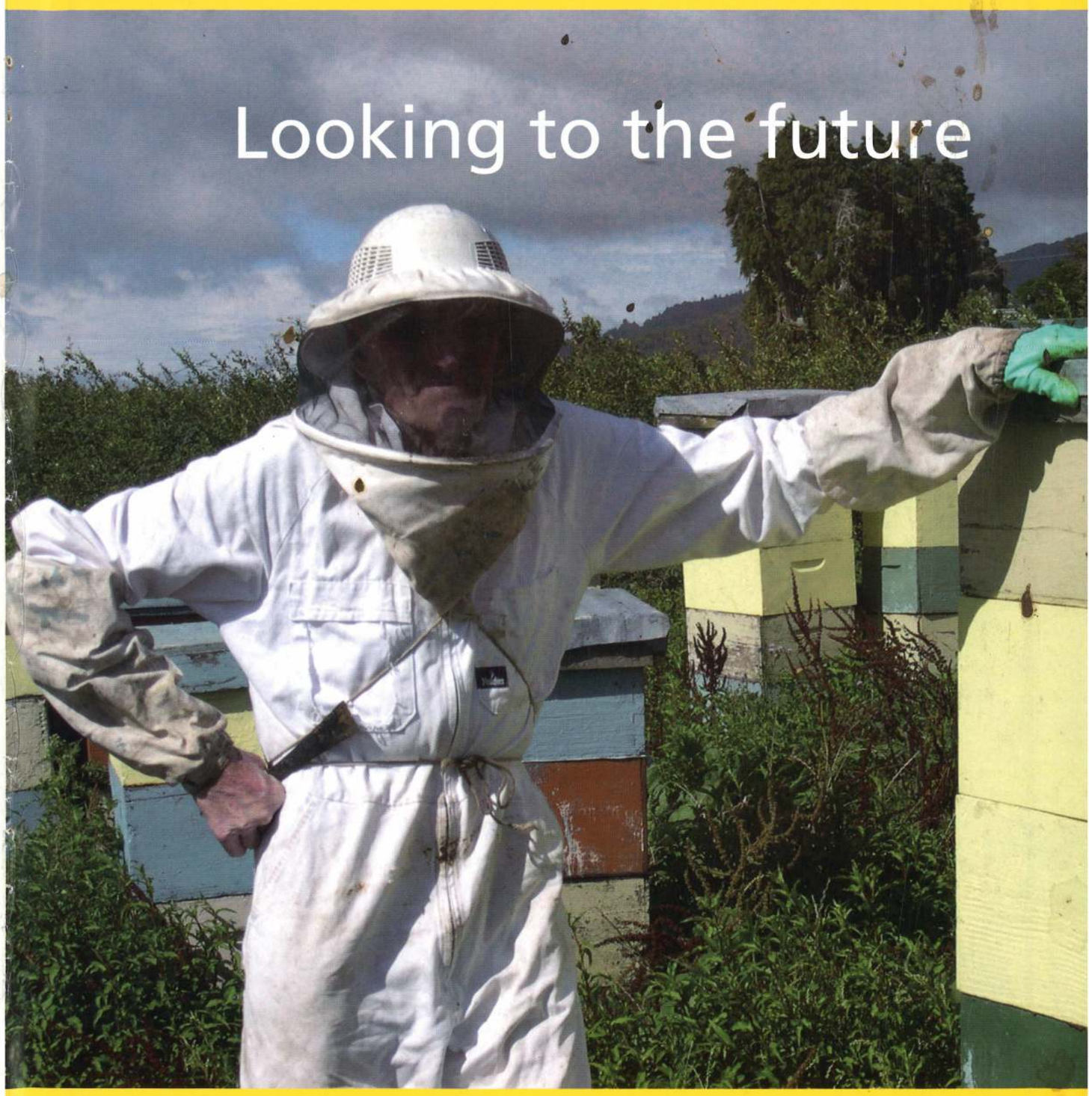
August 2011, Volume 19 No. 7

The NEW ZEALAND BeeKeeper



Looking to the future

- Conference coverage
- Psa: where to this pollination season?
- Effect on beehives of using mesh in orchards

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Front cover: "Can't put the hive tool down". NBA Life Member Dudley Lorimer, now 96 and a half, graces our cover this month. His daughter-in-law, former NBA President and Life Member Jane Lorimer, took this photo several years ago. Her photo was judged as the People's Choice at the 2011 NBA Photography Competition, sponsored by Ecroyd Beekeeping Supplies. See page 6 for a list of winners and placegetters in other categories.

Looking to the future

By Barry Foster, NBA President

Conference and our AGM have passed for another year and I write to you now as your new President, looking ahead at what needs doing and what might be anticipated for the coming 12 months.

Opportunities and threats have seemed to be common to our industry in recent years and this year will be no exception. Evidence mounts of increasing varroa resistance to some synthetic controls; while on the other hand, work is to continue on developing varroa-tolerant bees, both from the Mercury Island VSH bee stock and that being done by other companies. The long-term prospect is that we have to have varroa tolerance to some degree in our bee stocks for sustainable control of varroa in the future. This is why the NBA is backing the plan to evaluate VSH bees from Mercury Island this coming season. Possible funding for this at the time of writing may come from SFF but has yet to be confirmed. As international speaker Randy Oliver from California commented, "Until now we have only needed smart chemicals that could be used effectively by even dumb beekeepers, whereas in the future we will need smart beekeepers using dumb chemicals to control varroa." This is the paradigm shift coming to all beekeepers in New Zealand.

Our team

We have a good team of people on the Executive Council. They are dedicated people who should be applauded for putting their name forward for voluntary service, as they also have to work at making a living like the rest of us.

The industry, and indeed country, would not function without this sort of selfless dedication. Backing us up are our secretariat—comprising joint CEOs Daniel Paul and Pauline Downie, plus Executive Secretary Jessica Williams at Four Winds Communications—who bring the essential professionalism to the public face of the National Beekeepers' Association on a daily basis. I have spread the workload among the Executive for reporting purposes into areas of responsibility: Research Committee under Kerry Gentleman, Pollination Committee under Neil Mossop (who is also on the AFB NPMS Management Committee), Biosecurity and policy/codes of practice under Vice President Stephen Black, and Publications Committee under Mary-Ann Lindsay. Neil Stuckey on the Biosecurity Committee, as well as having oversight on finance, I am on the Technical and Submissions Committee on Pesticides plus the GIA committee, and Greg Byers of Cabbage Tree Accounting has been appointed as NBA Treasurer. There is a committee reviewing the association's rules comprising Alan Roper, Russell Berry, Jane Lorimer and Daniel Paul.

> "We need to advocate our position and celebrate ourselves for what we contribute to the economy, environment and food production."

Conference 2011

I congratulate the Auckland Branch for organising conference this year at a first-class venue, the Waipuna Hotel & Conference Centre. There was plenty of room for everyone with a lecture theatre second to none. As usual there are many threads coming out of conference, but one overriding positive impression was that people were communicating, leading to understanding and recognition of each other's viewpoint. We may have increasingly technical means of communication but nothing substitutes for good face-to-face communication. I thank Auckland Branch for facilitating this. On the downside, there were elements of poor communication that definitely require remedies for the next conference.

