my time as a beekeeper. Now is the time to consider what these strategies could be and what we will need to do to implement them.

Currently we are considering a slot at the seminars at the upcoming NBA conference to have an interactive session that may cover this topic. So I invite you to come to conference to participate in the seminars. And if you are not a member of the National Beekeepers' Association, please consider joining the organisation to help move the industry forward into the future.

## Conference planning

Conference planning is now well under way — more information on the conference can be found in other areas of this journal. The 2006 conference will certainly stand out from the others, as the Waikato Branch is looking at beekeeping history and surveying its future. We are also planning a small tribute to the older beekeepers of New Zealand. Conference activities will begin on Sunday 16 July and conclude on Thursday 20 July 2006.

We look forward to seeing you there.

## PMS Manager

Rex Baynes is settling in nicely into his new role as the AFB NPMS Manager. Although some of the terminology probably is still confusing to him, we are working closely with him to ensure a smooth transition.

On 16 March, the entire Executive Council met in Wellington to look closely at some of the aspects of the AFB NPMS. We also looked at some case studies to see what was done, what could have been done better, and what additional policies need to be put in place in order to improve the overall operation of the Strategy.

**- Jane Lorimer**

## Deadline for Publications

***May 2006 edition:*** ***10 April 2006***

***June 2006 edition:*** ***10 May 2006***

All articles/letters/photos to be with the Editor via fax, email or post: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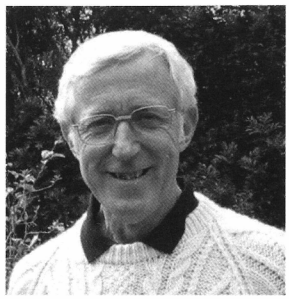
# Executive Officer's report: The vexed issue of imports



We are currently faced with the likelihood of honey being imported into New Zealand from Australia. On behalf of the whole industry, the NBA has been lobbying hard to express our concerns. At a local level Branch members have lobbied their Members of Parliament and generally received strong support for their concerns. We encourage you to follow this example and talk to your local MP if you have not already done so. We would like to hear your reports and will be pleased to print reports and photos of such visits on our website so that we can continue to demonstrate your concerns.

NBA President Jane Lorimer, Vice President Neil Farrer and I visited the Hon. Jim Anderton, Minister for Agriculture and Biosecurity, to express the concerns of beekeepers around the country. Our major focus was on the remaining disease risks, despite the risk analysis and review of submissions which we had previously discussed with Biosecurity New Zealand officials. Mr Anderton agreed to relay the concerns he had received from beekeepers back to Biosecurity analysts for further analysis.

We also discussed the impacts on beekeeping businesses of a possible loss of market share and the risk of depressed prices if honey arrives from overseas. This is on top of the impact of varroa and the new Risk Management Programmes (RMPs) being implemented for the New Zealand Food Safety Authority. We also expressed concerns about the impacts we see on pollination services and those industries that require pollination.

We met the deadline for submissions on the draft Import Health Standards for bee products. Our submissions focused on our continuing concerns that the risks that we see are not going to be managed satisfactorily, and seeking numerous assurances on the risk management measures required to be certified for products to be exported to New Zealand.

### The future

The reality is that sooner or later, the New Zealand market will be opened to more bee products from overseas. What we need to do is to focus on preparing the industry to operate in a much more difficult environment. Rather than leaving it too late, we need to concentrate now on how beekeepers can operate successfully in the face of varroa, RMPs and honey imports. We have active research programmes continuing into varroa controls, and pollination. It is not long since we had the programme using John Manhire's advice to help beekeepers manage their businesses. All of these programmes have been supported by the Sustainable Farming Fund (SFF).

We have now supported new applications to the SFF for research into the better management of Manuka to increase production in the higher return area of New Zealand honey, and research for better management of chemical risks to bees working near cropping and other farming activities.

So let us keep looking forward and work hard on preparing to operate successfully in a difficult environment.

**- Jim Edwards**
**Executive Officer**

**Do you believe that it is not worth alternating your treatment if your neighbours aren't as well?**
**Well it is actually very worthwhile to alternate because at least you will be killing any resistant mites in your own hives plus any invading resistant mites which come from your neighbours. While your neighbours treatments will be getting less effective, yours will still be highly effective and you won't run the risk of having to treat twice.**

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# News from the NBA Executive Council

## Membership for 2006

The deadline for membership renewal was 31 March 2006. If you have not yet renewed your membership for 2006, then please do so now by sending your subscription to Pam Edwards, Secretary, 10 Nikau Lane, RD 1, Otaki. You can find a membership form in this issue (see the back page of the Conference insert).

The NBA is working hard for you and all the beekeeping industry. To be able to function effectively at the top level, we need your subscription. In this issue you will read of the current activities that the NBA is working on for you. Please support us with your membership.

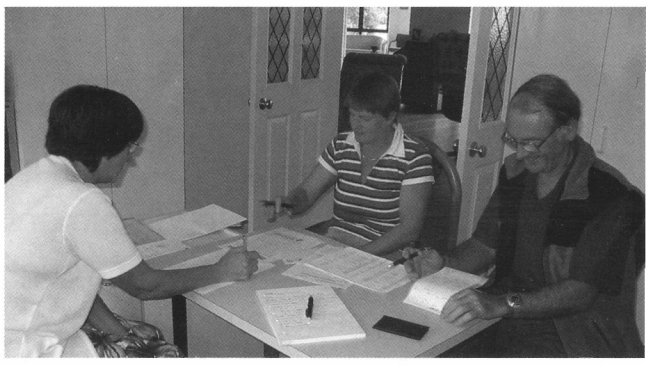
## Sponsorship for the Roy Patterson Trophy

The Management Committee of the NBA Executive Council has considered the composition of the Roy Patterson Trophy. The committee thought that the most important aspect of the award was that it attracts innovation in beekeeping, which is seen as a feature of the annual conference.

It was agreed to invite sponsorship of the Trophy. If you are interested in sponsoring the Roy Patterson Trophy, please contact Jim Edwards, our Executive Officer. (Contact details on page 2.)

**The Executive Council met on 16 March to discuss various administrative matters.**

Above (Left to right): NBA President Jane Lorimer, NBA Vice President Neil Farrer and Executive Officer Jim Edwards. Below: Executive Secretary Pam Edwards, Jane Lorimer, and Neil Farrer. *Photos provided by Jim Edwards.*



# Secretary's buzz

The first three months have just flown by. The NBA office has been very busy with the continuing flood of subscriptions arriving daily. **A big welcome to those of you who are new members of the association.**

I am finding the position of Secretary very varied and interesting, and the need to upskill my knowledge of the bee industry is a continuing challenge. Following in Pauline's footsteps is indeed a hard act to follow.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if there is anything I can help you with. I am in the office on Fridays but will respond to any urgent requests in the evenings after I get home from my Monday to Thursday job as Executive Co-ordinator Animal Welfare at MAF in Wellington.

I look forward to the challenges that come our way with the ever-changing future in the bee industry and to meeting you all at conference.

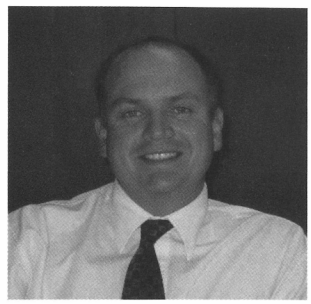
Keep those subs coming in.

**- Pam Edwards**
**Executive Secretary**

On 30 March Neil Farrer, Jane Lorimer, Roger Bray and Rex Baynes met at Wellington Airport to review the AFB NPMS Contract for Services document. This was an all-day meeting involving some intense and detailed discussion.
*Photo: Rex Baynes.*



# Goodbye and thanks to James Driscoll



The Management Agency was fortunate in employing James Driscoll as our inaugural Manager for the American Foulbrood National Pest Management Strategy (AFB NPMS). James has been with us since 2004 but decided that he needed to focus on his other work commitments and his growing family. James relinquished the reins at the end of February 2006 to Rex Baynes.

James' background as an employee of AgriQuality before and during the varroa incursion meant that his knowledge of the industry and the AFB NPMS was invaluable.

This enabled the Management Agency to utilise James' systems skills to set up most of the Operational Plan and also the accounting package to separate the NBA and the AFB NPMS into separate entities. Of course, as well as these activities James was also overseeing the day-to-day running of the AFB NPMS.

The work that James undertook has provided a solid platform on which to move the AFB NPMS closer to its goal of eradicating AFB.

The Management Agency wishes James, Miriam and their family well in the future, and hopes that James continues his association with the industry as a hobbyist beekeeper.

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# Clean honey tanks are essential

Some recent research looked at the prevalence of bacteria and yeasts in various parts of the extracting shed. Although floors and walls were probably the dirtiest areas of the room they were hardly more of a problem that much of the machinery, tools and other appliances. What surprised researchers was that tanks, pipes and honey gates held the largest proportions of filth and micro-organisms likely to spoil the honey.

Every time a tank is emptied it and the connecting plumbing should be scrubbed clean using strong detergents and loads of hot water. After washing, the tanks, pipes and gates must be dried and covered to prevent the accumulation of dust. Prior to being refilled a rinse out with hot water for a short period to dry will ensure clean product storage.

*From the* Australasian Beekeeper, *January 2006*

# Consultation on sections of the AFB NPMS not covered in the Order in Council: Education programme

Education of beekeepers about the nature and purpose of the American Foulbrood National Pest Management Strategy (AFB NPMS), and beekeeper's obligations in relation to it, are currently covered by articles being written and either printed in *The New Zealand Beekeeper* magazine, or distributed to other known beekeeper groups and hobby clubs.

The Management Agency is currently looking at possible changes to the education component and is seeking input from beekeepers.

## 1 Education seminars

We previously considered running education seminars around the country, but these have proven too expensive to run when looking to cover all of New Zealand.

One option we have is to run these seminar programmes when an appropriate cost-sharing opportunity arises. This may mean that not all areas of the country will be covered within a year, or maybe not even over a three-year period.

**Do you agree with this policy of trying to cover the country at the cheapest option over an extended period?**

**If you consider that this is not appropriate, and consider that it should be an 'all-or-nothing' approach, would you as a beekeeper be happy to pay a slightly higher levy in order for all regions to be covered?**

## 2 Competency exam

The other extremely important education portion of the AFB NPMS is the competency exam. This exam is part of the requirement before you can get your DECA and receive a Certificate of Inspection Exemption (COIE).

If people do not sit this competency exam, the Management Agency has no measure of how well beekeepers are able to distinguish American foulbrood from the likes of Parasitic Mite Syndrome (PMS), sacbrood or any of the other diseases currently in New Zealand.

When the AFB NPMS began in 1998 beekeepers were encouraged to get their DECA, but the Management Agency at the time had not organised the training of people to be able to conduct courses for beekeepers to be able to sit their competency exam. As a result many beekeepers still have not yet sat and passed this test.

**Should we give these beekeepers a timeframe in which to sit the test, or otherwise lose their Certificate of Inspection Exemption (COIE) and so lose their DECA? The result of this action would mean that the beekeeper would have to get someone who held the appropriate status to inspect their hives, which may also incur a cost.**

**Should we get more competency test trainers trained to ensure more courses can be run, so that all beekeepers who have not sat this test have the opportunity over the next year and a half to either sit the exam, or attend one of these training courses?**

Discussion is at present being undertaken with MAF with regards to possible changes in the Order in Council as a result of the submissions received from the discussion document in the October 2005 issue of *The New Zealand Beekeeper.*

Should you wish to make any further comment on the strategy, we welcome your feedback. **Please send your submissions by the end of May 2006 to Rex Baynes, email: rbaynes@ihug.co.nz, or post to Rex at PO Box 44282, Lower Hutt.**

## ATTENTION DECA TRAINERS!

The DECA tests will be unable to be processed from 12 July until 6 September 2006 due to the Administrator being out of the country on holiday.

**If you are intending to hold a course during this period, please make prior arrangements well ahead of this time.**

Mary-Ann Lindsay
Lindsay's Apiaries
26 Cunliffe Street
Johnsonville, Wellington

# Testing samples for the American foulbrood National Pest Management Strategy 2004/2005

**HM McBrydie, HortResearch**

## Executive summary

Testing of adult honey bees and honey is carried out as part of the National Pest Management Strategy. Samples of adult honey bees, and honey were provided by New Zealand beekeepers for American foulbrood *(Paenibacillus larvae* subsp. *larvae)* spore testing. Samples of larvae or comb were also provided for confirmation of visual field diagnosis. A total of 606 samples were tested, of which 30 (4.9%) tested positive for *Paenibacillus larvae* spores.

## Results

A total of 606 samples were tested (Table 1), of which 30 (4.9%) tested positive for *Paenibacillus larvae* spores (Table 2). Table 3 presents a summary of sample type with number of *P. larvae* colonies cultured in each category.

**Table 1:** Type and number of samples received to 30.06.04.

| Sample type | Total number of samples |
|---|---|
| Larvae (including comb) | 16 |
| Honey | 522 |
| Bees | 68 |
| **Total** | **606** |

**Table 2:** Number and percentage of positive samples.

| Sample Type | Number | % of total positive samples |
|---|---|---|
| Larvae (including comb) | 8 | 50 |
| Honey | 14 | 2.7 |
| Bees | 8 | 11.8 |
| **Total** | **30** | **4.9** |

**Table 3:** Summary of honey and bee samples with number of *P. larvae* colonies cultured.

| Number of *P. larvae* | Honey | Bees |
|---|---|---|
| 0 | 477 | 57 |
| 1 to 10 | 8 | 3 |
| 11 to 50 | 5 | 2 |
| 51 to 100 | 1 | 0 |
| >100 | 0 | 3 |
| Contaminated | 31 | 3 |
| **Total** | **522** | **68** |

# Taking honey samples for AFB analysis

For those beekeepers who have been asked to produce honey samples for AFB analysis, please get these completed as soon as possible and returned to HortResearch.

It is also important that honey samples are taken in a clean and hygienic manner. Wash your hands before taking a sample. Do not have any bee or comb contaminants in the sample. Do not touch the sample with your finger as this can introduce unwanted bacteria; i.e., quite a high number of samples last year had to be retested because initial testing showed bacterial contamination.

**- Frank Lindsay**

# *Annual Disease Return (ADR) and Certificates of Inspection (COI) defaulters a major concern to AFB NPMS Management Agency*

If this industry is serious about eradicating American foulbrood (AFB), every effort must be made to ensure all beekeepers take seriously the task of returning ADR and COI forms promptly.

As part of its governance role, the Management Agency is charged with maintaining the National Apiary Database. The ADRs and COIs assist in providing information about disease trends and beekeepers' holdings. Without this intelligence it is difficult to make informed decisions.

To date there are some 320 ADR defaulters and 500 COI defaulters, a trend that must be disappointing to those responsible beekeepers around the country.

As I write this I am preparing a paper for the Management Agency for consideration at a forthcoming meeting. I will be setting out the various options available to address the issue of ADR and COI defaulters, ranging from imposing penalities for breach(es) of the Biosecurity Act 1993 (Section 154q) to contacting each defaulter personally.

If you are talking to a fellow beekeeper, please ask him or her if they have lodged their ADR or COI. Your help will be most appreciated.

**- Rex Baynes**
**AFB NPMS Manager**
**Email: rbaynes@ihug.co.nz**

## BIOSECURITY (NATIONAL AMERICAN FOULBROOD PEST MANAGEMENT STRATEGY) ORDER 1998

## AN URGENT MESSAGE TO CERTAIN BEEKEEPERS

## ANNUAL DISEASE RETURN (ADR)

If you have not returned your Annual Disease Return (ADR) mailed to you in April 2005, then you are in breach of section 154(q) of the Biosecurity Act 1993.

The Management Agency responsible for implementing the strategy has a legal obligation under the Act to report all non-compliant beekeepers to the enforcement section of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries.

It is in beekeepers' interests to ensure you are meeting your obligations.

**DEFAULT LEVY PAYERS ARE NOW IN THE HANDS OF THE DEBT COLLECTION AGENCY**

Rex Baynes
AFB NPMS Manager
rbaynes@ihug.co.nz

# The Honey Bee Exotic Disease surveillance programme: Autumn 2006

Byron Taylor
Apicultural Officer, AgriQuality Limited

The annual Honey Bee Exotic Disease surveillance programme is currently underway with the testing of 650 apiaries to be completed this autumn.

In the South Island these inspections are being carried out in conjunction with the varroa surveillance programme, while in the North Island the inspection programme is 'stand alone'.

The table below outlines the exotic pests and diseases we are concerned about:

**Table 1: Exotic pests and diseases of concern**

- European foulbrood *(Mellisococcus plutonius)*
- Tracheal mite *(Acarapis woodi)*
- Asian mite *(Tropilaelaps clareae)*
- Tracheal mite *(Acarapis woodi)*
- Africanised Honey Bee *(Apis mellifera scutellata)*
- Small Hive Beetle *(Aethina tumida)*
- Cape Honey Bee *(Apis mellifera capensis)*
- Parasitic Fly *(Braula coeca)*

Surveying for these diseases not only provides us with the best chance of detecting a population that can be eradicated, but also enables us to make country freedom statements which help facilitate the negotiation of more favourable overseas market access requirements.

Most of these diseases are detailed in the 'Honey Bee Exotic Diseases and Pests' pamphlet and the Cape Bee supplement that were distributed to all beekeepers. The pamphlet is also sent to all new beekeepers when they register. If you would like another copy of the pamphlet please contact your AgriQuality Apicultural Officer.

## Inspection programme outline

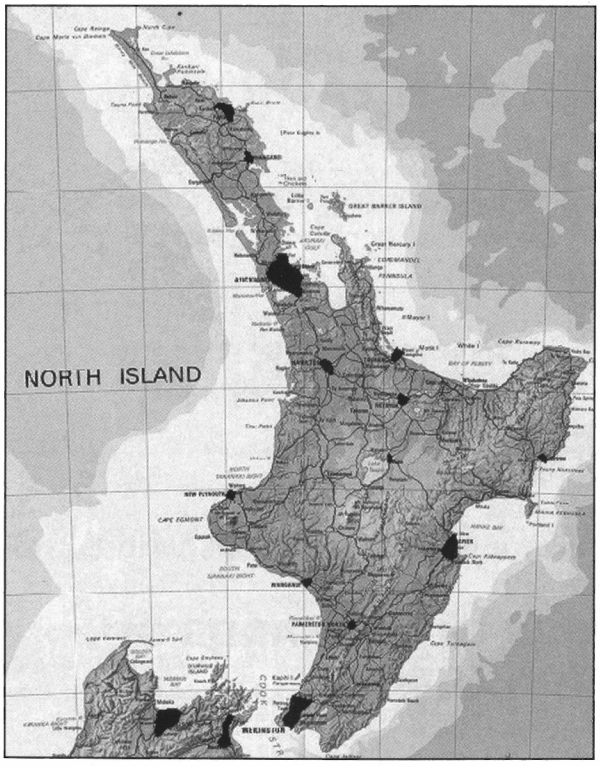
The inspection and sampling programme is split into two components:

1) inspection and sampling of a number of apiaries in high-risk areas
2) testing of bee samples provided from apiaries for which clearance is required to supply bees for export.

