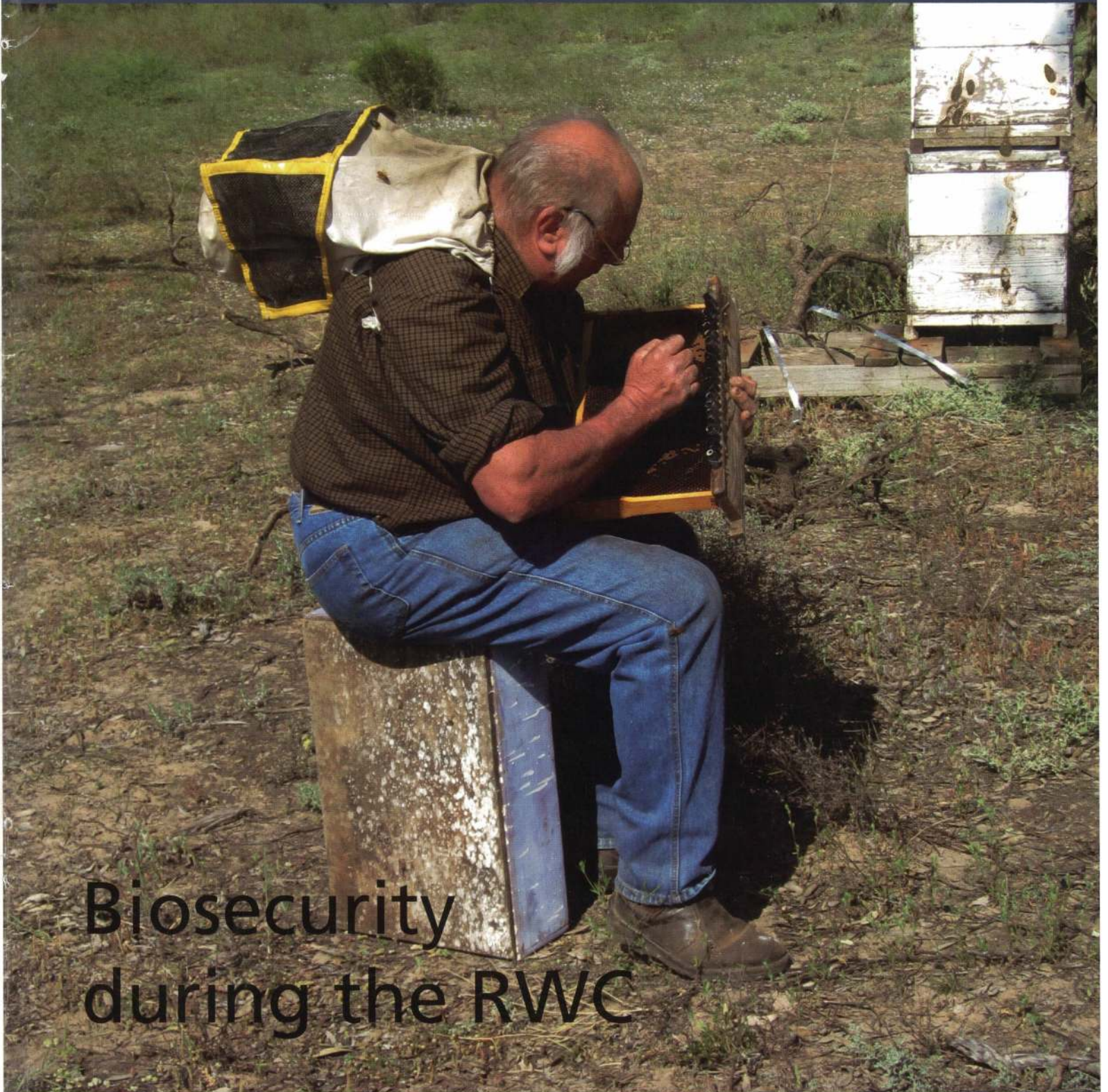


September 2011, Volume 19 No. 8

The NEW ZEALAND BeeKeeper



Biosecurity
during the RWC

- GIA on the horizon
- More Conference coverage
- Preparing hives for spring

BAYVAROL®

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

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*



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

The New Zealand BeeKeeper is the official journal of the National Beekeepers' Association of New Zealand (Inc.)