It is no small thing to note that the two speakers at our conference and AGM who both received standing ovations were non-beekeepers talking about non-beekeeping issues that affect us. Those speakers were lawyer David Boldt, speaking about honey imports and Phil O'Reilly, CEO of Business New Zealand, who spoke on our industry's outlook. The conference was good from a beekeeping point of view, with plenty of speakers, displays and discussion on the various subjects surrounding beekeeping. However, we are also businesspeople, marketers and a whole lot else besides that goes with 21st century beekeeping.

Anne Morrow Lindbergh, aviator and wife of the American aviator Charles Lindbergh, once said, *"Good communication is as stimulating as black coffee, and just as hard to sleep after".* The aftermath of Phil O'Reilly's speech would, I think, fall into this category. I heard comments like "what a breath of fresh air that was". Phil spoke on the industry outlook as he saw it. He said, "The export imperative is our biggest challenge and rests on free trade". Phil spoke about the fact that we have an economy that is smaller than Sydney or Melbourne, and that because of our size internationally we are more reliant on rules-based systems under WTO rules. He stated that to be credible internationally, we have to be seen to be fully compliant with these rules. For this reason, it is very important that our opposition to honey imports is not seen or perceived as 'trade protectionism in drag'.

Phil spoke on honey imports, mentioning that if there is scientific uncertainty, what is

Continued on page 6

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

Whether resistance has been found in your area or not, don't take any chances this coming Spring, use Apivar® and kill any pyrethroid resistant mites that you may have and avoid the risk (and expense) of having to treat twice.

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the degree of risk and risk to other sectors? It is this risk that we need to respond to by working together and investing in facts. We need to advocate our position and celebrate ourselves for what we contribute to the economy, environment and food production. We need to educate the wider public of our position and propose solutions, not just oppose and stand against change. We need to work to overcome the biological challenges surrounding imports. We need to find allies and partners in common so that through creative thinking and multiple methods our messages can be heard, because to date the wider public has not heard them.

At the time of writing I have just returned from a Hawke's Bay Branch meeting where members have agreed to host the 2012 NBA conference in Hawke's Bay. This promises to be an exciting, enjoyable and very future-focused conference. I will bring further updates on the progress for this conference in my reports over the coming months.

Pollination security and an economic analysis of pollination values

Pollination security was a feature of the June issue of the journal and has been in the media to a limited extent over some time now. In many cases limited education has come to the public through films like *Queen of the Sun*. It is therefore not surprising that the public is still largely unaware of this issue, or at least confused by differing perceptions surrounding it. It's a question of education: lobbying and increasing awareness that everyone with a stake should take part in. The public has to learn of the high probability of further unwanted diseases entering New Zealand by opening up new risk pathways that imports will inevitably bring and the extent of this new risk pathway.

We also need to begin to quantify the potential extent of the damage to pollination security and the economy should we suffer a 20%, 30% or 60% reduction in available pollinators through colony loss if this begins to appear in New Zealand in the future.

To date this economic analysis has never been done in a comprehensive way, let alone considering potential impacts from such losses. We think that the value of honey bees may be around $5.1 billion annually to the economy, but this figure is anecdotal and dated. The risk to our pollinators has changed to a much greater risk even from five years ago and certainly since varroa was first discovered. The current trend is for increasing risk from multiple factors that need to be addressed. Unlike other countries, we have no suitable substitute to honey bees to fill the gaps should they fail for some reason.

It is considered by far more qualified minds than mine that a full economic impact analysis on the value of honey bee pollination be done as a matter of urgency, combined with a further analysis on the likely impacts from colony losses to our economy as mentioned above. Failure to do so may mean that future generations may well look back and condemn us, wondering why this fundamental element in an overall judgment of risk was not done while the time and opportunity still presented itself.

NBA CONFERENCE

Photo competition results

The third annual NBA photography competition, sponsored by Ecroyd Beekeeping Supplies Ltd, was held during the NBA Conference in Auckland.

The guest judge was Gilles Ratia, the president of the International Federation of Beekeepers' Associations, assisted by Dennis Waite.

Following is a list of category winners and placegetters.

Class A—Close-Up Print
1st Frank Lindsay: "UMF today MGO tomorrow"
2nd equal Tony Lorimer: "Hairs on a bee's leg"
2nd equal Frank Lindsay: "Honey Taniwha"

Class B—Scenic Print
1st Jody Mitchell: "Water Garden"
2nd Mary-Ann Lindsay: "Under the Southern Alps"

Class C—Portrait Print
1st Frank Lindsay: "Grafting in the field"
2nd Jane Lorimer: "Can't put the hive tool down"
3rd Fiona O'Brien: "Silhouette in the morning sun"

Class D—Photo Essay
1st Frank Lindsay: "Spring Management"
2nd Jody Mitchell: "Girls' night out"

People's Choice
Jane Lorimer: "Can't put the hive tool down"

Highly Commended
Jane Lorimer: "Island Paradise"
John McLean: "3 ladies dining at a café"

Supreme Award
Frank Lindsay

Two winners and a ham

Left: Products of the Hive winners Hayden and Adrian Pohio with Maureen Maxwell.

Right: Peter Berry accepting the Beekeeper's Reserve Honey award on behalf of his brother John, flanked by Maureen Maxwell and Kim Kneijber.

Photos: Mary-Ann Lindsay.

Effect on beehives of using mesh in orchards

By Ian Berry, NBA Life Member

The following is an extract from a talk Ian gave at the recent seminar at the NBA Conference, Auckland.

He addresses the increasing use of fine mesh cloth in Hawke's Bay orchards, and its effect on their hives placed in these orchards for pollination.

Introduction

The Hawke's Bay Division of Arataki Honey farms more than 7,000 beehives for honey production and we place more than 6,000 hives into paid pollination each season. We use about half our honey hives for pollination, with many of the hives used for more than one crop. We also hire about 700 hives from other beekeepers for apple pollination.

All the hives we put out for pollination, including the ones we hire, are on square pallets. These pallets hold four hives, each placed hard against each other, and have the entrances facing in four different directions with a large lid that fits over the four hives. We do not supply any pollination hives that are not four hives on a pallet. We tow small four-wheel-drive tractors fitted with forks behind our trucks on trailers. The pallets are either unloaded at one place in the orchard for distribution by the orchardist using their own forklift, or we place the hives into the orchard using our forklifts. This takes the hard work out of shifting hives and makes it a one-person job. It also means we can place hives into the orchards even if conditions are wet.

Why is mesh used in orchards?

Three reasons include:

Apples: Hail protection and probably reduced frost and increased warmth, leading to earlier picking. Normally used as a roof only and left open on the sides. No problems noted so far with pollination or the bees.

Kiwifruit: Mainly to keep wind damage down but also helping keep the orchard a bit warmer with less frost, better growth and earlier picking. A few kiwifruit orchards are using mesh as a roof with the sides mostly open. This has not proved to be a problem for the bees provided the orchard is not too big and the hives can be placed at the end of the rows. It is also used along the rows under the canopy and for high walls for wind protection rather than shelterbelts of trees, which take space, need trimming and have long roots which need pruning.