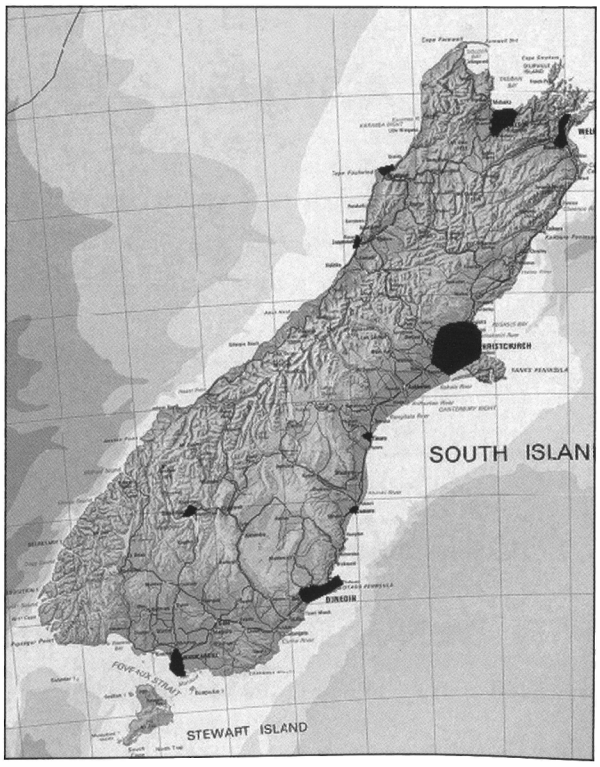
*High-risk areas*

350 apiaries from within high-risk areas will be inspected and sampled for the exotic pests and diseases mentioned above. 186 of these apiaries come from 13 high-risk areas identified in the North Island, with the other 164 coming from 10 high-risk areas identified in the South Island. High-risk areas are areas that have been identified as most likely points of introduction of an exotic bee disease and include:

- sea ports
- airports
- large population areas
- tourist areas.




Risk areas in the North Island




Risk areas in the South Island.

Inspections are carried out by beekeepers who are recognised as Authorised Persons (Level 2) under the Biosecurity Act and as such have the legal authority to enter property for the purposes of inspection and sampling hives. These beekeepers are acting under the direction of AgriQuality Apicultural Officers and will endeavour to contact the beekeeper prior to the inspection taking place.

In order to achieve the required detection sensitivity, every hive in each of the selected apiaries is to be tested. Each hive will receive a 24-hour miticide and sticky board test to detect possible infestations of the Asian Mite *(Tropilaelaps clareae)* and will have an adult bee sample taken and tested for Tracheal Mites *(Acarapis woodi)*.

In addition to the routine sampling, hives will be inspected for signs of European foulbrood, Small Hive Beetle, Africanised Honey Bee and Cape Bee. In some cases, suspect samples will be taken while in others (particularly if there is a threat to human safety), the hive will be reassembled and marked for further investigation and/or sampling.

If your apiary or apiaries are selected to be inspected you will not be advised of the results of the tests unless they are positive. If a test does come back positive, an exotic disease response will be launched.

*Bee samples from export supply apiaries*

300 apiaries from the population of apiaries supplying bees for export will have an adult bee sample taken and tested for both internal and external mites. Each supplier is required to provide samples from 15 apiaries that they use to harvest bees for export.

As with the high-risk samples, beekeepers are not informed of negative test results.

## What you can do

As important as it is for the surveillance programme to inspect and sample hives, it is even more important for beekeepers to be on the lookout. Read the pamphlet on exotic bee pests and diseases,and when you are inspecting your hives, always look for signs of an exotic disease. If you suspect an exotic pest or disease ring the MAF Exotic Disease Hotline: 0800 809 966.

Thank you to all those beekeepers that are taking part in the 2006 programme.

# The first two months

During a meeting recently I was put on the spot when asked for my initial impressions on my new role as AFB NPMS Manager. I responded that my main impression has been the relatively high level of non-compliance in completing and returning the necessary forms as required under the Biosecurity (National American Foulbrood National Pest Management Strategy) Order 1998.

The question now is if we are serious about eradicating AFB, do we accept this unacceptable level of non-compliance, and thereby pay lip service to the AFB NPMS? I think not.

As AFB Manager I believe it is my responsibility to provide the industry, through the Management Agency, the necessary leadership in the fight to eradicate AFB. If this means upsetting those who elect not to honour their legal obligation, then so be it.

The Management Agency is currently putting in place initiatives to reduce the level of defaulters as well as taking advice from MAF (Legal) on possible prosecution.

## Subgroup formed to review AgriQuality Limited contract

The Management Agency's contract for services agreement with AgriQuality Limited terminates on 31 May 2006. With this deadline in mind a subgroup has been formed to begin the renewal of services process.

AgriQuality Limited is required under the contract to provide a wide range of services, including:

- maintaining an accessible register of apiaries and beekeepers with associated information
- the provision of Annual Disease Returns (ADRs)
- the provision of Certificates of Inspection (COIs)
- undertaking inspections, compliance, audits and sample collection
- administration of Disease Elimination Conformity Agreements (DECAs).

In line with the above, AgriQuality Limited is required to provide a variety of reports to the Management Agency during the course of the year.

The review subgroup, comprising Jane Lorimer, Neil Farrer, Roger Bray and me, will meet on 31 March to review the current agreement. As with any contract, changes will need to be made to accommodate a changing environment. It is planned to have the task completed by 31 May 2006. **The views of beekeepers would be gratefully received.**

## Five-year review

In October 2005 the industry was invited to comment on a discussion document (printed in the October 2005 issue of *The New Zealand Beekeeper)* as part of the legal requirement under section 88(6) of the Biosecurity Act 1993, which in turn calls upon the Management Agency to review the AFB NPMS after five years.

The Management Agency received 12 submissions, with the majority supporting the status quo on the important aspects of the AFB NPMS. These submissions indicated a low level of dissatisfaction, a point not lost on Ian Govey of Biosecurity New Zealand during a recent meeting with the Management Agency.

## AFB audit inspections

Clause 40 of the AFB NPMS sets out the requirement for the Management Agency to review, test and inspect to ascertain if the Strategy is working to plan.

Disease coordinators in the various regions are being contacted on a personal basis. They will be sent inspection packs consisting of inspection forms, topographical site plans detailing the exact position of apiaries, sample bottles and detailed step-by-step inspection guidelines.

This year will see both targeted inspections and a percentage of random inspections being undertaken.

## Seven-day requirement for AFB reporting and destruction

In October 2005 it was reported that MAF and NZFSA audits had concluded that AFB reporting by beekeepers is not up to the required standard. *Please remember that your reporting of AFB hives to the Management Agency within seven days is the key in a vital process.*

**- Rex Baynes**
AFB NPMS Manager
Email: rbaynes@ihug.co.nz

*[Editor's note: for more information on legal obligations that must be met regarding American foulbrood disease, refer to the article 'Beekeeping and the law' on page 15 of this issue].*

Bee strikes a coy pose, or is it ready for a cleansing flight? Taken at the honey shop and museum of Geoff and Robyn Ernst, south of Tirau. *Photo: Fiona O'Brien.*

# Beekeeping and the law

*[This excerpt is from the Revised (unpublished) AFB Elimination Manual by Dr Mark Goodwin and Cliff Van Eaton.]*

New Zealand beekeepers have a number of legal obligations that must be met regarding American foulbrood disease. In summary, the most important of these obligations are to:

1. Only keep bees in moveable frame hives.
2. Keep access to apiary sites clear from obstruction.
3. Not feed drugs or substances that mask, obscure or conceal the symptoms of AFB.
4. Not keep beehives more than 30 days in a place other than a registered apiary.
5. Register all apiaries with the management agency.
6. Mark all apiaries with the beekeeper registration code.
7. Only the beekeeper who has the code number assigned to them can change the registration code, unless permission to do so is provided by the management agency.
8. Remove all identification codes when transferring the ownership of the hive.
9. Where a case of AFB is found, make a report by the owner of the hives within 7 days of becoming aware of the case.
10. Complete an Annual Disease Return by 1 June each year.
11. Destroy equipment and bees associated with a case of AFB within 7 days.
12. Not deal with or transfer ownership of material associated with a case of AFB.
13. Sterilise beekeeping equipment only by approved methods.
14. Ensure hives are inspected for AFB by an approved beekeeper with a Certificate of Inspection provided to the management agency by 30 November (unless there is a certificate of inspection exemption).

Under certain conditions there are some exemptions for these obligations.



# Do's and don'ts of AFB control

*[This excerpt is from the Revised (unpublished) AFB Elimination Manual by Dr Mark Goodwin and Cliff Van Eaton.]*

## Do

- Inspect your hives for AFB at least twice a year.
- Inspect hives before removing bees, honey or equipment.
- Carry out full frame inspections.
- Shake bees off frames before inspecting them.
- Train yourself and your staff in techniques to recognise and eliminate AFB.
- Report AFB to the management agency within 7 days.
- Burn infected colonies.
- Feed pollen substitutes rather than pollen.
- Feed sugar syrup rather than frames of honey.
- Use hive and apiary quarantines.
- Only use approved sterilisation methods.
- Use a thermometer and timer when wax dipping (10 min at 160°C).
- Treat hives to clear up parasitic mite syndrome (PMS) before checking for AFB.
- Become an approved beekeeper. Get suspect AFB samples tested.

## Don't

- Don't feed drugs for control of AFB. Don't scorch boxes to sterilise them.
- Don't try to control AFB by removing diseased frames.
- Don't extract honey from infected colonies.
- Don't feed bee-collected pollen to colonies.
- Don't feed extracted honey to bees.
- Don't let hives be robbed out.
- Don't shook swarm.
- Don't let stock knock over beehives.
- Don't use steam chests to sterilise infected equipment.
- Don't split the equipment from dead hives between other hives.
- Don't allow colonies to die of varroa or any other cause.

# New Zealand Food Safety Authority — Export Standards Group

Greg Zemke-Smith is the new export standards programme manager for the NZFSA. Greg has direct responsibility for general export requirements that affect the bee products industry; i.e., the Bee Products Official Assurances Guide. See www.nzfsa.govt.nz/animalproducts/publications/manualsguides/bee-products/index.htm

Greg stresses the importance of making sure that all bee products needing an official assurance (export certificate) are processed and handled within the export system. This will need the close attention of packers and exporters come 1 July 2006, when operations will move from registration under the Food Act or Food Hygiene Regulations and listed with NZFSA under the Bee Guide, to having registered RMPs for all secondary processing and storage operations.

Traceability and certification will be an integral part of bee product premises verifications over the next year. While there are expected to be few serious issues around initial RMP verifications, verifiers will almost certainly rule any product that has moved outside the export system as not eligible for export certification.

The Bee Guide contains all the essential information processors and exporters need to get official assurances the products they produce and export. Normally, for the purposes of exporting bee products, official assurances are export certificates issued by the NZFSA Verification Agency.

The various parts of the Bee Guide will eventually be dealt with in other Animal Products standards. The guide was published to put in place an export premises list, and to establish a traceability and eligibility system to allow for the movement of products around the country and to facilitate export certification.

The listing arrangement was only a temporary measure until export bee products were brought into the RMP system in July 2006, so this aspect of the guide will shortly become obsolete.

The traceability and eligibility system introduced in the guide will continue for some time. The Animal Products Official Assurances Programme (OAP) is being amended to incorporate the system introduced by the guide. The OAP is the permanent NZFSA publication where general certification requirements can be found (see www.nzfsa.govt.nz/animalproducts/publications/manualsguides/oap/index.htm). Much of the Bee Guide is a straight copy of the current Official Assurances Programme. When the programme is amended to include the additional requirements from the guide, the guide will be cancelled.

For some processors and exporters, other important requirements can be found in OMAR 01/172 – Import of Foreign Animal Material and Animal Products and Return to New Zealand of New Zealand Animal Material and Animal Products for Domestic Use or Export" (see www.nzfsa.govt.nz/animalproducts/publications/omar/01-172.htm). Although there is not much imported bee product being processed and re-exported in New Zealand, for those few people that do handle imported bee products this document is an essential part of ensuring the imported products are eligible for export certification.

Even though the only thing that requires a bee products business to have an RMP is a need for export certification of their product, Greg does not have responsibility for RMP standards. RMP standards are administered by the New Zealand Standards Group, and Jim Sim remains the key person for the bee industry in this respect.

Greg's contact details are:

NZFSA Export Standards and Systems
P.O. Box 2835
Wellington
Phone: (04) 463 2500
Fax: (04) 463 2591
Email: Greg.Zemke-Smith@nzfsa.govt.nz

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VARROA AGENCY INC

# Varroa Agency Incorporated News

## Varroa levy date remains the same

**The Varroa levy date for New Zealand beekeepers is to remain the same this year, despite our attempts to change it.**

The Varroa Agency Incorporated (VAI) had proposed changing the dates for striking the levy for payment, to simplify the levy collection process, and reduce confusion and the time involved in levy collection.

There was overwhelming support from South Island beekeepers during last year's consultation round of meetings for this proposal.

However the legal work required to make this happen has not been carried out by the appropriate agency — Biosecurity New Zealand. We notified Biosecurity NZ of the requirement immediately after the consultation meetings, but despite continued follow-ups, including correspondence to the Minister of Biosecurity, the order has not been changed as we requested.

The VAI now is in the position where it must continue with the dates of the original order, which is unsatisfactory as there were advantages for the VAI as well as for the beekeepers. I'm really disappointed with the result.

We will continue to try and change it for the 2007–2008 period, but for this year the dates are:

- March 31, 2006: the levy is set on the number of hives a beekeeper owns on this date
- June 1, 2006: the date the levy is due to be paid by in full.

Beekeepers are reminded that there is a penalty for late payment. Under the Order, if any amount of the levy has not been paid by the close of the due date, the following amounts must be paid to the Management Agency: 10 percent of the amount of the unpaid levy, plus for each month the amount is outstanding, two percent of the amount of the unpaid levy (excluding additional levies owing under this clause).

The VAI collected a high percentage of the levy last year, with only a small number of defaulters we're still actively chasing. The Board is taking strong action on chasing defaulting payments because we feel if most beekeepers contribute on time, then why shouldn't all beekeepers?

The levy for 2006–2007 is $1.38 plus GST per hive, or $10.00 plus GST for beekeepers owning fewer than five hives.

The levy helps to fund the Varroa Pest Management Strategy movement control, surveillance, and education work carried out by the VAI. The other 75 percent is funded by South Island regional councils, which are being billed for their contribution at the end of March.

### Surveillance

The new surveillance round for 2006 is about to start in the South Island, and beekeepers qualified as AP2 inspectors have been contacted in preparation.

This round of surveillance is more intense than the last six, with strong emphasis on surveillance of hives near main roads, airports and seaports that are entry points to the South Island. This has been done in response to concerns expressed by beekeepers at the round of consultation meetings in the South Island in November last year.

Beekeepers contracted to the programme are asked to give preference to getting the work done early in the year, so the programme doesn't drag on.

**- Duncan Butcher**
**Chairman**

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|---|---|
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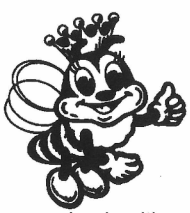

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# Varroa — What varroa?

Since May 2004 we have been treating our hives organically and have not lost a hive to varroa. Varroa simply is not a cause for concern and we have used Bayvarol strips only once a year when we winter down.

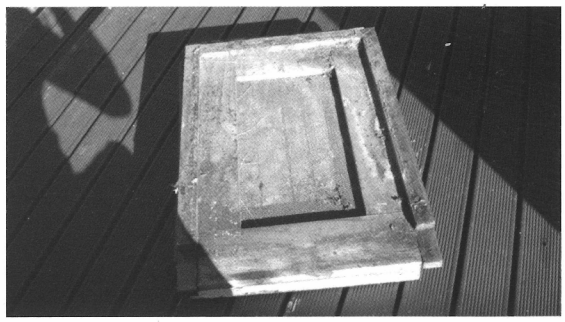
We accept that our treatment regime is probably not viable for very large numbers of hives but is very economical for our nearly 200 hives. But the results have astounded us, especially when we read of the research and the difficulties that some apiarists have with loss of hives. How have we accomplished this?

First, we were lucky in Taranaki to have eighteen months to prepare. We were part of a very active 'Varroa Surveillance Team' that worked together with the local beekeepers' club to educate all beekeepers. We had time to think about what we might do, listen to practical-minded people who had dealt with varroa and, of course, had set up our hives to be ready for the inevitable invasion.

Having attended the NBA conference in Napier and having the opportunity to listen to Dr Pedro Rodriguez and an American woman apiarist in Wanganui, we were able to learn from others and to formulate a plan to use Food Grade Mineral Oil as our main weapon.

To do this we prepared our hives by constructing mite boards for every hive, collecting advertising coreboards used by real estate agents and procuring cotton ropes (10 mm in width) that we cut into the recommended 50 cm length. We needed to 'uplift' our bottom boards to allow ample room for the sticky boards.

Mite boards.



Mite board on the bottom board, ready for the box. Note that the mite board becomes the entry board for the bees and a gap is left at the back for the sticky board and fogging.
*Photos: George Jonson.*

As soon as hives were infected with varroa we hit them hard with Bayvarol strips and began our three-weekly regime of roping and fogging.

We keep meticulous records of each visit so that treatment is regular. Yes, it's a lot of work but we have made it more economical by rationalising our apiary sites so we can treat several apiaries without doubling back, and have put LPG in the truck to cut down on travel costs.

Actually the onset of varroa has made us better beekeepers because we visit more regularly and inspect hives for other problems as well as keeping an eye on the varroa. We've had a number of 'unexplained' queen losses, but apart from that a record honey crop this year has vindicated our methods.

It is certainly more economical to treat in this way. By continually treating rather than waiting for numbers to build up before treating, we are able to maintain very healthy hives, and if inclement weather makes it impossible to treat on a three-weekly basis it appears that the hives do not suffer greatly.

