April 2011, Volume 19 No. 3

The New Zealand BeeKeeper

Bacteria linked with EFB

- Treatment-resistant varroa
- Conference information
- Christchurch hobbyists share experiences
- Trees for Bees

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Front cover: On 29 March 2011, Green Party spokesperson for Food, Health & Wellbeing, and Assoc Environment (Toxics), Sue Kedgley MP, supported by Daniel Paul, NBA Joint CEO, announced the "Green Party Bee Strategy – 2011". The rally at Parliament was covered in the *Dominion Post* on 30 March 2011 and on Rural Report on Radio New Zealand. Photo: Mary-Ann Lindsay.

Farewell to an industry stalwart

By Frans Laas, NBA President

It is with deep regret that we informed the members of the NBA of the recent death after a long illness of Ivan Dickinson, an elder statesman of the New Zealand beekeeping industry.

Ivan died on 27 March at the age of 77.

Ivan was one of the first professional beekeepers that I encountered when I entered the industry, and I bought my first 50 hives from him when he began his slow journey towards retirement. His distinctive silver three-quarter-depth boxes with his P17CA number burned onto every box, floorboard etc are now spread all over the Otago district, and in some respects act as a reminder of his participation in the bee industry of this country.

As well as being a sucessful commercial beekeeper, Ivan was also heavily involved with industry affairs. He was involved at various times as the Chairman of the old Honey Marketing Authority, President of our Association and a National Life Member, which recognises his outstanding contribution to our industry. In later years he acted as a Trustee on the Honey Industry Trust until his retirement last year.

Ivan always commanded respect and his views on various matters related to technical aspects of beekeeping could never be dismissed. I have learned quite a bit from him and he will be sadly missed.

I attended his funeral in Milton, which was well attended by the local community. Allan McCaw presented a tribute to Ivan on behalf of the beekeeping industry. After the service, a guard of honour consisting of beekeepers from around the country farewelled Ivan out of the hall.

On behalf of the NBA we offer our sincerest condolences to Merle and his children Jenny, Peter and Lynn for their loss. A fuller obituary will appear in the May issue.

Chemical resistance to varroa treatments

Recently we have received more reports of Varroa possibly exhibiting resistance to synthetic pyrethroid treatments. The information was provided by Mark Goodwin and his findings must be taken seriously. See pages 11 and 13 of this journal for details.

> "...some beekeepers are still using only one family of synthetic chemicals for their entire treatment regime. This is clearly not a good practice."

The development of resistance to various synthetic miticides by varroa is generally accepted as being an inevitable outcome; however, the correct use of chemicals can delay the onset of this problem for a very long time. We are still hearing reports that some beekeepers are still using only one family of synthetic chemicals for their entire treatment regime. This is clearly not a good practice.

We also hear of beekeepers still putting strips into hives at the start of the main honey flow. While this may still be legal in this country, it should be avoided if at all possible. Clearly if varroa levels are still excessive by early summer, then one must seriously evaluate what is actually happening in your hives.

Do you have suspected resistance? Are you using the varroacides correctly? Are you alternating treatment families? What else is going on in your operation?

Failure to control varroa adequately will lead to serious economic loss for individual beekeepers and ultimately for the entire industry in this country. The rest of the world has significant issues with maintaining bee colony numbers and bee health. In New Zealand we are still relatively unaffected by these problems, but if we don't get our varroa management right we will be in the same boat.

Pauline Downie, NBA Joint CEO, holds a framed certificate presented to the NBA in appreciation of their donation to the Life Flight Trust Christchurch earthquake appeal. See page 17 for a report from Christchurch hobbyists..

Resistance to both synthetic pyrethroid based strip treatments has now been confirmed.

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Bacteria linked with European foulbrood

By Marco Gonzalez, Apicultural Officer, AsureQuality Limited, Christchurch
Email: Marco.Gonzalez@asurequality.com

EFB, like American foulbrood (AFB), is a bacterial disease that is endemic in most parts of the world where bees are kept.

Both pathogenic bacteria are only found in honey bees. In the international beekeeping literature European foulbrood is somewhat neglected as a honey bee disease, even though its severity is currently increasing in parts of Europe (Forsgren, E., 2010).

A beehive can be affected by both AFB and EFB simultaneously, but it is impossible to find a single diseased bee larva infected with both pathogenic[1] bacteria at the same time. The reason for this is that the causative agent of American foulbrood (the spore-forming bacterium *Paenibacillus* larvae), when growing in its vegetative stage inside the bee larvae, produces a bactericide[2] agent that prevents any other type of bacteria from growing in the infected larvae.

On the other hand, the bacterium *Melissococcus plutonius*, the causative agent of European foulbrood, does not produce spores or any bactericide agent. Consequently, it is often associated with a series of saprophytic[3] bacteria. In the past these bacteria were accredited with causing EFB. This is at least partially due to the fact that these bacteria can outgrow *M. plutonius* and sometimes seem to improve its growth under lab conditions (Bailey, 1983). However, attempts to reproduce EFB disease by feeding larvae pure cultures of any of the associated bacteria have been unsuccessful.

These secondary bacteria present with *M. plutonius* include: *Paenibacillus alvei*, *Brevibacillus* (formerly *Bacillus*) *laterosporus*, *Achromobacter* (formerly *Bacterium*) *euridice*, *Enterococcus faecalis* and *Enterococcus faecium*. These bacteria are sometimes considered symbiotic and some of them may cause some of the differences in smell and appearance in infected larvae (Bailey, 1981), but in reality the role of secondary bacteria in EFB and the mechanisms of how EFB disease develops are still poorly understood (Forsgren, E., 2010).

This article takes a close look at these associated bacteria found in European foulbrood-infected larvae.

Paenibacillus alvei

Unlike the pathogens *M. plutonius* and *P. larvae*, which are found only in association with honey bees, *P. alvei* occupies many environmental niches, including the soil, milk, various insect species (including mosquito larvae and wax moth) and humans.

This bacterium was confirmed present in New Zealand last year, when bacterial culture from soil samples from apiaries in the North Island were positively identified as *P. alvei*.

This spore-forming bacterium is the most common secondary bacteria found in EFB-infected larvae. Rarely has any other secondary bacteria been identified in association with *M. plutonium* in EFB-infected larvae. *P. alvei* cannot grow in the gut of a normal larva, but becomes established in chronically diseased colonies growing in larval remains (Bailey, 1963).

P. alvei appears under the microscope from smears made from diseased bee larvae as Gram-positive rods that are 2 to 5 microns[5] (µm) long and 0.5 to 0.8 µm wide. (Refer to Figure 1.)

Spores are long and cylindrical, measuring about 0.8–0.9 µm wide by 1.8–2.2 µm long (1 µm = 0.001 mm). Although *P. alvei* was one of the first species described in the genus *Bacillus*, comparatively little is known about this organism.

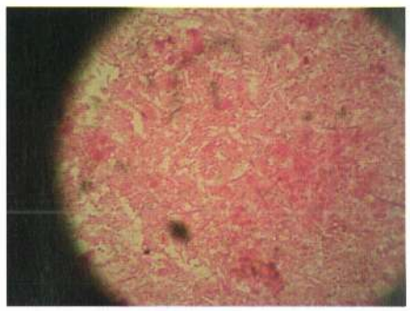

***Figure 1**. EFB-infected material under the microscope after stained with 0.2% Carbol fuchsin. Small dark round circles are* M. plutonius *and the rod-like bacteria are* P. alvei. *Source: AsureQuality Limited, 2007.*

An Australian research study showed that *P. alvei* has a high degree of variation revealed by both DNA profiles and the biochemical variability of this bacterium. This finding supports the hypothesis that *P. alvei* is not a "primary honeybee pathogen"[6].

The presence of *P. alvei* as a secondary pathogen in EFB can produce infected larvae similar to the signs seen with AFB-infected larvae (roping larvae), and the rotten smell associated with diseased larvae seems to be characteristic of the presence of *P. alvei*.

Brevibacillus laterosporus

Brevibacillus laterosporus (formerly called *Bacillus laterosporus* and *Bacillus orpheus*) is an aerobic spore-forming Gram-positive bacterium that grows in the soil. Under the microscope the cells are arranged in rods. It is mobile and has a flagella. Cell size is 0.6–0.9 x 1.2–2.4 µm. (See Figure 2 next page.)

It demonstrates a very wide spectrum of biological activities. It is toxic to some species

[1] Disease-producing organism.
[2] Chemical that kills other bacteria.
[3] Bacteria that feed on decaying organic material.
[4] Gram staining = All bacteria can be classified as Gram positive or Gram negative on the basis of this staining technique. Gram-positive bacteria remain blue-violet. In contrast, Gram-negative bacteria look pink to red.
[5] Micron or Micrometre = A unit of length equal to one millionth (10-6) of a metre.
[6] Primary pathogen = infective organism that causes disease as a result of their presence or activity within the normal, healthy host, and their intrinsic virulence (the severity of the disease they cause) is, in part, a necessary consequence of their need to reproduce and spread.
[7] Phytoparasite = Any plant parasitic organism.
[8] Gram Variable = Can be Gram positive or Gram negative depending on the growing media.
[9] It shows different forms in organisms of the same species.
[10] Facultative anaerobic = an organism that can use oxygen but also can grow without oxygen.

of beetles, flies, mosquitoes, phytoparasites,[7] zooparasites, nematodes and some molluscs. In addition, some strains of *B. laterosporus* produce the medically important substance espergualin (a molecule with antibacterial, anti-tumor and strong immunosuppressive properties) and bacithrocins A, B, and C (antibiotics).

Figure 2. Brevibacillus Laterosporus *under the microscope. Source: http://www.muni.cz/research/publications/715926*

Achromobacter euridice

Achromobacter euridice, also called *Lactobacillus euridice* and formerly called *Bacterium euridice*, is a non spore-forming bacterium frequently found in larvae affected by EFB. It is a common inhabitant of the alimentary tract of adult bees and the midgut of healthy larvae, but it is much more numerous in larvae infected by *M. plutonius*. The cells are square-ended rods, occurring singly or in chains measuring about 0.4–0.7 µm in width by 0.5–1.4 µm in length.

It is Gram-positive *in vivo* and Gram-variable in culture, which sometimes explains the confusion in identification with other species. It is pleomorphic in culture, taking the form of rods or streptococci, according to its culture medium. Its current taxonomic position is still undefined.

Enterococcus faecalis

This is a facultative anaerobic[10] Gram-positive bacteria. Under the microscope it shows oval cells in pairs or in short chains. Cell size is 0.6–2.5 x 0.6–2.0 µm. (See Figure 3.)

It can be isolated from plant material and the intestinal tract of humans and animals. It has been linked to endocarditis (inflammation of the membrane that lines the cavities of the heart and forms part of the heart valves), bladder infections and respiratory diseases. It is an indicator of improper sanitation of dried and frozen foods and faecal contamination. The rotten smell often found with EFB-infected larvae may come from the presence of this bacterium.

Figure 3. Enterococcus faecalis *under the microscope. Source: http://www.muni.cz/research/publications/715926*

Enterococcus faecium

E. faecium is similar in shape and size to *Enterococcus faecalis*. It is found in raw milk, plants, the intestinal tract of humans and

Continued on page 9

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animals (often found in healthy chickens and piglets). It has been linked to endocarditis and respiratory diseases. It is an indicator of improper sanitation of dried and frozen foods and faecal contamination.

European foulbrood symptoms

Most of the symptoms of EFB are also similar to symptoms seen in colonies with parasitic mite syndrome (PMS). (See Figure 4.) A key difference between parasitic mite syndrome and EFB symptoms is that PMS is always associated with heavy varroa infestation and infected larvae do not have a foul smell. In contrast, EFB is not associated with varroa levels and almost always has a particular sour or foul smell.

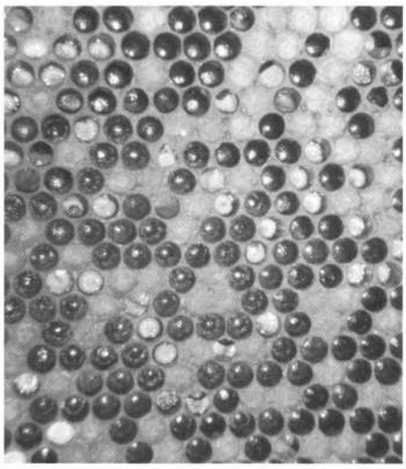

Figure 4. *EFB-infected frame showing typical symptoms. Source: AsureQuality Limited, 2007.*

Every beekeeper should frequently inspect their hives for suspicious or unusual symptoms to prevent establishment of new pests and diseases. Early detection will increase the likelihood that pests and diseases can be eradicated.

If you suspect you have found signs of EFB, contact the MAF hotline (0800 809 966) immediately. They will put you in touch with an Apiculture Officer who can arrange for a sample from your infected hive to be tested for EFB if required.

Table 1 shows the comparative symptoms of EFB, AFB and parasitic mite syndrome.

Acknowledgement

This article was funded by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry through the Apiculture Surveillance Programme. →

Table 1. Distinguishing features of EFB, endemic brood diseases and syndromes.

FEATURES	EUROPEAN FOULBROOD	AMERICAN FOULBROOD	PARASITIC MITE SYNDROME
Causative agent	Non-spore- forming bacteria *Melissococcus plutonius*	Spore-forming bacteria *Paenibacillus larvae*	Brood symptoms that occur with high varroa levels and secondary viral infection.
Age of dead brood	Younger than AFB Usually larvae die before pupation at the 'C' or pre-pupal stage.	Older than EFB > 3 days Larvae usually die at pre-pupal or pupal stages after the cells are capped. Larvae never die at the 'C' stage.	Similar to EFB, from the 'C' stage to the pre-pupal stage.
Appearance of brood comb	Patchy brood pattern with larval cells not capped over. Sometimes sealed in advanced cases when there may be perforated, sunken cappings.	Pepper pot irregular cappings. Sealed brood with sunken cappings, darker in colour, irregularly perforated. Sometimes cappings completely removed.	Pepper pot pattern with chewed cappings
Colour and shape of dead brood	Larvae change colour from pearly white of healthy larvae to dull white, yellow then yellowish brown. Body segmentation retained. The tracheae (or air tubes) are very white against the yellow bodies. Larvae may be twisted up the walls of the cell (corkscrew) or lie in a halfmoon scale around the lip of the cell.	Off-white, then coffee-brown, then dark brown to black. Loss of body segmentation and structure.	White/yellow colour Body segmentation retained
Dead brood consistency	Recently dead larvae are watery to pasty in appearance and rarely show signs of ropiness Old infections are usually creamy or rubbery and can rope up to 20 mm, but not to the same extent as AFB. The ropiness is due to the presence of secondary bacteria *Paenibacillus alvei.* Larvae collapse as if melting and eventually dry to form a loosely attached brown scale.	Sticky like glue when fresh and often ropes out. Once it dries it forms a black scale that is difficult to remove from the cell wall.	Scales can be removed Brood never ropes like AFB.
Odour of brood	Varies from odourless to sour or foul smell depending on the secondary invading bacteria present.	Can have foul smell (rotten, fishy smell).	No evident odour.
Appearance of dead larvae and scales (dried larval/ pupal remains).	Larvae 'corkscrew' up the cell or are found lying across the mouth of the cell in an open 'C' or halfmoon shape Capped brood can rope out (secondary bacteria). Scale dries out and is easily removed from cell.	Larvae slump down along the bottom 'V' of the cell Often rope out Tongue sticking up from front end of cell base if died in pupal stage. Larval scale shaped like bullet against cell floor Scale dries out and is difficult to remove.	Larvae often slump along lower cell wall like AFB. Larvae can also spiral up the cell wall or coil in a 'C' shape at the cell opening like EFB. Doesn't rope out.
Tips for identifying	Very contagious disease. Usually appears when there is a low nurse bee to larvae ratio in the spring. Larvae die before capping and often twisted up the cell walls or in a 'C' shape at the cell entrance.	Ropiness test Presence of tongue in scales. Scales hard to remove.	High number of varroa mites is present. Symptoms disappear after effective varroa treatment.

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IHS Independent Panel report

By Matthew Stone,
Group Manager Animal Imports and Exports, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry

The project set up to coordinate the work required after the Independent Panel reported its findings on the import health standard (IHS) for bee products from Australia has been making good progress.

The project's scientific activities centred on three microorganisms of concern: *Paenibacillus alvei* (a bacterium associated with hives), Israeli acute paralysis virus (IAPV) (a more recently characterised virus affecting bees), and *Nosema ceranae* (a more recently characterised fungus affecting bees). Both surveillance and research activities were planned.

The pilot surveillance programme for presence or absence of these organisms in New Zealand has now been completed. This programme used samples collected during the annual autumn sampling of high-risk sites. MAF has previously reported the two cases of *P. alvei* from apiary soil samples that were identified during 2010. These confirmed an earlier finding from 2009. The surveillance programme also found one positive case of *N. ceranae* from an apiary bee sample. This complements the positive apiary bee samples identified in the investigation undertaken last year. There was also a South Island positive sample found in December.

No IAPV was found in this pilot surveillance programme. A full proof of absence survey is therefore being planned, covering a wider sampling area than the initial pilot. It is hoped that sampling could take place this autumn, though this has not yet been confirmed.

The other stream of work in the project was research into the heat sensitivity of IAPV and *N. ceranae*. This was to help determine effective management measures should they prove not to be present in New Zealand. Because *N. ceranae* has been shown to be present, there is no need to carry out research on this organism. MAF is currently working with a laboratory in the United Kingdom to plan heat sensitivity research for IAPV. This is likely to take place in the northern hemisphere spring.

"...the findings ... will contribute to the development and release of a final IHS."

Once the research is completed the findings, as well as a previously completed scientific analysis of risks will contribute to the development and release of a final IHS.

The IHS provides the legal framework for importation of risk goods and is issued under the Biosecurity Act. It describes the risk mitigation measures that ensure the risks associated with the importation of honey are effectively managed so bee products can be safely imported from Australia.

Contacts for enquiries

Animal Exports: http://www.biosecurity.govt.nz/regs/exports/animals

Animal Imports: http://www.biosecurity.govt.nz/regs/imports/animals

To report suspected exotic pests or diseases please phone 0800 80 99 66.

Do you have treatment-resistant varroa?

By Jane Lorimer, Chair, NBA Research Committee

Are your Varroa mites resistant to your treatment products? Do you want to find out?

Then help the research committee to gather data on the extent of the resistance problem, by testing some of your beehives that have lots of varroa in them (**more than 50** in the sample). This process can be undertaken either individually or as a group or branch of the NBA.