Boysenberries and blueberries: Fully enclosed primarily for crop protection from birds. Also, it helps keep the bees working the crop they are brought in to work. It also helps prevent some of the spray poisoning from apple-thinning sprays, which are put on when hives are in boysenberries and blueberries. Other benefits include less wind damage and warmer temperatures inside the enclosures, meaning more hours the bees can work and earlier ripening of the crop. Fully enclosed blocks cause all sorts of problems for the bees.

> " It would appear that to get the best results, the bees should be in the centre of the orchard."

An example from last season

Last spring we were asked to provide bees for a new kiwifruit orchard. This was the first year of cropping and only part of the orchard needed bees. The rest of the orchard had been planted later. The orchard was all gold kiwifruit and was very well set out. Great care had been taken to have the whole orchard planted out with the rows the exact distance apart and the cross wires which supported the canopy all the same height from the ground. We could tell this by the fact our small truck that we used for feeding the hives sugar syrup just fitted under the canopy and we could drive down the approximately 400-metre-long rows without any problems.

A lot of fine mesh had been used when setting up the orchard. Firstly, there was mesh along every row from the ground to the height of the canopy, then there were really high walls of mesh above the canopy spread throughout the orchard. There wasn't any mesh over the top so the bees could fly out the top, although I couldn't see any reason why they should. One of the effects of these high walls of mesh was the variation in the time the flowers opened. One side of the tunnels had flowers well out while the other side, presumably because of more shading, flowered several days later.

As there was no cross track in this orchard with its 400-metre-long rows, it was decided to place half of the 24 pallets of hives ordered at each end. The first delivery was four pallets and the second 20 pallets. Before the bees were delivered the orchardist had done a lot of work lifting the screens up from the ground, so the bees could get from one row to the next by flying under the screens without having to fly down the tunnels and out the end to get to the next row.

The first day or two the bees seemed confused, with bees sitting on the mesh and not knowing where to go with probably quite a few not finding their way home. The bees soon settled down and seemed to find their way down the tunnels without getting lost, although disappointing numbers of bees were bringing in pollen from sources other than kiwifruit, perhaps half.

The weather while the bees were in the orchard was not good and when we fed the bees they were mostly not flying. However, we struck one really good day towards the end of the feeding and at least a few bees were finding their way down to the centre of the tunnels to collect pollen.

Several times when feeding we met up with a lady spraying pollen on the vines and it then became obvious why so much care had

been taken to set up the orchard so carefully. The lady doing the spraying was on a machine that had been brought down from the Bay of Plenty. It was superior to anything else we had seen for applying collected pollen. She was able to drive along each row at a reasonable speed and appeared to get a good even spread of pollen onto the vines. How much of this pollen actually landed on the right place in the open flowers to do the job of pollination is hard to estimate, but I suspect it would be a very small percentage.

When the grower was asked later in the season how the crop had turned out, he said he was reasonably satisfied except the set had not been as good in the centre of the orchard, and we would need to look at the placement of the hives for the next season. To me, this result indicates the spraying of collected pollen wasn't much help with his pollination. The whole orchard was sprayed a number of times and if the centre of the orchard had not set as well in spite of some bees working the flowers, it must have been the bees that had pollinated most of the crop. The flowers nearer the hives at the end of the tunnels would have had the most bee visits, and this is where the best crop was.

Setting out hives next season

So how do we set out the hives next season?

It would appear that to get the best results, the bees should be in the centre of the orchard. Had the orchard been properly set out for bee pollination there would have been a track across the centre of the orchard. Then putting the bees in the best place and doing the sugar feeding would have been simple and cost effective. However, I suspect it would be difficult and expensive to put in a cross track at this stage.

This leaves us with having to forklift each pallet of four hives 200 metres up to the centre of the row. That's 400 metres of forklift driving for each four hives, if they are all placed in the middle of each row. That's 24 x .4 of a kilometre, or 9.6 kilometres of driving the forklift up and down under the canopy to get the hives in the best place. Also, 9.6 km of driving the ute up and down under the canopy each time we feed sugar, probably four times. Then of course the hives have to be brought out again.

It would seem likely that the orchard will need more than the 24 pallets in future. Firstly, because this was its first production year and only part of the orchard was ready to crop. Secondly, it would seem unlikely there will be any pollen sprayed on next season. If there is, I doubt if we will be prepared to move any hives into the orchard and run the risk of picking up serious bee diseases from imported pollen. Unfortunately we are also faced with the fact there may not be many hives available for pollination because of the possibility of *Nosema ceranae* in New Zealand. This disease probably came into New Zealand on imported pollen and could have a serious effect on how many hives are in suitable condition for pollination next spring. We had much heavier losses than normal last winter and early spring and although we have made a few changes to hopefully improve the situation this winter, only time will tell.

Conclusion

As long as it is Government policy that free trade takes precedence over biosecurity, we face the possibility of European foulbrood and other bee problems being allowed in from Australia. Combine this with varroa mites in New Zealand starting to show signs of resistance to our treatments, and it could add up to a difficult time ahead for people who depend on honeybees for pollination.

If the beekeeping industry in New Zealand gets badly hit with the various problems facing us at the moment it could have a serious effect on the New Zealand economy. The kiwifruit, pipfruit, stonefruit, smallfruit and small seeds industries could be facing hard times through the lack of pollination. Also, a lot of clover flowers on New Zealand farms would be left unpollinated.

While our company has always believed that if you look after your customers well, the profits will look after themselves, we are faced with the situation at present where our profits would be higher if we did no pollination at all. Life would certainly be easier without all the night work and hassles of fitting the workload of pollination into one of the busiest times of the beekeeping season.

Arataki Honey Hawke's Bay has been supplying bees for paid pollination for approximately 60 years. We hope to continue to do this well into the future. However, now that the facts are out regarding the importation of pollen over the last several years, with apparent total disregard for the effects this could have on the beekeeping industry, the future looks pretty uncertain.

I will, however, sum up by saying: thank goodness we are beekeepers not orchardists.

Footnote

Our biggest customer in Hawke's Bay for kiwifruit hives had pollen sprayed on last year but he has assured us he won't be spraying on any pollen this year. He had some of the pollen left over tested for Psa and the tests showed it did have Psa in it.

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. Whatever your question, simply email it to editor@nba.org.nz and we will post the answers in the next issue of *The New Zealand BeeKeeper*.

Honey competition report

By Maureen Maxwell, Auckland Branch

Wow, what a strong showing of fabulous honey at this year's 100% PURE New Zealand Honey National Honey Show!

There was a noticeable increase in the standard from last year, with some very nicely presented samples.

I was joined by South Island judge Peter Bray on 27 June. We had a full day peering under the magnified spotlight, sniffing, whiffing and tasting some awesome New Zealand hive products.

We had a good representation from both commercial and serious sideline beekeepers, and the trophy recipients were spread nationwide. Always so interesting when the computer finally reveals the coded results.

Carol Downer won the Supreme Award for the highest scoring exhibitor overall, sponsored by 100% PURE New Zealand Honey. The award comprises the sum of the top six scores of an individual exhibitor being taken into account.

This year an additional marketing bonus for trophy winners was introduced with smart Gold Award stickers. Trophy winners can purchase extra labels through the NBA Head Office.