## Our apiary routine

On visiting the apiary we immediately look at the front of the hives to note anything unusual (like wasps!). Then we pull out the sticky boards, inspect them and clean them or replace them with clean boards that have been prepared prior to the visit. We can then place a covered box of fresh ropes in a convenient place at the back of the hives so as not to attract the bees, and proceed to inspect the individual hives. Whether we are collecting pollen, replacing supers, or inspecting for stores or AFB, we always go into the boxes take out the old ropes and replace them with the fresh ones. We have got into a routine of lifting the top box and sliding it to the front to avoid heavy lifting. We also use a table to put supers or boxes on to avoid lifting weighty boxes off the ground.

After completing our tasks we fog the hives from the rear, thus avoiding burning the bees. We usually give each hive two 'fogs'. We then re-coat the sticky boards with a mixture of cooking oil and Vaseline and replace the boards.

It is amazing that we often fail to find any physical sign of varroa, even in broken drone comb between the boxes. This year we will experiment with not putting in strips in some hives when wintering down just to see how it goes.

## Economics of this method compared with strips

We have carried out an exercise on comparing the economics of this method as compared with strips. The results are very conclusive. The total cost of treating over 160 hives from May to November 2004 was $365.25. This took into account the Whiterex 307 oil, ropes, honey, wax, propane gas, Vaseline, vegetable oil, mentholated spirits and kerosene for the primus. The cost per hive was $2.28, and the cost per hive per month was only 38c!

***Continued on page 20***

*Continued from page 19*

As a point of comparison, if we used four strips per hive at a cost of, say, $1.52 per strip, the total cost of treating over 160 hives would be $972.80. The cost per hive would be $6.08 and the cost per hive per month would be $1.01. Therefore, the difference using our method is $3.80 per hive.

We did not factor travel into these figures because we believe that our hive management regime requires us to visit all hives at least once a month during this time, regardless of what method we use. Neither did we factor in the initial costs of setting the hives up or the purchase of the fogger, as we were looking at ongoing treatment costs only. The mite boards cost between seven and eight dollars to make.

## Other factors

- It would appear that the ropes are going to last about three years, perhaps only two. So we will need to pay out about $80.00 a year for new ropes. The homemade mite boards are wearing well.
- By cleaning out the mite boards and the bottom boards we are saving the bees a lot of house cleaning work.
- The hives are very well ventilated throughout the year, so the queens shut down a little earlier and the hives are less damp.

So far, so good. We still cannot believe that the method we have chosen has been so effective and are waiting for 'the crash'. The results have been beyond our greatest expectations: certainly it has not been the horror story of many of our fellow beekeepers. It is just a pity that others, especially the hobbyist beekeepers, did not have the faith to try out a proven method of control rather than give up on their hobby because of the mite.

**- George Jonson and Ken Finer**

*Postscript from George: "I have been 'wintering down' and doing sampling for MAF and regretfully have to record that I have lost at least three hives to varroa and most hives need strips to knock the varroa back! Curses!! This has come about because I have been ill and unable to treat the hives for five or six weeks. It just goes to show that without constant treatment the varroa wins the battle! While our hive management plan means that we would have put strips in about April, this year we are going to have to put them in at least a month early. The infestation is very heavy with many hives barely surviving at present. There is still a lot of brood in the hives so there is ample breeding ground for the little blighters. We are still convinced that the FGMO is very effective, but as many beekeepers before us have found the regime has to be a 'no let-up' one."*

*[Editor's note: George Jonson is a semi-commercial beekeeper in Taranaki and member of the Southern North Island Branch of the NBA. Ken has been a beekeeper for about 15 years, and also runs a balustrade business]*

# *USA bee losses due to varroa*

*This was received by Rex Walker, member of the Wanganui Beekeepers' Club, and forwarded by Neil Farrer.*

Comment from a Beekeeper in Utah, USA: "Well things are not too good over here, the bee club told me one of the state's biggest producers who has 1000+ hives lost 813 of them, I lost a little over 50%, the club president had 150 hives, he has 30 now, the club yard had 10 hives, they have 2 left, the state bee inspector had a large loss himself ... over a 6-8 state area the mid-west lost 50-85% of their hives, Check-mite is due to be pulled from the market, the spray on sucrocide is no good either ... lots of used equipment on the block for sale, people are giving up ... a 2lb. package is $46.00, queens are going for $15 to $20.00. Loss of hives due to Varroa and most of the Chemical strips are no longer effective."

# e way of burning AFB hives

ssfully burn a hive that
nis method uses an open-
n an old Scout principle
sing a forced-air system.

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rs when you handle the

any material in an urban
ntainer of water on hand
uring the process as the
dding more frames. Put
you from radiated heat

Setup

Put the drum in place and add some newspaper and a few empty frames into the drum to get the fire going. Once established, add a super of frames at a time. Do not use an accelerant to assist the fire as there will be an instant explosion of flames, which will singe your hair as a metre-high flame will roar out of the top of the drum.

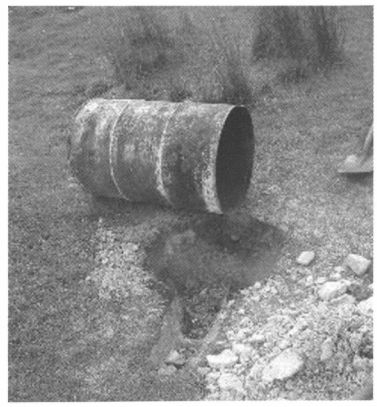
The air vent at the bottom provides a forced-air system and the drum provides a chimney that assists burning and channels the flames to the top of the drum. If overloaded with frames, there may not be enough air getting in and the flames will ignite at the top of the drum instead of at the bottom. When burning correctly, the fire will roar. Anything within a two-metre radius will get radiation burns over a period of time, as the heat is intense.

This system is ideal when burning just a few hives at a time. The fire is confined within the drum and therefore doesn't spread along the ground. The intense heat causes all the honey to be burnt so that there is very little residue left; however, it could take up to six hours to complete this process (based on burning 15 supers). Therefore you may need to slide the drum out of the way while you turn over the last of the residue in the bottom of the hole in the final stages of burning.

If you want to use this method for burning AFB hives, you will need to have your DECA modified.

**- Frank Lindsay**

Barrel takes a full super



Process completed — no residue

# Handy hints from Wales

*[Editor's note: these hints come from Wally Shaw, a beekeeper from Wales who visited New Zealand recently via Ceracell Beekeeping Supplies Ltd.]*

## Varroa control

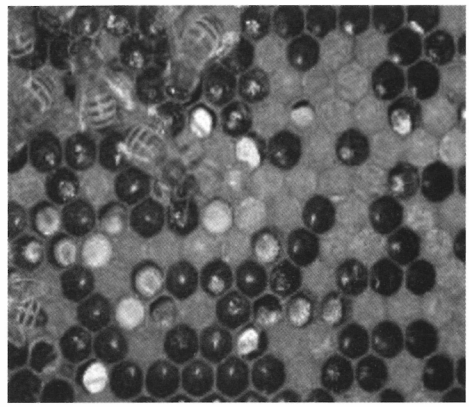
When using strips for varroa control, use a crayon to mark the roof of the hive when the strips are put in and cross this mark out when the strips are removed.

**Trickle treatment using 3.2% oxalic acid:** use the needle that comes with an InTec® refill system for computer ink cartridges. This is a 0.6 mm needle and gives an even flow when pressure is applied to the 50ml syringe. File off the sharp tip of the needle for safety.

## Parasitic Mite Syndrome (PMS)

If you missed the boat and the hive is heavily infected with varroa mites (symptoms include spotty brood, lots of sacbrood, half-sealed larva, small bees: varroa can easily be seen on the frames and bees), remove all the brood frames and replace with drawn combs and apply a varroa treatment. Within a couple of days all the varroa on the bees will all be dead and the hive will recover more quickly than it would if you left the frames of brood in place.

Freeze the brood frames for 48 hours to kill the brood and give the frames to a strong hive to clean out, or burn or compost the frames if they are old and dark.



Spotty brood caused by varroa. Generally some bees will have short bodies and stunted wings. *Photo: Frank Lindsay.*

# Revised Codex standard for honey

## CODEX STAN 12-1981, Rev.1 (1987), Rev.2 (2001)[1]

*[Editor's note: This is an abridged version of the Codex Alimentarius Standard, which is seven pages long. The scope section notes, "Part One of this Standard applies to all honeys produced by honey bees and covers all styles of honey presentations which are processed and ultimately intended for direct consumption." For a copy of the full Standard, see the International Portal on Food Safety, Animal & Plant Health: http://www.ipfsaph.org/servlet/BinaryDownloaderServlet?filename=/kopool_data/codex_0/en_cxs_012e.pdf]*

The Annex to this Standard is intended for voluntary application by commercial partners and not for application by Governments.

### PART ONE

**2. DESCRIPTION**

**2.1 DEFINITION**

Honey is the natural sweet substance produced by honey bees from the nectar of plants or from secretions of living parts of plants or excretions of plant sucking insects on the living parts of plants, which the bees collect, transform by combining with specific substances of their own, deposit, dehydrate, store and leave in the honey comb to ripen and mature.

2.1.1 Blossom Honey or Nectar Honey is the honey which comes from nectars of plants.

2.1.2 Honeydew Honey is the honey which comes mainly from excretions of plant sucking insects *(Hemiptera)* on the living parts of plants or secretions of living parts of plants.

**3. ESSENTIAL COMPOSITION AND QUALITY FACTORS**

3.1 Honey sold as such shall not have added to it any food ingredient, including food additives, nor shall any other additions be made other than honey. Honey shall not have any objectionable matter, flavour, aroma, or taint absorbed from foreign matter during its processing and storage. The honey shall not have begun to ferment or effervesce. No pollen or constituent particular to honey may be removed except where this is unavoidable in the removal of foreign inorganic or organic matter.

3.2 Honey shall not be heated or processed to such an extent that its essential composition is changed and/or its quality is impaired.

3.3 Chemical or biochemical treatments shall not be used to influence honey crystallisation.

**3.4 MOISTURE CONTENT**

(a) Honeys not listed below - not more than 20%

(b) Heather honey (Calluna) - not more than 23%

**3.5 SUGARS CONTENT**

**3.5.1 FRUCTOSE AND GLUCOSE CONTENT (SUM OF BOTH)**

(a) Honey not listed below
- not less than 60 g/100g

(b) Honeydew honey, blends of honeydew honey with blossom honey
- not less than 45g/100g

**3.5.2 SUCROSE CONTENT**

(a) Honey not listed below
- not more than 5g/100g

(b) *For each of the honeys under (b), the Standard is not more than 10g/100g*
Alfalfa *(Medicago sativa)*, Citrus spp.,
False Acacia *(Robinia pseudoacacia)*,
French Honeysuckle *(Hedysarum)*,
Menzies Banksia *(Banksia menziesii)*,
Red Gum *(Eucalyptus camaldulensis)*,
Leatherwood *(Eucryphia lucida)*,
Eucryphia milligani

(c) Lavender *(Lavandula spp)*,
Borage *(Borago officinalis)*
- not more than 15g/100g

***Continued on page 24***

*Continued from page 23*

**3.6 WATER INSOLUBLE SOLIDS CONTENT**

(a) Honeys other than pressed honey
- not more than 0.1g/100g

(b) Pressed honey
- not more than 0.5g/100g

**4. CONTAMINANTS**

**4.1 HEAVY METALS[2]**

Honey shall be free from heavy metals in amounts which may represent a hazard to human health. The products covered by this Standard shall comply with those maximum levels for heavy metals established by the Codex Alimentarius Commission.

**4.2 RESIDUES OF PESTICIDES AND VETERINARY DRUGS**

The products covered by this standard shall comply with those maximum residue limits for honey established by the Codex Alimentarius Commission.

**5. HYGIENE**

5.1 It is recommended that the products covered by the provisions of this standard be prepared and handled in accordance with the appropriate sections of the Recommended International Code of Practice – General Principles of Food Hygiene recommended by the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC/RCP 1-1969, Rev 3-1997), and other relevant Codes texts such as Codes of Hygienic Practice and Codes of Practice.

[1] Secretariat Note: The Revised Codex Standard for Honey was adopted by the 24th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission in 2001. At the time of the adoption the Commission agreed that further work would be undertaken on certain technical issues, particularly the provisions concerning Moisture Content.

[2] These levels will be established in consultation between the Codex Committee on Sugars and the Codex Committee on Food Additives and Contaminants as soon as possible.



# *Exotic disease surveillance*

In recent years, AgriQuality has asked some AP2s to check hives annually for exotic diseases.

The process involves visiting randomly selected apiaries, going down into the brood nests, doing a visual check for AFB or any obvious abnormalities, inserting two test strips and pushing sticky boards in above the floor. After 24 hours the strips are removed and the sticky boards inserted into clear plastic envelopes for sending to the lab. At this time a 50-ml jar is filled with bees for storage in a freezer before being sent off to the lab.

This is an activity that I would urge all to help in, if asked and there is payment for those participating. Try to pick your weather, as at this time of year the bees are hell-bent to protect their winter stores with not much nectar available.

**- Ron Morison**


Gap between two top boxes was an invitation to rob.


We picked the wrong day with lousy weather.

*Photos supplied by Ron Morison.*

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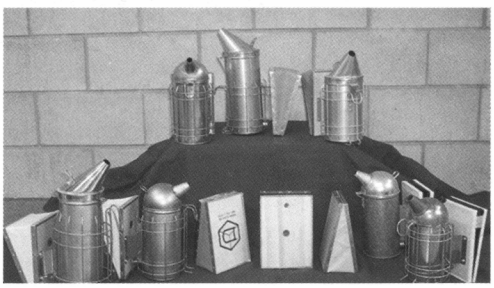

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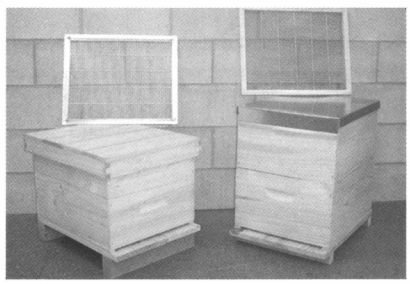

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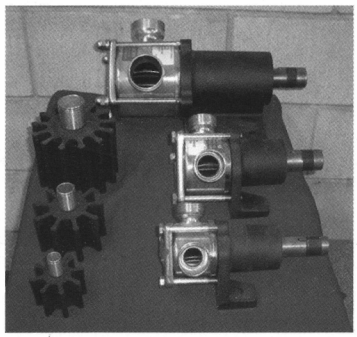

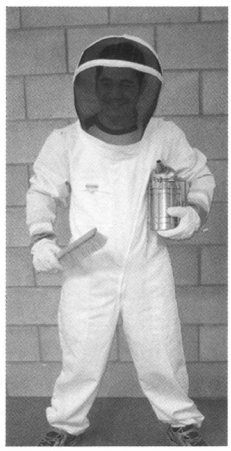

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BK193

# Do you want bee diseases and cheap bee products imported into New Zealand in two months' time? No!

**Then it is time to protest.**

Have you made submissions on the Import Risk Analysis: Honey Bee Products and the Import Health Standard for the Importation into New Zealand of Specified Bee Products from All Countries, Australia and the Pacific? Don't feel too bad if you have not: most people who made submissions are outraged at the little effect their commonsense submissions have had on the importing of bee products into New Zealand.

It seems the only thing to do now that will keep diseased, cheap, poor quality bee products (including honey) out of New Zealand in about two months' time, is political action.

Find out what other beekeepers are doing. Organise your NBA Branch members to visit their local Member of Parliament and Opposition member. Stress the effect European foulbrood will have on kiwifruit pollination, pip and stone fruit pollination, small seed crops and pollination of Clover throughout New Zealand.

How will your business survive on $2.00 to $2.50 per kg for bulk honey, European foulbrood and lots of other possible 'nasties' that will affect your bees? Very low prices and additional diseases = very few beehives left in New Zealand shortly.

The US currently has very few hives available for pollination. Beehive numbers are dropping and soon there will not be enough beehives for pollination of their almonds.

The effect on New Zealand beekeepers will be great, but nothing compared to the effect on New Zealand's economy as a whole, as much of our economy is based on pollination of agricultural and horticultural crops. We are contacting horticulture and agriculture groups to gain their support and participation in political action.

The Government is sitting on a knife-edge majority and it does not want anyone rocking the boat. The Waikato branch members of the NBA are actively canvassing support from their Members of Parliament and Opposition members, as well as formulating protests to be held at the Beehive in Wellington.

It is essential to let Government know before they make their decision that we intend to protest and take strong political action. We have already held two well-attended branch meetings to plan protest actions. If Government decides to allow imports of bee products, it becomes very much harder to change their minds.

We do not need imports of bee products into New Zealand. We are exporters now. Any risk of bringing in bee products is unnecessary and stupid and very damaging to the whole of New Zealand's economy.

Go to the NBA web page (http://www.nba.org.nz) or email me (russell@arataki-honey-rotorua.co.nz) for some of the submissions already made.

Do not allow us to be a pawn in any government 'apples to Australia' deal, or to further the Prime Minister's dream of free trade with China by allowing bee products into New Zealand. Let's fight it all the way. Let the owners of the Beehive bare their sting and take action!

**- Russell Berry**
**President, Waikato Branch, National Beekeepers' Association**

*[Editor's note: We will run a report of the 4 April march on the Beehive in the May issue.]*

Did you know that during 2005, 13.9 tonne of propolis powder (powder alone, not including other propolis, Royal Jelly, etc.) was imported into New Zealand from China? See your local politician and put the pressure on. New Zealand needs protection from such practices and a Country of Origin scheme for all purely NZ hive products.

## Phillips' Beekeeping Collection website

If you're after a comprehensive apiculture library website, http://bees.library.cornell.edu should fit the bill. According to their home page, "The Phillips' Beekeeping Collection at Cornell's Albert R. Mann Library is one of the largest and most complete apiculture libraries in the world. *The Hive and the Honey Bee* grew out of a presentation on the Phillips collection at the 2002 Eastern Apiculture Society conference and is something of a digital child of that print collection. At present, it consists of the full text of thirty rare books from the Phillips Collection, and each book is fully searchable."

For more information on *The Hive and the Honey Bee* and the E. R. Phillips Collection, go to http://bees.library.cornell.edu and see their 'About' page.