We then ask that you send your results to Kerry Gentleman (email: frazer.kerry@clear.net.nz) for collation. Identities of individuals will remain confidential.

Please indicate:

- whether the hive that you have tested has been or is currently under treatment for this autumn, or is yet to be treated; and
- the area that it has been collected from (and perhaps the road name).

You will need:

- a 400ml Mason jar (used to be the old quart preserving jar) or an equivalent-sized plastic jar as described in the *Control of Varroa* manual (revised edition), page 49
- one ordinary lid for the Mason jar and a mesh lid for the same jar (either wire mesh or something like plastic propolis mat—something that will not allow the bees to escape or chew through, but has holes big enough to easily allow the mites to fall through)
- a strip of new treatment product cut to 9mm x 12.5mm (e.g., Apistan, Bayvarol, or Apivar: whichever treatment product you have been using)
- a piece of index card 75mm x 125mm or similar
- a sugar cube
- a cup to collect the bees.

Photo courtesy of Plant & Food Research.

The procedure is outlined below.

1. Staple the small piece of treatment product to the centre of the index card/cardboard and put this inside the 400ml jar so the **treatment strip is facing inwards**, and place a sugar cube in the bottom to keep the bees fed.
2. Collect 300 bees by removing a brood frame covered in bees from your test hive (make sure the queen is not on this frame). Shake the bees off the frame down into an upturned lid. Bump the bees down into the corner and then scoop up the required number of bees into a cup—the cup needs to be half full. (If you are going to test several hives, make sure you mark the hive and the sample so that you know which sample came from which hive.)
3. Place the bees in a warm dark spot for 24 hours.
4. After 24 hours, take your sample of bees and turn it so the mesh lid is facing downwards, and hit it with the palm of the hand three times (do this over a white sheet of paper or a white tray). Count the number of mites—this is the **initial kill**.
5. Then place the bees in a freezer to kill the bees and the mites.
6. Remove the cardboard and half fill the jar with methylated spirits. Place the ordinary lid on jar, then shake it vigorously for 5 minutes.
7. Change the lid back to the mesh lid and then pour the methylated spirits through a fine sieve (or paper towel or pantyhose or cheesecloth) into a bucket. Then half fill the jar with water and pour through the sieve again into another bucket (this way the meths can be reused without being diluted with the water). Do this with water a second time. Keep washing until no more mites are present.
8. Remove the paper towel/pantyhose and count how many mites are present—this is the **final kill**.

To calculate the % kill =

$$\frac{\text{initial kill}}{(\text{initial} + \text{final kill})} \times 100$$

Please be careful to not breathe in the fumes from the methylated spirits.

Note: The significance of needing more than 50 mites in a sample is a statistical one. If there are only a few mites in the sample, you may have collected all the resistant mites in the hive or you may have collected all the ones that show no resistance. So if your mite numbers are low, you may want to go and collect one or more samples from the same hive until you have a sample size of more than 50.

Reference

Goodwin, M., & Taylor, M. (2007). *Control of Varroa: A guide for New Zealand beekeepers* (Rev. ed.). Wellington: New Zealand Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry.

Goodwin R. M., McBrydie H. M., and Borowik O. December 2009. Varroa resistance (A brochure prepared by The New Zealand Institute for Plant & Food Research Limited). The research and production of this brochure were funded by MAF Biosecurity New Zealand, Ecroyd Beekeeping Supplies Ltd, The New Zealand National Beekeepers' Association, and Bayer New Zealand Ltd.

Drones suffer the most significant effects from varroa infestation.

Source: Control of Varroa: A guide for New Zealand beekeepers *(revised edition), by Mark Goodwin & Michelle Taylor, page 20.*

Synthetic pyrethroid-resistant varroa found

By Jane Lorimer, Chair, NBA Research Committee

On 24 February 2011, Dr Mark Goodwin alerted us that SP-resistant varroa was suspected in several hives.

While they only tested a couple of hives, it serves as a wake-up call to us all that resistance will soon be widespread unless we are sensible about alternating treatments applying correct dose rates, and removing the treatment strips at the correct time.

The text of the email follows:

"This is to notify everyone that we suspect we have SP resistant varroa at Ruakura (Hamilton).

Fifteen months ago we tested a sample of bees with varroa from North Auckland to determine if they could be resistant to Apistan. The test was carried out because a beekeeper saw live varroa in his hive after an Apistan treatment. We used the USDA Apistan resistance field test developed for detecting resistant mites in the USA. The test only killed 27% of the varroa while the same test on varroa at Ruakura at the same time killed about 90% of varroa. This 90% kill rate was similar to tests we had done in previous years and tests we did when varroa first arrived in New Zealand. Unfortunately there was not funding available to confirm the field test results using our lab bioassay.

This February a hobby beekeeper found unusually high varroa in a hive near Hamilton. We tested the hive using the same USDA Apistan test. We then tested one of our own hives with the USDA Apistan test and carried out further tests with both Bayvarol and Apivar. The results from our hive were

Apistan 22.6% varroa killed
Bayvarol 18.5% varroa killed
Apivar 100% varroa killed

Without having carried out a lab bioassay we cannot confirm these results. We also cannot predict what these results mean for the effectiveness of the treatments.

However, we suggest that everybody treats their hives as early as possible this season and check varroa levels in all their hives after removing varroa control strips. If a sugar shake is carried out immediately following an Apistan or Bayvarol 8 week treatment we estimate that there should be less than 5 varroa if the varroa are not resistant.

Unfortunately with only samples from North Auckland and Hamilton we cannot provide any information on how far any resistant varroa may have spread.

Regards Mark Goodwin"

Proposal to change new organism status

The Environmental Risk Management Authority (ERMA) is seeking submissions on a proposal to remove the new organism status of several pest species already present in New Zealand.

This would mean the organisms would no longer be regulated under the Hazardous Substances and New Organisms (HSNO) Act.

The organisms are:

- Tomato potato psyllid (TPP) (*Bactericera cockerelli*)
- *Candidatus* Liberibacter solanacearum
- Australian citrus whitefly (*Orchamoplatus citri*)
- Varroa mite (*Varroa destructor*)
- Lettuce aphid (*Nasonovia ribisnigri*)
- Eastern flower thrips (*Frankliniella intonsa*)

The proposal will remove impediments to researchers working on pest management options. Input from the public and interested parties is now being sought on the effects of this proposed change. Submissions close on 2 May 2011. To read the proposal, go to http://www.ermanz.govt.nz/consultations/Pages/default.aspx

Decision on insecticide trichlorfon released

ERMA has released its decision on the review of the organophosphate insecticide trichlorfon. Trichlorfon is used to control a range of insects in a variety of horticultural and agricultural crops. It is also used as a veterinary medicine. The Authority has decided to phase out approvals for the further importation or manufacture of trichlorfon for plant protection purposes.

In making its decision, the Authority said the use of trichlorfon for plant protection purposes posed risks to the environment which could not be safely managed.

A three-month phase-out period has been set. From 1 June, 2011, trichlorfon for use on plants may no longer be imported into, or manufactured in, New Zealand, and existing stocks must be used or disposed of.

The Authority has approved the continued use of trichlorfon as a veterinary medicine, with stricter controls.

It said the addition of stricter controls on trichlorfon's use as a veterinary medicine would safely manage any potential risks. The new controls come into effect on 1 June 2011.

The reassessment of trichlorfon is part of a wider review of organophosphates used in New Zealand and internationally.

To read the decision, go to http://www.ermanz.govt.nz/search-databases/Pages/applications-details.aspx?appID=HRC08005#

Source

The Bulletin—Issue 129, March 2011 ISSN: 117-3619. (Abridged from an email from ERMA New Zealand, 17 March 2011.)

Australian EFB study tour (part 2)

By Frank Lindsay, NBA Life Member

In September 2010, eight beekeepers from the Southern North Island Branch set off on a study tour to southern New South Wales and Victoria to look at EFB.

We learnt a lot during our trip. One of our hosts in Victoria, Ian Oakley, was an engineer before becoming a beekeeper and is very clever with his hands. He made most of his extracting plant and modified a bottling plant for his purposes.

Ian's uncapper has a speed control which can really push the frames through. He has a second honey separator/wax melter as a single one can't keep up with the flow from the uncapper when it's running in fast mode. He looks at eBay most evenings looking for bargains. Consequently there was lots of extra equipment lying around in the yard but he knows where everything is. (He put his hand into the grass to retrieve a super hand cutting tool for Kevin Gibbs, one of our branch members.)

Ian is always thinking of ways to improve things and has a number of projects on the go (e.g., backpacker accommodation, which provides an inexpensive means of having crew on site and saves time as well). Ian makes extensive use of backpackers as most are keen to work but only stay a month or so before moving on to see the rest of Australia. These temporary workers make supers, bases and roofs from planks of wood. Each process has its own machine, which has to be both simple and safe to use. Tasks range from making dovetails to drilling all the holes in the super sides at one time. All supers and other gear are hand painted on a jig which can be spun around with little effort by the painter. Ian has a saw with multiple blades that cut bottom runners all at one time.

Ian makes up his own pollen supplement using a base of debittered soy flour (80–90 kg), torula yeast (12.5 kg) and icing sugar. Ian used to put in five to six 20-litre buckets of honey, but now uses soft icing sugar to combat possible AFB problems. He also mixed in half a kilogram of KelatoVIT Performance Powder. It's a horse supplement full of concentrated vitamins, trace minerals and antioxidants. Some of it is a bit coarse but the bees can't use these bits anyway and push it out the entrance. Recipes can be found in the book *Fat Bees, Skinny Bees* by Doug Somerville; downloadable from https://rirdc.infoservices.com.au/items/05-054

Eucalyptus

All eucalyptus trees have uneven flowering periods which are dependent upon sufficient moisture to produce buds and then to flower. Some carry the flower buds for 18 months before they flower. If there's insufficient rain, they drop off.

> "All of the beekeeping gear was made to last."

Trees will flower only if they are in peak health. Beekeepers spend quite a bit of time driving, looking at what's about to flower in each region. Everything is very dependent upon rainfall. Hives are set out in apiaries according to the size of the truckload. Most beekeepers have at least 100 hives in each apiary.

Bottom boards and other gear

All of the beekeeping gear was made to last. Everything was hot wax-dipped in a 50:50 mix of paraffin wax and canola oil, which works better than straight paraffin wax in their hot climate. The 35-mm rim of the bottom boards allows the bees to cluster under the frames. This is where they build drone comb and with each inspection, the drone comb is sliced off. Drones contribute to congestion that can trigger swarming; hence most drone cells are squashed or the comb is removed.

By using a single super brood nest under a queen excluder, congestion can be reduced in strong hives by giving the entrance a good smoking, which will drive excess bees up into the roof cavity (roofs have a 45 mm rim which sits flush on the super). It was then just a matter of removing the roof from the strong hive (with the bees clustered underneath) and putting it on a weaker hive, providing an instant population increase equivalent to a couple of frames of bees.

Ian papered the roofs onto the weaker hive to prevent fighting. Often it would blow away or would require another person to hold the paper in place, which slowed things down. We showed him a quick way of introducing the bees by spraying them and the tops of the hive supers with a little air freshener. Ian said that this one tip would increase his efficiency no end.

We were pretty impressed with the apiary work. The boss drove a forklift around the site, dropping pallets of supers close to where the workers required them. Kevin remarked that he would like to be that sort of boss someday.

All hive scrapings were put in bins and taken away at the end of the day. Hardly anything is left on the ground for the ants and animals to feed on, although I saw a small goanna on a tree waiting for us to leave. No doubt it went around the hives picking up the bits of comb and brood we left behind.

National park sites

We spent a lot of time in the national park apiary sites. This land was purchased as a national park in the 1960s and left to develop on its own. But rabbits and kangaroos took over and just about devastated the place. Now half the park is fenced to keep the

kangaroos and rabbits out to protect fragile ecological areas. Rabbit warrens are rotary-hoed to kill them.

You soon realise that this is a dry area, less than 12 inches of rain a year. In some areas you couldn't see much difference from when it was a farm, apart from the odd bush. In New Zealand an abandoned farm would soon be covered in gorse and manuka.

Animals and ants

All beekeepers are conservationists at heart. We have to be as we depend upon our environment for a living. Ian likes all animals and at that time of the year (September) lizards come on to the roads to sunbathe and warm up. Ian will go out of his way to navigate around them or will stop and move them off the road.

We only saw one yellow belly blacksnake, dead on the road. It's generally too cold for them in September but they are about when the temperature reaches 30°C. Ian believes snakes have their place as rodent controllers so leaves them alone.

Ants can be a real problem in Australia. Ian described a column of ants a couple of inches wide going from a nest into an apiary. They can destroy a hive in no time. Hence he has a tin bottom board with an adjustable opening.

These hives were left open when we went to lunch, and came back an hour later. There was no robbing as there was such a flow on.

Grafting queen cells

Ian wanted an extra 300 nucs and we were able to graft 18 bars for him (23 cells per bar; one bar per hive). Ian prepared his cell bars by just dipping the tips of the cell in hot wax to form a starter for the bees to work on. He said he gets better acceptance that way.

Kevin and I selected an apiary where the bees were already swarming as they were on a good nectar and pollen flow. We selected 18 strong hives (they were all fairly strong) that the staff hadn't worked, found the queen in each hive and confined her with a frame of brood into the second super.

We then concentrated six mostly capped brood frames into the bottom super with a frame of pollen and put a grafter cell bar between frames with open brood (where the nurse bees are). A spare frame of pollen was then mashed up with nectar and dribbled over all the frames for the young bees to clean up. (This gets them producing royal jelly.)

Grafted cell bars. Photos: Frank Lindsay.

The queen excluder was then put on the first super and a sheet of plastic the size of a super was placed on the queen excluder, leaving 10 mm of the queen excluder exposed at the back so bees could come up from the first super into the second if required. (The piece of plastic stops the queen pheromones being transmitted into the lower super. The bees in the bottom super think they are queenless and are congested with all the field bees, so immediately start feeding the larvae in the queen cell bar.)

Next day we inspected the cell bars. Those with a poor uptake (only six bars) were regrafted and more mashed pollen and honey was dribbled over the frames. Those that had a good acceptance rate (20 out of 23 cells—Kevin did most of the grafting) had the sheet of plastic removed so the hive became a queenright unit again.

Anybody can learn to graft cells. The development of the Chinese grafting tool has made it easy. Tip: a day or two before grafting, feed a couple of litres of sugar syrup to the hives you want to graft out of and into. The bees will then put more royal jelly under the very young larvae, making it easier to slide the tip of the goose quill under the larvae.

To get the hang of it, try it out first with three-day-old larvae as they are larger and have a big pool of jelly under them. When you are happy with your technique, select larvae that are 12 to 24 hours old. These will be on the edge of the brood next to cells with eggs. They are tiny and will have only a little amount of jelly under them. The smaller the larva, the better the queen will be as the transformation to queen starts immediately from when it's fed. (Bees have a modified royal jelly but queens are fed on straight royal jelly.)

Push the tool slowly down the edge of the cell and under the larva. If you don't pick it up with its pool of jelly in one action, discard the larva: rolling the larva will drown it. I use a head magnifier but most don't need this. You can cut the cell down a little to see the larva better, which also makes it easier to lift out.

Then transfer the larva onto the bottom of the plastic queen cell cup by placing the tip of the tool in the middle and pressing gently on the end of the tool. This action pushes the larva off the quill end while drawing the tool back a little, thus positioning the larva in the centre of the cell cup. Again, it must be in one smooth action or else you will damage the larva.

Cover each cell as you graft it with a damp tea towel to stop it drying out. Then position the bar into a queenless part of a hive next to open brood. Dribble a little mashed pollen and honey over the frames and reassemble the hive.

That's all there is to it—no big mystery. The essentials for queen rearing are a queenless hive (or a portion thereof), plenty of young bees (each super should be full of bees), plenty of pollen in the gut of the nurse bees plus a frame of pollen close at hand, and a good flow on: that is, feed the hive.

[Editor's note: part 1 of this article ran in the March 2011 issue.]

Christchurch hobbyists share their experiences

Following are some post-quake observations by members of the Christchurch Hobbyists' Beekeepers Club.

From Vyvyan Trealeven, club president:

"Many people have done things to keep their hives up: hive straps, tying hives to pallets, tying to waratah posts. Many people have reported their bees are aggressive and irritable. Wasps in some areas. Some people have reported a poor honey season. Some people report their bees leaving after the 6.3."

From Derek Skinner:

"The Christchurch earthquakes have cost me a lot of time and money. Having multiple apiary sites means that after each sizeable shock I must go to each site and put the hives upright again. At some sites there was no problem but the apiaries located on the Banks Peninsula were always a problem…

On the day of the September 4 quake, despite much damage to my home and the contents, I was compelled to visit all hives. It took me about six hours to get around to them all. Travelling around took most of the time... Very wide tears in the asphalt were a big problem particularly along roads that were parallel to the rivers. The bridges over several streams and rivers had huge gaps where the road had subsided up to a metre below the level of the bridge deck. I was really glad that I had recently bought a four wheel drive truck with wide tyres…

I usually do not strap my hives but instead weigh them down with large concrete blocks. This was a mistake and was certainly no match for the power of the earthquake. Those hives that were strapped with M lock straps fell over in one complete block, where the strap was only around the hive. Those that had the strap around the hive and the pallet that they sat on were very solid and never moved at all. There is a hard lesson to be learned from this. I shall be buying more straps…

Events after the second earthquake were very similar to the first one but after that quake the bees seemed to terminate collecting of nectar. This has had a great effect on the size of the honey harvest this year, it being about one third of the take last year… coupled with the damaging effects of the great winds the region has suffered early this year, it is not surprising that the take is down.

I have noticed in all apiaries that robbing of the weakest hives by the stronger ones has been very noticeable. In my twenty years as a beekeeper I have never seen such a level of robbing, which I can only put down to some hives losing their honey stores so they go out and steal from others. This has led to several of my hives dying out… It must have been a mighty battle as there were many dead bees in the bottom of the box. Indeed, a sad sight.

> "Now comes the challenge to keep the hives fed and living so that next year we can start afresh."

I wonder, now, if the earthquake and aftershocks is having an ongoing effect on the bees and in particular the queens who seem to readily leave the hive. This is something never seen before.

Now comes the challenge to keep the hives fed and living so that next year we can start afresh. Hopefully it will be without high winds and particularly without earthquakes."