It was disappointing to see no entries in the Chunk Honey class. From a marketer's view, chunk honey is the product that creates greatest positive emotion from the consumer. I wonder how many beekeepers pack chunk. Let me know if you want me to run a chunk class again next year.

Products from the Hive (Class 16) is an opportunity to display those innovative added-value products. Waikato beekeepers Adrian, Lania and Hayden Pohio nearly scooped the pool. Hayden just pipped his mum at the post with the very moreish Manuka Boosta Bars, whilst Adrian and Lania's beautifully presented beeswax polish was much admired.

> "... an additional marketing bonus for trophy winners was introduced with smart Gold Award stickers."

This year unfortunately we were not able to award a prize in the Airborne Commercial Monofloral Honey, Class 17. In the final sift out, the last two entries failed the bacterial plate count lab tests. This competition is to promote excellence. The judges felt this year that standard had not been met. Peter Bray has rolled over the prize pool for next year. A minimum of 32 crisp $100 notes, along with the trophy and media package! Talk to Airborne Honey about how you can be there at the finish line next year.

Steve Lyttle presenting Carol Downer with the Supreme Award.

To all entrants, well done. It was a delight and honour to judge. I look forward to an even bigger and better showing next year. Start planning now.

[Editor's note: due to space constraints, we are unable to publish the full list of winners in the journal, but this list is available on the NBA website.]

Some of the winners. From left to right: Granulated honey categories, sponsored by Arataki Honey. Frank Lindsay: Naturally granulated honey Medium; Paul Badger: Naturally granulated honey Light; Bruce Hayward: Naturally granulated honey Dark. Honey competition judges Peter Bray and Maureen Maxwell. Supreme Award winner, Carol Downer, with her awards. Allen McCaw (left) accepting his award for Creamed Honey from Peter Lyttle. Photos: Mary-Ann & Frank Lindsay.

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 spring, or is yet to be treated; and
- the area that it has been collected from (and perhaps the road name).
- the data for the initial kill, final kill and % kill.

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 (whichever is the treatment product you have been using) cut to 9mm x 12.5mm; e.g., Apistan or Apivar. If you are using Bayvarol, then use two strips of the above size—one on each side of the card. (The tests for Apivar and Bayvarol have not been verified, but will at least give an indication of possible resistance.)
- 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 =

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

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.

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No post-conference breather

By the NBA Secretariat

It goes without saying that the month was dominated by the conference and the AGM.

Those members who attended the conference will know what a great event it was. Thank you to the Auckland Branch organising committee for a job well done.

The AGM was a chance for members to air their views and concerns about a range of issues—this year there was intense focus on how to strengthen the NBA and what a stronger NBA might look like.

The Secretariat and the Executive Council have taken those views on board and we are in the process of creating a work programme for the coming year (2012) that will see the NBA tackle a range of prominent issues. The first draft of this work programme was presented at the AGM and now it will be fine-tuned based on the initial feedback.

Our efforts will reflect very much the comments made at the AGM by the Chief Executive of Business New Zealand, Phil O'Reilly. Business New Zealand is the country's foremost lobby group on behalf of the business sector and it was very useful to have Phil address the AGM.

He stressed that the NBA would benefit considerably from having members work more closely together. He said that while some good work has been done recently to raise the profile of the beekeeping industry, and to engage widespread awareness of, and support for it, more needs to be done.

Phil said our industry needs to avoid the trap of seeming to be always in opposition to, and in conflict with, government. He said that while industry might have very real grievances and concerns (Australian honey imports is a prime example), he urged industry to seek mutually acceptable solutions to problems.

Phil's comments were echoed by a number of attendees at the AGM and it's with this philosophy in mind that the NBA is designing a strategy to strengthen the organisation.

We need to say a big thank you to outgoing President, Frans Laas, who held down the job for four years. Members may not realise the huge time commitment required of the President, but it can be many, many hours a month, all unpaid.

Also, we say farewell to Maureen Maxwell, who stepped down from the Executive Council at the AGM. Maureen has long been a stalwart of the NBA and she's a wonderful ambassador for our industry. Long may you keep up the good work, Maureen.

Both Frans and Maureen received exceedingly warm praise from the AGM as they stood down.

Frans has been replaced by new President (and former VP), Barry Foster, who's already got the sleeves rolled up. Maureen has been replaced by Neil Stuckey and we welcome you aboard, Neil.

The coming months will be no less busy. The major project on the horizon is the GIA biosecurity issue and the work we will be doing assisting the industry to get a clear idea of how the GIA is supposed to work, and what the benefits and pitfalls are for members. Expect to read and hear a lot about this issue in the future.

We also hope to circulate to branches our agreed work programme for the coming year so you can get a feel for the Association's priorities, and how they affect you, over the coming 18 months.

Until next time, Daniel, Pauline and Jess.

New era for manuka honey industry body

Abridged media release from the Unique Manuka Factor Honey Association, 4 July 2011

The Active Manuka Honey Association is changing its name and rebranding. The new name is The UMF Honey Association.

The new name "UMF Honey Association" was officially launched today by Chairperson Neil Stuckey, with bold new branding, a new website and other changes designed to underwrite the positioning and integrity of this iconic New Zealand product in international markets. This change is being made to reinforce the UMF® (UNIQUE MANUKA FACTOR®) quality trademark. Along with the new name, a new design for the quality trademark is being introduced and the Association's website and information pamphlet are being revised.

This initiative has been brought about by concern that consumers were potentially being misled in the marketplace by use of the word "active". All honeys have a level of activity but it is only some Manuka honey which has unique antibacterial properties. The Association is very keen to ensure the UMF® quality trademark represents this unique activity along with an array of quality standards that support this natural activity found in some Manuka honey. A major promotional drive is being undertaken in all territories in which UMF® Manuka honey is sold. This includes the release of the names of overseas laboratories that are involved in the recently introduced international verification programme.

UNIQUE MANUKA FACTOR®
HONEY ASSOCIATION

The new quality trademark *[not pictured here]* is a unique design.
It denotes the level of Non-Peroxide Activity and features the registered UMF® quality trademark.

For further information please contact:
John Rawcliffe, General Manager,
UMF Honey Association
Phone: + 64 274 418 508 or + 64 9 575 3127

Thank you, bees (part 2)

By Mary Allen

In this article, Mary reflects on how she responded to some difficult beekeeping experiences, and thanks everyone who helped her to become a beekeeper.

I had many frustrations and setbacks, especially in the early years when I was on my own a lot, as my husband Andrew often worked away from home during the spring.

Gates often caused me trouble. Some were just hard to open, whereas with others the farmer would change a lock and forget to give me a key. In one place, where we had to use a farmer's track to access our hives on DOC land, the farmer put up a locked gate. Due to my lack of strength I always fought with Taranaki (wire) gates. Horses often gave me headaches by trying to get out of the gate I wanted to enter. Once a big draught horse would not move, no matter how much I yelled and pushed it.

Mary opening a Taranaki gate.

Mary attempting to close a Taranaki gate. Photos: Andrew Allen.

Muddy tracks or new grass: I am not the only beekeeper to go for a slide. Luckily the worst that has happened is that I have had to wait several hours for my husband to come home and realise I should be home. He is good at coming to my rescue. I always take reading material, a drink and something to eat.

> "I am not the only beekeeper to go for a slide."