*Material cited from the Phillips' Beekeeping Collection website. Thanks to Dr Peter Molan at the University of Waikato, Honey Research Unit, for this information.*

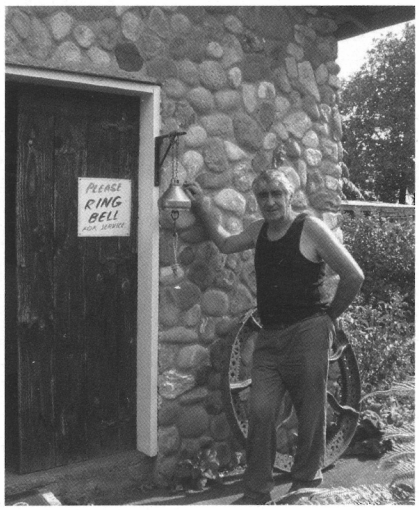
# NBA history revisited

*[Editor's note: This is the third of a series of historical articles related to the National Beekeepers' Association of New Zealand. This series also commemorates the 100th anniversary of the Waikato and Southland branches of the NBA. The photos were taken by Fiona O'Brien.]*

This month Pauline Bassett and I ventured across country to Tirau, halfway between Rotorua and Hamilton, on State Highway 1. Tirau has become a bustling town filled with novelty, antique and specialty shops, all, of course, surrounded by many cafés. The old-world charm of grandfather clocks can be found on one side, with yesteryear treasures now given a different status, and at the top of the town is 'The Honey Shop'. We headed there for ice cream and sampled their 'honey and pecan' and 'Manuka and Chestnut ribbon' offerings. Inside the shop, the live bee display was certainly active. The walls and centre displays were filled with unique 'treasures of the hives', either packaged as is or hidden in gourmet delights, and all from familiar beekeeping businesses.


The honey shop, Tirau

Tirau wasn't our goal, however, so we kept our purses firmly closed: there was to be no shopping on this occasion. About 10 minutes south of Tirau is a major intersection, where we took State Highway 5 and began looking for a 'Honey and Museum' sign. Here we met up with Geoff Ernst. Geoff and his wife Robyn have a 10,000-square-foot building housing an impressive display of collections: clocks, lamps, gramophones, coins, military memorabilia, bottles, stoneware and firearms. We found evidence of beekeeping history in all the displays.




Geoff Ernst outside his museum

On one wall, and tucked away behind glass is a magnificent collection of honey tins. Some tins are very old and display not only beekeeping history but printing and packaging history as well, something of interest to me. High up in the museum was a collection of honey boxes and smokers. As we toured with Geoff, we saw that other beekeeping items were tucked into the various displays, including the shop fronts of the day.

Geoff, whose hive registration number is C37, started beekeeping in 1958 and during his peak beekeeping ran 1400 hives, with some located around Tirau and in Tumanui (south Rotorua). Walter Ernst, Geoff's dad, started his beekeeping in 1933. For a short time Geoff's brother joined in the beekeeping business as well. Today Geoff runs about 50–60 beehives, keeping his rural honey shop ticking over with product. His time is divided between the rural honey shop/museum and 'The Honey Shop' in Tirau, which opened about 15 years ago.

And what are Geoff's memories of past days of beekeeping? He recalls many meetings of the beekeeping industry, where he was just a young fellow (according to the old-timers of the day) and which he still humbly believes himself to be, even after 48 years of beekeeping. His view of the future of beekeeping in New Zealand is ultimately an industry that is becoming more entangled with rules and regulations.

**- Fiona O'Brien**

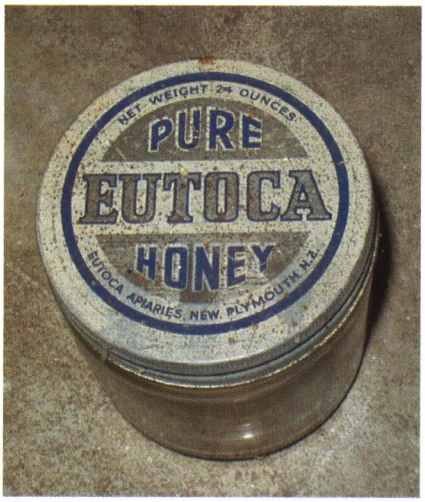
*Postscript: Pauline and I have been advised that there are other collections of honey tin collections around the country. If you have or know of such a collection, we would love for you to photograph it and send us a story. We are planning a memorabilia display at conference 2006, so if you have any sort of beekeeping collection that would enhance our memorabilia display, please contact Pauline Bassett: PO Box 234, Te Kuiti: ph/fax 07 878 7193, email: waihon@actrix.co.nz.*


Making use of supers inside the museum.

# *Inside the honey shop and museum of Geoff and Robyn Ernst, south of Tirau.*


Honey cases inside the museum.


Part of Geoff's collection of honey tins.




Eutoca honey.


A wax press behind glass.


Pauline Bassett holding the 'Buy it in the re-fill jar' sign.

*Photos supplied by Fiona O'Brien*

# INVITATION

## NATIONAL BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION OF NZ (INC) SEMINARS & CONFERENCE 2006

*'Please come and help us celebrate our Branch Centenary to be held at Glenview International Hotel & Conference Centre'*

## HAMILTON

## 16 JULY – 20 JULY 2006

**Sunday 16 July**

**Lunch by invitation to all long-serving beekeepers.**
**Everyone else welcome to attend at cost (see reg. form).**
**There will be a display of beekeeping memorabilia & photos.**

**Monday 17 July**

**Specialty Group Meetings**
**Mix & Mingle in the Evening**

**Tuesday 18 July**

**Seminars with various Speakers**
**Sponsors Evening & Presentation**

**Wednesday 19 July**

**Seminars with various Speakers**
**Dinner & Show at 'Specially arranged location'**

**Thursday 20 July**

**NBA Annual General Meeting**

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**www.nba.org.nz**

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## TOPICAL SEMINARS

**NZ Beekeeping over the last 100 years**
**Alternative Fuels**
**Bee Viruses**
**Cape Bee**
**The future of Beekeeping – The need to introduce new technology into Beekeeping**
**New Research**
**Exporting**
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**Second overseas speaker to be confirmed**

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## Conference Contacts

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**NATIONAL BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION OF NEW ZEALAND (INC.)**
**SEMINAR & CONFERENCE – WAIKATO**
**16 JULY – 20 JULY 2006**
*Glenview International Hotel & Conference Centre, Hamilton*

# REGISTRATION FORM

**Date:** _____ **Name:** _____

**Partner's Name:** _____

**Business Name:** _____

**Postal Address:** _____

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**Phone:** _____ **Fax:** _____ **Email:** _____

| SEMINAR & CONFERENCE 2006 | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| EVENT | NUMBER ATTENDING | NBA MEMBER | NON MEMBER | TOTAL |
| Full Registration | | $35 | $55 | |
| One Day Seminar only Registration | | $25 | $45 | |
| *Celebrating 100 Years* Lunch (Sun 16 July): lunch/cruise on 'Waipa Delta' | | $35 | $35 | |
| Mix & Mingle – Monday 17 July | | $20 | $20 | |
| Seminar Day – Tuesday 18 July | | $50 | $75 | |
| Sponsors' Night – Tuesday 18 July | | Courtesy of Sponsors | | |
| Seminar Day – Wednesday 19 July | | $50 | $75 | |
| Dinner & Show (Special Location) – Wednesday 19 July | | $80 | $80 | |
| **NON PARTICIPATING PARTNER – SOCIAL FUNCTIONS ONLY** | | | | |
| Registration | | $20 | $20 | |
| *Celebrating 100 Years* Lunch (Sun 16 July): lunch/cruise on 'Waipa Delta' | | $35 | $35 | |
| Mix & Mingle – Monday 17 July | | $20 | $20 | |
| Sponsors Night – Tuesday 18 July | | Courtesy of Sponsors | | |
| Dinner & Show (Special Location) – Wednesday 19 July | | $80 | $80 | |
| | | | SUB TOTAL | |
| NBA Membership - complete form over page | | | | |
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*Sponsors' Night* – Two Complimentary drinks per person, payment thereafter
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**Please make cheques payable to: Waikato Branch NBA Conference**
**For further payment information contact Tony Lorimer.**

**Completed registration forms and payments to be sent to:**
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# THE NATIONAL BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION OF NEW ZEALAND

# Attention All Beekeepers!!!!

Please consider joining the National Beekeepers' Association of New Zealand and receive the benefits that it offers.

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A voice in the Association
Branch membership & information sharing
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Attend conference 2006
2006 subscription to *The New Zealand Beekeeper* (11 issues)

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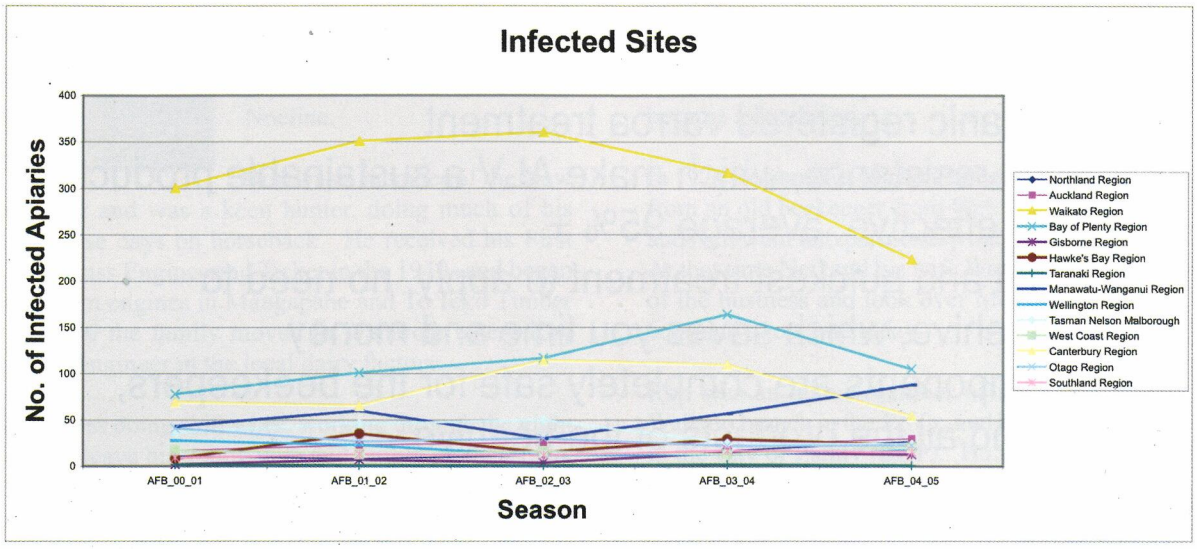
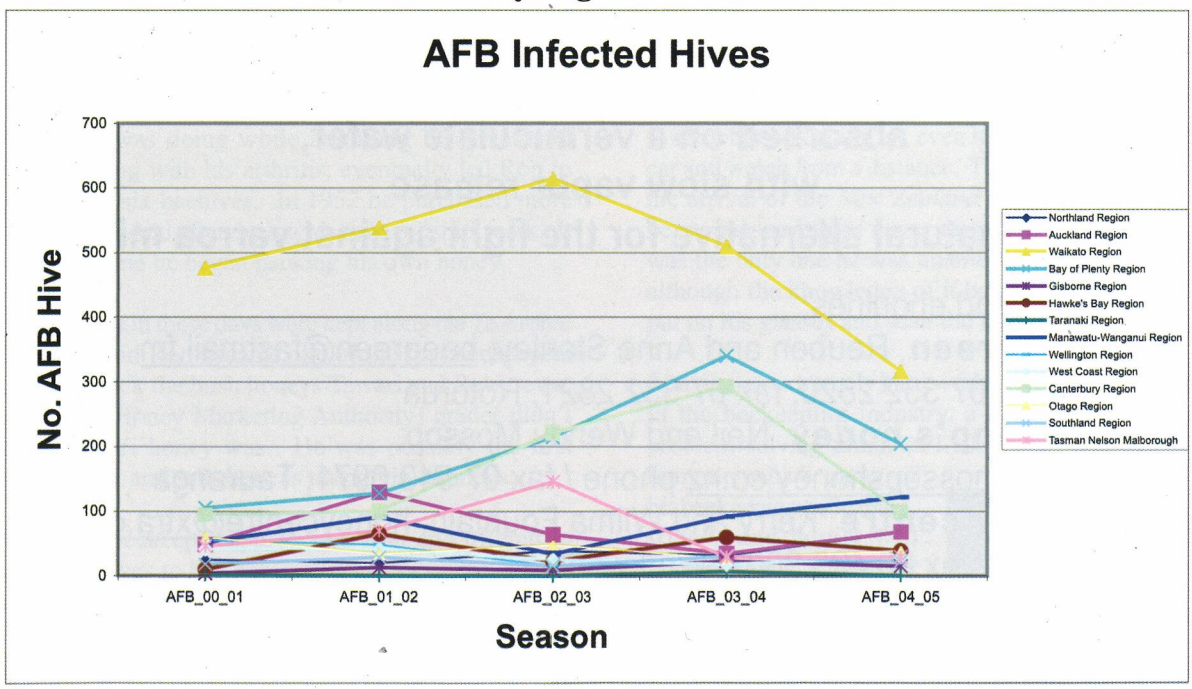
# AFB infection statistics by region

*Prepared by David McMillan, formerly AgriQuality Apiculture Officer, Mosgiel*

## Number of AFB-infected apiaries by region




## Number of AFB-infected hives by region



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**ApiLife var contains four essential oils:**
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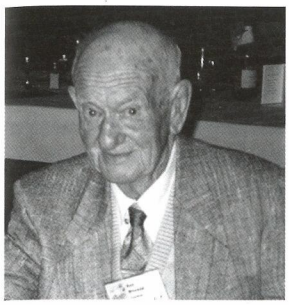
-51 to 99 boxes, 5100 to 9900 pces = 4.10 each + GST
-100 + boxes, 10000 + pces = 4.00 each + GST

Use ApiLife and your bees will have a happy life

BK246

# Obituary: Ronald Joseph Mossop (1921–2005)



Born in Patea on 9 July 1921, Ronald Mossop was the son of a farmer, attending the local primary school in Kakaramea. In 1939 he began working as a cheese maker until he developed rheumatoid arthritis in 1944. In 1942 he married Noeline.

Ron was a member of the New Zealand Army and was a keen hunter, doing much of his hunting in those days on horseback. He received his First and Second Class Engineering Ticket in the 1940s and began operating steam engines in Mangapahe and Te Teko Timber Mills. In 1946 the family moved to Waharoa, where Ron worked as an engineer in the local dairy factory.

In 1947 Ron was doing shift work, working through the night and having to leave his young wife and family on their own. Often the local drunks would gather at the end of the road near their house in the evening to finish off their drinking. Ron was concerned about the safety of his young family due to these uninvited visitors, so devised a plan to have the local beekeeper place a couple of hives in the spot where the drunks usually met. The plan was nonetheless very successful and the unwanted visitors never returned.

It was during this time he became interested in what the local beekeeper was doing while attending his hives and this curiosity, along with his arthritis, eventually led Ron to purchase his first six beehives. In 1952 he purchased more hives, which he looked after during his time off shift work. It was also at this time he began packing his own honey.

Mossop's beehives in those days were kept along the Te Aroha/ Kaimai Ranges and Ron became one of the first beekeepers to produce and pack the bush honeys Tawari and Rewarewa. Even the HMA (Honey Marketing Authority) grader didn't know what Tawari honey was. He was possibly the first beekeeper to pack and sell these as monofloral honeys.

In 1954 a local beekeeper approached Ron and offered to sell his 500 beehives to him for 22s 6p each ($2.25), a huge investment in those days. Life as the young Mossop family knew it changed forever — their lovely Chev car was sold, replaced by an old, smokey V8 truck. The family fishing trips and holidays ceased and his young sons of only eight and 10 years old became the first labourers, along with wife Noeline, in Mossop's Apiaries (as it was known in the earlier days).

In those early years Ron would visit his hives with a beekeeping book in one hand and a hive tool in the other. He initially had no idea what he was doing, but was inspired, teachable, and had found his third love: bees!

The stress of shift work and operating what, in those days, was considered a full-time beekeeping business, took its toll and after nearly eight years, Ron decided it was time to move to the sunny side of the Kaimai Ranges. So in 1961 the family shifted to Tauranga and Ron purchased more beehives from local beekeepers Ken Harrison, Charlie London and Ron Parkes.

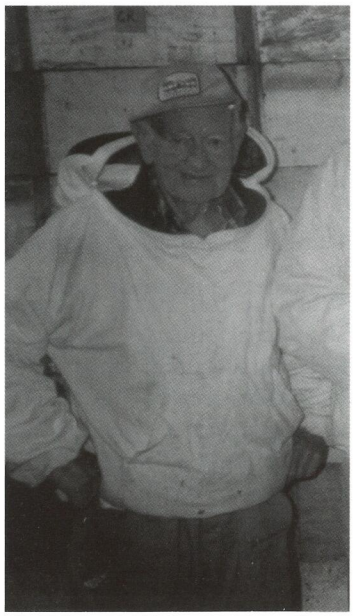
In 1966, while living in their Tauriko home, they put a small roadside stall in the front of their house, and began selling their honey from it. Noeline operated the honey stall and attended to customers for 28 years, during which time the honey stall became a local icon.

In 1971 Ron and his son Neil bought several hundred beehives from an old beekeeper from Welcome Bay, and in 1975 Ron and Neil went into partnership until Ron's retirement in 1981. At that time Neil and his wife Wendy bought out Ron's share of the business and took over Mossop's Honey, which they continue to operate today.

Ron was an active member of the NBA starting with the Waikato branch in the 1960s, and had continuing membership in the Bay of Plenty (BOP). He faithfully attended Waikato Branch field days, missing only a couple of these over the years. He was one of the earlier members of the BOP Branch and served as Secretary and President during the course of his active membership. He was eventually honoured with Life Membership of the BOP Branch.

Ron maintained a strong and vibrant interest in bees and beekeeping, even while his health deteriorated dramatically in recent years. He delighted in being taken down to the factory to see what was going on, even if it meant having to stay in the car and watch from a distance. The highlight of his month was the arrival of the *New Zealand Beekeeper* magazine, which he would read from cover to cover. The most recent copy was the only one he was unable to read due to his ill health, although the knowledge of it beside his bed inspired him to put on his glasses and scan the front cover.

Ron was an extremely hard worker, a pioneer in many respects in the beekeeping industry, a deep thinker with an alert, problem-solving mind, an Irish temper and a great sense of humour, which many of his beekeeping colleagues, friends and family will remember of him for many years to come. His words of beekeeping wisdom were offered whenever he could. He remained mentally alert up until the last few hours of his life and died on 21 October 2005.



Ron is survived by his wife Noeline, four sons and one daughter.

**- by Neil and Wendy Mossop on behalf of the Mossop family**

# Obituary: Richard David Bensemann (1961–2006)

Richard was born at Lower Hutt Hospital on 21 September 1961 and was adopted by Paul and Janet 10 days later. The family spent three years in Scotland from 1964, where Richard went to a private kindergarten and the Ardgowan school. Back in New Zealand he was educated at Middleton Grange and Boys High in Christchurch. While living in Halswell he was introduced to bees by Alister Little at the local Boys Rally Club. Alister worked for Bray and Gosset at the time, and Richard managed to get a job there in the 1974 Christmas holidays when he was 13. He stayed with Alister, who was living at the cottage on the premises. Richard was remembered as the little guy with the big boots and boundless enthusiasm.