From Torfrida:

"I have just one hive, in New Brighton…The hive survived the Feb quake with just a crack in one of the honey boxes which had been ill-made. I stuffed it with a sliver of wood & tin foil to stop robbing. I left the bees for about 3 weeks then went in yesterday to take off honey & winter down with varroa treatment. They weren't aggressive. The young queen was still laying, and there were slabs of capped brood and a lot of honey and pollen.

I swapped the bottom box for one of those fancy black plastic ones, to see if it helps with varroa. They seemed to take to it OK. I also raised the hive up on concrete blocks, as I think flooding will be more of a problem in our area than quakes now…"

From Ian Wells:

"When I took over as club secretary, we moved all our club computer records to 'the cloud' instead of keeping them on someone's computer. Our club membership list exists now as a google document spreadsheet that can be accessed by our club executive independent of the state of any one's harddrive and their location. All club minutes and online documents also now live in google documents. What this meant is that we had no disruption to our club records due to the earthquake (once members were able to get to power and phones), unlike many businesses whose computers were lost or locked in red-stickered buildings…Our web site and google group are all in the cloud too and stayed up even when power here was down….

Once members were able to get phone and power, they were able to connect back up with email to us. We got several requests for help with hives and so on and folks … would go and help once their own home situations allowed."

Editor's note: we are indebted to club members, particularly Vyvyan Trealeven and Ian Wells, for making these stories available to us. We greatly appreciate the time they have taken to share their experiences with us, despite great personal hardship and at a particularly busy time for beekeepers. We pass along our best wishes for a steady recovery and a bountiful season in 2011.

To read the full Google groups postings, go to http://www.chchbeekeepers.org.nz/about-the-club/google-group-rss-feed/

AMERICAN FOULBROOD NATIONAL PEST MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

New Zealand beekeeper, apiary and hive statistics by apiary district as at 25 March 2011

Apiary Register Location	Category 0-5 Hives		
	Beekeepers	Apiaries	Hives
Blenheim	191	229	435
Canterbury	400	452	815
Hamilton	136	144	270
Otago/Southland	245	279	625
Palmerston North	457	513	833
Tauranga	121	139	254
Whangarei	461	510	974
New Zealand	2011	2266	4206

Apiary Register Location	Category 6-10 Hives		
	Beekeepers	Apiaries	Hives
Blenheim	27	40	230
Canterbury	55	103	416
Hamilton	20	32	139
Otago/Southland	54	78	425
Palmerston North	81	132	626
Tauranga	45	67	367
Whangarei	99	162	770
New Zealand	381	614	2973

Apiary Register Location	Category 11-50 Hives		
	Beekeepers	Apiaries	Hives
Blenheim	28	72	656
Canterbury	49	168	1111
Hamilton	21	64	571
Otago/Southland	47	125	1043
Palmerston North	65	213	1778
Tauranga	38	94	968
Whangarei	91	233	2135
New Zealand	339	969	8262

Apiary Register Location	Category 51-250 Hives		
	Beekeepers	Apiaries	Hives
Blenheim	15	220	2256
Canterbury	28	360	3409
Hamilton	15	115	1791
Otago/Southland	28	251	3464
Palmerston North	41	354	4462
Tauranga	42	275	4646
Whangarei	48	389	5564
New Zealand	217	1964	25592

Apiary Register Location	Category 251-500 Hives		
	Beekeepers	Apiaries	Hives
Blenheim	10	252	3777
Canterbury	25	697	9759
Hamilton	7	200	3517
Otago/Southland	12	333	4806
Palmerston North	20	321	6860
Tauranga	30	459	9551
Whangarei	14	312	6332
New Zealand	118	2574	44602

Apiary Register Location	Category 501-1000 Hives		
	Beekeepers	Apiaries	Hives
Blenheim	10	378	5856
Canterbury	15	608	10129
Hamilton	12	489	10064
Otago/Southland	19	893	12893
Palmerston North	14	640	11622
Tauranga	21	528	13192
Whangarei	11	378	7664
New Zealand	102	3914	71420

Apiary Register Location	Category 1000+ Hives		
	Beekeepers	Apiaries	Hives
Blenheim	10	813	14824
Canterbury	14	1425	30566
Hamilton	12	1420	32654
Otago/Southland	14	1380	25767
Palmerston North	14	2367	47952
Tauranga	25	2113	46323
Whangarei	14	1700	35027
New Zealand	103	11218	233113

Apiary Register Location	Total		
	Beekeepers	Apiaries	Hives
Blenheim	291	2004	28034
Canterbury	586	3813	56205
Hamilton	223	2460	48890
Otago/Southland	419	3339	49023
Palmerston North	692	4540	74133
Tauranga	321	3651	74917
Whangarei	738	3684	58466
New Zealand	3270	23491	389668

AFB NPMS Chairman's report

By Frans Laas

Over the past year there has been a substantial increase in the numbers of new beekeepers being registered, with a net gain of 312 compared with March 2009.

The Management Agency (MA) has also stepped up its education activities with a big increase in the number of Disease Recognition courses being held throughout the country. We have also increased the number of approved trainers to cope with the extra courses being undertaken. With the rapid increase in the number of new beekeepers, the MA will need to ensure that people are given the opportunity to participate in one of these courses as soon as practicable after becoming registered.

Ideally we would like new beekeepers to have sat and passed the test within a year of being registered and obtain their DECA. Having a significant proportion of beekeepers still having to be on Certificate of Inspection (COI) is a bit of a drain on the MA resources and a source of frustration at times. Compliance with COI has been dramatically improved over the last year; however, the MA has had to resort to default inspections to achieve this. This situation is a bit unfortunate but COI beekeepers were given ample opportunity to comply with their obligations. ADR returns are improving, with compliance being in the high 90% region.

Reported AFB levels continue to remain relatively low, on a par with last year. But it is still of concern that a small number of beekeepers still are contributing to a significant number of cases. Three beekeepers alone are responsible for 17% of the national total. This is somewhat disturbing as they have clearly been unable or unwilling to deal with the high level of AFB in their hives and have required MA intervention.

Also of concern is the number of disease reports from non-DECA holders, which is nearly four times the national average. The increase in compliance for COI holders may have contributed to the apparent increase.

At present the MA is undertaking court proceedings against beekeepers over unpaid levies. Again these individuals were given ample opportunity to get their affairs in order. One person had bankruptcy proceedings instigated against him. That got his attention quite rapidly and the situation is being resolved.

> "...a small number of beekeepers still are contributing to a significant number of cases."

Top bar hives

Over the past year the MA has become aware of the existence of a movement that is advocating the use of top bar hives for a number of reasons including cost and philosophical reasons. Some claims have also been made about top bar hives possessing certain attributes that enhance bee health.

However, the MA has received a significant number of complaints from all sectors of the industry about this practice, including proponents of organic beekeeping methods. They are concerned about disease issues and the fact that many of these beekeepers are not complying with New Zealand law.

The current rules regarding the construction of beehives are:

Section 11 Obligation to keep honey bees in moveable frame hives

The definition of a moveable frame is:

> "'moveable-frame hive' means a beehive containing frames IN which the combs are built, and where the frames may be separately and easily removed from the beehive for examination without causing damage to the combs".

Quite unambiguous.

However, there are no rules to define shape, materials etc. of the hive body.

There is a good reason why moveable comb hives were banned in this country, as they were an impediment to the successful elimination of AFB. Moveable frames are one of the cornerstone management principles that have helped to keep the levels of AFB as low as they are in this country.

The MA has not yet developed a formal policy on how top bar beekeeping can be accommodated under New Zealand law, but we welcome input from proponents of the system.

Extreme care must be taken when handling oxalic acid as it is corrosive.

Source: Control of Varroa: A guide for New Zealand beekeepers *(revised edition), by Mark Goodwin & Michelle Taylor, page 76.*

Did you know?

By Rex Baynes, AFB NPMS Manager

Year	Registered beekeepers	Number of apiaries	Number of beehives
2000	4,864	21,633	299,712
2001	4,550	20,993	320,113
2002	3,973	20,258	305,152
2003	3,649	20,228	300,729
2004	3,211	19,592	292,530
2005	2,911	19,281	294,886
2006	2,694	18,954	300,728
2007	2,602	19,228	313,399
2008	2,589	20,439	343,155
2009 (22 Jun)	2,663	21,593	365,709
2010 (7 Sep)	2,944	22,432	377,574
2011 (10 Mar)	3,251	23,395	388,369

AFB NPMS statistics

By Rex Baynes, AFB NPMS Manager

The Management Agency is pleased to report that as at 15 March 2011 there is a 92.7 % Annual Disease Return (ADR) compliance rate.

This result is due to some hard follow-up work from both staff at AsureQuality Limited and from within the Management Agency.

AFB percentage levels are down to 0.22%. This result is especially pleasing given the increase in ADR compliance (greater level of reporting), and suggests a greater appreciation by beekeepers in the need to report.

Statistics Courtesy of AsureQuality Limited.

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Percentage of beekeepers with a Disease Elimination Conformity Agreement (DECA)	79%	79%	59%	64%	58%
Percentage of DECA approved beekeepers who have completed the competency exam.	49%	62%	100%	100%	100%
Annual Disease Return (ADR) compliance (by 1 September 2011)	61%	73%	71%	70%	Not applicable as yet
Annual Disease Return (ADR) compliance (best for year)	83%	91%	88%	89%	92.7% (2010 ADR)
Certificate of Inspection (COI) compliance	22%	30%	64%	68.8%	Not applicable as yet
AFB percentage levels	0.30%	0.32%	0.27%	0.25%	0.22%

By the numbers

0.22%
Reported rate of AFB infection for the 12 months ending 10 March 2011

491
Beekeepers attended an AFB Recognition Course from 1 January 2010 through 31 December 2010

33
AFB Recognition Courses were held from 1 January through 31 December 2010.

26
Beekeepers opted to sit the AFB Recognition test by not attending a course

100%
Of DECA Holders have passed the AFB Recognition Course Test.

47
Certificated AFB Recognition Course trainers (34 in the North Island and 13 in the South Island)

3,251
Registered beekeepers as at 10 March 2011

23,395
Registered apiaries as at 10 March 2011

388,369
Registered hives as at 10 March 2011

1,899
Hobby and commercial beekeeping operations holding a DECA

68.8%
Of the 1,298 Certificates of Inspection sent out in August 2010 have been returned.

1.9 %
Percentage of apiaries where AFB has been reported.

22%
Increase in the number of registered beekeepers in the last 21 months

6.2 %
Increase in hive numbers in the last 21 months.

92.7 %
Annual Disease Return compliance rate.

885
New beekeepers with less than two seasons' experience.

27%
Of the beekeeping industry has less than two seasons' experience

Concern over non-DECA holder compliance

By Rex Baynes, AFB NPMS Manager

Beekeepers who do not hold a Disease Elimination Conformity Agreement (DECA) with the Management Agency are required under the Biosecurity Act 1993 to have their hives inspected by an Approved Beekeeper by no later than 30 November of each year.

If we study the rates of compliance over recent years they make for dismal reading, and suggests that a significant number of beekeepers do not take their responsibility seriously enough.

The Management Agency has, since August 2010, allocated a great deal of resource and effort into ensuring a greater level of compliance. It is therefore timely to explain the mechanisms that have been put in place to encourage inspections.

In early August 2010 (as in past years) we mailed out to 1,298 non-DECA holders:

- their Certificate of Inspection (COI) Inspection form
- a covering letter explaining their legal obligations and responsibilities (hives to be inspected by 30 November 2010) etc.
- a schedule detailing the names of Approved Beekeepers (DECA holders in their immediate area) who had agreed to have their names and contact details released, and who in turn were prepared to inspect hives
- a schedule detailing some 16 planned AFB Recognition courses nationwide to be held over the next 6 months or so.

In the months prior to August 2010, we recruited 28 new AFB Recognition Course trainers to compliment those 19 already on our books. All new trainers were put through a training course during June and July.

Subsequent to the August 2010 mailout referred to above, wide publicity was given to the need for inspections (refer to *The New Zealand BeeKeeper* journal, October 2010) as well as email communication to organisations involved in the industry such as beekeeper clubs, etc. A glossy flyer was also mailed out in mid-October to those who still needed to return their Certificate of Inspection. In addition to these measures, we attempted to make contact with these beekeepers by phone.

In early December 2010, I commenced contacting about 50 AP2s to seek their assistance in undertaking inspections on a default inspection cost-recovery programme. Without exception all those contacted agreed to assist. That programme is now well under way with inspections being carried out.

Year	COI compliance rates (%)
2005	14.0
2006	18.0
2007	22.0
2008	30.0
2009	64.0
2010	68.8

Although compliance is trending upwards, the attitude of certain beekeepers to their responsibilities leaves a lot to be desired.

Bee Week: 30 May–3 June 2011

Every year the National Beekeepers' Association of New Zealand runs a National Bee Week. This year Bee Week will run from 30 May to 3 June 2011.

We would like to encourage you to join in and help promote this very important week of the year to raise awareness of the value of bees to Kiwis and our country.

This year, similar to last, the focus will be on generating media activity (both national and regional) and interacting with the public and local schools in all areas.

We will be drafting numerous press releases that will be pitched to national media. We have posters, word puzzles, a colouring competition (sponsored by Buzzy Bee), and a list of bee facts that we will send out to branches once finalised. In addition, NBA Northern Ward rep, Maureen Maxwell, is exploring the possibility of developing packets of 'Save the Bees' bee-friendly seeds for planting which the NBA will sell.

We will also begin mailing out Bee Week posters in the next couple of weeks to branch secretaries.

On another note, NBA head office is looking for product that we can use to generate further media activity by offering it as prizes to local media. If you have anything you would like to donate (e.g., skincare, honey, lip balm etc.), please post it to head office as soon as possible. Last year this was a great success, and many newspapers and magazines ran competitions during Bee Week to win a hamper full of bee product goodness.

The details of the products you supply will be included in any correspondence we have with media who run a competition in their newspapers etc., so there is a chance for some very valuable free marketing.

This is just a brief rundown of what head office is doing, but feel free to develop your own fairs, visits, displays and the like. Let's get involved, spread the word and show Kiwis how important honey bees are to New Zealand.

AFB recognition training reaches new high

By Rex Baynes, AFB NPMS Manager

Given the upward trend in beekeeper numbers over the last two years or so, the Management Agency has moved quickly to ensure there are adequate AFB recognition courses available nationwide.

These courses are intended to accommodate the needs of new beekeepers who require AFB recognition training and those who require refresher training.

I am pleased to report that 490 beekeepers attended 33 scheduled courses in 2010. This is an especially pleasing achievement when compared to previous years 2009 (356 beekeepers), 2008 (264), 2007 (453), 2006 (93) and 2005 (128).

I would like to acknowledge those people who have given of their time to assist in facilitating the various courses, without whose help the results described above would not have been possible.

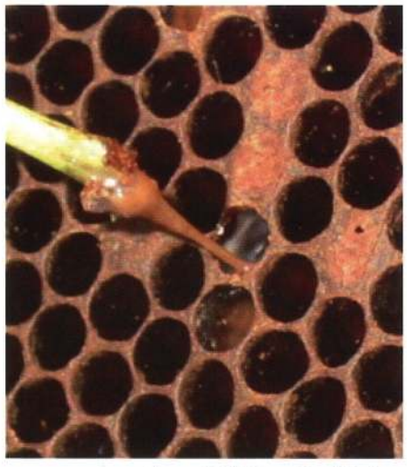

Photo of AFB. Photo: Frank Lindsay.

Andrew Beach, one of the training course facilitators, at one of the 33 courses held during 2010. Photo: Rex Baynes.

Bruce Stevenson	*Kerikeri*
Dan Lambert	*Kerikeri*
Simon Peacey	*Whangarei*
Sarah Peacey	*Whangarei*
John Gavin	*Whangarei*
Bob Russell	*Auckland*
Matt Tunzelmann	*Auckland*
Paul Walsh	*Auckland*
Carol Downer	*Auckland*
Kim Kneijber	*Auckland*
Peter Riem	*Auckland*
Bryan Mitchell	*Hamilton*
Tony Lorimer	*Hamilton*
Mark Berry	*Waiotapu*
Ross Carroll	*Tauranga*
Mark Silson	*Katikati*
Gerrit Hyink	*Katikati*
Paul Badger	*Gisborne*
Willie Kaa	*Gisborne*
David Hills	*Napier*
John Berry	*Havelock North*
Tom Taylor	*OngaOnga*
Mary-Anne Thomason	*Takapau*
Stephen Black	*Urenui*
Mary Allen	*Raetihi*
Neil Farrer	*Wanganui*
Allan Richards	*Wanganui*
Frances Beech	*Levin*
Andrew Beach	*Paraparaumu*
Frank Lindsay	*Wellington*
Peter Ferris	*Masterton*
Judy Ferris	*Masterton*
Ian Moffatt	*Masterton*
Gerald Atkinson	*Martinborough*
Will Trollope	*Blenheim*
Nigel Costley	*Nelson*
Frazer Wilson	*Takaka*
Gary Glasson	*West Coast*
Jeff Chandler	*Christchurch*
Lindsay Moir	*Christchurch*
Kevin Gates	*Christchurch*
Roger Bray	*Ashburton*
Phil Sutton	*Timaru*
Gavin McKenzie	*Waimate*
David Woodward	*Balclutha*
Brice Horner	*Outram*

National Beekeepers' Association of New Zealand
2011 Member Subscription Form

PO Box 10792, Wellington 6143, New Zealand

Telephone: +64-4 471 6254 Fax: +64-4 499 0876

pauline@nba.org.nz secretary@nba.org.nz www.nba.org.nz

Payment can be made by internet transfer. Bank of New Zealand Paraparaumu Branch Account No. 02 0733 0057338 00, SWIFT BKNZNZ22. Please use your name as the reference.