Large commercial beekeepers: Until we reached the level of 200 beehives, I found other beekeepers very helpful. As our operation grew and spread out into the district from our farm, we had our first abusive phone call. As nearly all other beekeepers took their hives away in winter, we were unaware who else was around.

This is where belonging to NBA was a great help. Other beekeepers assured me we were doing nothing wrong, and that some large-scale beekeepers were using bullying tactics. With hindsight, I now understand they were getting worried and protecting their own interests. Since our hives are on the decrease we have not had any problems with other beekeepers.

End-of-road farmers: Our hives on DOC land border their farms. Talking to other local farmers, I soon learnt we weren't the only ones having problems. After receiving a particularly nasty phone call I talked to our local councillor. He said to me, "Why do you think you have trouble? Has it never occurred to you that something might be growing on the DOC land he does not want you to find?" This understanding made me feel better.

American foulbrood disease: We found it difficult to build up our hive numbers so we ended up buying a few hives. When we still owned fewer than 10 hives we bought 10 more. The beekeeper assured me they were disease-free, and they looked clean to us. The following year we split those hives up. It was a hard cold wet spring, and every split had AFB. We were devastated and considered giving up.

I suspected that AFB was in many hives undetected until those hives were put under stress. The late Ted Roberts, MAF apiary officer in Palmerston North, persuaded me to mark each super with a dot of spray paint and ensure it was returned to the same site each year. When we had used up all our hive-marking colours, we used a combination of colours. In our record book we headed up each site with an A, B, C, or D:

A=AFB found this season
B=AFB found two seasons ago
C=AFB found three seasons ago
D=AFB found during the last five years.

We still use this system, but after several years we gave up marking honey supers. If we had someone helping us it was too hard to keep control of how the boxes were stacked in the shed; also, each different site would produce more or less honey than the year before. One season an apiary may produce the most honey, whereas the →

following season it may produce no extra honey than the hive requires. We try to leave a box and half of honey on the hive for winter. Although now we still are upset if we find a hive with AFB, we realise that it is part of bee farming: no different from having a sick cow.

Farm Helpers in New Zealand: FHINZ is a similar scheme to WWOOF New Zealand but we do not have to be certified organic. One year I felt I needed a little help and saw an advertisement in *The New Zealand BeeKeeper* to join this scheme. People who are travelling round the country work with you for four hours a day in return for a bed and meals. Most are very good. If we have a full day one day, we try to give them the next day off. In a way it is more work having someone stay but it helped me to discipline myself. I found if they help with lifting bee boxes I could last longer. I also found that during the first week, I spent all my time showing them what to do, and by the time they had been here four weeks some were telling me what to do. If Andrew was around he never had this problem, or not much. Some of the males would really annoy me if I said we were working the hives in a certain way, and they would ask if Andrew would approve.

Varroa did not reach us until 2001. We did not have enough hives to be comfortable then. We had been aiming for 400 and had reached 350. Since then it seems no matter what we do, our hive numbers keep slipping back.

> "During the years we have met so many wonderful people who are involved with beekeeping."

Financial struggle: We did not build up our hives as fast as I had planned. It is quicker to think about assembling a beehive than doing it. The NBA helped here by running a business course for beekeepers. Often it is too easy to be overwhelmed by the practical side of beekeeping and the bookkeeping side suffers.

Poor balance: this is still a problem for me on sloping sites, but now I am never on my own. We can level hives.

Often when I removed the top brood box I would go for a tumble, bees and all. The bees did not like it but they are hardy little creatures. I would reassemble the hive and after a while the bees would settle down. The more tired I became, the more I fell. I found a cup of tea the best cure.

During the years we have met so many wonderful people who are involved with beekeeping. Thank you all for your help, support and encouragement. I know the bees themselves have also helped me to grow stronger.

[Editor's note: part 1 of this article ran in July.]

FROM THE COLONIES

Auckland Branch

The branch thanks all beekeepers and sponsors who attended the Auckland conference and helped make it such a success.

We especially thank the three overseas speakers, Blake Shook, Randy Oliver and Gilles Ratia; also our New Zealand presenters. Our special thanks to Agmardt for their sponsorship of air fares and accommodation for two of our overseas guest speakers.

The speakers' presentations at the seminars gave all of us much food for thought, especially in the area of resistant varroa mite. Over the autumn one of our beekeepers has lost 28% of his hives after removing strips one month previously. Others who have done shake tests with strips still in the hives have found more mites in the hives than should be. The speakers at conference have given us many more tools to work with.

The members of our branch express our thanks to Ian Browning for his years of service as President. Ian retired at the end of conference.

We express appreciation to our Northern Ward representative Maureen Maxwell, who also retired at the end of conference. We wish her well in her new venture at Queenstown. We look forward to working with Neil Stuckey, our new ward representative.

Thank you to the Auckland Beekeepers' Club and the Auckland NBA committee for all their untiring work. Last but not least, grateful thanks to the Waipuna Hotel & Conference Centre, who were very helpful throughout the conference.

We are weathering the cold wet winter and muddy paddocks and are looking forward to a mite-free spring, Yeah right …

- Valerie Cammell

Waikato Branch

We are all back from conference and settling in to our wet winter. Not a lot to tell at the moment due to the weather. Most beekeepers seem to be well into their planning for the coming season and expect to start mid August. Randy Oliver's presentation at conference certainly created a lot of interest and talk among beekeepers in the Waikato.

Rex Baynes came to visit us at our recent branch meeting to discuss upcoming AFB disease inspection planning in the Waikato area. Attendees at the meeting were also able to talk to Rex directly, which was beneficial to all (see more information below).

Passing through Auckland International Airport the other day, it was interesting to see different honey products and pricing! I need to review my pricing expectations.

- Stephen Black,
NBA Vice President and Waikato Ward representative

The Waikato is rather waterlogged at the moment. So when the branch meeting date was set, the board room was fuller than usual, and it was great to see so many beekeepers at the after conference meeting. On the agenda for discussion was a roundup of conference and a vote of thanks to the Auckland Branch and the sponsorship that they sought from Agmardt to procure our overseas guest speakers.

One of the forums at conference was an opportunity to discuss the NPMS for AFB. As a result of Rex Baynes' attendance at the branch meeting, we have now organised to have a Branch Diseaseathon on 20 August 2011. We invite all Waikato AP2s, DECA holders, AFB disease recognition course attendees, and all other beekeepers wanting practical tools to learn to recognise AFB to join with us on this day. Please contact disease co-ordinator Fiona O'Brien 07 872 2400, or Branch secretary/president as per magazine.

Further ahead: discussion groups are planned, even the Christmas venue is set! So it's back to beekeeping awaiting the frosts, to slow down the rapid flowering of some plants that should not be at the stages that they are at.

Some beekeepers are taking the chance to see what mite levels are at in the hives, some are busy reading up as to the alternative methods that they can be using, with resistance already poking its head up.

Good luck for the season ahead.

- Jane Lorimer,
Branch Secretary and NBA Life Member

Poverty Bay Branch

The honey crop for 2011 was mixed, with multifloral around Gisborne being about the same as last season. Manuka was a different story, with crops being 30–80% down depending on how far up the coast sites were.

The weather has also been very mixed with May one of the wettest on record, then a very dry warm start to winter. Some cold weather must be coming: hopefully not in spring!