Subsequently he worked for Russell Poole during the school holidays, and Russell would pick him up from his gate on the Akaroa highway on his way out to the sites around Greenpark and Kaituna. At the same time Richard had started running his own hives and the income from them was enough to pay an airfare up to Kaitaia and back. Alister Little had moved up to work for Bill Haines in Kaitaia, and Richard went and spent some time queen rearing with Bill, a skill that Richard was to carry on with for the rest of his life.

Richard was never a reader, preferring to talk to people and gain all his information that way. But such was his interest in bees, he bought a large textbook around three inches thick and read it cover to cover.

His first real job after school was with Len Hunt in Ashburton. Richard was a hard worker and his time at Len's gave a great resource of stories to be retold for every occasion. A simple one that sums up Richard's attitude to life was the salt and pepper sandwiches. Lunch was taken daily and the tomato sandwiches were broken down into bread and butter with salt and pepper. Len would bring the tomatoes to cut up in the field so they didn't go soggy by lunchtime. One day Len forgot the tomatoes. Salt and pepper sandwiches for lunch! Most people would treat this as a low point, but Richard told of finding some honey and eating honey sandwiches with salt and pepper. A bad experience was turned into a memorable one, full of humour, and a treasured memory he relished retelling!

When he left Len's, Richard went out on his own as Woodstock Apiaries, buying out Terry Burns at Tai Tapu near Christchurch. Terry had been there for 10 years and had made a good living, saying to Richard that while he did not get the best of crops like some of the others on the plains, he always got a couple of boxes even when the others were having poor seasons. Unfortunately, the 10 years Terry had been there just happened to have been one of the best 10-year periods on the plains. No sooner had Richard taken over than the good seasons stopped. Richard kept his hives and in 1988 consolidated them with Airborne Honey in return for a shareholding and directorship. At first he managed the Ashburton side of Airborne's hive operation, running around 1,500 hives and living in Ashburton at the Airborne property on the north west outskirts of the town. During this period, Airborne would send its beekeeping staff to Canada for the winter, getting the benefit of wider experience from the staff. Richard leapt at this opportunity and in 1989 worked for Paul Gregory at Fisher Branch, a small town of 400 people around two hours north of Winnipeg in Manitoba. During one of these visits he met Claudine, his future wife, and they were married in Canada on 15 June 1991.

When Airborne sold its hive operation, Richard then moved to Leeston and took over the marketing and honey purchasing, putting his skill at making friends and contacts to good use.

Richard was always involved in a wide range of activities for sport and recreation. These included speed skating, yachting ("R" class, phase 2, Phoenix and Laser), shooting, jetboating, cycling, four-wheel driving, trail biking, skiing and archery. Additionally his time in Ashburton involved active involvement with the Jaycees and that spread to the fishing club, the share club and the diving club. In all his club activities, Richard was one of the prime motivators, and projects like the purchase of a brand new Mac boat and outboard with fundraising activities for the dive club was just par for the course. His more recent involvement in the Leeston Cycling Club with Don Kirdy from Ashburton has seen the club go from a few older riders to a club with 20 new young riders from six years old and up, all brimming with enthusiasm. When mention was made of "safety issues" by some of the older members, Richard organised a small truckload of road cones, 'Cycling Race' signs, Day-Glo jerkins and implemented a traffic management plan. Suddenly safety had never been so good.

Richard was also involved with the NBA at a branch level and a national level, being the NBA local branch president and the NBA vice president, where he was a significant contributor to the AFB NPMS. One task he took up was the collection of hive levy payments from beekeepers that were less than forthcoming. The collection rates were hugely improved, and showed what could be done by a motivated person who was prepared to get the job done. That Richard was then able to buy honey from many of these same people after the event is an insight into his friendly, congenial nature.

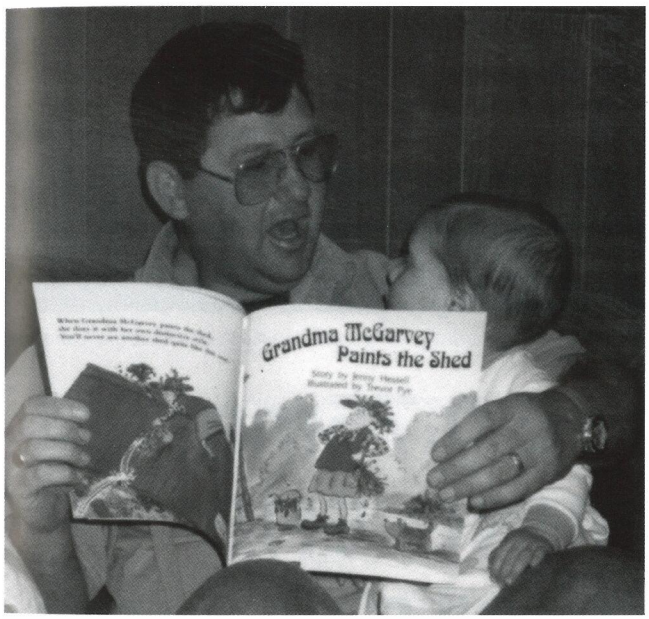
Richard's very active life came with a significant handicap. During his teenage years he developed Type 1 diabetes, which later led to kidney failure and many other associated health problems. Being on dialysis is a huge handicap and many people just subsist. But Richard decided that he would be on home dialysis at night, meaning that many people were not even aware of his condition. His optimistic outlook and zest for life were key to him overcoming many of the numerous operations and medical procedures he had to undergo, and surviving life on dialysis with all the downsides and complications it entails.

Richard found this birth father three years ago and got on well with him, so much so that Richard and Max (who trains horses) became joint owners of a horse that Richard named 'Nectar Collector'. Brittany, Richard and Claudine's oldest daughter, spent a couple of weeks with Max in the North Island learning all about horses.

Richard has left behind a family of three young children: Brittany, Monique and Lachlan. His family was important to him and latterly most of his activities were devoted to the family. It is poignant that he died in Ashburton in a cycle race. Participating in the race were Claudine, Brittany, Monique and Lachlan. Claudine won the race!

Richard was a precious husband to Claudine and loving father to the children. Our hearts go out to them. His irrepressible nature has been an inspiration to us all.

**- Peter Bray**
Airborne Honey




Richard sharing a moment with eldest daughter Brittany.
*[Photos supplied by the Bensemann family.]*

## An additional tribute from Canada

Dear Editor,

I received this tribute to the late Richard Bensemann by the owner of a beekeeping business in Manitoba, Canada, where Richard worked for several seasons. He asked if his memories could be published in *The New Zealand Beekeeper.*

Thank you,
Peter Smyth.

"Richard Bensemann was a good man. He was irreverent yet Christian; obnoxious yet kind-hearted; liked the gossip yet a loyal friend; he was a leader yet a great employee. We, as a Manitoba beekeeping community, are truly in sorrow by the loss of this man of such stature.

Richard's energy knew no bounds. He was patient with new beekeepers but his knowledge ran deep. He would sometimes announce when going through colonies that whomever (myself) went through the hives before was bloody rough and the colonies were up and down like a whore's drawers!

When the day was rainy (west coast mist) he asked, "What we waiting for? Are we commercial or hobbyist beekeepers? Get the smoker lit."

He worked hard but on weekends, cold drinks and warm women beckoned (life before being hitched). He taught us well about life and beekeeping. We are truly saddened.

Kindest regards,
Paul Gregory, P.Ag.
Fisher Branch, Mb."

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# *Advantages of using open-mesh floors (OMFs)*

a. Monitoring natural mortality of mites enables the beekeeper to get a quick estimate (a snapshot) of the number of mites in a colony — although I increasingly doubt whether in practice this works properly!
b. Use of an OMF reduces the mite population by about 20%. Live mites that fall through the floor cannot get back into the hive again (requires a minimum 50 mm drop). Such mites die prematurely and do not complete their full potential of breeding cycles — that is what produces the 20% population reduction.
c. OMFs may well increase the efficiency of treatments like Apiguard®. A higher kill rate is claimed for the similar product Apilife VAR® on OMFs.
d. It is claimed that cold-wintering on an OMF creates a longer brood-free period when all the mites are on the bees and can be effectively treated by oxalic or lactic acid. Again, I am not completely convinced that it does increase the brood-free period, but it certainly does reduce the amount of brood in the colder months.
e. Arguably, an OMF encourages healthier, more vigorous colonies and freedom from disease.
f. With an OMF, can use correct bee space over floor and still have adequate ventilation of combs. An OMF greatly reduces comb extensions on the bottom bar, making comb movement and box swapping (e.g., Snelgrove or Demaree swarm control) much easier.
g. The colony usually starts raising brood higher up in the hive when it is on an OMF. This prevents a honey ceiling accumulating in the upper box (on brood and a half) and helps give the queen space to lay to her maximum capacity.
h. With a low height OMF (9 mm), there's no need to use those horrible mouseguards.
i. An OMF enables colonies to better control their temperature in hot weather and gives good ventilation for honey ripening.
j. OMFs are good for transporting bees — there's no need for travelling screens, and bees show no signs of distress even in warm weather.

**- M.W. Shaw** (Wales), February 2006

# Are you a good employer?

Recently I reviewed the Kiwi Careers website (www.kiwicareers.govt.nz) on beekeeping information. Last year's information was a little disappointing to read, as it said that there is a high turnover of staff in the two regions covered. How are we to encourage people into entering this industry, when it made the implication that the job is basically temporary?

Now I know of some beekeepers who have employed the same staff for over twenty years, yet others that seem to have a high turnover of staff. Why? Well, there are staff and staff. Some beekeepers employ part timers to assist them through the heavy workload periods, such as when moving hives to pollination or during honey extraction. These workers generally are not kept on because they are no longer necessary or because the beekeeper can't afford to keep them on during times when money is short.

However, there are several large employers who could perhaps keep staff on. I refer to the staff who show an aptitude and have the talent to become a good beekeeper. These potential beekeepers need nurturing and encouragement. Recognise them early and assist them to get experience and educated. Work in with Telford Rural Polytechnic. If you can't employ them during the off-season, arrange for them to experience beekeeping in the Northern Hemisphere during our winter. Good beekeepers are hard to come by; it only takes one bad experience or a lack of ongoing encouragement at the right time for a person to reassess his or her plans.

Some say they don't have time to train people. It takes many hours to train a person and this could be wasted if that person moves on. Actually, training is not wasted on anybody. Initially, output is slow until the person comes up to speed but with encouragement and training, their output increases and finally the new staff member is brought up to be a good productive unit. Keep an eye out for that special person who has a bent for bees. Don't expect them to work day after day humping supers from the initial get-go. It takes a few weeks to get fit — break them in gently. Vary their job experience so they see the good side and the repetitive side to beekeeping.

Why do some bigger beekeepers slag hobbyists? This also came out in a Kiwi Careers interview with their personnel. Nearly everyone who wasn't born into beekeeping has been a hobbyist at some stage. We should be encouraging young people to take up beekeeping and if they like it, that is, they can stand the stings and have a bent for nature, then guide them into the profession.

I was brought up with 'Training within Industry' when this concept first came to New Zealand. Generally if something goes wrong, the employer must go through all his instructions to find out where "he" went wrong; i.e., when you point a finger, another three fingers are pointing back at you. Consequently it usually proves to be something you didn't do or impart correctly.

I spent 30 years in telecommunications, mostly working in telephone exchanges from manual exchanges to electronic units, and gradually progressed up the corporate ladder. During this time all staff were encouraged to take leadership courses, something that seems sadly lacking these days.

So why is there such a high staff turnover in some businesses? Perhaps staff are just given donkey work, find it uninteresting and move on. I don't think this is correct, as a new worker will take the donkey work if they see there is a future in it. Most probably it's because some business owners just don't know how to handle staff. The recent court case over an abusive manager at a Warehouse store in Auckland should have sobered some.

Most bosses are not really aware how they come across to others. There are times when things turn to custard and when money is pouring out, like into the bees' stomachs. There are stressful times but how you handle these situations is important. Yes, it's good to let off steam but there's a right way and a wrong way of doing it. Too often I've heard of employers just erupting, and some may not even know they are doing it. Some employers are poor communicators and poor planners. They just respond to situations as they arise and expect employees to jump to it without considering priorities or workloads. Videotape yourself giving instruction and see if you can follow what you are saying. It's scary sometimes when you see yourself and your mannerisms.

## How can we turn this situation around?

I looked up my father's 1953 Self Help Co-op staff manual. This was a very successful grocery chain in those days and although the manual is a product of its time, many of these management concepts still pertain today. Here's an excerpt:

*"SHOP MANAGER'S DUTIES — STAFF CONTROL.*

*The Manager is in control of his staff and must lead them.*

*Be firm, but not officious. The staff look to the Manager for leadership, and if they don't get control and leadership they drift, to the detriment of the business. Even the best assistants tend to become less efficient without the correct leadership, and poor assistants become virtually useless. Alternatively, poor assistants* ***will improve*** *and become really capable assistants when the Manager exercises the necessary control. The Manager must tell the staff their duties, and see those instructions are carried out promptly.*

*If, and when, it is necessary to reprimand an assistant for anything, never do so in front of customers or other staff. Get the assistant on their own so as not to be overheard, and discuss the matter with him telling him of his mistake. A Manager will lose the respect of both the customer and staff if an assistant is reprimanded publicly.*

*Give praise when deserved for jobs well done or jobs quickly done. It is sometimes helpful if staff have to be reprimanded, to endeavour to praise some small section of their work first.*

**Continued on page 37**

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**Continued from page 35**

*If it is obvious that some member of the staff is unhappy in their work, the Manager is to try and find out what is the cause of this unhappiness or grouching, and endeavour to rectify it. An unhappy assistant will not build sales.*

*Boys and Juniors are important members of our staff, being future Seniors and Managers, possibly Executives. How successful they will be depends a great deal on the Manager's training. Assistants, especially boys and juniors, can be much more easily led than driven.*

*When a boy, or junior, starts with Self Help as his first position, it is an entirely new world to him, and the most important day of his life. It is the Manager's duty to mould him in the right way.*


Drawing from the *Self Help Co-Op staff manual*, 1953, page 127.

*When allocating lunch hours it is desirable for the Manager to have the Junior working with him during the lunch hour, to build up his enthusiasm by instruction, and to get the boy's confidence. The Manager should encourage the boy, and give him small jobs to do. Make him responsible for them, and so help make him really interested in the Grocery trade. Upon the Manager's attitude to the boy frequently depends whether he stays in the trade or drifts out to other jobs. There is an excellent future for Juniors in the Grocery trade.*

*The Manager should take a friendly interest in all new members of the staff, from the moment they commence duties, and should make each one realise that he or she is a most important member of the staff. This will assist to get staff working as a team, so that they will enthusiastically help to build sales, and also help the efficient running of the shop.*

*It is more satisfactory for the Manager to show assistants, especially new assistants, how jobs are to be done. Show them thoroughly. Fully explain and see that they understand. The Manager should encourage them to do jobs as rapidly as possible and if possible make them entirely responsible for certain duties.*

*The more the Manager can teach his staff the more successful will be the shop. The more interest a Manager takes in his staff, the more interest they will take in both him and the shop.*

*To get the staff working enthusiastically, they are to be told what is expected of them. Give them their duties so they can carry on from one job to another without wasting time, and having to refer continually to the Manager.*

*Arrange a schedule of jobs and when possible interchange them each week. No one likes to have all the dirty jobs week after week. Also, no one likes to be put on a long dirty job by themselves.*

*The Manager can cultivate a team spirit by having all work together as much as possible. Work is then done more quickly and cheerfully. Two working together do more than twice as much as one. Wherever possible the Manager should set the pace for the staff to follow. If the Manager sets the example by working hard the staff will follow.*

***Much of a Manager's success will depend upon the enthusiastic co-operation he receives from his staff, and this will depend upon him and his leadership."***

That paragraph about the first day on the job is so important. You don't know where that boy or girl you hired to uncap frames will be in five years, so make them welcome. Don't just throw a manual at him or her and tell them to sign it when they have finished. Don't assign someone else to induct him/her into your business — do it yourself. Take time to take them through everything so that they understand the concept of what you do. Give them the big picture. Tell them where you want to be in five years, and sell it to them so they buy into it. Tell them what you expect of them and how proud you are of your product. They will return your investment in their time — tenfold. Give your staff responsibility and encourage their ideas. It might not have worked ten years ago, but times and techniques change: don't suppress ideas, it suppresses enthusiasm. Surprise them occasionally when an aspect of seasonal work is completed with a family picnic or dinner. The odd after-work celebration helps to build teamwork and is a good chance to get feedback. Provide a good working environment.

Is your extracting plant up-to-date? I've been in some plants that are worked entirely by a team of women. The heaviest item they lifted was a frame of honey. Everything else was electrically winched or on rollers.

Do you still expect young assistants to lift a full-depth super of honey? Regulations came out ages ago stating people shouldn't lift more than 25 kgs. That's why sugar bags and grain sacks have been reduced from 40 kgs in weight. It might be okay for you to do this but if a staff member sustains a back injury, you as an employer might have to explain why you haven't put in facilities.

You have a responsibility as an employer to do your best for your staff. Give them the best and they will repay your confidence in spades. Yes, beekeeping does offer a future.

**- Frank Lindsay**

# The honey factor in medicinal vodka

Most people come across only the variety of vodka sold in shops. There is also a small group of people who produce homemade spirits. And only very few doctors know what medicinal vodka is.

I spent 50 years of my life in the former part of the Great Russian Empire (Ukraine), where the great Russian scientist Dmitriy Mendeleyev (the inventor of the well-known Periodic Table) scientifically proved in 1894 that genuine vodka had special properties. However, medicinal vodka became familiar to me only 20 years ago, when my wife began practicing apitherapy.

And so now I know four main types of vodka. The first type is low-quality vodka, which has a strong brandy smell. I use it to wash my car's windscreen. The second type is commercial vodka of high quality. It has a neutral taste and can be consumed in small doses as a spirit without any harm to health, but I prefer to use it to disinfect my beehives. The third type of vodka has a small quantity of natural bioactive substances, and is meant for healthy people as a means of preventing different diseases. That is my favourite vodka. And the last rare type of vodka — vodka highly enriched with healing additives that is supposed to be consumed by people with health problems — can be taken in small doses and only by doctor's instructions.

So, now about medicinal vodka. There are two types of medicinal vodka — one for healthy and the other one for not-so-healthy people. I really want to emphasize that any spirits are contraindicated for youth, pregnant women and seriously ill people.