Date: _____ Name: _____

Business name: _____ No. of people working in your business: _____

Postal address: _____

Postcode: _____ Phone No: _____ Fax: _____

Email Address: _____ No of Hives: _____

☐ Existing Member ☐ New Member ☐ Life Member

☐ I am happy to be contacted on email by NBA partners with special offers (no more than 4 times per year)

Sub. encl: $ _____ or Internet banking date: _____ Receipt required: ☐

Tax Invoice GST No. 14-437-525

Categories	Total hives	GST Incl.	Please Tick
Standard Hobbyist	<11	$138.00	
Sideline/Commercial	11-50	$172.50	
Small Commercial	51-250	$345.00	
Commercial Level 1	251-400	$552.00	
Commercial Level 2	401 - 800	$1012.00	
Commercial Level 3	801-1200	$1495.00	
Commercial Level 4	1201-1500	$1840.00	
Commercial Level 5	1501-3000	$3565.00	
Mega Commercial	3001 +	$4600.00	
Corporate Membership (Affiliate companies – non-beekeeper)		$287.50	
NZ Beekeeping Clubs		$256.00	
BeeKeeper Journal Subscription Only New Zealand Australia Rest of World		 $123.00 $128.00 $130.00	

Donations NO GST	
General Research:	$
Varroa:	$
Honey:	$
Marketing:	$

Membership or Journal subscription	$
Donation	$
International T/T Fee ($25 for recovery of bank fees) NOTE: Please add for overseas transactions only	$
TOTAL PAYABLE TO THE NBA	**$**

Please sign this form and post, fax or email it to the NBA. Your membership will be processed on receipt of a fully completed form and confirmation of receipt of payment.

Declaration: The information I have supplied in this form is true and correct.

Signed: ----------

Date: ----------

National Beekeepers' Association of New Zealand

PO Box 10792, Wellington 6143, New Zealand
Telephone: +64-4 471 6254 Fax: +64-4 499 0876
Website: www.nba.org.nz

Welcome to the National Beekeepers' Association. Your membership is vital to the continuation of a strong and healthy industry, an industry with tremendous potential for future growth.

The NBA aims to provide a strong cohesive association that liaises with Government departments: MAF, ERMA, BPSC and the like, and the Federated Farmers Bee Industry Group to raise issues of importance about our industry. Issues facing the industry in 2011 include the Government Industries Agreement, Australian honey imports and unexplained bee losses. Without your financial support, the association would not have the resources to confront and deal with these issues.

On a more positive note, the NBA is working on an industry development strategy, a Code of Practice for NBA branches and post-border surveillance initiatives with MAF. In addition, we are currently rebuilding the website and expanding the list of preferred suppliers for member discounts.

There are numerous benefits to being a member of the NBA, some of which include:

- Advocacy on a range of issues
- A well-established Branch system, where you can meet other beekeepers and attend field days
- A new Association website
- Discounts through NBA-preferred suppliers
- A members' library for books and magazines
- 11 issues of *The New Zealand BeeKeeper* journal
- Access to the work of committees such as those addressing issues including pollination, publications, research and Australian honey imports
- A discounted rate at annual conference.

Thank you for your support. We urge you to encourage other beekeepers to join the association. The larger our membership, the more voice we have with Government.

Frans Laas
President

It's not too late to renew!

The NBA membership year runs from 1 January to 31 December.

Membership subscriptions are due 1 January each year. If remaining unpaid at 31 March in the same year, membership shall be deemed to have lapsed.

If you haven't renewed your subscription, it's not too late to do so now. Back issues of the February and March journal will be sent upon receipt of a subscription payment.

Do's and don'ts of AFB control

Do

- Inspect your hives for AFB at least twice a year.
- Inspect hives before removing bees, honey or equipment.
- Inspect all brood frames.
- 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 paraffin 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 distribute the equipment from dead hives between other hives.
- Don't allow colonies to die of varroa or any other cause.

[Excerpted from the revised edition of *Elimination of American Foulbrood Disease without the use of Drugs—a practical manual for beekeepers,* by Dr Mark Goodwin.]

Beekeeping and the law

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. Change registration numbers only by the beekeeper who has the code number assigned to them, unless permission to do so is provided by the management agency.
8. Remove all identification codes when transferring the ownership of the hives.
9. Where a case of AFB is found, the owner of the hives must report to the Management Agency 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 DECA 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.

[Excerpted from the revised edition of *Elimination of American Foulbrood Disease without the use of Drugs—a practical manual for beekeepers,* by Dr Mark Goodwin.]

Who do you call?

Recently the Secretariat has been receiving a lot of calls regarding hive registration and pest management issues, most of which we are unable to answer as those issues are dealt with by other entities. So, to make it easier for you to know who to call for what, we thought we would give you an easy reference guide.

AFB RECOGNITION COURSES

Rex Baynes – Manager, AFB NPMS
PO Box 44282
Lower Hutt 5040
www.afb.org.nz

Email: rbaynes@ihug.co.nz
or info@afb.org.nz

ASUREQUALITY LIMITED

http://www.asurequality.com
Ph: 0508 00 11 22

- Annual Disease Returns (ADR)
- Certificate of Inspections (COI)
- Disease Elimination Conformity Agreements (DECAs)
- AFB Destruction
- AFB Finds

REGISTRARS OF BEEHIVES
North Island – Bob Derry, Registrar
Ph: (07) 850 2837
Fax: (07) 850 2801
Email: derryb@asurequality.com

South Island – Margaret Roper, Registrar
Ph: (03) 358 1717
Fax: (03) 358 6222
Email: roperm@asurequality.com

2011 NBA Conference & Seminars Venue
An extra-special one
The Waipuna Hotel, Auckland

Waipuna Hotel and Conference Centre is a unique first class complex and your premier Auckland conference centre and luxury hotel accommodation property.

Waipuna is five minutes from the Southern Motorway, just 15 minutes from both Auckland City and Auckland's International Airport. Waipuna is set amongst 6.26 acres of parkland overlooking a picturesque saltwater lagoon.

Waipuna's prestigious 4-star hotel accommodation and superb guest facilities include 450 free off-street car parks, Internet, restaurant and bar options, and a swimming pool, spa and gymnasium for your use.

The superbly appointed accommodation offers 25 suites and 125 spacious ensuite rooms perfect for families, holidaymakers and corporate travellers, at a reasonable conference cost of from $145 plus GST per day.

Waipuna Hotel is one of New Zealand's largest and most comprehensive conference centres and hotel accommodation venues. It is primarily dedicated to staging conferences, meetings, exhibitions, product launches, seminars, and special events.

It has 18 conference centre rooms specifically designed to encourage learning and serenity with effective use of natural light. The views over the lagoon and spacious gardens offer a relaxing and invigorating outdoor environment. The conference centre features a full-blown theatre style auditorium, seating up to 380 persons with all the audiovisual tricks.

Waipuna is a fully integrated conference centre designed to serve your specific needs.

There are just a few venues in New Zealand that offer such extensive conference, meeting and function facilities, in combination with a variety of hotel accommodation options and fine in-house restaurant dining.

Come and experience the best our country has to offer in personal service and courtesy with Waipuna Hotel and Conference Centre, Auckland, New Zealand.

Auckland NBA Branch looks forward to seeing you here 26–30 June.

AFB recognition courses planned for 2011

By the Management Agency, AFB NPMS

We are providing non-DECA holders with the opportunity to attend an AFB Recognition and Competency Course and take the test. This is an essential step to becoming a DECA holder.

Christchurch
When: 16 April 2011 (Saturday)
Facilitator: Jeff Chandler (03) 385 5375
Note: This course was postponed because of the Christchurch earthquake.

Waikato
When: 30 April 2011 (Saturday)
Facilitator: Tony Lorimer (07) 856 9625
Note: A flyer and attached application form has been mailed to non-DECA holders within a 50km radius of Hamilton.

Palmerston North
When: 4 June 2011 (Saturday)
Facilitator: Frances Beech (06) 367 2617
Note: A flyer and attached application will be mailed to all non-DECA holders within a 80km radius of Palmerston North.

New Plymouth
When: 11 June 2011 (Saturday)
Facilitator: Stephen Black (06) 752 6860
Note: A flyer and an attached application form will be mailed to all non-DECA holders within the Taranaki region.

Auckland
When: 27 June 2011 (Monday)
Facilitator: David Woodward
Note: Please refer to the notice contained within this journal.

Hawke's Bay
When: 6 August 2011
Facilitator: John Berry (06) 877 6205
Note: A flyer and an attached application form will be mailed to all non-DECA holders in the Hawke's Bay.

Auckland
When: 27 August 2011 (Saturday)
Facilitator: Kim Kneijber (09) 418 1302
Note: A flyer and an attached application form will be mailed to all non-DECA holders within the immediate Auckland area.

Timaru
When: September/October 2011
Facilitator: Phil Sutton (03) 686 1513
Note: A flyer and an attached application form will be mailed to all non-DECA holders in the South and mid Canterbury and North Otago region.

Gisborne
When: 10 September 2011 (Saturday)
Facilitator: Paul Badger (06) 868 4785
Note: A flyer and an attached application form will be mailed to all non-DECA holders within the Poverty Bay region.

Nelson
When: September/October 2011
Facilitator: Nigel Costley (03) 548 3101
Note: A flyer and an attached application form will be mailed to all non-DECA holders within the Nelson region.

Dunedin
When: December 2011
Facilitator: Brice Horner (03) 486 2299
Note: A flyer and an attached application form will be mailed to all non-DECA holders in the Otago/Southland region.

Bee Losses Survey—a reminder

Thank you to all those who have completed the survey and returned it to the national office.

The information we are gathering as a result is of great importance and will be extremely valuable in building cases to ERMA, MAF and AGCARM for re-evaluating a range of pesticides and for raising the bar in horticultural application practices. Both ERMA and MAF have expressed their interest in the results of the survey.

We appreciate this is a very busy time for you all, but if you have experienced bee losses for whatever reason we would encourage you to take the time to complete the survey and send to us.

If you would like further copies of the survey, please email pauline@nba.org.nz

A copy is also available on www.nba.org.nz

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NZ's No 1 VARROA TREATMENT

Why?

- it's highly effective (up to over 99% efficacy)
- it's the easiest to use (rigid strips - no curling)
- it's very safe to use (very important - especially for staff)
- it has twice the contact area (4 strips per brood chamber)
- very kind to beeswax, propolis & comb honey
- very gentle on queen bees & nucs
- it can be used during the honey flow if required
- strips have a 5 year expiry date from date of manufacture

Note:
There have been **NO** confirmed reports by commercial beekeepers in New Zealand of Varroa being resistant to Bayvarol®

We'd strongly recommend that you use Bayvarol® as one of your alternate treatments.

Bayvarol is New Zealand's most popular Varroa treatment, for **very** good reason.

Current prices as at 1st April 2011

20 to 80 strips	$2.09 + GST each
100 to 780 strips	$1.96 + GST each
800 to 8800 strips	$1.59 + GST each
9600 plus strips	$1.54 + GST each

Packets contain 20 strips, cartons contain 800 strips. For orders of up to 100 strips please add $7 incl. GST for freight. Orders of 100 strips or more are despatched freight free to anywhere in New Zealand. Payment is required prior to despatch by Visa, M/Card, Cheque or Electronic Banking.

For any enquiries or orders, please phone 03 358 7498 or email: Bayvarol@beehealthy.co.nz

BK121

Bayvarol ® - Registered trademark of Bayer AG Germany - Approved under the Animal Products (Ancillary and Transitional Provisions) Act 1999

www.beehealthy.co.nz

Ecroyd Beekeeping Supplies Ltd

Distributors, Exporters & Importers of Beekeeping Equipment
Distributors of Bee Healthy & Beeway Honey & Bee Products

E B S

www.ecroyd.com

P.O. Box 5056 Papanui, Christchurch 8542, New Zealand • 6A Sheffield Crescent, Burnside, Christchurch
Phone: (03) 358-7498 • Fax: (03) 358-8789 • Email: ecroyd@beehealthy.co.nz

Tutin Standard update

By Jim Sim, Principal Adviser (Animal Products)

The new Tutin Standard is seeing a lot of test results coming into MAF to go into our database.

These results will provide vital information that can feed into a later standard review, which could see a significant decrease of the areas where testing or other precautionary measures need to be applied.

Unfortunately some beekeepers do not appear to be submitting their results and if there are too many "holes" in the dataset we won't be able to draw any conclusions from it. We will be asking laboratories for their overall testing figures and matching those with sample results received. If it turns out there is too much discrepancy we will have to relook at the feasibility of reducing the areas covered by the standard.

> "...if there are too many "holes" in the dataset we won't be able to draw any conclusions from it."

We also have a lot of forms coming in that have not been properly completed, especially with respect to the map references for where the honey was harvested from. If you are unsure how to complete the forms, please check the compliance guide or contact Susan Morris on 029 894 2403 or email susan.morris@nzfsa.govt.nz for further guidance.

At the moment our compliance team is in the field taking honey samples at retail outlets to check tutin levels in honey in the marketplace. We will take enforcement action if honey is found over the limit.

Proposal to amend Tutin Standard

MAF has become aware that some beekeepers think Option 2 provides a loophole from testing because of the way it is worded. It has been suggested that it may only be necessary to place supers onto hives between 1 July and 31 December to claim a low-risk harvest date, rather than ensuring supers are also removed by 31 December. Such an interpretation of Option 2 was not the intention, nor was it the proposal consulted on last year prior to the issue of the Standard.

Following such a misinterpretation means that honey harvested after 31 December could be purported to have been harvested during a low-risk period when such is not the case. Given the risks posed by Tutin and the purpose of the Standard, MAF does not consider that the option of taking no action is appropriate. MAF is therefore consulting on an option to amend clause 9 of the Standard to remove the possible ambiguity, by clarifying that beekeepers relying on Option 2 must remove their supers on or before 31 December in the same year in which the supers were put onto the hives. The proposed wording would be along the lines of:

"Option 2 is for the person to hold a written statement from the beekeeper supplying honey confirming that the beekeeper holds records that demonstrate that the honey has been taken from honey supers placed onto hives after 1 July in any year and removed from those hives by 31 December in the same year."

Comments on this proposal or any other matter relating to the Standard can be sent to:

Jim Sim
Principal Adviser (Animal Products)
Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry
PO Box 2526
Wellington

Email: jim.sim@maf.govt.nz

By: 5.00pm Thursday 12 May 2011

Wax moth problems

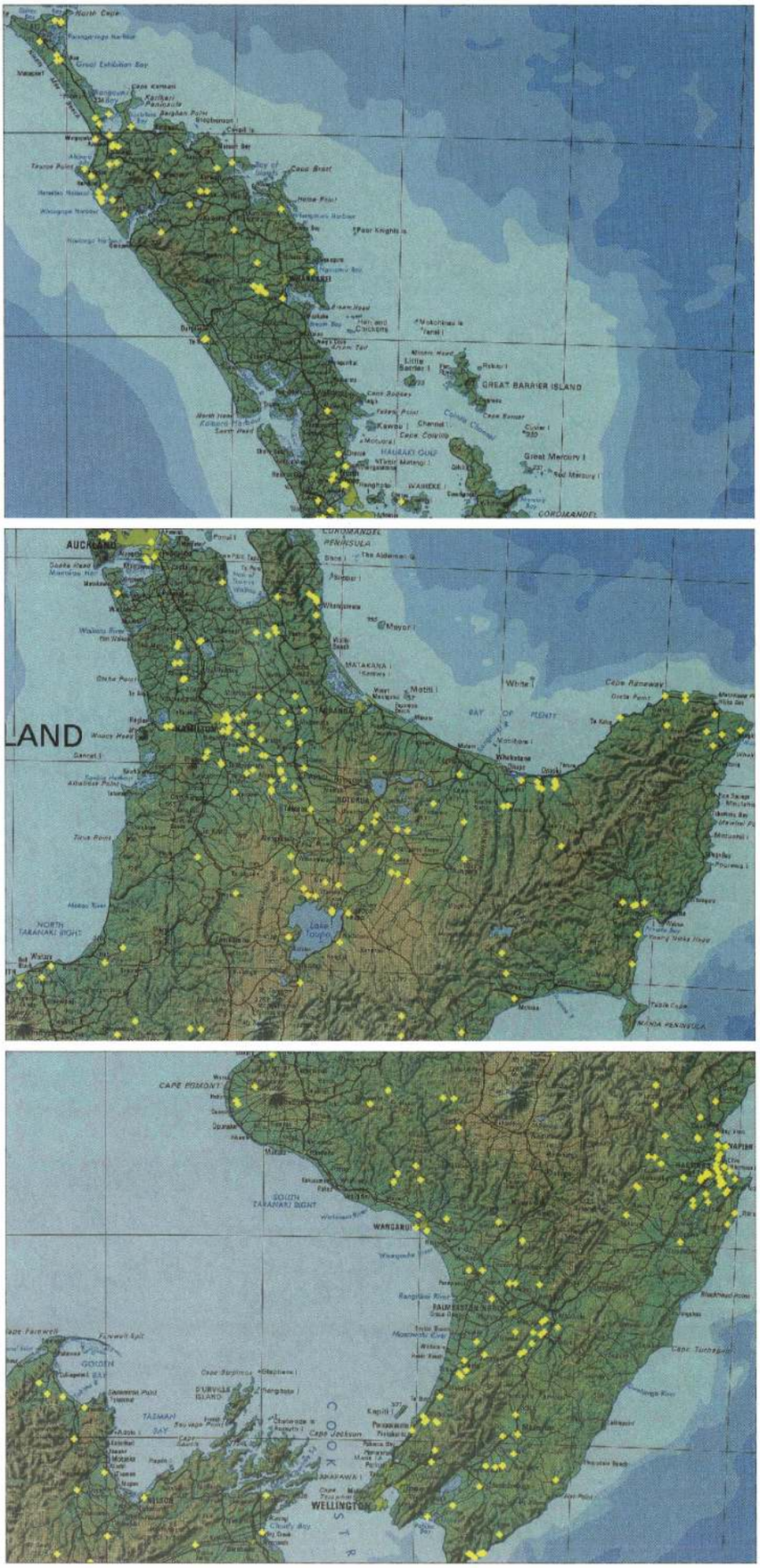
By Frank Lindsay, NBA Life Member

This year a lot of honey supers either didn't go on hives or were taken off early because it was such a poor honey season.