Hives have wintered down well with very low varroa counts being reported. Counts seemed to be lower right through autumn this year for some reason.

I have just got back from conference in Auckland and enjoyed both seminar days with a range of very informative speakers. Well done to the Auckland Branch for their organisation. For those that missed out, there can be life after miticide-resistant varroa infest your hives.

An AFB recognition course will be held in Gisborne on 10 September 2011. Please register with Paul Badger or Willie Kaa.

- Paul Badger, Branch President

Hawke's Bay Branch

Many of our Branch members attended conference and enjoyed it immensely. We congratulate Auckland on a very good, well-run conference. What a wonderful venue the Waipuna was, with a room suitable for every conference event. I especially liked the auditorium, complete with sound techno person for the seminar days.

During the course of conference, I was very concerned when, over a cup of coffee, a beekeeper told me that he has been treating with two Bayvarol strips and one Apivar strip at once. Mortified, I said, "you can't do that" and asked, "why would you do that, as it is under-treating with two chemical families, which will only lead to resistant mites to both chemical families?" The beekeeper informed me that a New Zealand scientist had told him he could do it. That floored me, so off I went to ask the scientist, Dr Mark Goodwin, and I was right. Mark said, "NO, I did not say beekeepers could do that".

Continued on page 17

Continued from page 15

That set me thinking about beekeepers going off course with simple rules. Our Branch, via our own Industry Education Trust, tries to fund an annual education event for NBA members and other beekeepers, with a very good speaker coming to Hawke's Bay to talk to us. This year we have organised for Dr Mark Goodwin to come on 11 August, at 7.30pm at the Lantern Room, Havelock Community Centre. Entry for NBA members and their employees from all regions is free, but membership confirmation is required at the door. Non-NBA members are charged a $5.00 entry fee. Mark is going to present on 'Using Varroa Chemicals Correctly, Controlling Resistant Varroa and AFB'.

Most of you will know that Dr Mark Goodwin has 25 years of experience in honey bee research and the New Zealand beekeeping and pollination industries. He leads a honey bee research team based in Hamilton, which carries out most of the honey bee research carried out in New Zealand. The team manages about 100 hives as part of their research programme and normally use several hundred hives belonging to commercial beekeepers each year.

Mark's research interests include honey bee behaviour, honey bee and artificial pollination of crops, American foulbrood and unfortunately more recently, varroa. Mark also assists New Zealand and other countries with development of strategies for responding to exotic pests and diseases.

Mark's team also conducts research on the effect of pesticides on bees, provides disease diagnostic services for the New Zealand beekeeping Industry and conducts research on the pollination of a range of crops in New Zealand and other countries. He and his team have an extensive extension programme.

This presentation is a wonderful opportunity for all beekeepers (particularly new beekeepers) and their staff to refresh on the correct use of chemicals, how to control resistant varroa and to reinforce the way we manage AFB elimination.

Look forward to seeing you there.

- Mary-Anne Thomason, Branch Secretary

Canterbury Branch

So far the Canterbury winter has been pretty much nonexistent, albeit a little wet. It is hard to believe that the shortest day has come and gone (along with conference), and that we will be starting our rounds in a few short weeks. I, along with most Canterbury beekeepers, will be starting early as the mild winter has enabled the bees to stay more active than usual.

It has been a busy year for me this year with the ongoing events in Christchurch. The clean up from September has taken a lot longer than we anticipated and is just about complete. That, along with building a new shed because the last one was munted and shifting house because of the same reason, didn't leave a lot of time to look after the bees, all of which has led to a pretty ordinary year. All in all, I for one am looking forward to a new season.

- Brian Lancaster, Branch President

News from the Chatham Islands

Although at times it has been wild and wet here, by comparison with the South and North Island the temperatures have been relatively mild; e.g., 20°C at midday on Thursday 7 July. Two weeks earlier we had had snowflakes.

This winter we have been experimenting with a mix of winter feeding arrangements using candy, syrup and sugar and using internal and external feeders. We have also been experimenting with hive insulation and despite the ongoing vagaries of weather, the hives are doing well for this time of year.

Kaingaroa School (Chatham Islands) students receiving a practical lesson from tutor Mana Cracknell. The students pictured are students Serena Whaitiri, Nicole Whaitiri, PJ Piraka and Juvaunte Piraka. Photo: Michele Andersen.

On 23 June Kaingaroa School on Chatham Island celebrated Bee Week. The school has five students ranging from 6 to 11 years old. In February they began an integrated beekeeping program with me and my partner Mana. The school bought two hives and bee suits for the students, the principal and special needs teacher.

The students are very keen and have been working very hard. They are surprised by how much they have learned in such a short time; e.g., bee identification, making boxes, spinning honey, making and waxing frames, feeding, dealing with raiding, winter hive management.

The Kaingaroa students organised a Bee Day for 60 students who visited from Te One School (the only other school on the island) and surprised themselves by being able to answer all the questions about beekeeping put to them by the students of Te One.

The day began with a powhiri and morning tea, followed by group activities and the yummiest hangi for lunch. The visiting students dressed in bee suits and viewed the hives (under supervision), watched a bee movie, made beeswax candles and read the bee journals created by the five students. They were reluctant to leave for home—a bumpy bus ride of 60 kilometres—but on the way home they ate chocolate bees and sang songs. Several grandparents are now purchasing bee suits and hives for their kids and families. This is a great outcome for the island community and its youth.

There is an awesome report (with student commentaries) about this event in the Chatham Islander newspaper (July).

- Mana Cracknell and Michele Andersen

Keep an eye out for more Conference coverage in the September issue.

Psa: where to this pollination season?

By Dennis Crowley, Bay of Plenty Branch President and Member, NBA Pollination Committee

On the outside not a lot has changed from last season, but behind the shelterbelts a lot has happened.

Psa (*Pseudomonas syringae pv actinidiae*) is still mainly in the Te Puke area and there is a lot of fear of it spreading further. Zespri has engaged 40 or so labs and research scientists from around the world to help with the containment/eradication of Psa. Although there are some interesting developments so far, they won't be immediately useful to the orchardist for this season.

The Psa bacteria on artificial pollen can be killed in the lab by heat treatment and not affect the viability of the pollen itself. The question is whether they can control it on a commercial basis, and will any orchardist want to risk it this season? There are a lot of paranoid orchardists out there, so the hygiene controls of entering and leaving orchards will be a lot stronger this year: gates being locked, better gates being locked, better wash-down areas provided, and spray-down areas being set up to make sure there is no contaminated material coming onto or leaving orchards. You will see road signs put up as you come into the area telling you not to move plant material out of the area.

Psa in a New Zealand orchard, showing ooze associated with infections of the vine vascular system. Photo courtesy of ZESPRI OPC.

The hot zone, as they call it, is still quite compact (limited to Te Puke) but the buffer zones are increasing little by little each month. The question on everyone's lips is how big the zone will get this spring.

Orchardists are using copper sprays to hold back the infection, and they are using a lot of it so general spraying, along with the extra copper ones, will be something we beekeepers will have to watch.

> "...the hygiene controls of entering and leaving orchards will be a lot stronger this year."