Vodka was invented in the 15th century. At present the right to be called the First Inventor of Vodka is being disputed between Poland, Finland, Ukraine and Russia. But in the past these four countries were parts of one big country: the Great Russian Empire. Originally vodka was used purely as a medicine. It was scantily produced, cost a fortune to buy and sold only in drugstores. Eventually technological progress enabled the production of cheap commercial vodka and from that time vodka began to rob people not only of their money, but of their health as well.

So, is it possible for vodka to be medicinal? Vodka is defined as a combination of pure alcohol and water. Dmitriy Mendeleyev proved that if this combination contains 40% of pure alcohol (weight percentage), it turns into a liquid with special properties. And only at this proportion do the compactness and the ductility of the combination reach their maximum, and this is when each molecule of alcohol connects to three molecules of water. If a little less alcohol is taken for the combination, each molecule of alcohol will connect with 12 molecules of water; a little more and a pair of molecules will be created, containing one molecule of each substance. This is why only genuine vodka (the weight of which is taken by 40% of pure alcohol exactly) flows like oil and has a distinctive 'diamond' sheen. Only such a combination has those special valuable biochemical properties that enable vodka to be used for medicinal purposes.

Scientific research shows the effects of most drugs are increased many times when consumed in combination with alcohol. This is the very reason why it is forbidden to take any drugs and spirits at the same time.

Peoples inhabiting the south of the European part of the boundless Russian Empire (Ukraine and Poland) have traditionally used natural products for treatment of diseases. Usually those were various healing plants and bee products.

In the 18th and 19th centuries, production of vodka for commercial purposes was a monopoly of the State. The quality of such State vodka was extremely poor. But the aristocrats were granted with a privilege of producing vodka for their domestic needs.

The landlords had plenty of free time at their disposal, as well as cheap labour and pure natural raw materials. They all valued their vodka and produced it with great care and thoroughness, competing with each other in achieving the best quality. They used to waste huge amounts of eggs, milk, bread and honey for the purification of vodka. The volume of the vodka produced was no more than 2% of the total volume of raw materials put into the production.

Having noticed the property of alcohol to accumulate and strengthen healing qualities of natural drugs, people started to experiment in this direction. As a result of such experiments conducted during the 18th–19th centuries, a special category of healing vodkas has appeared, better known as *tinctures.* However, thoughtless combining of many different plants with alcohol produced unpredictable results. Simple tinctures based on a few herbs were the most popular. But all those tinctures always had one ingredient present — honey, which improved the taste of vodka.

Talented healers intuitively created complicated compositions using plant material and strong alcohol, to which they added honey and propolis. Those *balsams* were indispensable medicaments, given to patients by teaspoon portions. Many secrets of such balsams have been lost, but some of them have been preserved and are being used today.

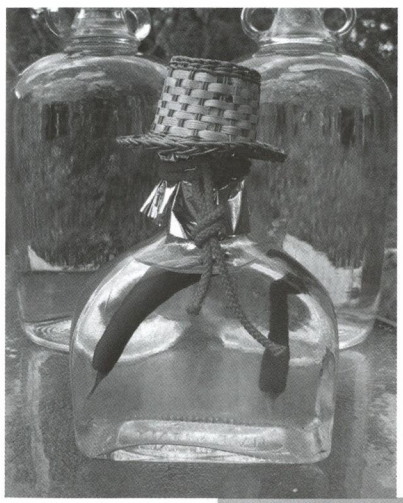
Although our family has lived in New Zealand for only three years, we have already become aware of this country's great potential for the production of various health products, including medicinal vodkas. I managed to restore the recipes of many rare medicinal tinctures with the help of my wife, and at the meantime we are working on creating balsams. Our healing drinks are handmade by us using only organic plants and our own products of a medicinal apiary, located in our 'no spray' property in Puhoi.

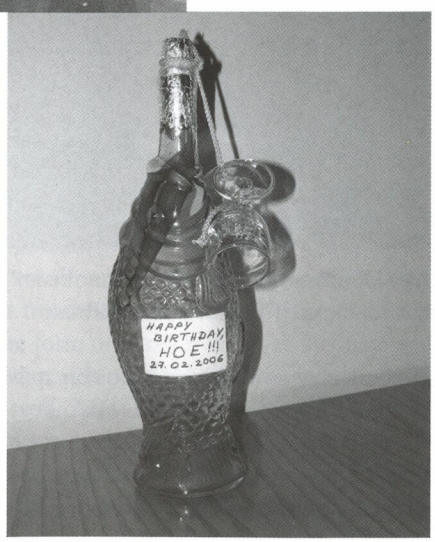
A few words about the quality. In February 2006 an international competition between spirits producers took place in Moscow. Nine hundred vodkas manufactured in different countries were blind tested by the experienced jury. The winner happened to be a Ukrainian vodka that was very familiar to us. No doubt it is an excellent commercial vodka. But the quality of vodka we have achieved in our shed at

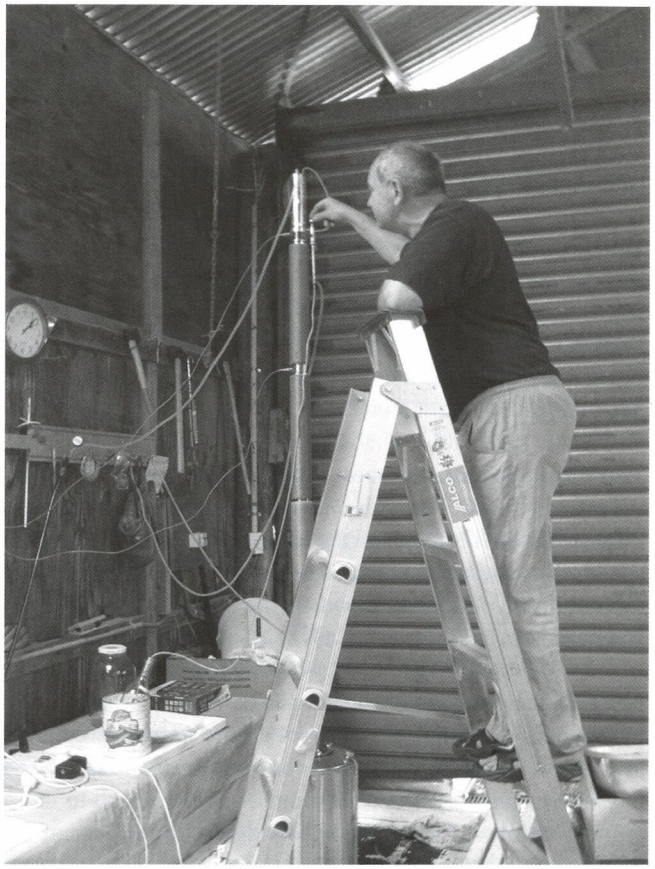
home is much higher. And so it happens that the best *vintage vodka* is now being produced in Puhoi, available of course only in small quantities, enough to supply ourselves and our friends. This year I joined the local club of amateur spirit-makers, and intend to present several healing vodkas at the national competition. Hopefully, there will be some good news to share with the readers at the end of the competition.

**- Alex Kirichuk**
**Email: Alex_Kirichuk@clear.net.nz**
**Address: PO Box 2, Puhoi 1243**

A selection of vodkas distilled by Alex Kirichuk in his home distillery. *Photos supplied by Alex Kirichuk.*





Alex working in the shed. *Photo: Victoria Kirichuk.*

*[Editor's note: I have tried Alex's manuka honey and red chilli pepper vodka and can attest to its excellence. See also the article by Alex's wife, Iryna Kirichuk, a doctor and apitherapist, in the March 2006 issue.]*

# From the colonies

## Auckland Branch

***Auckland/Northland combined field day***

March 5 was a beautiful day in Warkworth: the sun was shining and the sky was blue, making it a perfect day for taking off honey. Nevertheless, beekeepers from Cape Reinga to North Waikato took respite from noisy blowers and gagging over fume boards to attend the Auckland/Northland combined field day at the Warkworth Honey Centre.

There was a fantastic turnout, with standing room only during the presentations. The wide variety of age and interest groups left me in no doubt that beekeeping is alive and thriving in the region. The gathering was also enriched with an international flavour provided by participants from Wales, Korea, Russia, Brazil, and even as far away as the South Island!

Most of the day was taken up with discussions on varroa, from beekeepers' personal experiences of the various treatment systems to scientific studies on varroa-related diseases. The day was fascinating and educational, and thanks go to those who so kindly shared their knowledge with the rest of us. Likewise, thanks to the organisers for bringing together a top-quality programme.

The day also featured merchandising, a honey house demonstration, and the obligatory barbeque. These events gave everyone plenty of opportunity to catch up with old friends, make a few new ones, swap ideas and debate issues.

Last, but by no means least, thanks to the owners and staff of the Warkworth Honey Centre for their excellent hospitality, all done while they ran a café and tourist venue at the same time. They were truly professional.

Now it's back to the hard grind of getting a honey crop, inserting varroa treatments, and preparing for splits or package bees. Just another day in Paradise.

**- Mark Horsnell**

***DECA course and test***

The Auckland Branch will be running another DECA course and test. The venue and date is yet to be decided. Please register your interest with the Auckland disease coordinator Bob Blair 09 479 4354, or Bob Russell, training provider, 09 294 8656 (evenings).

## Waikato Branch

Chilly mornings with just a hint of fog are making their presence felt in the Waikato. We saw our first frost on 24 February and I understand in the Taumarunui region that they have had four or five already. Beekeepers are either putting varroa mite treatments into hives that have had honey removed from, or busy getting honey off in preparation to treat their hives.

The branch has met frequently to plan the conference. Whilst these meetings are an inconvenience for some when trying to put time into the field to treat varroa, the branch is communicating a lot more effectively, including e-mail preparation and actual meeting time. It's been easy to combine normal branch meetings with a conference meeting on the same day. Discussion has surrounded the possible importation of honey into New Zealand. I am just off to buy some super glue (!) to keep those beekeepers who aren't normal attendees, but have skills and ideas to impart, involved for a little longer. Their experience and ideas have been very valuable.

Evidence of how the Waikato beekeepers feel about the importation of honey (and therefore the possible importation of another beekeeping disease) can be read elsewhere in this edition of the magazine; needless to say the debate is hotter than when varroa was detected and movement controls became controversial. At this time, it hasn't been good luck but good legislation that has kept bee diseases out of New Zealand.

Beekeepers at an O'Brien's apiary.

Welsh beekeeper Wally Shaw (centre left) shares some varroa control tricks. Photos: Fiona O'Brien

The branch was delighted to be able to host Wally Shaw from Wales on Thursday 9 March. We met at an O'Brien's apiary, where Wally talked us through every hive, explaining how he used the varroa mite treatment Apiguard in Wales and what alterations we might have to do to make this treatment work. We used a couple of different styles of lids and floors and placed sticky boards in some hives for a 24-hour mite drop. Ceracell Beekeeping supplied the Apiguard, which

was in tinfoil trays; later, Wally explained how he used the "Apiguard in a tub". It was an excellent way to learn the tricks of the trade not just from Wally but from all beekeepers who contributed to the discussion. Lunch and another round of questions/answers and discussion took place at the Tihiroa Hall. Wally described his use of oxalic acid and some of the beekeeping methods used in Wales. The discussion the next day at the branch meeting was about 'shook swarming', a term that cropped up in discussion with Wally and a term that the younger beekeepers might not have heard. On 23 March another tray of Apiguard will be placed in the hive, and then in a further two weeks, around 6 April, we will be getting back together at the yard to go through the hives and have a look at the result.

**- Fiona O'Brien**

## Poverty Bay Branch

Branch members have met with both local MPs (Moana Mackey, Labour, list; and Anne Tolley, National, East Coast) on the issue of honey imports. Both have taken the issue further and we plan to follow up with them on the outcomes.

Poverty Bay NBA branch members at a recent meeting with local MP Anne Tolley (National, East Coast), on the issue of honey imports. Left to right: Peter Burt (Branch president), Brian Gibson, Anne Tolley MP, Bill Savage, Peter Lamb, Don Simm (partly obscured), Paul Badger and Barry Foster.

**- Barry Foster**

## Hawkes Bay Branch

As the season winds down for the year there is more time to reflect on some of the changes that are going to occur; for instance, next year we will not be able to use galvanised drip trays. It doesn't seem to occur to the powers that be that these have been used in one form or another for over 50 years and no one has ever been hurt. I suppose I had better stop drinking water off my roof as well. Most in this area are also less than delighted that the Government wants us all to play on a level playing field. The *American Bee Journal* (September 2004) has an interesting article including photos of an American honey house: if these are the standards that we have to meet we shouldn't have too many problems. The honey crop in this area has been quite variable, with some areas very good and others quite poor. While not all honey is in yet, it looks to be about an average season.

**- John Berry**

## Southern North Island Branch

The majority of our commercial members are flat out taking honey off. The preliminary results are an average season with the highs and lows of various types of honey. A major concern to all is the price of honey, as with varroa treatments and in some cases varroa-related losses. Many commercial beekeepers in our area feel that the North Island beekeepers are disadvantaged with extra costs that the South Island do not have.

Concern has been expressed over the importation of honey in the last issue and there are more entries elsewhere in this issue. At the meeting with Minister of Agriculture Jim Anderton it appears economics is a dirty word and we do not get any sympathy; however, pollination is a different matter.

I was interested to read two facts in the January 2006 issue of the *American Bee Journal:*

(1) "With only 2 million bee colonies and 2/3rds needed for almond pollination in California, the industry is changing to a pollination industry from a honey industry. Predictions are that by 2012 more than 2 million colonies will be required for pollination." USA imports bees from Canada, Mexico and Australia, so even if USA beekeepers continue to have heavy losses they can import bees, which we are unable to do.

(2) China could supply up to 200,000 tons of honey: imagine what that would do to honey prices. The way that Australian honey is currently blended with other imported honey and still sold as 'Australian honey' with a very low retail price is going to make life very difficult for all of us. The farmers' markets and other sales tables will help the smaller commercial beekeepers, but those with 2000+ hives are going to have to rethink the way they carry on their beekeeping business. If the pollination demand continues then we may end up like the USA beekeepers and be primarily pollination beekeepers, rather than honey producers as at present.

In the meantime we have RMPs to complete with additional costs for that. We live in interesting times.

**- Neil Farrer**

## Nelson Branch

All news fades to insignificance as we have learned today of the loss of Richard Bensemann. There would be few people in the industry whose lives haven't been touched in some way by this positive and enthusiastic man. Richard told us just this week he had exciting news: I thought that he had found a new kidney. But no, he had news of Claudine and the kids and their cycling. His family was his life and all of us reach out in giving our deepest sympathy to Claudine and their three lovely young children.

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The honey is over, still some honeydew dribbling in, but the autumn has come upon us so quickly that we are suddenly seeing the bees shutting down and preparing for what looks like an early winter.

Most areas from Murchison to Golden Bay report a reasonable year with certainly a better crop of Manuka than the last two years have yielded. Beekeepers are still extracting their crop, a few are having problems with early granulation and also finding slow clearing of the 'stickies' (wet frames). More importantly, most report that they are enjoying slower days and catching their breath after a busy year.

**- Merle Moffitt**

## Canterbury Branch

The days are starting to draw in and there is a distinct nip in the air, signalling the start of autumn. Lack of rain is starting to have an adverse effect with few pollen-bearing plants available for winter supplies; however, hives are still strong. Canterbury will need above-average winter rainfalls to improve water shortages.

Remember that time is running out to get your RMP registered. The increasing amount of compliance work and costs is starting to really add up. What freaks me out is hearing local farmers who have immigrated from England saying "You ain't seen noth'n yet!" It really is starting to take the fun out of it. Has anyone stopped to think how quickly you sign a piece of paper these days compared to 10 years ago? Guess we are lucky that we are all speed readers. ☺

The Canterbury branch meets on the second Tuesday of each month, 7.30 pm at the Hornby Working Men's Club.

**- Brian Lancaster**

## Otago Branch

The beginning of March heralded a sudden turn in the weather in Otago and some of these autumn days feel like they have been overtaken by winter already. With a few snowfalls on the tops this month and a frost or two, any hopes of late flows to top up winter stores are dashed. In late February strong colonies, especially in bush areas, went from warm weather and a good flow to a complete dearth in a matter of days, and many now have little honey stored below the excluders. As a result I for one have had to do some feeding before winter and have found quite a few queens have stopped laying already by mid-March. Just as well.

For most in the province the season has barely fulfilled its early promise. A few areas that got sufficient rain have produced a good 40 to 50 kg crop of clover, but I expect the average for the region will be well down on that. On the plus side, many beekeepers have built up hive numbers this year as a result of a good spring.

Having harvested the crop we need to be sure we can maximise our returns as producers. Fortunately the weakening NZ dollar

will help improve returns on exports, offsetting significant increases in fuel and sugar prices.

A recent meeting in Dunedin of the Otago–Southland Discussion Group focused on new marketing opportunities. Local representatives of New Zealand Trade and Enterprise and an advisor from the DCC Economic Development Unit led the session. We plan to further develop some good ideas to improve the marketing, and prices, of some specific local honeys.

And then there is a well-earned break due, maybe a 'real' winter for a change with some good snow in the hills this year to play in, and of course another season to plan for. We will all do it better next year won't we?

**- Peter Sales**

# Hawke's Bay lifestyle blocks field day

On Saturday 25 March the local Regional Council held a field day for small block holders at the Hastings A & P showground.

As with last year, the Branch set up a display with all types of beekeeping equipment, different methods of treatment for mites, examples of wasps and the obligatory observation hive. There was considerable interest, with the kids dragging parents to see the live bees. We were also able to meet the other exhibitors to swap experiences and ideas. It was a good opportunity to explain what diseases we have and to describe the risks of importing Australian honey, both to us as apiarists and also to the national economy. Several farmers asked what was involved in setting up a hive and one even said he would come to our next meeting. As we were not selling anything the 3x3 metre display area was made available free of charge.

We felt this was an excellent public relations exercise and would encourage other branches to participate if the chance is there.

**- Ron Morison**

# About the apiary

April and it's autumn. Already the nights are cooler and there's snow on the central North Island mountains, thanks to that cold snap at the beginning of February and another in March.

The last of the Koromiko *(Hebe stricta)* and Lacebark *(Hoheria populnea)* are the only scrubs flowering on the bush fringes, while in the central North Island desert, the introduced Ling Heather *(Caluna vulgaris)* is in full flower and available to those beekeepers who can get apiary sites on private land. I stopped to take some photos and the smell was heavenly, just like a strong Manuka honey.