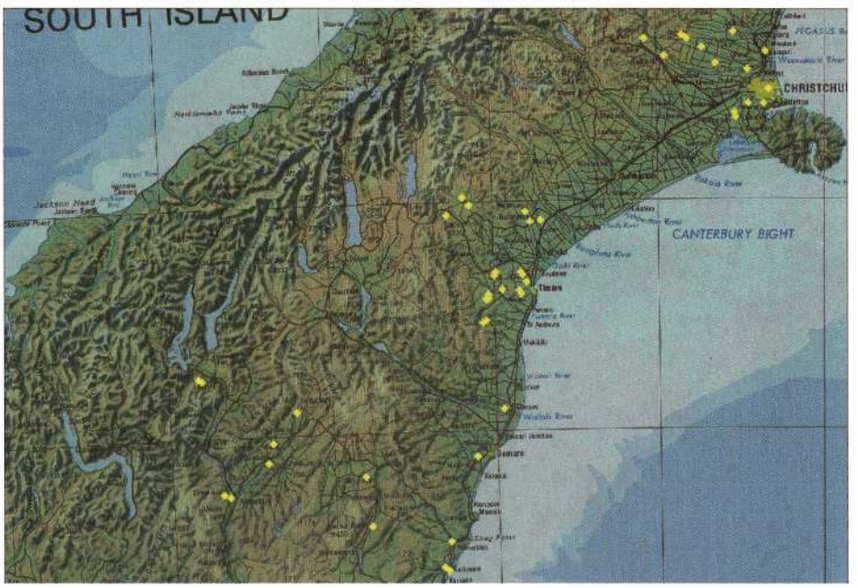
Several beekeepers have reported early wax moth build-up in their supers. They have either had the supers gassed in a sealed container or have stacked them on pallets, shrink wrapped, and had the local coolstore freeze them for a week.

Smaller beekeepers can put supers in plastic bags and use their own freezer to treat them for 48 hours.

AFB Incidence from 18 March 2010 to 17 March 2011




TASMAN BAY
KARAMEA BIGHT
Cape Foulwind
Greymouth
Hokitika
AND


SOUTH ISLAND
CHRISTCHU
CANTERBURY BIGHT
Jackson Head
Timaru
Oamaru


DUNEDIN
FOVEAUX STRAIT

Food Safety Course at Conference

By Tony Roper, Apicultural Officer, AsureQuality, Christchurch

As you are probably aware, AsureQuality has been running a series of successful 'Honey Food Safety & RMP Awareness' courses throughout the South Island and North Island.

These courses have been aimed at RMP operators and staff.

Maureen Maxwell, of the NBA Executive, saw the need for a similar course in basic food safety to target hobbyists and semi-commercial beekeepers. At Maureen's initiative, a half-day course has been developed by AsureQuality Apicultural staff and will be held in conjunction with this year's NBA Conference.

The information presented in the course will give beekeepers a better understanding of food safety and legislation relating to bee products. This course will enable beekeepers to be far better informed and therefore more effective in meeting their legal obligations. Successful completion of the course will result in attendees being issued an AsureQuality certificate in "Food Safety Awareness for the Beekeeper".

Who can come to this course?

The course is designed specifically for beekeepers and people associated with processing honey. However, the course is open to anyone associated with the beekeeping industry. The course will also be useful for beekeepers who may wish to set up their own processing plant at some future date.

What will the workshops cost?

To help cover the costs of developing the course together with the costs of the venue and catering, $57.50 per person will be charged for the half day. Afternoon tea together will be supplied. All other meals, transport and accommodation are the attendee's responsibility.

What will the course cover?

- Introduction
- Food Poisoning and Food Safety
- Tutin in Honey
- Afternoon tea break
- Beekeeper Requirements: covering both primary and secondary processing
- Short test with discussion on answers afterwards

Who will run the courses?

Apicultural Officers and RMP verifiers from AsureQuality Limited, Tony Roper and Marco Gonzalez, will deliver the courses together with assistance from Maureen Maxwell.

Where and when will the courses be held?

It is planned to run a half-day course at this year's NBA Conference in Auckland. The course will be held at 1:00 pm on Monday 27 June 2011. Places are limited because of the size of the room to 100 trainees and places will be allocated on a first-in, first-served basis.

Please contact Margaret Roper roperm@asurequality.com for a registration form, or download the form from nba.org.nz. Return your registration form to Margaret Roper as soon as possible so that you do not miss out.

Notice of 2011 Annual General/Special Meeting

The AGM will be held in Waipuna Hotel & Conference Centre, Auckland on Thursday 30 June 2011, commencing at 9.00am

Pursuant to the Rules of the Association:
Notices of Motion and any **Proposals to Alter Rules** must be received by the Chief Executive Officer no later than 5.00pm on Friday 6 May 2011.

Ward representatives: Nominations for Ward representatives must be received by the Chief Executive Officer no later than 5.00pm on Friday 6 May 2011. Elections for 2011 Ward representatives are required in the following wards:

Northern	Northland and Auckland
Waikato	Waikato
East Coast	Poverty Bay & Hawke's Bay
Upper South Island	Nelson & Marlborough
Lower South Island	Otago & Southland

Daniel Paul and Pauline Downie, Joint Chief Executive Officers

Manuka honey money spinner development

News release from Manuka Health New Zealand Ltd, 23 March 2011

Earnings by a leading company in New Zealand's $100 million Manuka honey export industry have the potential to increase ten-fold through use of patented technology outlined at a conference in Auckland today.

Speakers from natural health science company Manuka Health New Zealand Ltd said the development had the potential to be "a 10-times multiplier" in what could be earned from each kilogram of Manuka honey.

A special session of the country's annual NZBIO biotechnology showcase, heard from several speakers about Manuka honey, billed as "New Zealand's foremost bioactive" product.

Manuka Health chief executive Kerry Paul told the conference his company's next generation of Manuka honey products would use patented technology to deliver the active ingredient in forms more akin to pharmaceutical products than jars of honey.

Branded CycloPower, the products will use cyclodextrins, a circular compound made up of oligosaccharide molecules, which has the ability to enhance solubility, stabilise, control release rate, increase bio-availability and absorption.

Mr Paul said the Manuka Health CycloPower range would include products such as throat lozenges. Manuka honey's active ingredient, the naturally-occurring compound Methylglyoxal, would be encapsulated within cyclodextrins as a powder.

The process eliminated the disadvantages of delivering the active ingredient in honey—such as acidity, taste and odour—and opened the way to a wide range of applications such as eye drops, nasal sprays, topical creams and oral capsules.

"CycloPower moves us a long way from a pot of honey," he said, "improving bioactivity, easy of use and convenience, and with a presentation consistent with medical applications."

"From a commercial perspective it increases the multiples earned per kilogram of honey by around 10 times. It opens up new frontiers, mid-way between natural health and pharmaceutical products."

Mr Paul said Manuka Health was collaborating with international cyclodextrin expert Professor Keiji Terao, of Tokyo University of Agriculture and Technology, who will also address the NZBIO conference.

Prof Terao is a director of the International Cyclodextrin Society and vice-president of the Japan Cyclodextrin Industrial Society.

Manuka Health research and development manager Dr Lynne Chepulis told the conference that antibacterial studies being carried out by Auckland University using reference strains of common bacteria had found significant differences in growth. Cyclopower showed significantly higher rates of bacterial inhibition than the raw Manuka honey.

Further studies are planned using different bacteria, including those responsible for sore throats, stomach ulcers, pneumonia and respiratory diseases.

Dr Chepulis said CycloPower-type compounds were already in use in pharmaceuticals and cosmetics. They were recognised as safe by the United States Federal Drug Administration. "Common uses are beauty creams with encapsulated Vitamin C, and in the angina supplement coenzyme Q10."

Oral delivery of Manuka honey's active ingredient Methyglyoxal opened up many possibilities to make better use of its antibacterial, antifungal and anti-inflammatory properties.

"It is well-recognised that Manuka honey high in Methylglyoxyl *[Methyglyoxal]* is beneficial for health and wellness. The problem is in standardising the product and providing effective delivery methods."

"CycloPower's encapsulation within cyclodextrin compounds achieves that. For example, lozenges with small amounts of methylglyoxal could replace large doses of honey necessary to counter dilution in the gut.

"The formation of a Manuka CycloPower complex also allows the active ingredients in Manuka Honey to be delivered to the lower gut. The complex acts to stabilise the honey compounds and should provide a slower rate of Methylglyoxal release; thereby allowing it to work for longer.

"By standardising delivery we have more options," Dr Chepulis said.

Enquiries:
Trish Keenan
Ph +64 9 580 1150

Do you have a burning question about beekeeping?

Are you worried about your beeswax?

Mystified about moths moving in? Well fear not, help is at hand. Every keen beekeeper has a list of questions they'd love to know the answers to. Luckily, the NBA has our local beekeeping brainboxes on hand to answer any beekeeping-related queries, from giving your hives a helping hand to sussing out your swarms.

APIWEB update: March 2011

By Byron Taylor, Apiculture Officer, AsureQuality Limited

Good progress has been made since my last report.

Here's where we are as at March 2011 and the plan for the remainder of the season.

In mid-January 2011 APIWEB was released to commercial beekeepers who, at the time, had 500 or more hives registered. This included approximately 200 beekeeping enterprises which, between them, manage over 304,000 hives on 15,132 apiaries. While this is a relatively small number of beekeepers, it is worth noting that this group accounts for almost two thirds of the apiary records held in the apiary database. This means that the majority of the apiary records held on the database can now be updated online by the beekeepers themselves. APIWEB is coping well with the current volume of information being processed through the system, but has not been without the odd issue (mostly at the data capture end of the process). Most issues have been around mapping, which has resulted in some additional work for the Apiary Registrars but this has now largely been addressed.

We have also had a number of suggestions for improvement from beekeepers using the system. Some of these have been acted on while others, although sometimes very good ideas, will have to wait until more development funds are available. One enhancement that we are currently considering is the ability to print off a Master Beekeeper List. This is a line-by-line summary of a beekeeper's apiary holding and is one of beekeepers' most frequently requested documents.

Looking forward, the second group of beekeepers that very soon will receive access information for APIWEB is the group of beekeepers operating 50–500 hives. This group totals around 335 beekeepers and would take the total percentage of apiaries able to be managed via APIWEB to 84%.

I am also aware that there are a vast number of beekeepers with smaller hive holdings who are very keen to try out the new system. All I can say at this stage is thank you for your continued patience. Things should move more quickly now that we are confident that APIWEB is 'stable under load' (i.e., it doesn't fail when many people try to use it at the same time).

Finally, I would like to again thank those that have contributed to the development of APIWEB, including:

- The Management Agency for the National American Foulbrood Pest Management Strategy: www.afb.org.nz
- MAF Biosecurity New Zealand: www.biosecurity.govt.nz
- AsureQuality Limited: www.asurequality.com

As always, we are hoping to be able to continuously improve on the system as funding allows, both in usability and functionality, so we appreciate your feedback.

AFB Recognition and Competency Course

(An opportunity to sit the test)

TO BE RUN IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE NATIONAL BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION OF NEW ZEALAND (INC.) 2011 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

HOST: National Beekeepers' Association of New Zealand (Inc.) – Auckland Branch
WHEN: 27 June 2011 (Monday), in conjunction with the NBA 2011 Annual Conference
VENUE: Waipuna Conference Centre, Mt Wellington, Auckland
COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr David Woodward, Apiculture Technical Adviser, Agribusiness Training
START: 8.30 am FINISH: 1.00 pm
COST: **$55.00 to attend course and sit the test.** $15.00 to attend as a "refresher only" and not sit the test.
CATERING: Morning tea provided **REGISTRATION DEADLINE: 10 June 2011 (Friday)**
CONTACT FOR COURSE REGISTRATION: Mary-Ann Lindsay
Address: 26 Cunliffe Street, Johnsonville, Wellington. Phone: (04) 478 3367. Email: lindsays.apiaries@clear.net.nz
PAYMENT OPTIONS: Direct Credit: F or M-A Lindsay, TSB Bank Direct 15-3959-0146898-00 or a cheque made out to Mary-Ann Lindsay

IMPORTANT NOTES:

- Applications to attend the course will not be accepted after 10 June 2011 (Friday), nor will they be accepted on the day of the course. If you intend participating in this course, you are asked to obtain a copy of the booklet *Elimination of American Foulbrood Disease Without the Use of Drugs* (commonly referred to as the 'Yellow Book'. This publication can be obtained from:
- Your local beekeeping supplier or • National Beekeepers' Association of New Zealand (Inc.) PO Box 10792, Wellington
  Phone: (04) 471 6254 Email: secretary@nba.org.nz Attention: Jessica Williams
  Cost: $31.50 (includes $1.50 postage)

- Rex Baynes, AFB NPMS Manager

The Management Agency - Biosecurity (National American Foulbrood Pest Management Strategy) Order 1998
Special Purpose Financial Statements Year Ended 31 May 2010

AUDIT REPORT

To the Minister of Agriculture:

We have audited the special purpose financial statements of The Management Agency Biosecurity (National American Foulbrood Pest Management Strategy) Order 1998 on pages 2 to 5. The special purpose financial statements provide information about the past financial performance of The Management Agency Biosecurity (National Foulbrood Pest Management Strategy) Order 1998 as at 31st May 2010. This information is stated in accordance with the accounting policies set out on page 6.

Executive Committee Responsibilities
The Committee is responsible for the preparation of the special purpose financial statements which fairly reflects the financial position of The Management Agency Biosecurity (National American Foulbrood Pest Management Strategy) Order 1998 as at 31st May 2010 and of the results of their operations for the year ended 31st May 2010.

Auditor's Responsibilities
It is our responsibility to express an independent opinion on the special purpose financial statements presented by the Committee.

Basis of Opinion
An audit includes examining, on a test basis evidence relevant to the amounts and disclosures in the special purpose financial statements. It also includes assessing:

- the significant estimates and judgments made by the Committee in the preparation of the special purpose financial statements; and
- whether the accounting policies are appropriate to The Management Agency Biosecurity (National American Foulbrood Pest Management Strategy) Order 1998 circumstances, consistently applied and adequately disclosed.

We conducted our audit in accordance with New Zealand Auditing Standards. We planned and performed our audit so as to obtain all the information and explanations which we considered necessary in order to provide us with sufficient evidence to obtain reasonable assurance that the special purpose financial statements are free from material misstatements, whether caused by fraud or error. In forming our opinion we also evaluated the overall adequacy of the presentation of information in the special purpose financial statements.

Other than in our capacity as auditor, we have no other relationship with or interest in The Management Agency Biosecurity (National American Foulbrood Pest Management Strategy) Order 1998.

Unqualified opinion
We have obtained all the information and explanations we have required.

In our opinion:
- proper accounting records have been kept by The Management Agency Biosecurity (National American Foulbrood Pest Management Strategy) Order 1998 as far as appears from our examination of those records; and
- the financial report on pages 2 to 5 complies with generally accepted accounting practice in New Zealand and fairly reflects the financial position of The Management Agency Biosecurity (National American Foulbrood Pest Management Strategy) Order 1998 and the results of its operations for the year ended 31st May 2010.

Our audit was completed on the 22nd March 2011 and our Unqualified opinion was expressed as at that date.

Auditors: RHB Chartered Accountants Limited
Address: 525 Cameron Road, Tauranga

The Management Agency Biosecurity (National American Foulbrood Pest Management Strategy) Order 1998
Statement of Financial Performance
As at 31st May 2010

	Note	*2010* $	*2009* $
INCOME			
PMS Bio Security Levy		257,552	191,226
Penalty on Levy		26,365	20,217
Interest Received		1,636	3,220
AFB Recognition Course Income		564	0
		286,117	214,664
Levies - Charged Next Year to 31 May	1(b)	301,260	273,972
Less Income in Advance		(301,260)	(273,972)
Total Income		286,117	214,664
LESS EXPENSES			
Accountancy Fees		6,026	3,920
Administration Fees		5,171	9,401
Aerial Surveillance		6,217	968
AFB Counselling (AsureQuality)		6,000	6,000
AFB Counselling & Audit Admin		11,984	5,521
AFB Hive Inspection		40,551	48,889
ADRs Admin		6,897	5,593
ADR (AsureQuality)		39,014	35,011
AFB Recognition Courses		1,451	0
AP2 Training		3,435	8,669
Apiary database upgrade		10,435	5,515
Audit Fees		4,654	3,200
Bad Debts written off		41,067	6,194
Bank Fees		88	29
Beekeeper Communication		4,349	843
Beekeeper Education		3,400	6,030
COI Admin		3,282	5,115
COI (AsureQuality)		13,677	7,964
Compliance Costs		945	3,117
Conference (NBA)		577	1,159
DECA (AsureQuality)		15,086	13,736
DECA Scheme Admin		2,270	1,949
Default Inspections		3,262	2,602
EFB Working Party Expenses		3,472	0
Honoraria		0	4,000
Plant & Food Research Ltd		15,618	9,409
Insurance		773	766
Legal Expenses - re Collection		3,558	4,233
Magazine Expenditure		7,883	9,924
Manager Branch Visits		5,311	3,540
Meetings Management Agency		5,226	9,882
Postage Stationery & Printing		10,010	10,238
Reporting Government		1,439	545
Telephone		4,722	3,907
Travel & Accommodation		7,712	5,267
Website Expenses		959	1,958
Total Expenses		296,520	245,096
NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)		(10,403)	(30,433)

NOTE: This statement is to be read in conjunction with the Notes to the Financial Statements.

The Management Agency Biosecurity (National American Foulbrood Pest Management Strategy) Order 1998
Statement of Movements in Equity
As at 31st May 2010

	Note	2010 $	2009 $
EQUITY AT START OF PERIOD		(45,296)	(14,863)
SURPLUS & REVALUATIONS			
Net Surplus (Deficit) After Tax		(10,403)	(30,433)
Total recognised revenues & expenses		(10,403)	(30,433)
OTHER MOVEMENTS		-	-
EQUITY AT END OF PERIOD		(55,699)	(45,296)

The Management Agency Biosecurity (National American Foulbrood Pest Management Strategy) Order 1998
Statement of Financial Position
As at 31st May 2010

	Note	2010 $	2009 $
CURRENT ASSETS			
National Bank of New Zealand		202,304	158,273
Accounts Receivable	1(b)	94,530	141,669
Total Current Assets		296,834	299,943
TOTAL ASSETS		296,834	299,943
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
GST Payable	1(c)	16,193	18,659
Accounts Payable		35,079	52,607
Income in Advance		301,260	273,972
Total Current Liabilities		352,532	345,238
TOTAL LIABILITIES		352,532	345,238
NET ASSETS		($55,699)	(45,296)
Represented by:			
EQUITY			
Funds Settled		(52,064)	(52,064)
Retained Earnings		(3,634)	6,769
TOTAL EQUITY		($55,699)	($45,296)

Treasurer _____ Chairperson _____

Date 10/3/2011 16/3/11

NOTE: This statement is to be read in conjunction with the Notes to the Financial Statements.