As far as beekeepers are concerned, not a lot has changed from last year—but talk to your orchardists early. We suggest that the bee dumps are in bigger and easier to get to sites, so we are not driving all over the orchards. If you have to go down shelter/vine rows, ask the orchardist to trim the shelter/vines so you don't get foliage over your truck/ute decks.

The only science we have on bees cleaning up their hives for bacteria is with fireblight. The hives were clean in three days after moving away from the orchards, so that will be the suggested time of a gap between orchards. Asking for the hives to come out of pollination a little earlier will help with this and some will want to get a copper spray on as well.

For hives used in the hot zone and then used outside of the hot zone, well that's up to you and your orchardist. We suggest that this practice be avoided.

As I mentioned earlier, talk to your orchardist and do all you can to minimise the spread.

Questions and answers

Here are answers to some questions I was asked by beekeepers:

Has it been proved that Psa has been found in the pollen of beehives, and therefore are bees considered a spread vector? (They are considered to be with fireblight: another bacteria.) *No, not yet; they are still doing research on this. What little research they have done so far is inconclusive.*

Can the beehives be used twice as they have in the past by some beekeepers (gold to green)? *Yes, with a three-day stand-down period in between. The orchardists should release the hives a little earlier as well because they may want to get a copper spray on.*

Will fewer hives be required or more this spring? *Artificial pollen might not be available this season. Unsure on hive requirements: that will be up to each orchardist to decide. As for artificial pollen being applied, once again it will be the orchardist's decision, but I think some will be very wary of using it this season.*

What restrictions will be put on beekeepers moving hives in and out of orchards? *The measures taken by some growers last year weren't up to scratch—just a spray bottle for the tyres. The hygiene controls on orchards have been increased a lot since last pollination so expect to see more locked gates, spray-down/wash-down areas.*

Will beekeepers know which orchards are under movement control? *No orchards are under movement controls.*

What should beekeepers in other districts be doing to counter the spread of this disease? *As long as you clean your vehicles before leaving each orchard you are OK.*

Working hard on pollination issues

By Neil Mossop, Chairman, NBA Pollination Committee

I am pleased to report that the NBA Pollination Committee had its first face-to-face meeting during the annual conference in Auckland on 28 June.

Formed one year ago, we are a small group of six people who keep contact by phone and email on pollination issues affecting beekeepers.

Since last year, we have addressed the following issues:

1. represented beekeepers' views for protocols on placement of beehives into kiwifruit orchards during the Psa incursion. This is an ongoing consultation with the kiwifruit industry. (Please refer to Dennis's report in this issue.)
2. conducted a survey of bee mortality. We are hoping to get a better understanding of bee deaths and the number of beekeepers and hives involved, and possibly where and what chemicals were involved
3. closer working relationship with ERMA: we now have a delegated person to take issues directly to ERMA regarding chemicals, sprays and their registrations
4. talked with Zespri and requested research be done by Plant and Food on Movento, a systemic spray used on a number of crops. Dr Mark Goodwin reported on their research at the recent NBA conference. More research still needs to be done on fungicide use in kiwifruit orchards
5. took a case to the Commerce Commission regarding what we understood as price fixing by Zespri in some of their publications to growers last year, regarding standards of hives and the prices beekeepers should be paid. We believe this is something between the beekeeper and their orchardist. The Commerce Commission ruled that it was not price fixing; hence we lost the case
6. members of the committee have also been involved with a presentation to the Parliamentary Local Government and Environment Select Committee regarding pollination security in New Zealand
7. we have generally promoted bees as a pollinator and their importance to the national economy.

Some of the issues that we need to address this year are:

- more research on bees as a possible vector of Psa in kiwifruit orchards. Research overseas indicates they are not, but this needs to be confirmed
- more research on fungicides and their effects on bees
- keeping a watch on sprays in orchards for the control of Psa and their effect on bees
- lobby and obtain some assurance that no more pollen be imported for artificial pollination. We believe this is high risk for importing bee diseases, is something we have not been consulted on and, as far as we are aware, has not been considered in the risk assessment

- to generally support beekeepers and issues that arise regarding pollination
- to promote safe practices and bee health during crop pollination.

See page 3 for more info.

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Otherwise fine

By Frank Lindsay, NBA Life Member

It's late July as I write this. I have had the use of another beekeeper's helper and this has been matched with four beautiful, fine winter days.

We have been around the hives checking their weight and adding a super of last year's granulated honey to any that I considered a bit light (fairly easy to heft slightly off the ground from the second-storey handhold). This tactic is perhaps a bit risky, but all the supers are marked and it won't be too hard to backtrack if AFB pops up, although it shouldn't.

The bees are flying well, gathering nectar mostly from five finger, Spanish heather and tree lucerne and pollen from some of these and gorse. Kohekohe has just about finished flowering and all the hives that have access to this flower have nectar in a few frames.

Hive casualities

We've found a few surprises: another four hives are dead and one was queenless—lots of pollen in the bottom two supers, no brood or bees at all and wax cappings on the bottom board, indicating it had been robbed out. All of the other casualties have been from varroa.

After listening to Randy Oliver at last month's conference, I believe these hives went down because of viruses. I'm seeing similar things to what you see with PMS: spotty brood, the odd cell with sacbrood and cannibalised larvae, but little varroa. If I had resistant mites, it wouldn't be just the odd hive dead but many beside them would be severely weakened, but I'm not seeing these signs. One hive was down to a handful of bees and was being robbed, so I classified it as dead although I did save the queen—she was on the bottom board being stung by three robber bees.

Another hive had completely run out of food with the bees in a cluster and looked dead; however, when I took out a frame there was movement, so these two hives are in the garage warming up to see if they will come away again. One hive needs more bees badly so they will get a handful each day to boost bee numbers. Meantime, I'll also cage the queen to prevent her from being killed. A commercial beekeeper would have just dumped both these hives on strong hives and left the bees to it. I like the challenge of trying to get the bees going again.

> " ... I believe these hives went down because of viruses."

My four-frame nucs are a bit of a disappointment. By this time they usually have brood in three frames and should be charging ahead. They just require the odd frame of honey to keep them going. However, a few are queenless and some have new queens that aren't laying. A few months ago, several had supersedure queen cells that I rubbed out as it's too cold for mating, but it seems the bees have their own ideas and have done this anyway. Now it's another wait to see if I have drone layers or mated queens.

In one apiary we entered, half the bees were flying like mad in the late afternoon—a sign of robbing. A quick check at the entrance of each hive showed bees with pollen coming in so they must be robbing someone else's hives nearby. I'll bet that more varroa are coming in again, so I'll give them a vaporisation with oxalic acid (12-day kill without opening the hive) in a week's time.

Then you find the odd half dozen hives pushed over (the tyre tracks in the mud indicated it wasn't one of last month's gales) but you never know. Four had held together fairly well (my hives are tied with nylon rope) but some had lost the top super of honey. Still, that's better than them all being dead.

Although it seems to be all doom and gloom, at the moment the score is three dead to lost queens and fifteen dead to varroa reinvasion, out of 400 hives. All the rest are coming along well, judging from the bee activity at the entrance and the weight of the colonies.