Koromiko

Lacebark

Caluna field in flower

*Photos: Frank Lindsay.*

In the lowlands, there's still a dribble coming in from the last of the Thistles, Pennyroyal *(Mentha Pulegium)*, Ink Weed *(Phytolacca octtandra)*, Fennel *(Foeniclulum vulgara)* and Willow Herb *(Epilobium Spp.)*. Down south, no doubt the honeydew in the beech forests will be producing well as it's been fairly dry through March.

In the cities the bees continue to hum also, producing brood due to the stimulation from flowering ornamentals. In my area the Gorse *(Ulex europaenus)* started flowering again in February and should continue producing high-quality pollen for two to three months. The odd flowering gum tree is like an oasis to all sorts of bees (honey, bumble and native bees) gathering pollen and nectar from them. One tree was humming with activity: most bunches of flowers had five or more bees working them. These bees will only close down their activities when the weather turns cold.

Before you undertake any work on a hive, take a minute or two to observe the comings and goings at the hive entrance. If you see bees fanning at the entrance and others coming in with extended bodies (meaning they're carrying nectar) as well as pollen on their hind legs, the bees are working a flow. This late-autumn nectar is generally packed around the brood nest in preparation for winter. You may also spot what looks like very red shiny pollen. This is propolis, which the bees use to seal the hive against winter rains and robber bees and wasps.

Not all areas are the same. In the dry areas, that cold spell in late February where we got a shower of hail for an hour was enough to trigger some hives into throwing out their drones. This means that the bees in these hives are happy with their queens and are starting to close down the hive in preparation for winter. Generally the bees don't turf out the drones for another month, but as I stated in an earlier article, autumn looks to be coming earlier this year.

## Robbing season

When visiting these apiaries, one thing is very noticeable. Despite the availability of flowering sources there's hardly a bee flying, just a few water carriers. At the entrance and at cracks between supers, there's a line of bees in defensive mode. It's robbing season so wasps and bees from other hives are probing hives, looking for a way in. In one apiary there was a lot of activity and it wasn't long before I discovered why. A hive had failed to produce a new queen last month and now most of the bees in that apiary were taking advantage of an unprotected hive. So I stripped the hive, swung in a nuc I made this spring into place (now two supers high and full of bees and honey), put the half-robbed honey supers on top after bumping them to remove the robber bees, restricted the entrance to just a few bees wide and taped up any gaps with 'hundred-mile-an-hour tape' (as the shop assistants refer to it; manufacturers call it cloth tape). Within half an hour things had settled down again. Any work undertaken at this time of the year has to be done quickly and if a hive is broken down, the supers must be covered to prevent robbing. Once bees start robbing a hive, it's very hard to control. Swapping the position of the hive being robbed with a strong hive can assist. Closing the entrance down or sealing it up with grass gives the bees

a change to reorganise themselves. Just remember to spray some water into the hive so the bees have access to water. Turning the sprinkler on in the garden also stops bees flying. Another little trick is to spray the outside of the hive with air freshener to disguise the scent markings the bees leave at the robbing entry point.

Once the robbing has ceased and the robbers have stopped hanging around (in two to three days), you have to investigate further to determine what's gone wrong within the hive. Hopefully it's just a failed queen but sometimes it can be due to disease, or if you are in the North Island and missed treating your hive for mites you could have a collapsing hive due to Parasitic Mite Syndrome (PMS), so check the brood nest carefully.

In early March, the varroa mites had built up to such a degree in some of my hives that they were damaging the brood. I was a bit late in putting strips into the hives and if I hadn't attended to them promptly these hives could have died before or during the winter. In several hives, mites could be seen quite clearly on a few bees and on the comb surface — a sure sign that the hives were about to collapse. Normally I don't worry, because my hives are on the coastal fringe and will recover and continue brood rearing right through the winter. But for those inland beekeepers facing this problem, they could do what Wally Shaw (a visiting Welsh beekeeper) recommended. Shake all the bees off the brood frames, remove them and replace them with drawn comb and put in the varroa treatment. The treatment will kill the mites on the bees within a few days and the bees will then have a chance to re-establish their brood rearing before the really cold weather arrives. If the frames are fairly new (you can see light through them), freeze them for a couple of days so they can be stored and put out in the spring for the bees to clean up; otherwise compost or burn them.

## Full brood inspection and wintering down

In April we all do our last inspections and prepare hives for winter. Wait for the robbing season to finish so you can take a little extra time in the hives. Pick a nice warm afternoon to go through your hives. Begin by checking the condition of the supers and lid and replacing any that are starting to rot. If the odd corner is going, perhaps you will get another season out of it by using it as a honey super; otherwise they are just fit for kindling wood.

Strip down the hive to the baseboard by placing all the supers on the upturned lid beside the hive stand. Check the condition of the baseboard and make sure it has a slight slope forward (about 1 cm) so the rain will run off. Check that it is in good condition and scrape any accumulated debris off it. Place the bottom super back on the baseboards, and remove two outside frames and rest them against the outside of the super so you can undertake a full brood inspection.



Remove the next frame and when it is halfway out, give the frame a quick jerk downwards to remove most of the field bees, which will fall back into the super. With the light behind you, tilt the frame slightly so you can see the bottom face of each cell and run your eye over the surface of the frame. You are looking for any sort of scale (old dried-up larvae), or the odd, dark, sunken capped cell on the frame. Some cells may have a hole chewed in the capping. Generally the bees clean these cells out but when there are a large number of diseased cells, the bees leave a few. If you find one, try and get the larva out of the cell. Everything apart from AFB will generally come out.

Check the other side of the frame and all the other frames in the brood box one by one, shaking the majority of the bees off as you go. Most probably you will find the odd cell of chalkbrood or sacbrood, which are fairly easy to identify (check your bee books if you're not sure). Then place the next super back on the hives and repeat until you have checked all the brood frames. As you go, also check the condition of the frames. Darker ones should be moved to the outside of the super, or if they are completely empty (just a little pollen in them), replace them with this year's fully drawn frames. Getting rid of old, dark frames reduces the spore loading in the hives, which can reduce the seriousness of nosema, chalkbrood and other pathogens that are sealed into the comb. Also replace frames that contain more than a few rows of drone cells.

In the second super you will generally find a few frames of capped brood. Check the brood pattern. Spotty brood (lots of missed cells) could indicate an old queen. It might not be too late to try and replace her with a mated queen from a queen producer. No brood at all could indicate the hive is queenless or is superseding its old queen. Sometimes it's hard to tell, so put in a frame of brood and eggs from another hive (inspect the hive first before exchanging any equipment). Within a day the bees would have started to draw queen cells if it's queenless (look for lots of royal jelly in the bottom of some cells). If there's no evidence of queen cells, there may be a virgin queen in the hive. Generally you can tell as there will be a few combs in the middle of the brood nest that are cleaned out and polished, ready for the new queen to lay in. Pollen scattered about is another sign of a queenless hive. If this is the situation and you can't get another queen, unite a small hive on top of the queenless hive using two sheets of newspaper.

If all is well, continue to inspect the frames with brood in them carefully, making sure to replace the frames in the same order they originally were in the hive. Don't be afraid to flick the cappings off the cells. Provided the larvae underneath are not damaged, they will come through to maturity. Honeycombs don't need to be checked unless they have a few rows of cells along the bottom.

Finally, close up the hive and restrict the entrance to 10 mm x 100 mm to prevent mice getting into your hives. This whole process could take five to ten minutes depending upon your experience and the condition of the hive. Provided you have been fairly gentle, you will not have harmed the bees.

Surveillance shows that 98.8 % of all hives will have healthy brood and will be free of disease. It's the odd 0.2% of hives

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that have AFB that we are looking for, and autumn is the best time to find it. If you are not sure what to look for, get another beekeeper to assist you. Two pairs of eyes are better than one pair. If you find something and are uncertain what it is, contact your local AgriQuality Apicultural Officer and ask their opinion. They may suggest that you send in a sample of three larvae for testing. Follow their instructions.

If you took all your honey off early, it may be necessary to feed your hives sugar syrup, as the bees will have been chewing into the reserves producing that late brood. While the hive is open it's easy to count frames. Try to have the equivalent of a full super of honey in the hive. Colder areas may need more. If you have already done your check, try 'hefting' the hive to judge its weight. Stand behind the hive and with one hand in the top super's handhold, try and lift the back of the hive off the stand. If it's got enough food, it shouldn't move. If it lifts up, you have to use your judgement as to whether to feed now (a much easier and better option) or feed in the early spring.

For the commercial beekeeper, it's a matter of checking hives for AFB, replacing any queens that did not get mated last month, feeding those that are short of feed, removing propolis mats for winter cleaning, and planning and ordering equipment or woodware to make up during the winter. Many will be planning their winter holiday to take in a conference or beekeepers' meeting so it's tax deductible, or just going away somewhere to relax. Some of us will still be extracting, hoping the end is in sight.

## Things to do this month

Winter down hives: check feed, AFB check, slope bottom boards for water drainage, fit mouse guards, replace any rotten or damaged equipment. Clear away grass around the hives or use a spray. If the hives are shaded during the winter days, place a sloping board in front of the hive so chilled bees landing short of the landing board can crawl into the hive. Fumigate stored supers for wax moth or store them in a light, airy area off the ground. Store extracted boxes and cover with a queen excluder to prevent mice entering them.

**- Frank Lindsay**

*Photo: George Jonson.*

# Small Hive Beetle (SHB) information seminar, University of Western Sydney (Hawkesbury), Richmond, New South Wales, 17 November 2005

*[This is an extract of an article written by Linton Briggs that appeared in the February 2006 issue of the* Australasian Beekeeper.]

Dr. Neumann (Department of Zoology, Martin Luther University, Halle, Germany and regarded as the world's leading authority and researcher of SHB), led the seminar of about 70 people through two well presented information sessions.

At the outset, he observed that SHB in its native South Africa, had been historically regarded as a minor pest. He had observed its most successful reproductive success was geared to the absconding of hives, and to weak or otherwise stressed hives. It had also been known to successfully reproduce on some fruits such as bananas and tomatoes.

The former world status of SHB as a minor pest has suddenly and dramatically changed, with the pest now exhibiting an exponential increase in transmission capability and destructive capability throughout parts of the USA, Europe, Egypt, and the Australian eastern seaboard, providing impetus to the search for more knowledge about the pest, and the development of effective control strategies.

In some of the above countries, bumble bee colonies have become hosts to SHB, but their impact on these species is not understood. For the first time, significant beekeeping economic losses attributable to SHB have been recorded. In 1998 for example, in Florida, USA, losses of $3m were reported.

In the USA, and as has been observed on the eastern Australian seaboard, warm (30°C) and humid weather conditions appears to stimulate reproductive success. This view was supported by many seminar attendees who reported losses of good strength colonies as well as losses of more vulnerable hives.

Reports of significant losses on the NSW north coast were heard, and of losses that had occurred inland at Cowra. Dr. Neumann advised that a hypothesis gaining currency among some people was that the genetic improvement of honey bees that included selection for gentleness may reduce resistance to SHB by diminishing aggressive behaviour towards SHB.

In 2003, an opinion was circulating that SHB in Australia may not have the same adverse impact that was occurring in parts of the USA because of the generally dry Australian climate. However, in 2005, preliminary investigations by Dr. Neumann's team revealed that some levels of infestation on the eastern Australian seaboard are the highest yet recorded in the world.

The highest adult beetle count in a single beehive recorded by Dr. Neumann's team so far on the eastern seaboard was 2029 beetles (USA 1071, South Africa 491). In another worst case scenario, 524 beetles were counted, having migrated into a strong colony over a period of 5 days. The team also observed the destruction of a strong, queen right hive within 1 week by SHB. Reports from seminar attendees indicated that the manipulating of strong colonies on hot days which caused hives to "hang out" for long periods afterwards, were most vulnerable to attack by reproducing SHB.

Additional issues raised by the preliminary investigation were:

- Should the eastern Australian climate produce several years of elevated humidity during spring and early summer, or even if it does not for that matter, it would be useful to then compare SHB population levels with those of today.
- There are SHB impacts on honeybees in the USA and Australia that are unknown in their native South Africa.
- Why more SHB aggregate in some strong colonies than others in the same apiary is unknown.
- Where other diseases are present in hives, the impact of SHB is more severe. The more stress to which hives are subjected, the more vulnerable to SHB attack they become.

Clearly, it is early days yet and the information gaps are large. Further investigation through research will be required and much more knowledge needs to be assembled to help the industry develop the most productive future strategy for the management of SHB in this country.

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## SHB will attack caged queens

Recent observations have shown an alarming situation when caged queens are placed in a colony infested with Small Hive Beetles.

The beetles are attracted to the queen candy and will avidly consume it until they penetrate into the cage where the queen is located. The beetles will defecate in the cage and the queen (and escorts if present) will get stuck in it. This causes their death and the beetle larvae will feed on the carcasses as well as any remnant candy.

*Extract from the* Australasian Beekeeper, *February 2006*

# Some historical snippets from July 1914

- Miss M. Shepherd advises that she has just landed from Root's another of their special select breeding queens. This makes the third queen this progressive breeder has been successful in landing since the end of last season. Large importations of high-grade queens will be of immense value to the beekeepers of the Dominion.

- The side and ends of dovetailed storeys should be dipped in linseed oil for a few seconds before the storey is nailed up. The oil soaking into the wood preserves the joint, in addition to lessening the labour and the risk of splitting.

- Apiary Sites. – The following sites have been recommended by the Apiaries Division as being suitable land for apiaries in lands recently cut up by the Lands Department. Full particulars may be obtained from any Government office. Three sites Waimarino Block, one each Waipaore, Heatherlea and Branchpeth, two each in Waipawa and Hillesden Block.

- An article under "Reports" – The seventh annual meeting of the Canterbury Beekeepers' Association was held in the Trades Hall, Gloucester Street Christchurch July 7th 1914. Mentioned was:
  - the "forthcoming Grocers' Exhibition in London October 20th to 23rd, and asking for entries in honey classes for colonial producers able to supply five-ton lots.
  - Membership stood at 105.
  - Mr. E. G. Ward (President) urged the meeting (after discussion) to adopt the "National constitution and become a District Branch". Mr. C. A. Jacobsen and Mr. A Ireland followed on along the same lines; and on being put to the vote it was unanimously resolved to become a District Branch.
  - The annual report congratulated the Association on a very successful year. A considerable saving on cases for honey export had been made to members through the Association buying these in large numbers. A most enjoyable day had been spent in February at the annual field at Mr. Jacobsen's apiary, Little River.
  - The co-operative movement inaugurated by the Taranaki Association was discussed and details explained by the conference delegates. Share application forms were distributed and keen interest aroused. A meeting will be held shortly and it is probable if details are mutually agreeable to the Waikato, Canterbury and Taranaki Associations that a branch of the N.Z. Co-operative Honey Producers will be formed in Christchurch. About 70 tons of honey have been exported from Canterbury this season, so it will be seen that the business is worthy of consideration, as the season has been below the average.
  - Much interest was also roused in connection with the publication of a bee journal.

**The Bulletin Board – Market Reports from Far and Near**

- Auckland. – Honey in good demand, prices firm, at 3 3/4d. to 4d. Beeswax scarce and prices firm at 1/5 to 1/6 per lb.

- Wellington. – Market fairly well supplied, consumption in this centre being rather small, prices nominally 4d. per lb.

- Christchurch. – Honey plentiful, prices nominally 3 3/4d., demand steadily increasing. Beeswax scarce and in demand at 1/3 ½.
- Dunedin. – Market inclined to be short and enquires for small parcels. Prices 3 3/4d. to 4 1/4d. for good samples. Beeswax scarce and in fair demand at 1/4.

*Source:* The New Zealand Beekeeper, *July 1914*

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# Bee houses for urban apiaries

Many urban beekeepers experience problems with neighbours. Very often the mere sight of hives, no matter how well kept, can be enough to set off fears almost to the point of paranoia. But it doesn't have to be so.

Consider a bee house as a solution to your problems. They originated in Europe and are very popular for a number of reasons. Yes, they did originate as a result of cold climates where it is necessary to house the bees in winter in something more substantial that a standard hive.

The bee house has evolved into something far more elaborate and utilitarian and they appear like mushrooms as soon as an apiary is established.

Of course the amount of elaboration depends on just how far you want it to go. I've seen European bee houses that doubled as holiday retreats with bunkrooms, kitchens, eating areas, alcove verandas and of course rooms for the hives (up to 30+) and space alongside for extracting and hive maintenance.

You need not go to this extreme unless you have a permanent out apiary site away from the "rat race" of urban life. But, in the urban back yard a small shed in which you can have half a dozen hives, space for box and frame storage, extracting and perhaps a workshop bench would be ideal. For a few hundred dollars a bee house has a lot going for it. Mind you bee houses are not a means of exceeding the recommended hive numbers but a safe means of housing them in a less obvious environment and their accoutrements in a utilitarian manner.

- *Reprinted from the* Australasian Beekeeper, *January 2006*

# Please pass the honey

Our wash-house was about ten foot square but it was Dad's only place for extracting honey in the early days. It would be done at night to avoid bees trying to steal it back and when the men were not at their day jobs. It was done by the light of a single electric bulb. The boiler for Dad's new steam un-capping knife sat on the lid of the copper by the door and certainly added to the atmosphere, along with the heady smells of honey and hot beeswax. Boards across the tubs made a place for him to uncap the honey frames and pass them to Bill Thornton to use the pricker board on them. Honey from the cappings dripped and globbed down between them into the bowl of a press under the tubs. The tenderised frames were put into the baskets of the extractor. If it was the original Eastbourne model, the Rev. John Graham turned the handle — the other two figured he could do with the exercise — or if it was the new model, he just revved up the motor to screaming pitch and had the honey splatting out onto the walls of the tank in no time. It slowed down, Mr Graham reversed the baskets and the other side of the frame got the benefit of centrifugal force. Not even Manuka honey could resist, especially after a spell on Bill Thornton's bed of nails. The honey flowed out through a pipe into the honey tank in the back corner. Two stacks of honey supers, full and empty, took up the space behind the two Bills and the chook mash and wheat got shoved behind the door. Space was so tight that when they wanted to change jobs, or go to the toilet just outside, the whole squad had to file out and re-form.

Sometimes Tinny Davis, the town character also squeezed in to see the fun. It was Tinny who discovered that a piece of comb honey dropped into chook mash was very tasty. After that he dropped every piece. To think that the muesli bar was first invented in our wash-house and everyone was just too polite to notice!

Outside children would be running round the yard in the dark, enjoying the festival. If it was Bill Thornton's honey they were extracting that night, Malcolm and Phillip would be summoned periodically to put a four gallon tin of honey on the flatbed tray of Billy Thornton's superior ball-bearing trolley, push it up the narrow concrete track of the drive, down the gravel footpath to Thornton's house past rampant dahlias to the back door, and up two steps into the bathroom where they poured it into a honey tank for packaging. Annie Thornton probably gave them a biscuit if there were no spills on her hooked rugs.