ISSN 0110-6325

Printed by South City Print, PO Box 2494, Dunedin 9013, New Zealand

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER:

Daniel Paul
PO Box 10792
Wellington 6143
Ph: 04 471 6254
Fax: 04 499 0876
Email: ceo@nba.org.nz

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY:

(including NBA Membership & Journal Subscriptions)

Jessica Williams
PO Box 10792
Wellington 6143
Ph: 04 471 6254
Fax: 04 499 0876
Email: secretary@nba.org.nz

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL:

Barry Foster (President/East Coast)
Stephen Black (Vice President/Waikato)
Neil Stuckey (Northern)
Neil Mossop (Bay of Plenty)
Mary-Ann Lindsay (Southern North Island)
Kerry Gentleman (Upper South Island)
Trevor Corbett (Central South Island)

EDITORIAL/PUBLICATION:

Nancy Fithian
8A Awa Road, Miramar
Wellington 6022
Ph: 04 380 8801 Fax: 04 380 7197
Mobile: 027 238 2915
Email: editor@nba.org.nz

PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE:

Frank Lindsay
26 Cunliffe Street
Johnsonville
Wellington 6037
Ph/Fax: 04 478 3367
Email: lindsay.s.apiaries@clear.net.nz

JOURNAL SUBSCRIPTIONS:

— 11 Issues —
NZ \$123.00 GST inc
Australia NZ\$128.00 + TT Fees NZ\$25.00 and incl P&P
Rest of the world NZ\$130.00 + TT Fees NZ\$25.00
and incl P&P
Subject to review if postage charges increase

DEADLINES FOR ADVERTISING AND ARTICLES:

Due on the 6th of the month prior to publication
All articles/letters/photos to be with the Editor via fax,
email or post to Nancy Fithian (see details above).

Please direct advertising inquiries to:

South City Print Ltd, PO Box 2494, Dunedin 9044.
Phone: 03 455 4486, Fax: 03 455 7286
Email: sales@southcityprint.co.nz

Articles published in *The New Zealand BeeKeeper* are subject to scrutiny by the National Beekeepers' Association management committee. The content of articles does not necessarily reflect the views of the association.

© *The New Zealand BeeKeeper* is copyright and may not be reproduced in whole or in part without the written permission of the Publisher, The National Beekeepers' Association of New Zealand.

CONTACTS TO THE NEW ZEALAND BEEKEEPING INDUSTRY:

Rex Baynes, AFB NPMS Manager
PO Box 44282, Lower Hutt 5040
Email: rbaynes@ihug.co.nz

American Foulbrood Management Strategy
www.afb.org.nz

AsureQuality Limited
Ph: 0508 00 11 22
www.asurequality.com

Exotic Disease and Pest Emergency Hotline 0800 809 966
www.biosecurity.govt.nz

Contents

- 4 Maintaining vigilance during the RWC
- 7 GIA on the horizon
- 8 Effects of thyme oil on varroa
- 10 Memo to all NBA members
- 11 'Hive Mate' proves a winner
- 12 Hobby day a resounding success
- 14 From the colonies
- 17 Preparing hives for spring
- 18 Coating plastic frames

Front cover: 'Grafting in the field': this was the winning photo in the Class C (Portrait print) category of the third annual NBA Photography Competition 2011, sponsored by Ecroyd Beekeeping Supplies Ltd. Photo: Frank Lindsay.

Maintaining vigilance during the RWC

By Barry Foster, NBA President

The country is humming with Rugby World Cup fever and the media is abuzz with it. These are perfect conditions for distractions in which biosecurity mistakes can occur.

A projected 88,000 visitors will arrive, many bearing gifts. Some will bring honey and other food, which hopefully will be intercepted at the border. But biosecurity is not just about a Government department maintaining vigilance on our behalf. It requires constant vigilance by everyone, as the recent interception of honey mentioned in the media reminds us. A pot of honey posted from the USA aroused the suspicions of a member of the public as 'not being quite right'. MAF BNZ staff responded and the pot of honey was destroyed.

A connection has been hypothesised between small hive beetle being first found in commercial hives near Sydney and Brisbane in 2002, and the Olympic Games in Sydney in 2000 that resulted in a mass of visitors to Australia. Certainly two years is long enough for a tiny population of beetles to grow to a noticeable one. We will never know the truth; nonetheless, we should learn and take action from these experiences. The NBA has asked MAF BNZ about what extra measures they are taking to maintain adequate border protection with the increased international traffic that the Rugby World Cup will generate. The full response from MAF is printed on page 6.