If this unusually (for Wellington) good weather continues, I'll be out with a new bushwhacker and chainsaw (someone thought they liked mine better than buying their own), opening out some of my apiary sites so they get more sun. Over the years, the bush around quite a few of my apiary sites has grown faster that the surrounding area (bee guano) and my hives are now in the shade. Full sun, we were told at the conference, is best for healthy bees.

Things to do this month

Prepare for the new season's work: queen-raising equipment, feeding equipment, grass-spraying gear, etc. If queen rearing, stimulate drone production hives by feeding syrup and pollen supplement. Embed foundation into extracting frames. Undertake a quick hive check for weight by hefting hives. You can open a hive for a few minutes to check it if it's not too cold (i.e., not cold on your arms with your sleeves rolled up).

MAF programme update

Following is an update on MAF's work programme following the Independent Panel report on the import health standard for honey from Australia.

There were two work streams initiated in direct response to the Independent Panel report.

1. Surveillance

The article published in the April 2011 issue of *The New Zealand BeeKeeper* (page 10) noted that the pilot surveillance programme was completed, confirming for MAF that *Paenibacillus alvei* and *Nosema ceranae* should be considered established in New Zealand, with no justification for measures in import health standards.

Work has progressed well on the proof of absence survey for Israeli acute paralysis virus (IAPV). All sampling has been completed by AsureQuality Limited, completing their role in the project. Thanks to those who have assisted this sampling. There were 856 bee samples collected from 302 apiaries, in accordance with the randomised sampling scheme. The diagnostic testing is being performed by MAF's Investigation and Diagnostic Laboratories (IDC), Wallaceville, and they have this week reported they are approximately 40% through that work with no IAPV positives detected by the PCR assays being used (2x American and 2x European primer-based PCRs).

We expect this work to be completed by October, but please note that IDC's resources may need to be re-directed to more urgent activity at any time.

2. Thermal inactivation research

MAF has agreed that the National Bee Unit, Food and Environment Research Agency, Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, United Kingdom, will undertake research into the thermal sensitivity of IAPV. We have specified that NBU will utilise the thermal inactivation parameters targeting European foulbrood within the draft import health standard within this research, testing whether these parameters successfully inactivate IAPV. NBU has provided progress reports indicating some technical difficulties in the early stages of this research project. Communication from NBU to MAF on progress and issues is satisfactory from MAF's perspective.

MAF statement on top bar hives

Disclaimer: MAF is unable to provide legal advice on this matter and the information below should not be construed or relied on as such. MAF accepts no responsibility or liability to any person for any errors or omissions of fact or law or opinion expressed in the paragraphs below. The statement below represents MAF's general view. It is recommended that parties seek their own independent legal advice on this matter.

Hive types are regulated by clause 11 of the Biosecurity (National American Foulbrood Pest Management Strategy) Order 1998 (the strategy), which requires that bees be kept in moveable frame hives. The definition of 'moveable frame hive' in the strategy is reproduced below:

"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."

The first part of the definition suggests top-bar hives are not compliant with the NPMS, as the hive must contain frames in which combs are built. This is not possible if a 'frame' consists only of a top bar.

However, the second part of the sentence reads *"and where the frames may be separately and easily removed from the beehive for examination without causing damage to the combs".* This provides the rationale for the requirement to use moveable-frame hives.

The inspections referred to are within the context of a strategy that has the objective of reducing the incidence of American foulbrood, and which requires visual inspection of brood combs for disease symptoms.

Section 5 of the Interpretation Act 1999 (set out below) states that when interpreting legislation (statute or regulations), one needs to do so in light of the purpose and text of the legislation. This is called the "purposive" approach; i.e., one does not just look at the dictionary meaning of the words but the context in which they are used. In other words, when interpreting the law, you have to consider the intent as well as the strict dictionary meaning of the words.

Interpretation Act 1999
5 Ascertaining meaning of legislation
(1) The meaning of an enactment must be ascertained from its text and in the light of its purpose.

Looking at the purpose of the American Foulbrood Strategy Order (clause 5), the primary purpose is to reduce the incidence of American foulbrood by specified percentages over a certain period of time. One of the secondary objectives of the strategy is to locate all beehives and ensure that each honeybee colony is inspected at least once a year for AFB.

The definition of "moveable frame hive" needs to be interpreted in light of these objectives of the strategy. It appears that the original intent behind the requirement to have moveable frames was to facilitate inspection for AFB, so the key consideration is that there should be no impediment to inspection.

Until this issue is determined by a court, MAF can not give a conclusive answer as to the legality of top-bar hives.

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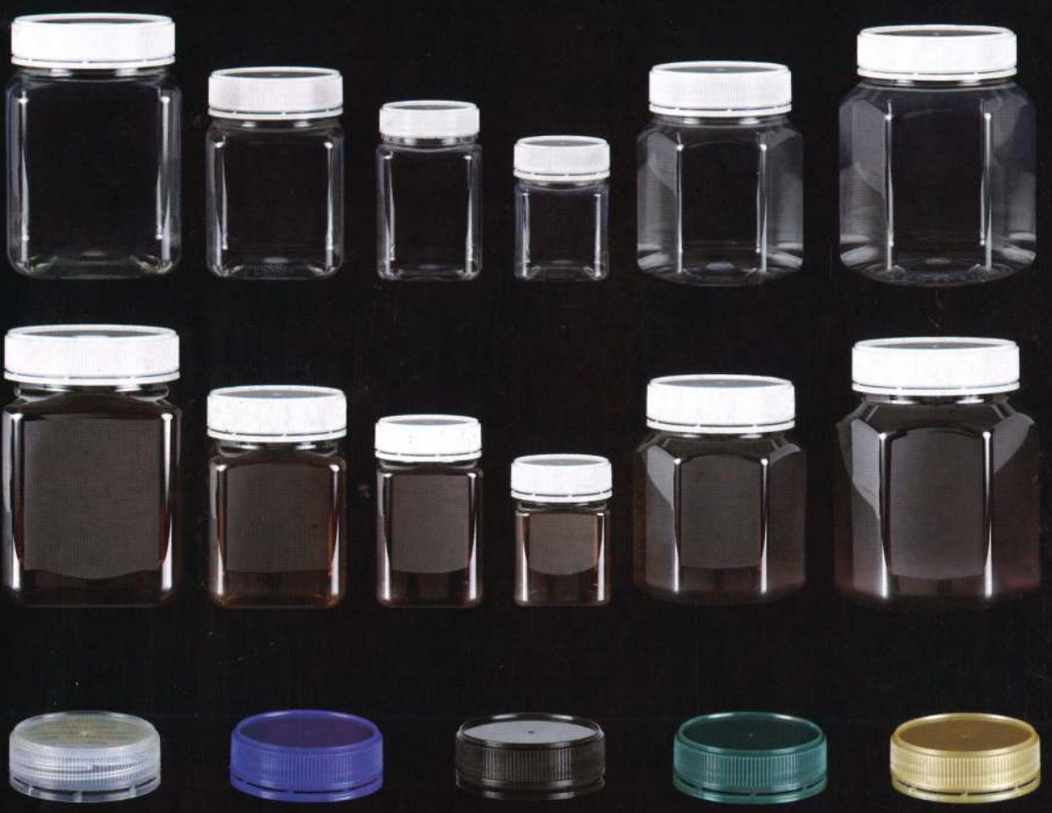

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