The Management Agency Biosecurity (National American Foulbrood Pest Management Strategy) Order 1998
Notes to the Financial Statements For the Year Ended 31st May 2010

1 REPORTING BASIS AND NATURE OF BUSINESS

The National Beekeepers Association is a non-profit organisation that acts for and facilitates on industry matters for the benefit of its members.
Further to this it has been appointed as the Management Agency for the AFB NPMS. The duties relating to this appointment are set out in the Blosecurity (National American Foulbrood Pest Management Strategy) Order 1998. Levies used to pay for the running of the AFB NPMS are collected through the Biosecurity (American Foulbrood - Apiary & Beekeeper Levy) Order 2003. Pursuant to the Biosecurity Act 1993 the Management Agency must provide transparent financial records with respect to the management of the AFB NPMS Levy Order and this is what is reported in these statements.

The Management Agency; Biosecurity National American Foulbrood Management Strategy is a non-profit organisation.

The accounting principles recognised as appropriate for the measurement and reporting of earnings and financial position on an historical cost basis have been used, with the exception of certain items for which specific accounting policies have been identified.

a. Changes in Accounting Policies

There have been no changes in accounting policies. All policies have been applied on bases consistent with those used in previous years.

b. Receivables

Receivables are stated at their estimated realisable value. Bad debts are written off in the year in which they are identified.
Member levies for the year ended 31 May 2011 have been charged prior to 31 May 2010.
The amounts unpaid at 31 May 2010 are included in the Accounts Receivable balance. An adjustment for levies charged in advance is shown in the Statement of Financial Performance.

c. Goods & Services Tax

These financial statements have been prepared on a GST exclusive basis with the exception of Accounts Receivable and Accounts Payable which are shown inclusive of GST.

2 AUDIT

These financial statements have been subject to audit, please refer to Auditor's Report.

3 CONTINGENT LIABILITIES

At balance date there are no known contingent liabilities (2009:$0).

4 SECURITIES AND GUARANTEES

There was no secured overdraft as at balance date nor was any facility arranged. The Management Agency Biosecurity (National American Foulbrood Pest Management Strategy) Order 1998 has not granted any securities or guarantees in respect of liabilities payable by any other party whatsoever.

2011 NBA CONFERENCE

Attention: Commercial Beekeepers

Open forum meeting of all participants in the AFB National Pest Management Strategy

27 June 2011
Waipuna Conference Centre, Auckland, at 1.30pm

Chair: Allen McCaw
Attendees will include:

- Rex Baynes, AFB NPMS Manager
- AFB NPMS Management Committee
- AP1s (AsureQuality Limited)
- AP2s (as many as possible)
- Area Coordinators
- And **you**, the levy payers.

This is your opportunity to attend and listen to and voice any and all concerns about the AFB NPMS operation.

The NPMS is important to keep a lid on disease and obtain export certification for bee products and live bees. If you are involved in any of these activities, you need to take an interest. This meeting is open to all, both NBA members and non-members.

The agenda will be advertised in the May issue of *The New Zealand BeeKeeper journal*.

Any items to be added to the agenda should be emailed to Bob Russell at bobrussell@kol.co.nz

- Auckland Branch, Conference Committee

The NBA, you and me

By Colin McLean, Auckland Branch

I've been around the NBA for about 25 years. I started as a hobbyist, worked for a large commercial beekeeper, built my own business, became a hobbyist again and built another beekeeping business.

So what's this got to do with the NBA? Well, not a lot. The NBA is an industry organisation, run by volunteers. For the most part they don't get paid anything. They contribute because they believe that working together and having a collective voice is beneficial to everyone. I admire some of these people who have tirelessly given their time, and money in supporting the beekeeper industry.

So should we support the NBA? Some of you ask why? What does the NBA do for me? Why doesn't it control its costs better? The problem with these questions is they see the NBA as being something separate from you and me. The NBA is made up of individuals who do their best to work together. The politics and self-interest, the differences of opinion and diverse views make this all rather complex, but within this lie our strengths.

I still think the branch structure has and will always be the essential link between beekeepers and the NBA. So while it may seem hard to justify and we all want value for money, maybe we can all dig a little deeper to support the NBA. The NBA to survive also needs to be more lean and mean—that's how beekeepers survive.

Varroa resistance and Nosema

By John Berry

News has just reached me that mites have been found in the Hamilton area showing a marked resistance to synthetic pyrethroids.

This will come as no surprise to those of us who have inspected hives for American foulbrood and found strips that have been in the hives for several years. Varroa has turned up in Hawke's Bay a lot earlier than normal in some areas and seems to be causing a lot more harm at lower mite levels than in the past. It is very important that you check your hives at the end of the treatment period.

I am getting more comments about the PMS and the NBA from both commercial and hobby beekeepers saying that they are a waste of time. Personally I fully support them and believe the problems stem from the toothless legislation that was foisted on the industry.

The NZFSA can put expenses and draconian legislation onto beekeepers at the stroke of a pen (I'm not saying all this legislation is unnecessary) but when gross abuse of our AFB legislation is found, or when you find hives with strips that have been left in for years, a stern talking to is the most that is likely to happen.

If this behaviour only affected the beekeepers concerned that would not be a problem but the ongoing ramifications for the industry, especially in the case of varroa, are going to be horrendous.

Another question that has been asked is how did the new strain of nosema get into New Zealand? Considering the devastating consequences of this new disease, MAF head office seems to be sitting on its hands. Perhaps they could investigate the rumours I have heard that someone illegally imported Caucasian bees to New Zealand in the recent past. I hope this is not true but I have heard of queens being offered.

By the way if it turns out to be true, how about a 10-year jail sentence rather than a slap on the wrist? A permanent ban on keeping bees for any persons involved with this would also be a good idea.

On a lighter note, a hobbyist friend of mine has extracted over 200 kg of honey from his one hive this year, a remarkable achievement even when you consider that he got his original hive from me. I won't tell you where he keeps his hive but perhaps we should all be moving our hives into the middle of town.

FROM THE COLONIES

Auckland Branch

What a strange season we've had: drought, then unseasonable rain and early cold snaps. The bees have been as confused as we are; however, our worries are mere trifles by comparison with our Canterbury counterparts. We send our condolences, commiserations and best wishes for a speedy recovery.

Harvest is basically finished—overall the crop seems down. For Auckland it's been a 'dark honey' year and the conditions have left our bees strong and healthy, with plenty of pollen still coming in.

Conference update

Conference planning is powering along. We can now confirm four international speakers: Gilles Ratia, President of Apimondia from France; Randy Oliver, a prolific honey commentator from California; young newcomer Blake Shook from Texas and Dr Charles Claudianos, a fascinating scientist from the Brain Institute in Queensland, who will be speaking on bee navigation.

The plans are for an exciting and inspirational programme with a wide variety of topics covered for all beekeepers from beginner to mega commercial. Mark Sunday 26 June through to Thursday 30 June in your diaries now! See the conference registration liftout in this issue, or go to the website www.nba.org.nz for competition entry forms, programme, registrations and accommodation details.

- Maureen Maxwell,
Northern Ward Representative

Poverty Bay Branch

This season in our area will certainly be noted as one of the worst in regard to volume taken. The brilliant mid-March weather would have been welcomed a little earlier, but this seems to be a cycle for the past three years.

Recalling past observations, it can leave hives hungry going into winter because they are using more energy looking for food sources that are not there, therefore using their feed stocks quicker.

There have been very few reported instances of AFB, which is good to know. However, just because it is not being found does not mean beekeepers can become complacent or cut corners.

Varroa mite levels seem to be very low this autumn due to no swarms leaving the hives in spring because of the poor weather conditions here. A note for South Islanders new to varroa: the later that swarms leave in late spring/summer, the later the swarm will break down and be robbed from varroa in autumn. Therefore keep an eye on varroa treatments.

You have probably heard this before but it is a timely reminder, just like my next statement: alternating varroa treatments is not a choice but a must, even if you are using a thymol product! For those who remain organic, good luck, as I continue to only use organic methods too.

Our best wishes go to those affected by the earthquakes in the South Island.

- Don Simm, Branch President

Nelson Branch

It feels as if autumn has arrived virtually overnight. There's an evening chill in the air that wasn't there a matter of days ago and the leaves on the poplars are turning yellow: a promise of things to come!

The last of the honey has been harvested and all the varroa treatments are in. There are plenty of stores left on the hives for winter and hives are still looking strong.

Wasps are starting to be a real problem in some areas. One hive in a yard we arrived at yesterday looked to be busy working, but on closer inspection proved to be wasps raiding the hive.

Autumn cells have gone in and autumn queens are all installed, with site clearing and mouse guards the only things left to do.

It's been an *annus horribilis* for a lot of us in the top of the South, necessitating a rethink of holiday plans. Having said that, it seems ridiculous to moan about a lack of honey when just down the road in Christchurch they are having a truly terrible time.

It looks like the orchardists and kiwifruit growers will harvest a good crop and we hope they can get some decent returns on their fruit this year. Unfortunately the berry growers were hit yet again by some really gnarly weather right on harvest, so we can only hope they get a good price for what was left.

As this issue is going to all registered beekeepers, I just want to mention again that there has been some thieving of honey boxes going on. One area in particular was hit very hard with around 30 boxes of honey stolen.

This is about as low as it gets, and I know that there's a beekeeper out there reading this who knows exactly where those honey boxes are.

- Gareth Ayers

Otago Branch

Otago has had an oddball season. Like fishing sometimes, the big one got away just as you started planning the feast.

Three months of brilliant spring and early summer had the bees in fantastic order, but just as the heat and an oncoming drought peaked we got midsummer rains. At first it was welcome with new flowers blooming and hives on a roll, but suddenly the tables turned. The showers and cloudy weather set in for the first two months of the year and hives went into slow-mo, or worse, started eating 'our' crop. Thrown in for good measure, in one 24-hour period in February we had a 38-degree morning, a 12 degree temperature freefall over a 20-minute span at lunch, 60 mm of rain that night and snow on the hilltops the next morning. No wonder the bees went on strike!

Actually, for many the outcome hasn't been too much different to the previous year. It's still a low average crop, but it sure feels different. Getting a half-up cup when you thought you might have none somehow felt a lot better than this way round.

Predictably, now in March, the weather is generally better. Autumn queens should be mating well and many areas are getting a steady late flow of yellow flowers and thistles, so hives should winter down well. →

On the positive side too, prices are holding high for clover due to short supply and keen demand.

Varroa still seems to be confined to just some western parts of Central, so many in the south may enjoy a year or more free of it yet.

Hobbyist numbers continue to grow and an April meeting is planned for Cromwell with the prospect of a new Central Otago Beekeepers club being formed. *[Editor's note: a small steering committee was elected on 3 April to work towards the establishment of a club.]*

Another season is all but over and before we know it we will be planning our first moves for next spring.

-Peter Sales, Branch Secretary

The international code for marking queens. A quick way to remember the code:

When	White	1/6
You	Yellow	2/7
Requeen	Red	3/8
Get the	Green	4/9
Best	Blue	5/0

Essentials for successful wintering

By Frank Lindsay, NBA Life Member

It's April and we are preparing hives for the winter.

For most it hasn't been a very productive season and with a continuing dribble of nectar coming in, the bees have produced large amounts of brood. Some hives even swarmed during February and March as we had conditions that mimicked early spring.

The robbing season has mostly finished but it's important not to have the hives open for too long. Think about the essentials for successful wintering:

- *a young queen*, although I mostly go by the brood pattern. I like to see a good solid brood pattern with very few missed cells, centred mostly in the lower brood chamber
- *plenty of healthy bees:* you need one or two generations of bees that have been reared in mite-free conditions. They have built up internal fat reserves, will survive most of the winter and are the bees that will feed the brood when the queen starts laying again in July
- *plenty of stored honey:* a single super hive should have at least six frames of honey and a couple of pollen and honey. A two-high hive should have 10 frames of honey plus pollen frames. The more honey, the better
- *a hive free of disease:* strong hives will sometimes rob weak hives to increase their reserve of honey. As well as honey, they will bring back varroa mites and if the hive was diseased, spread AFB to your hive
- *a dry environment inside the hive:* ideally the hive should have one complete air change every hour. I use a combined hive mate/split board with a 25mm wide entrance on one side. This provides a complete air change in our district (the entrance side is normally downwards when on the hive). Others might find a matchstick under each corner is enough to keep the sides of the supers dry and lets the moisture that accumulates under the crown board to get away. It can be slightly damp in the middle of the crown board during winter but shouldn't drip water on to the bees below.

Inspecting hives after robbing season

The inspection after the robbing season has finished is one of the most important inspections you make during the year. From this inspection you will decide as to whether to take this hive through to spring or if some aspects are deficient, to combine it with another hive and produce a new one in the spring.

> "The inspection after the robbing season has finished is one of the most important inspections you make during the year."

One of the causes of colony death during winter apart from running out of stores (beekeeper neglect) is queen failure. She either becomes a drone layer or just dies and the bees are unable to replace her. Another cause that happens when varroa is new to a district is your bees will rob dying feral hives, bring back varroa mites and within a month your hive is dead. This can be quite distressing for a new beekeeper but in beekeeping, since varroa arrived, you can expect that between five and 15 percent of hives will die during the winter.

The inspection. Heft the hive to judge its weight. Standing beside to the hive, place your hand in the top super's handhold and try lifting up the back of the hive. A two-storey hive full of honey is hard to lift. A light hive (easy to lift) means that you will need to feed it to get at least seven full frames of honey—enough to take the hive through to early spring (mid August). Therefore you should prepare five to eight litres of 50/50 sugar syrup and repeat every few days. Hefting gives an indication only. I found a hive that was heavy, but on inspection it was full of stored pollen—the result of a failing queen!

Before opening a hive, put three or four puffs of smoke into the entrance and take a moment to observe what's going on at the entrance. Bees flying, pollen on the bees' legs, the odd drone being pushed out of the hive are all normal signs. Entrances at this time are reduced to whatever the bees can guard. A strong hive can handle a 100-mm entrance but smaller hives can be reduced down to whatever they can handle. If there are wasps about, close it down even further to what they can defend. (Small nucs should only be a finger-width wide.)

After a couple of minutes, put another couple of puffs into the entrance and then look over the hive. Is the stand or the pallet it's sitting on still structurally sound? The pallet or hive stand has to take a lot of weight: you don't want it to collapse and tip the hive over in the middle of the honey flow, so change things now when there isn't any pressure on you. It's essential that hives are up off the ground 100mm to 150mm so there is air circulation under the hive. Is the bottom board on a very slight slope so the rains will run off and not into the hive? Are there any supers that have shrunken bits or corners that are rotting? Get spares now so they are ready to go on during the inspection. Is the hive still getting plenty of sun? Trees grow and may need a little trimming to let in more light.

After another couple of minutes you are now ready to start your inspection. The bees will have reacted to the smoke and this will change their responses from one of guarding to one of preservation where some will have taken in a little honey. Gently remove the roof and place it upside down in front of the hive. Then with the hive tool, break the propolis seal of the crown board, mat or inner cover and as you lift it up, gently puff three of four puffs of smoke over the top of the frames to drive any defensive bees down in between the frames. The smoke will disguise any alarm pheromone and give you control of the hive. Look at the distribution of the bees in the super. They will mostly be

Continued on page 49

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- **Research in Hungary showed that colonies fed FeedBee produced significantly more honey than the colonies that were not fed, and that Nosema levels at the end of winter were lower in the FeedBee-fed colonies.**

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near the frames with brood in them. If the super is full of honey, there will be a scattering of bees through the super. Next, force the hive tool into the corner between the first and second super and lever the supers apart. Some hives are well sealed and you may have to lever both front corners to get the propolis seal to break apart. As you are doing this, peer in between the supers to see if any frames have been braced together. Force these apart with the tip of the hive tool to prevent the frames in the lower super being lifted up when the top super is removed. It may be necessary to put a 15–25mm piece of wood between the super to hold them apart so you can lever the frames back down into the lower super. (Most beekeepers remove this brace comb but I leave a bit in the middle so the bees can use it as a ladder. The same goes for the brace comb just under the crown board near the opening in the crown board: bees build this to reduce draft so don't remove it all.)

After doing this, add a couple of puffs of smoke in the space between the supers to quieten the bees and then lift off the super and place it on the upturned roof. Ideally it should be very heavy and full of honey. You can see if it is all completely capped by looking along the bottom bars.

Now look at the top of the super on the bottom board and observe the distribution of the bees. Greater numbers will be in the middle four frames or the four frames towards the sunniest side of the hive: this is where the frames of brood are. You want to inspect three of the brood frames to check the brood pattern and for AFB where the bees are emerging. But first you must clean and inspect the bottom board. Clean any build-up of debris off the bottom boards and put it back in position. Check that it slopes slightly and that the entrance restrictor/mouse guard is held in tight. I have permanent entrance guards 100mm by 9 mm that prevent mice getting in. During winter, a mouse can cause an enormous amount of damage and eat the hive's honey reserves, resulting in one dead hive in the spring and a happy family of mice. (I also put out mouse baits in plastic Sodastream syrup bottles under a couple of pallets to help control mice and rat populations.) Now replace the first super on the bottom board.

Remove the outside frame and lever the others across to where the majority of the bees are. Start removing the frames, one by one, and inspect the brood. You don't have to look for the queen—eggs in the bottom of the cells mean you have a queen. A good brood pattern with only a few missed cells means she is relatively young. You may also observe a torn-down queen cell as quite a few hives produced supersedure cells last month and now these queens are mated and laying.

No brood or eggs could mean the hive is queenless or is still going through the supersedure process. Get a frame with eggs from another hive (check for disease first) and place this in the centre of the brood nest. In four or five days, check again to see if the bees have started to produce emergency queen cells—a few cells with the larvae swimming in royal jelly. If you find the bees have started to produce queen cells, try and order a new queen, or if none are available, scratch out all the cells and combine this hive with another strong hive using two sheets of newsprint.

> "What is most important with maintaining nuc hives through the winter is that they start by being absolutely full of bees."

On the frames with brood, check the areas where the bees are emerging. Move the bees out of the way with your finger or shake the bees off the frame into the bottom of the super. Look for those capped cells that remain in the area where the bees have emerged and with the tip of the hive tool, flick off the cappings. All should have healthy larvae underneath at about the same stage of development.

Those that are not alive should be checked for AFB. AFB will continue to rope out no matter how many times you try, while sacbrood will only rope out once then it goes all watery.

Read *Elimination of American foulbrood without the use of drugs—a practical manual for beekeepers* (the revised edition of the 'yellow book') before the inspection and work with another beekeeper if you are not confident). This book should tell you all you want to know. A good brood pattern indicates a good queen, the hive is disease free and you have at least a super full of bees. Put a puff of smoke over the top of the frames to drive the bees down, remove the varroa treatments and then put the hive back together. Now it's up the bees to form a cluster and survive the winter.