So that was how honey was produced in Bonnett's Road, Kaitaia, in 1948, without benefit of any stainless steel whatever.

*Excerpt from* BEEKEEPING IN XANADU, *the life story of Bill Haines (1911–76), beginning on the gumfields at Kaikohe and ending with exporting package bees to Saudi Arabia and Canada and the medical discovery of teatree honey.*

*Available for $30 from Julie Ryan, 7a Preston Avenue, Mount Albert, Auckland.*

# Letters to the Editor

## Three letters concerning importation of honey and bee products

*[Editor's note: the following letter, dated 14 March 2006, was sent to all the rural publications and main newspapers in New Zealand.]*

Dear Sir/Madam

Readers may wish to know that beekeepers of New Zealand and the wider agricultural/horticultural industries are under threat from the potential importation of honey. Currently beekeepers fight a constant battle to eliminate American foulbrood disease and North Island beekeepers are also seriously affected by varroa mites — a biosecurity breach of the worst kind. We now face the prospect of honey coming into New Zealand from overseas should the regulations be relaxed regarding bee product imports.

Imported honey would create the possibility of European foulbrood coming here — a disease that would be the final nail in the coffin for beekeepers already under siege. Any subsequent reduction in beehive numbers would spell disaster for our unique New Zealand honeys and for crops pollinated by bees — kiwifruit, avocados, pip and stone fruit, clover … the list is endless and the implications are frightening.

Yours sincerely
**Pauline Bassett**
Waitomo Honey Ltd
PO Box 387
Te Kuiti
Ph/Fax: 07 878 7193
waihon@actrix.co.nz

Dear Editor

I have been following with interest the debate around the importation of honey into New Zealand and what it may do as a consequence. Having seen firsthand the effects of varroa on our bees, the financial cost on the balance sheet and the grey hair of fellow beekeepers, I am very wary of anything that may allow the importing of another exotic disease to our shores.

How may honey be brought into New Zealand — legally and illegally? Well, legally if the borders are opened, honey will be able to be imported as long as it meets the import health standards, which I believe to be, "that the honey must be heat treated or irradiated" to kill as much bacteria as New Zealand is prepared to accept as a risk. Sounds kinda odd, don't you think, that we have to risk anything at all, but under this proposal we have to.

Then there is the illegal way — through the borders from tourists: either New Zealanders returning from overseas, or people visiting New Zealand. Confused? If I was an ordinary New Zealander and I heard that the beekeepers' bid to keep imported 'honey and bee products' out of New Zealand had failed, I would therefore naturally assume (of course I shouldn't) that I could bring any honey into New Zealand any old time. (Of course I don't read the fine print, don't have time for that!)

Paints an interesting picture, doesn't it? Uncle Joe and Aunty Sue, off on their big world trip, decide to bring home a sample of honey from their many culinary stops for the relatives back home to try. In fact, they spent a couple of hundred dollars or so doing it. Maybe they do declare it at the border, and it is checked to see if it complies with the health standard, or maybe they just don't declare it as they figure that it is now okay to import honey.

So where does that leave New Zealand beekeepers? At the mercy of the border once again, so buckle up and put some money in the bank for the next exotic outbreak.

By the way, anyone got a spare pot of Italian Rosemary honey — can't wait to cook with it. (Okay, nobody needs to tell me that I need to go to Italy, just a few more airpoints and I will get my wish.)

**Fiona O'Brien**

### *Response from Biosecurity New Zealand:*

Dear Editor

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the letter from Fiona O'Brien concerning honey imports.

The letter suggests it is odd "that we have to risk anything at all". Biosecurity risks exist whether or not there is a legal trade in the products concerned, as varroa demonstrated.

The draft import health standards for honey, currently undergoing a review of submissions, specify the importation requirements for honey products. These requirements include conditions such as country of origin and certification of heat treatment. Products must comply with the relevant import health standard in order to be given biosecurity clearance, and therefore be eligible for importation. Honey declared or detected at the border will only be given biosecurity clearance if it complies with import health standard requirements. Non-complying products will be seized and destroyed.

The situation described of having legally imported goods available in New Zealand, but still needing to maintain restrictions on personal imports, is extremely common. For example, most New Zealand supermarkets stock a range of imported fruit and vegetables. I am not convinced that having these imported goods on the shelves in New Zealand supermarkets leads to more people attempting to bring in fruit and vegetables in their personal baggage.

We have a wide range of measures in place at the border to prevent and detect illegal importations of risk goods. These measures include the distribution of biosecurity information

to arriving travellers, the use of sniffer dogs, x-ray machines, and profiling and targeting passengers. Last year, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry staff at airports and mail centres seized 7600 consignments of bee products (or items containing bee products), with a combined weight of over three tonnes. Despite this, we cannot be confident that every undeclared consignment of honey is intercepted.

Regards
**Gillian Mylrea**
Animal Imports Team Manager

Dear Editor

My thanks must go to Mr Howard Pharo, Team Manager, Risk Analysis (Animal Kingdom) Biosecurity New Zealand, for such a clear analysis of the protocols that are in place for honey and other bee-related products entering into New Zealand.

My congratulations must also go to our NBA for instigating the NPMS, which has effectively shut the door on the importation of bee products into New Zealand if there may be a risk of AFB. However, the item in the protocol that would enable honey to enter into New Zealand by using spore counting does interest me. I quote, "a requirement that spore levels be 2 orders of magnitude lower than the known minimum infectious dose of AFB".

It was unclear in Mr Pharo's reply who would be carrying out these tests. Would it be the producer? If so, would these tests also bear a certificate of origin? Would it be the packer? Again, with the origin of product becoming so important for exports from New Zealand, I would presume a certificate of origin would also be required from the packer. Or would it be the importer? I don't believe that the large supermarket chains would want to go down that road!

With regard to the other treatments recommended, I believe the cost of irradiating all honey imported into New Zealand would not be commercially attractive to the hard-headed cost accountants employed by the supermarket chains. Finally, as a one-time honey packer, if I had taken honey to 240deg F/120deg C (temperatures above boiling point) and held it for 24 hours, I would have ended up with toffee or a fire!

Yours sincerely
**David Penrose**

### *Response from Biosecurity New Zealand:*

Dear Editor

I would like to thank David Penrose for his questions in the February and April issues of this magazine. Submissions on the draft import health standards closed on 20 February, and an analysis of the submissions is underway. Without wanting to pre-empt this process, I will attempt to respond to the points he raises.

Firstly, I do not believe that the National Pest Management Strategy (NPMS) for American foulbrood has "shut the

***Continued on page 52***

*Continued from page 51*

door" on honey imports. Where a disease is present in New Zealand, we cannot apply more stringent measures for that disease to imported goods than we apply to the same type of goods produced in New Zealand (SPS Agreement, Article 2 (3)). As the AFB NPMS does not prohibit the sale of honey containing AFB spores, New Zealand cannot impose a prohibition on the sale of imported honey with AFB spores. However, New Zealand can impose 'equivalent' measures, designed to ensure that imported honey has been produced under conditions that prevent it containing vastly more AFB spores than New Zealand honey. Where equivalent measures cannot be agreed on or complied with, the exporter has the option of using AFB spore testing to show that the honey is below the level known to start new AFB infections.

The requirements set down in an import health standard are for government-to-government certification. In order for imported honey to be allowed into New Zealand, it would require a certificate acceptable to the New Zealand government, issued by the responsible authority of the exporting country. In the case of Australia, this organisation is the Australian Quarantine Inspection Service (AQIS). Any laboratory results (e.g. AFB spore testing) would have to be carried out in a laboratory approved by the government body responsible for certification. Testing would have to be carried out according to a sampling protocol approved by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry in New Zealand.

Some of the measures outlined in the risk analysis of honey and bee products are not necessarily relevant to bulk honey. However, they may have application to other bee products, or manufactured goods containing honey.

Yours sincerely
**Howard Pharo**
Team Manager Risk Analysis (Animal Kingdom)
Biosecurity New Zealand

*[Editor's note: the original correspondence between David Penrose and Howard Pharo appeared in the February 2006 issue.]*

## Stolen honey update

Dear Editor,

Following my reporting to you about the manuka honey robbery from several hives, I am writing a followup. Those of you who read the item will know that the robbery was 'committed' by a two-legged 'B' and not the type with wings! *[Editor's note: the original article is in the March 2006 issue, page 18.]*

Following our report to the local police, we were talking with the farmer who runs his sheep on the site of the robbery and he told us that he had seen a vehicle at the site about the time we lost the honey. He didn't recognise the people working the hives or the vehicle and they didn't respond when he waved to them.

Let it be a lesson to all that we should always take more notice of 'strange' vehicles and people when visiting 'out-of-the-way' places. Go over and speak to people and always write down the description of the car and the licence number. It may not mean anything, but you have the information if anything untoward turns up later.

As it turned out, this same farmer had sheep rustled about the same time that our honey was taken and he is now a lot more vigilant about who is on the property.

Also, it transpired that the 'strange' beekeepers on the site were probably MAF staff doing varroa checks on the hives!

Cheers
**Merle Moffitt**

## More thievery!

Dear Editor,

My son Cory and I had a similar experience to Merle Moffitt's theft of honey, only this was a theft of frames and bees. Our hives are situated at Makikihi and had come through the winter strong and healthy.

Cory was doing his Apiculture course at Telford Rural Polytechnic and was raising some queens for splitting our hives when he came home at Labour weekend. On the Saturday we started working the hives when we noticed they were not as strong as they were previously. We then started finding half-eaten frames, wax moth, cobwebs and old queen cages. We realised someone had gone through and stolen our bees and frames and replaced them with crap. After going through them all and replacing the queens that weren't there, we moved them to another site to recover. I had to feed them until Christmas to boost them up as I had them booked in to pollinate a couple of clover paddocks for a farmer.

We have our suspicions as to who did it and filed a report with the police, but they can't do much as our frames never had our registration number on them. We now have put our number on everything.

Our hives have recovered now but we still have the same number as 12 months ago. We will get a reasonable amount of honey this season and are looking forward to a better season next year.

**Tony Rusbatch**

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# Trees and Shrubs of New Zealand

***Rumex flexuosus***

**Common name: Maori Dock**

The Maori Dock is related to the broad leaf dock common in pasture. The common dock is reputed to have been sold as tobacco seed to the Maori in the early days.

The native dock is a much-branched herb with long narrow leaves, greenish red, with a wavy edge. The flowers are on stalks above the leaves (not unlike the common dock) and flower from November to March. The dock produces a dull-coloured pollen and a pale nectar, and is only collected by bees if nothing else is in flower.

The Maori used the sap from dock leaves to cure abrasions. The ash from dock roots was used from the same reasons but is reported to make one's eyes water.

Maori also used the sap of dock leaves to lessen the pain from bee stings and when stung by the stinging nettle.

A poultice of the leaves can also be used as a draining agent for septic sores.

**- Tony Lorimer**

## NIWA's climate outlook until May 2006

During autumn, atmospheric pressures to the east of the South Island are likely to be higher than normal, increasing the likelihood of northeasterly wind flows on to the North Island. Air temperatures are expected to be above average in the North Island and northern South Island, and average or above average in the rest of the South Island.

Rainfalls are likely to be normal or above normal in the east of the North Island, and normal or below normal in the eastern South Island. Elsewhere, near-normal rainfalls are the most likely outcome, apart from the northern North Island, where the outlook is unclear due to conflicting guidance from the suite of available prediction models.

Soil moisture levels and stream flows are likely to be below normal in the east of the South Island, and normal or below normal in the northern North Island. Normal or below normal streamflows are likely in the west and south of the South Island. Elsewhere, normal soil moisture levels and streamflows are likely.

# Club Contacts & Beekeeping Specialty Groups

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **WHANGAREI BEE CLUB**<br><br>Meetings: 1st Saturday each month (except January)<br>Time: 10 am, wet or fine (we are keen)<br>Contact: Dave Trinder<br>Phone: 09 433 8566<br>John Parsons<br>Phone: 09 438 8766<br>Kevin Wallace<br>Phone: 09 423 8642 (Wellsford) | **AUCKLAND BEEKEEPERS CLUB INC**<br>Meets 1st Saturday monthly at Unitec, Pt Chevalier, Auckland.<br><br>Contact: Carol Downer, Secretary<br>Phone: 09 376 6376<br>Email: fairy-angel-peewee@xtra.co.nz | **FRANKLIN BEEKEEPERS CLUB**<br>Meets second Sunday of each month at 10.00am for a cuppa and discussion. 10.30am open hives.<br><br>Contact: Peter Biland<br>Phone: 09 294 8365 |
| **WAIKATO DOMESTIC BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION**<br>Meets every third Thursday at 7.30pm.<br><br>Contact the Club President: Brian Fowles<br>Phone: 07 8438 737 (evenings) | **HAWKES BAY BRANCH**<br><br>Meets generally on the second Monday of the second month at 7.30pm, Arataki, Havelock North<br><br>Contact: Ron<br>Phone: 06 844 9493 | **TARANAKI BEEKEEPING CLUB**<br><br>Contact: Stephen Black<br>685 Uruti Road RD 48, Urenui<br>Phone: 06 752 6860 |
| **WANGANUI BEEKEEPERS CLUB**<br>Meets on the second Wednesday of the month.<br><br>Contact: Neil Farrer<br>Phone 06 343 6248 | **MANAWATU BEEKEEPERS CLUB**<br>Meets every 4th Thursday in the month at Newbury Hall, SH3, Palmerston North<br><br>Contact: Frances Beech<br>35 Whelans Road, RD 1 Levin<br>Phone: 06 367 2617 | **WAIRARAPA HOBBYIST BEEKEEPERS CLUB**<br>Meet 3rd Sunday of month (except January) at Norfolk Road, Masterton at 1.30 pm.<br><br>Contact: Arnold Esler<br>Phone: 06 379 8648 |
| **WELLINGTON BEEKEEPERS ASSN**<br>Meets every second Monday of the month (except January) in Johnsonville. All welcome.<br><br>Contact: John Burnet<br>21 Kiwi Cres, Tawa, Wellington 6006<br>Phone: 04 232 7863<br>Email: johnburnet@xtra.co.nz | **NELSON BEEKEEPERS CLUB**<br><br>Contact: Kevin<br>Phone: 03 545 0122 | **NORTH CANTERBURY BEEKEEPERS CLUB**<br>Meets the second Monday of April, June, August and October<br><br>Contact: Mrs Hobson<br>Phone: 03 312 7587 |
| **CHRISTCHURCH HOBBYIST CLUB**<br>Meets on the first Saturday of 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<br><br>Contact: Jeff Robinson<br>64 Cobra Street Christchurch 3.<br>Phone: 03 322 5392 | **SOUTH CANTERBURY REGION**<br><br>Contact: Peter Lyttle<br>Phone: 03 693 9189 | **DUNEDIN BEEKEEPERS CLUB**<br>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.<br><br>Contact Club Secretary: Margaret<br>Phone: 03 415-7256<br>Email: flour-mill@xtra.co.nz |
| **ACTIVE MANUKA HONEY ASSOCIATION (INC)**<br><br>Contact: John Rawcliffe<br>Phone: 07 549 4085 | **NZ COMB PRODUCERS ASSOCIATION**<br><br>Contact: John Wright<br>Phone: 09 236 0628 | **NZ HONEY BEE POLLINATION ASSOCIATION**<br><br>Contact: Russell Berry<br>Phone: 07 366 6111 |
| **NZ HONEY PACKERS AND EXPORTERS ASSOCIATION INC**<br>Contact: Allen McCaw<br>Phone: 03 417 7198<br>Contact: Mary-Anne Thomason<br>Phone: 06 855 8038 | **NZ QUEEN PRODUCERS ASSOCIATION**<br><br>Contact: Russell Berry<br>Phone: 07 366 6111 | |

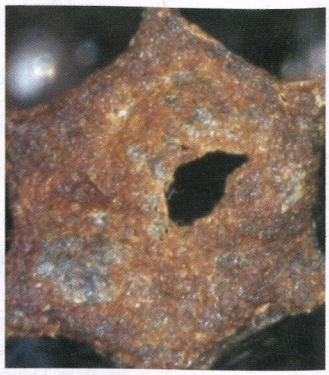
**Is your group or Branch missing from here?**
**Please contact the National Beekeepers Association – inside front cover.**

# Can you recognise AFB?

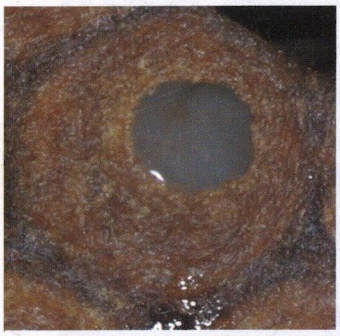
Photos supplied by the Apicultural Research Unit, HortResearch, Ruakura. 

Diseased larva with tongue stretched across cell.

Healthy bee emerging through cell capping.



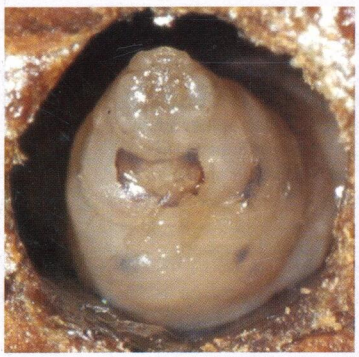
Irregular capping on diseased cell.



Normal cell being capped.

Chalkbrood mummies removed.

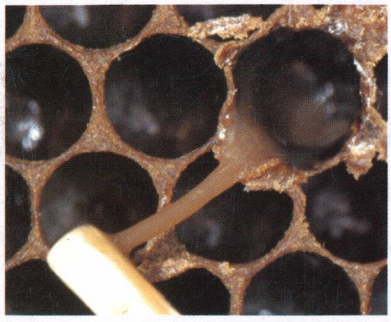
White chalkbrood mummy.



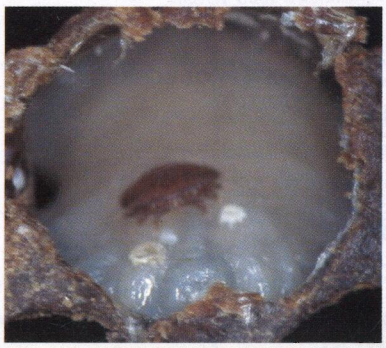
Early sacbrood larva.

Late sacbrood larva.

Parasitic Mite Syndrome (PMS) larva removed.



AFB 'ropiness' test.



Varroa Parasitic Mite Syndrome-affected larva.

Varroa and Parasitic Mite Syndrome larva spiralling up.