Some beekeepers will have made nucleus hives during the summer. These can be left in four-frame boxes but being small, they will lose heat quite easily. Cut some builder's foil to a size that covers two-thirds of the frame surface. This will reflect the heat given off by the bees back down and they will use less honey during the winter. The slightly smaller size than the frames will allow moisture to escape.

On average, I replace the two outside frames during the winter in most of my nucs with another two honey frames. What is most important with maintaining nuc hives through the winter is that they start by being absolutely full of bees. You can even winter a four high half-frame nuc if it's in dry conditions and has adequate honey reserves, but they must be full of bees to maintain a cluster.

Others will put their nucs into full-sized supers, add another six frames of honey and pollen and put these on top of an existing hive. The heat from the hive below helps to maintain the nuc hive above and this saves on extra bases and roofs.

Things to do this month

Winter down. Check food, do an AFB check, remove varroa treatments (check that they have been successful—one or less natural mite fall in 24 hours). Slope bottom board for winter drainage and fit mouse guards. Some put a sloping board in front of the entrance to allow those bees out flying during the winter to crawl back up into the hive if they fall short of the entrance.

Replace supers and bottom boards that are rotten or damaged, attend to fences, check for wasps. (Some districts have had it bad this year.) Store extra supers and check stored honey supers for the presence of wax moth; control mice around the sheds. Control the grass around the hives. I also like to tie my hives so that if pushed or they fall over stay together. Most beekeepers put rocks on their hives to stop roofs being blown off during winter.

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Hive management

By Carol Downer and Kim Kneijber, Auckland Beekeepers' Club

In January 2008, after our apiary hives had swarmed more than normal, the committee decided something drastic needed to happen.

As we have an educational apiary and have members with different ideas about hive management, we handed responsibility of each hive to a hive manager. We have an apiary manager responsible for making decisions that affect the apiary overall, and the committee usually confers on decisions about varroa treatment and extraction of honey.

At that time there were six hives at the apiary, consisting of five Langstroth hives and a long hive (the latter was designed for use for those with bad backs or similar). Since 2010, with the number of new beekeepers wanting to use alternative beehives, we now have a top bar hive. The hive managers came up with plans and hive set-ups that would reduce swarming and either produce a lot of honey, comb honey or be treated organically.

The club has formal meetings during the day on the second Saturday of each month, and a fortnightly meeting in-between from spring through to autumn. We are able to check the hives regularly during the most active time of the season.

Overview

All hives have screened floors. The aim for most of the hive managers was to have a honey harvest, and honey was collected in either three-quarter-depth supers or full-depth (F/D) unless otherwise stated below.

The aim is to experience a different style of beekeeping. As most of the club members are urban beekeepers, swarming if possible should be prevented, as most of us have neighbours in close proximity.

The plans below have worked to a limited degree.

Hive 1

- The aim was to organically treat; however, due to our lack of experience and fear of losing a hive, it was treated with chemical strips in the first year.
- For the past two years the hive has been treated organically.
- Lessons: do regular mite counts and if necessary, take honey off to treat. Any time there is a high mite count, do an extra treatment.

Hive 2

- This was run as a single F/D brood box and queen excluder, with three-quarter-depth honey boxes.
- Swarm control: use frames of brood for nucs with the old queen and requeen/ take frames of brood out to place in any weak hive.
- Cut out any queen cells that may be present when inspecting.
- Check that honey and pollen have not reduced the laying space/check overcrowding.
- This worked relatively well over the season.

Hive 3

- Is operating as a double F/D brood box with plastic queen excluder. The aim is to produce cut comb and box sections in half-depth boxes.
- Swarm control: check cells by hefting the front of the box and looking for cells on the base of the frames. To swap the brood boxes, change 20% brood frames, and make a nuc over Christmas.
- The plan worked well the first season and was not repeated to the same standard for the following years.

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Auckland Beekeepers' Club hives. Photo: Gilles Ratia.

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Hive 4

- Originally a single F/D brood box, this was to be changed to two three-quarter-depth brood boxes with plastic frames. The changeover would take time and nucs were made during this period. The first year there would be less swarming as the bees would also have to draw out new frames. The honey harvest was expected to be small for the season. The change was also made by moving the F/D frames above the queen excluder, with the queen remaining below on the new frames.
- Over the past winter, high varroa counts were recorded: we nearly lost hives 1 and 4. Both hives were nurtured back to health but did not produce much honey this season.
- The hive manager runs the same system at home, usually producing about 30 kg of honey at a minimum. The advantage of using all the same hiveware allows for easy hive manipulation.

Hive 5

- This hive is basically three F/D supers in length and frames can be built out with boards retaining the bees in an area. There are adapted queen excluders for the sides and on top of the box.
- The first season saw two queens working the hive (one on each end). Then a split was made with the old queen going to a nuc, with more nucs made as swarm control.
- Half-depth supers were added for honey over the season.

A closer look. Photo: Gilles Ratia.

Hive 6

- Is a single F/D brood box with an extended area between the frames and the screen floor of 50mm.
- To avoid swarms, the bees were given plenty of room with supers added.
- The honey supers are three-quarter-depth with plastic frames.
- This hive uses a regular bucket extraction method over the honey flow season to create plenty of ongoing honey storage area, without the build-up of a lot of supers to be extracted once.
  [Editor's note: see article on page 22 of last month's issue.]

Top bar hive

Only in its infancy, the hive manager has been running a top bar hive successfully at home for two years. There have been problems with the bees building more than one comb per bar (can't be inspected!) and weak comb breaking. To rectify these problems, the hive is opened earlier in the day when temperatures are cooler. The design of the starter bars, where the comb is drawn from, has been changed. During the winter reduction of hive size unused bars will be modified using a triangular starter strip.

[Editor's note: Concern has been expressed in some quarters in regard to the legality of top bar hives. The NBA is liaising with AFB NPMS manager, Rex Baynes, and the AFB NPMS Management Agency to gain a ruling on whether top bar hives meet PMS regulatory standards.]

> "...we hear claims about treatments that do and don't work—some of these claims do not ring true."

Other possibilities

Making splits could also be a good way to lessen swarms. However, the club has no need to make increases. We have a large number of new members requiring nucs, and the club has provided nucs by removing frames from the hives, enabling us to renew brood frames regularly.

Lots of nucs were produced this summer for new club members. This sometimes happened at the cost of bee vitality. In these cases the management plans changed from the original.

Treatments

In the beekeepers' network we hear claims about treatments that do and don't work—some of these claims do not ring true. When comparing treatments and their effectiveness, we need to be sure that the overall constitution of the colonies to be compared are the same. Members report on their successes of varroa treatment using a variety of methods. Some suppliers will tell you of large commercial beekeepers using their product and after some experimentation they find a more effective way of using the product other than what the instruction panel gives them, by adapting to New Zealand conditions. (Refer to the article 'Treating with organic varroa treatments' in last month's issue, page 6.) At the club we regularly demonstrate effective monitoring of hives, use mite counting boards, sugar shakes and uncapping drone brood, to check mite presence.

NOTE: Because we put in the mite treatment late, the hives have developed parasitic mite syndrome (PMS).

Requeening

At the apiary we don't necessarily requeen the hives annually in spring or autumn. The hive manager makes the choice. We usually requeen with caged queens and would like to see other options used in the future (e.g., queen cell introduction, grafting.) We have not favoured any race of bees, trying both Italians and Carniolans.

We do not feed our bees in spring to stimulate build up. We monitor the hives through the winter and it is very seldom that the apiary hives require feeding.

Future planning

1. Collect propolis by putting mats on the hives.
2. Ensure that any burr comb or build wax comb is collected each time the hives are opened.
3. Create honey blocks and work without an excluder.
4. Work more with alternative treatments for varroa.
5. Collect pollen, but as this requires regular collection and weather monitoring it won't work unless monitored and visited regularly.

As hobbyists we have time and energy to experience endless management options, and in the process we observe how adaptable the bees can be.

The club's motto is "Learn, Educate".

New quad bike guidelines released

By Frank Lindsay, NBA Life Member

FarmSafe and the Department of Labour want to see zero accidents on farms and have released "guidelines for the safe use of quad bikes" as these are a major contributor.

The Government is serious about reducing the death and injury rate from using these vehicles. Eighteen deaths and 296 serious injuries have been attributed to quad bike accidents, costing ACC $10 million per year. A quarter (25%) of work-related accidents are caused by quad bikes.

Quad bikes are not synonymous with all-terrain vehicles (ATVs). They won't go everywhere so the term has been dropped in favour of "quad bike". These vehicles were initially designed for recreational use only. They are harder to drive than a two wheeler but farmers have adapted them for farm use, sometimes adding on extra equipment they were not designed to carry.

To assist farmers and users of quad bikes, the Department of Labour has released the guidelines. The guide is quite comprehensive with pre-operation checklists and maintenance checklists, as well as competency assessments that have to be signed and dated. Quad bikes require regular maintenance to keep them in safe working order.

Along with the guidelines, FarmSafe has launched its new "quad bike farm licence". To obtain a licence you will need to undertake a quad bike course and do 20 hours of practical experience before it's issued. It's recommended that all quad bike riders obtain this licence.

Helmet wearing is compulsory. A number of farm workers don't like to wear helmets, saying that they fit poorly and obstruct their vision as they don't sit up high enough, but all that's required is to adjust the Velcro strips on the headband to suit. Beanies (without the rolled-up edge) can be worn under the helmet during winter to keep the head warm.

At a recent quad bike demonstration, farm leaders were shown how to get out of difficult situations. Also featured was the new all-purpose helmet designed by Pacific Helmets Ltd Wanganui. Apart from being a quad bike helmet (designed for speeds up to 30 kph), the helmet also has a safety face visor and earmuffs for chainsawing and other work activities.

As well as wearing a helmet, particular attention should be paid to wearing correct footwear. High-sided, lace-up safety boots that protect the ankle were recommended.

Other practical aspects were shown. Many accidents happen after an operator has backed up to open a gate, left the bike in reverse gear and touched the thumb accelerator with their knee when remounting the bike, causing it to reverse at high speed. It was suggested that all quad bikes have a reversing beeper installed so that bikes are never left in reverse with the motor running. (Dick Smith Electronics sells these for up to $100.)

The correct riding position is with the rider standing up, as this lowers the bike's centre of gravity and allows for the quicker transferring of the rider's weight during turning. The handle bars can be lifted up so this riding style is comfortable.

Another useful tip is to only use add-ons that have been specifically designed for quad bikes. We were shown a video of an old quad bike rolling end over end down a hill, eventually stopping with apparently very little damage. We were told that when it was rolled down again to see what would happen, it completely fell to pieces. Puts one off buying secondhand quad bikes.

Spraying caused a lot of roll-over accidents. Spray tanks attached to bikes that didn't have internal baffles caused the bikes to tip easily and because of their small wheel base, it was also impossible to get off them as they tipped over so quickly.

This should also be a warning to beekeepers that use ICBs on the back of vehicles to sugar feed hives in the autumn and spring. Without internal baffles, the weight of the syrup could easily influence a vehicle's stability on uneven ground.

OSH inspectors will be on the lookout for unsafe practices on quad bikes and anybody not heeding their advice could face prosecution.
Farm safety is important. We beekeepers are perhaps a bit behind the rest of the farming sectors in having documented all the safety procedures relating to our business activities. I recommend everybody with a quad bike take a little time to go through the websites below.

FarmSafe have also introduced a key ring with 4X2 on it. When approaching a new job, stand back four metres and think about it for two minutes. Is what you are contemplating the best and safest way to do the job?

Some important web addresses

All-terrain vehicles: ATV registration licensing and safety (Factsheet 19): www.nzta.govt.nz/resources/factsheets/19/all-terrain-vehicles.html

Quad bike safety tips: www.acc.co.nz/quad-bike-tips

Info on buying and selling second hand quad bikes, competency assessment check list, pre-operation check list and the guidelines: www.dol.govt.nz/quad-bikes/index.asp

Health and Safety in Employment Amendment Act 2002 (everything you want to know): www.osh.govt.nz/law/quickguide/index.shtml

Accident reporting, hazard identification and other reporting forms are on the Department of Labour website: www.osh.dol.govt.nz

Dairy New Zealand publications, pdfs, etc: http://www.dairynz.co.nz

Compliance toolkit (from the DairyNZ site) will give you some idea of what a business requires: www.compliancetoolkit.co.nz

Bee stings and staff

By Frank Lindsay, NBA Life Member

When a new beekeeper first starts beekeeping or a commercial beekeeper engages a new staff member, they generally use the 'suck it and see' method to determine how that person will react to stings.

If they can last the week with (sometimes) multiple stings, then they become beekeepers.

We as employers have to provide a safe working environment, although this is a little difficult when you are handling bees. Note that I said handling bees. We have to teach a new beekeeper how to handle bees, how to apply smoke, to watch for a subsequent alarm reaction when working the hives and counter this with smoke.

On the personal safety side we should, first off, introduce them to venom, which used to mean a sting under safe conditions but it doesn't have to be a sting. At the Nelson Conference's new and small beekeepers forum in 2010, we were introduced to the Japanese technique of apitherapy. By removing the sting and just touching the droplet that appears on the end of the sting to the skin's surface, a Japanese therapist can apply the venom to 10 or more trigger points and get the same effect as 10 stings without the pain.

We beekeepers should use the same technique to test and build up the immunity in new workers, as it is a safer, more pleasant way to introduce new beekeepers to the tail end of a bee.

Reducing venom reactions

You could also do other things to reduce the reaction. 1000 milligrams of vitamin C half an hour before beginning work will boost the body's immune system, which will generally lessen the reaction to a sting. (Judgment is still out on this use from the medical fraternity.)

Antihistamine tablets can take up to half an hour to be absorbed into the body, so are not much use after a bee sting has occurred. Polaramine is available in syrup form, which will give faster results if somebody is having a bad reaction in the field. Even though you have administered antihistamine for an allergic reaction, you may still need to get the beekeeper to a hospital.

Beekeepers should also carry an adrenalin kit in the form of an EpiPen®, or you can get a doctor's prescription for a syringe and adrenalin ampoules to be held in the vehicles in case of a severe allergic reaction. *What is equally as important is when and how to use it.*

The big advantage with an EpiPen® is that it's immediately available for use but is considerably more expensive. Adrenalin must be administered at the first signs of a severe allergic reaction into the upper outside thigh muscle at a 90-degree angle so it is not administered into a vein or artery. Learn how to do this from a medical practitioner. Anybody having a serious reaction should seek immediate medical assistance—don't wait to see if the reaction is life threatening before administering adrenalin.

These kits should be kept in the first aid pouch, low down behind the seat of the vehicle. We all know that the glove box in a vehicle can heat up to 30°C (warmer than the rest of the interior of the vehicle), so is not a good place for a first aid kit or queen bees.

Bee suits

Most are made from cotton drill and with subsequent washes they will gradually soften, allowing a bee sting to penetrate more easily. Spraying on Scotchgard™ will stiffen up the fabric again. Some use suits made from a smooth nylon material that the bee can't grip on to, but these don't breathe the same as drill suits and the beekeeper can get extremely hot in them.

Communications

Last month Telecom turned off its old SDMA network those that provided service to the old 025 and 027 numbering scheme. Now we have only the new 3G (GSM3) network. It runs on a higher frequency (designed to carry data) but the wavelength is shorter; hence the distance it travels is shorter.

Most of us have been using cell phones for an emergency communication device but no longer will a phone work on a distant hill, miles from the nearest cell tower. Beekeepers work alone, often at the back of farms or in bush areas, sometimes in rugged country miles from civilisation (and main roads), so will have to consider another form of communication.

There are models for town use but these are not suitable for our industry; therefore we will have to consider VHF radios and or perhaps an emergency personal locator beacon. In the event of an accident, we ourselves will have to summon aid. If we have to wait to be found, it will be hours later when injuries will be worse. A radio needs somebody to answer it, while a locator beacon has Police response criteria. They first contact your home (the number you nominate when you register the beacon) to verify that it isn't a false alarm, then a full response will be put into action.

In the event of a serious accident, at least you are only a helicopter's distance away from a hospital, provided the weather permits the helicopter to fly.

So to conclude:

- introduce new workers slowly to bee stings so they build up a resistance to the venom
- always look for the early signs of an allergic reaction. It can happen to even the most seasoned beekeeper
- have a kit on hand to administer adrenalin if necessary and
- have a means to summon emergency response units quickly.
- Have GPS coordinates of your apiary sites in the vehicle.

Trees for Bees: a helping hand!

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Ross Little, Bee Friendly Farming Group Chair, Amberley; ross.little@farmside.co.nz

Honey bees today are under all sorts of pressures, from new bee pests and diseases to the misuse of pesticides in the environment.

Included in these pressures is poor nutrition, which is often overlooked but is critical to the honey bee's survival. For bees, good nutrition is based on good bee forage providing high quality pollen and nectar.

The supply of good bee plants in New Zealand has been taken for granted; their loss or deliberate removal has not been an issue recently. However, the scale of current land use changes is beginning to cause concern. The shift to more intensified farming and the success of weed control programmes are reducing the supply of good bee forage that beekeepers have usually relied on, especially plants like gorse and willows during pollen dearth times in spring.

Good nutrition from protein-rich pollen is essential for bee disease resistance and brood build up. Beekeepers can feed sugar to supplement for lack of honey, but it is difficult for beekeepers to adequately supplement for lack of protein-rich pollen. It is widely known that a diversity of natural pollen is the best food for bee health, while artificial protein supplements are costly and kept as a last resort since they often are unable to supply all the nutrients needed.

Somerville (2005) recommends honey bees feed on pollen with a protein content of at least 20–25%. As an example, if the bees are foraging only on nodding thistle (*Carduus nutans*) pollen—which is only 15% protein—they will go backwards rapidly. It can sometimes be difficult to find a sufficient supply of diverse and protein-rich pollen, especially during pollen dearth times in spring and autumn.

What is being done to address this problem?

A group of scientists, beekeepers and farmers have joined forces to tackle the bee nutrition problem. The group is called the *Bee Friendly Farming Group* (BFFG) and is chaired by Ross Little, a sheep and beef farmer from Canterbury. This research programme is building on the successful Trees for Bees programme initiated by John Hartnell and Shona Sluys of Federated Farmers in Canterbury in August 2009 (see www.fedfarm.org.nz/treesforbees).

> "The idea of this project is to identify which plants have the best pollen for bees in terms of protein content."

In December, the BFFG was awarded a three-year Sustainable Farming Fund (SFF) grant to conduct research on the problem of protein-rich pollen sources for bees. The BFFG has broad support across the beekeeping and farming sectors including Federated Farmers, Environment Canterbury and other councils, National Beekeepers' Association, AsureQuality Limited, Landcare Research, The Honey Trust, Foundation for Arable Research, Tree Crops Association, and 18 commercial honey and bee supply companies.

The idea of this project is to identify which plants have the best pollen for bees in terms of protein content. We can get some information from overseas sources on exotic plants but little is known about the protein content in pollen from New Zealand native plants, so their pollen will be analysed in the lab. It is expected that some native species will be good candidates for planting on farms (Butz Huryn, 1995). For example, five finger (*Pseudopanax arboreus*) is a good early spring plant and iconic plants like flax (*Phormium tenax*) seem to have pollen that is attractive to bees. For every candidate exotic or native tree, shrub or herb that is proposed we will gather information on attractiveness to bees, practicality and usefulness for farms, growing conditions and potential for invasiveness. Farmers need plants for shelter, nitrogen fixation, forage, firewood, cropping, river and stream protection, erosion control and landscaping, etc. We will provide information to show farmers which plants could meet bee nutrition needs at the same time as their identified farm needs.

Honey bee in male flowers of five finger, Pseudopanax arboreus, *in Nelson. Photo by Richard Toft. Copyright Landcare Research.*

How is this different to other plant lists?

An important part of this project will be to widely disseminate information from our Trees for Bees database to encourage farmers, councils and the general public to plant these "bee-friendly" plants wherever →

possible. In fact, an important part of the SFF project is to work alongside farmers and plant up areas on their land as demonstration sites to show the benefits to bees and pollination on farms.

Bee Plant Guides are being created with lists of candidate plants that will be produced from the wealth of information that we are entering into the Trees for Bees database. This information will be available to everyone for free via the website (www.treesforbeesnz.org) and handouts at farmers' and beekeepers' conferences and events. Because the information is being stored in the database, our results will be available for the long term and can be used by anyone wanting to plant good bee forage in the future. This is an improvement on previous programmes that some beekeepers will remember such as those during the 1980s (Jeffs, 1983).

How can you help with this important work?

We invite you to help Trees for Bees by donating your information about flowers for bees. You can contact us by email, letter or phone, or you can take advantage of the upcoming workshops where we will explain how you can participate in the Trees for Bees Beekeeper Survey. We will hold workshops at the National Beekeepers' Association conference in Auckland from 26–30 June and at the Federated Farmers Bees Conference in Ashburton from 31 May to 2 June. In this way, with your help, we hope to encourage farmers to create truly "bee-friendly farms" full of healthy bee forage all year round.

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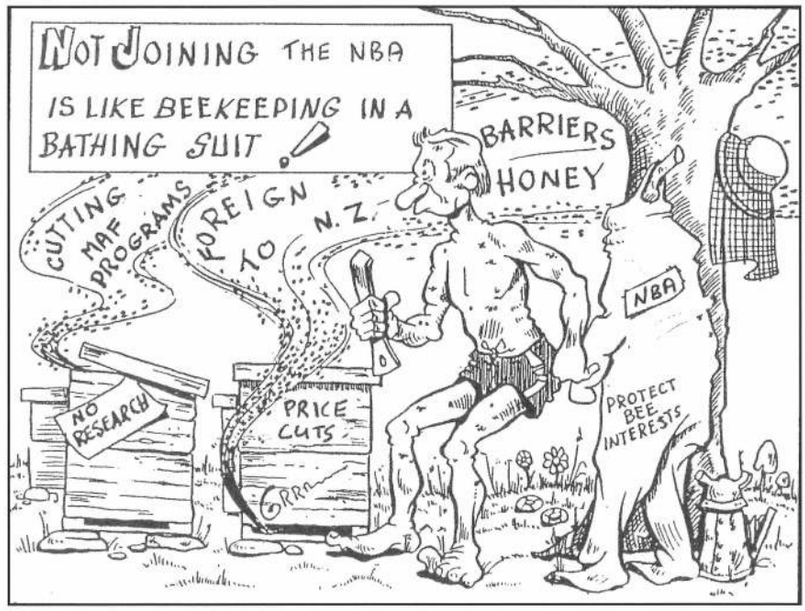
References

Butz Huryn, V. M. (1995). Use of native New Zealand plants by honey bees (*Apis mellifera* L.): a review. *New Zealand Journal of Botany 33:* 497–512.

Jeffs L. (1983). A community tree-planting programme helps to provide shelter, bee forage and employment. In Matheson, A. G. (Ed.) *Proceedings of MAF beekeeper's seminar,* Nelson, 26 July 1983.

Somerville, D. (2005). *Fat Bees, Skinny Bees, A manual on honey bee nutrition for beekeepers.* Report for the Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation, Australian Government RIRDC Publication Number 05/054.

Honey bee in flowers of cabbage tree, Cordyline australis, *in Hamilton. Photo by Neil Fitzgerald. Copyright Landcare Research.*



Taken from Beelines *Number 34, February 1988. Provided by Andrew Matheson, former Apicultural Consultant, MAF Tauranga.*

Aussie beekeepers campaign at Canberra

by Des Cannon

In one of the more publicised efforts of recent years by the Australian beekeeping industry to draw attention to an issue, almost 200 beekeepers from across all States gathered in Canberra on 1st and 2nd March.

The 'Campaign' (a more positive word than 'protest' or 'rally') met just outside Canberra on 1st March to hear a briefing on the issues around the decision on January 31 by the Asian bee National Management Group that it 'was technically not feasible to eradicate the Asian bee from Queensland' and that the surveillance programme and eradication efforts would cease after 31st March.

The Campaign was put together in a very short time (2 weeks) by a dedicated group of industry supporters, led by Jodie Goldsworthy and Max Whitten, and the renowned rumour mill for once worked in favour of the industry, with participation from Qld, NSW, Victoria, Tasmania, South Australia, WA and the ACT. One of the reasons for this is that the rumour mill was backed up by the formation of an excellent website, which not only contained beekeepers registration forms, but also included background and fact sheets to educate both beekeepers and the public. Prior to the two days in Canberra, fact packs were sent to every Federal MP and Senator.

At the briefing, a number of speakers gave presentations on different aspects and issues around the Asian bee incursion.

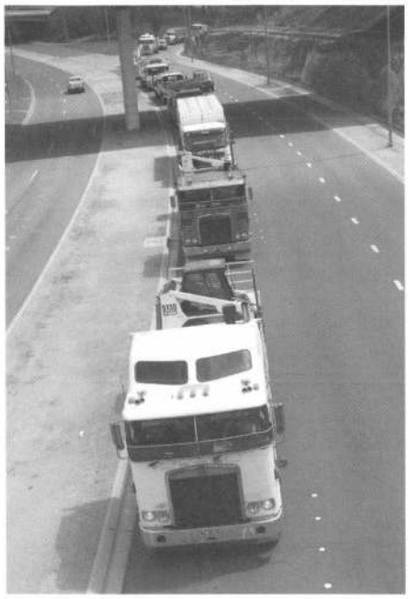
- Jodie Goldsworthy outlined the development of the campaign, giving particular thanks to the roles played by industry stalwarts Max Whitten and Gretchen Wheen. In discussions with Trevor Weatherhead, it was decided that personal meetings with individual MP's would not carry enough weight to force a change of attitude on the part of the Government. Rather, a campaign to gain public support and awareness was needed. Within the past two weeks, support had been obtained from many beekeeping industry companies and businesses, as well as the NFF *[National Farmers' Federation]*, the Victorian Farmers Federation, the Australian Food and Grocery Council, the Australian Institute of Food Professionals *[and others]*. Jodie stressed that this was to be a non-confrontational campaign. Distinctive polo shirts and hats had been designed and produced to publicize the message of the campaign.
- Max Whitten spoke on the meeting that had been held earlier in the day with Joe Ludwig, Commonwealth Minister for Agriculture. Ludwig had not been supportive of the concept of public funding for the eradication programme. By contrast, Senator Christine Milne (Greens) had been extremely supportive.

> "What was achieved was a great deal of publicity for the industry's cause."

Max then discussed the expected impact of the Asian bee on the Australian honeybee industry, and upon the Australian environment (both human and natural).

- Denis Anderson explained the significance of the Java strain of *Apis cerana* (the strain in Cairns), placing emphasis on the poor traits of the strain which make it unsuitable for domestic honey production and/or pollination. With production of more colonies that are smaller in size, it would be expected to displace and compete with honeybees and native fauna. It will have a major impact on the environment, and beekeepers will have to change the entrance openings to hives as well as hive ventilation, to enable honeybees to compete with the Asian bee. The package market will be affected, and *cerana* drones could mate with *mellifera* queens, making them non-viable. They will not pollinate large-scale monocultures as well as *mellifera* do, and there were implications in their ability to host Varroa. Denis expected the Asian bee to have a greater negative impact than European wasps.
- Warren Taylor spoke on the expected impacts on the package bee market and live bee exports.
- Trevor Monson addressed the likely impacts upon the pollination industry, especially in relation to almond pollination.
- Terry Ryan spoke on the expected economic impact of the Asian bee, particularly in relation to human health (more likelihood of stings to the public).
- AHBIC [*Australian Honey Bee Industry Council*] Chairman Lindsay Bourke congratulated Jodie and Max on their organisation of the campaign, and stressed the need for the industry to not only present a united front, but to treat this as a beginning of efforts to convince our local MP's of the need to change the Government's attitude.
- Trevor Weatherhead, who has been the beekeeping industry's spokesperson on the quarantine and eradication fronts in Queensland, outlined the efforts made to date to eradicate the Asian bee, and pointed out that WE ARE ONLY GOING TO GET ONE CHANCE! If the Government gives up now, the Asian bee is here forever.
- Jodie then outlined the plans for the next day, with a delegation of beekeepers and chosen State representatives, together with non-industry supporters such as the NFF, to host a presentation session within Parliament House. The remainder of supporters of the Campaign would host an all-day free 'breakfast' for the public, with tea, coffee, hot crumpets/toast and Australian honey, as well as fresh fruits pollinated by bees, being served and showcased. Permits had been obtained for a convoy of bee trucks to drive

through the Canberra CBD and around Parliament House at lunchtime. Over 40 trucks had been registered for this event, which would draw public attention to the Campaign – an objective that was definitely achieved!



Part of the long convoy – air horns at full blast!! Beekeepers make themselves heard! As the convoy rolls on... And on... And on!

And the result of all this effort?

What did the campaign aim to achieve?

The campaign aimed to get a commitment from the Australian government to:

1. Immediately allocate $10 million over two years to eradicate the Asian bee in Australia.
2. Implement the recommendations of the *2008 More than Honey report* by allocating an additional $50m annually to maintain healthy bee populations to secure pollination services.
3. Provide funding for the establishment and operation of the Co-operative Research Centre for Bee Research and Food Security.

At the time of writing (immediately after the rally), there is obviously a great deal of uncertainty about whether any of these aims would have been achieved. Minister for Agriculture Joe Ludwig presented himself as being poorly informed, with a less than basic understanding of the scientific complexities of the issues. He was not very receptive to the delegation which met with him, stating that it was a Government principle that industries which benefit from eradication programmes should foot the bill *(conveniently ignoring the fact that the Government funded the Equine Influenza eradication programme to the tune of some $340 million dollars – but silly me, I forget, there are big tax dollars earned for the Government from betting on racing!)*

What was achieved was a great deal of publicity for the industry's cause. The delegation that made the presentation inside Parliament House reported a steady flow of visits from MP's and Senators interested to learn more about the issues. In some cases they sent their staff, and in one instance the staffer left, to return soon afterwards with his MP.

In addition, there were a number of news articles in *The Canberra Times*—at least two the day before the rally, and one the day after. ABC Radio gave a report on 'Country Hour' the following day. Max Whitten was interviewed by Georgie Oakeshott for an article for the 'About The House', the Parliamentary in-house magazine.

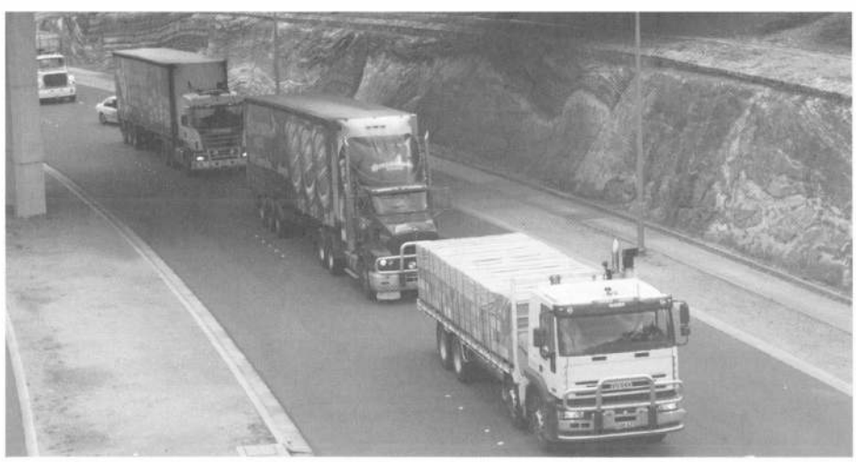
The key message 'Food Security needs BEE SECURITY'. Photos: Des Cannon.

Outside Parliament House, visits from the public were light, even though the 'breakfast' had been well-publicised in the articles in *The Canberra Times*. The presentation by the beekeepers was excellent. However, the bee truck convoy certainly attracted attention. It made enough noise!

Reference

Cannon, D. (2011). Canberra 'rally' campaign attempts to convince government to change tune. *The Australasian Beekeeper*, April 2010 *112*(10), 414–423. Abridged and reprinted with permission.

[Editor's note: New Zealand should draw on this information with GIAs around the corner. Could we afford such a costly incursion?]



The Code of Practice for fruit wine, cider and mead is being updated. The proposed amendments are now available for consultation. **Consultation with interested stakeholders closes on 29 April 2011.** Go to http://www.foodsafety.govt.nz/elibrary/industry/consultation-wsmp/index.htm

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CLUB CONTACTS AND BEEKEEPING SPECIALTY GROUPS

WHANGAREI BEE CLUB
Meets first Saturday each month (except January)
Time: 10.15 am, wet or fine (we are keen)

Contact: Mike Maunder, Phone: 09 437 5847
Arthur Tucker, Phone: 09 436 1631
Kevin & Melissa Wallace
Phone: 09 423 8642 (Wellsford)
Email: whangareibeeclub@xtra.co.nz

AUCKLAND BEEKEEPERS CLUB INC
Meets first Saturday monthly at Unitec, Pt Chevalier, Auckland.

Contact: Kim Kneijber, President
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Email: kimk_bees@hotmail.com

Carol Downer, Vice President & Secretary
Phone: 09 376 6376
Email: thefairy@xtra.co.nz

Website: www.aucklandbeekeepersclub.org.nz

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

Contact: Steve Carey, Secretary
Phone: 09 292 7849
Email: franklinbeekeepers@gmail.com

Website: https://sites.google.com/site/franklin-beekeepersclub/home

WAIKATO DOMESTIC BEEKEEPERS
Meets every third Thursday (except January) at Lab 1, Wintec Campus classroom, Hamilton Gardens, Gate 2, Cobham Dr., Hamilton, at 7.30 pm

Contact: Maryanne Partridge, Secretary
Phone: 07 825 2691
Email: partridge4@xtra.co.nz

HAWKE'S BAY BRANCH
Meets at 7.30 pm, Arataki, Havelock North for workshops or meetings as advised to the members
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E-mail: kintail_honey@xtra.co.nz

John Berry, Branch President
Phone: 06 877 6205

TARANAKI BEEKEEPING CLUB
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685 Uruti Road RD 48, Urenui 4378
Phone: 06 752 6860
Email: beeclub@beesrus.co.nz

WANGANUI BEEKEEPERS CLUB
Meets every second Wednesday each month (except January), at 7.30 pm at Canaan Apiaries, Mosston Rd., Wanganui.

Contact: Neil Farrer, Secretary/Treasurer
Phone 06 343 6248

MANAWATU BEEKEEPERS CLUB
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Website: www.manawatubeeclub.org.nz

WAIRARAPA HOBBYIST BEEKEEPERS CLUB
Meets the second Sunday of the month except January, Norfolk Road, Masterton, 1.30 pm.

Convenors: Diana and Neale Braithwaite
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Fax: 06 308 9171
Email: nandd12@xtra.co.nz

WELLINGTON BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION
Meets first Wednesday of the month (except January) at 7.30 pm in the Community Hall, Johnsonville Community Centre, Main Hall, Ground Floor, Moorefield Road, Johnsonville. All welcome.
Main Meeting at 7.30 pm
Beginners' Tuition at 7.00 pm

Contact: John Burnet, Treasurer
21 Kiwi Cres, Tawa, Wellington 5028
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Email: johnburnet@xtra.co.nz

NB for prospective members: please check our website www.beehive.org.nz before coming as increasing numbers of members have necessitated a number of venue and date changes over the last couple of years.

NELSON BEEKEEPING CLUB
Meets first Tuesday of every month, 7pm
Waimea Lounge, Richmond Park Showgrounds
Lower Queen Street, Richmond
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CHRISTCHURCH HOBBYIST CLUB
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Website: http://www.chchbeekeepers.org.nz

NORTH CANTERBURY BEEKEEPERS CLUB
Meets the second Monday of April, June, August and October in Rangiora.

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Cellphone: 027 441 8508
Email: rawcliffe@actrix.co.nz

NZ COMB PRODUCERS ASSOCIATION

Contact: John Wright
Phone: 09 236 0628

DUNEDIN BEEKEEPERS CLUB
Meets on the first Saturday in the month September–April, (except January) at 1.30 pm. The venue varies so check phone or email contact below.

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Email: flour-mill@xtra.co.nz

NZ HONEY BEE POLLINATION ASSOCIATION

Contact: Russell Berry
Phone: 07 366 6111

NZ HONEY PACKERS AND EXPORTERS ASSOCIATION INC
Contact: Allen McCaw
Phone: 03 417 7198
Email: amccaw@clear.net.nz
or
Mary-Anne Thomason, Phone: 06 855 8038

NZ QUEEN PRODUCERS ASSOCIATION

Contact: Russell Berry
Phone: 07 366 6111

BEE PRODUCTS STANDARDS COUNCIL

Contact: Dr Jim Edwards, Chairman
Phone: 06 362 6301

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