The future of NZ beekeeping

In April 2010 and June 2011 KPMG produced two Agribusiness Agenda reports. The 2010 report provided various reflections on the views of chosen agribusiness industry leaders, while the 2011 report compiled the results of interviews from over 80 agribusiness industry leaders. Looking at the list of the interviewees, none appeared to be any recognisable commercial beekeeper or leader from our industry. This is regrettable. Both reports make interesting reading and are available from the KPMG website.

Beekeeping and other agricultural industries face similar challenges, opportunities and potentials to be realised. For example, biosecurity ranks highest as the major priority issue for agribusiness, as for our own. The interviewees' next priority issues were around understanding consumer trends and maintaining our 'clean green' image in export markets. Offsetting this, the reports also speak of having a 'mature' debate over genetic modification and the choice as a country to adopt it or not. The reports speak of setting ourselves to become best-practice producers rather than the lowest cost commodity producers: something we have done increasingly well over the last decade as more honey is exported packed rather than in drums. Certainly more can be done and perhaps these reports offer some food for thought.

The reports speak of adopting more ecologically sustainable practices in producing food exports in line with increasing consumer trends in high-value markets; these are around consumers' desires to reduce their personal impact on the environment and lead healthier balanced lives. These trends should not be dismissed as unimportant in our growing Asian markets, for they are long held in our traditional markets in Europe and are increasingly becoming global. Traceability, verifiable standards and providing consumers with some connection to the production source through technological reach and guarantees of authenticity offer significant opportunities, and some challenges to us. We need to debate, discuss and act on these issues to gain the greatest benefits.

China is expected to become our largest trading partner by 2013 and our largest export market by 2014. A considerable

amount of manuka honey is already exported to China and Asia; yet we have no complete standard as to what constitutes manuka honey! The Bee Products Standards Council is working with several scientists to complete this crucial standard, which will be high on the agenda at their meeting in September.

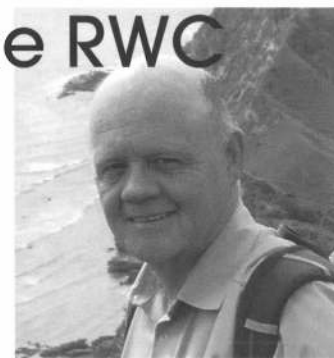
Many of us have enjoyed the economic benefits of being in a rising manuka honey product life cycle bell curve over the past decade or more. The key to any successful product is to increase and extend the top of the bell curve for an even longer period. To quote the 2011 Agribusiness Agenda report:

"The key is getting into a mindset that a value-add solution can be any product if it is delivered in a way that meets a customer's specific requirements."

The benefits of traceability, sustainability and verifiable standards are already recognised as value-added components in our export markets. Authenticity, having greater and more immediate understanding of changing eating trends and developing solutions with customers to supply higher-value niche products are challenges and benefits to be further developed. Scientific research, the reports say, is critical to the success in reaching "our global potential". I often wonder where the next manuka success story is coming from: perhaps it lies amongst the benefits mentioned above.

The greatest omission from both reports is the fact that neither talks about pollination as being within the overall aim in realising our global potential in agribusiness. This in spite of the fact that in 2009, some 66% of the country's export income was derived from agribusiness. Analysing the figures in

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.



The most reliable Varroa treatment available!

**Used in New Zealand's most successful
beekeeping operations!**

10 – 90 strips	\$3.83 each plus G.S.T.
100 – 990 strips	\$3.50 each plus G.S.T.
1000 – 4990 strips	\$3.07 each plus G.S.T.
5,000 – 9,990 strips	\$2.85 each plus G.S.T.
10,000 – 19,990 strips	\$2.79 each plus G.S.T.
20,000 plus strips	\$2.73 each plus G.S.T.

Dosage Rate: 2 Apivar strips per brood chamber.

Price includes delivery, except for Rural Delivery, which is \$4.44 plus G.S.T. for each 1000 strips or part thereof. Phone or email for an order form.

Payment is required prior to delivery by cheque or electronic banking.

Prices subject to change without notice.



New Zealand Beeswax Ltd

Postal: Private Bag 6001, GERALDINE 7956, New Zealand

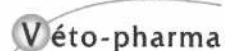
Factory: 44 Gladstone St South, ORARI, South Canterbury

Phone: 64 3 693 9189; Fax: 64 3 693 9780

Email: info@apivar.co.nz; Web: www.apivar.co.nz

Apivar® is the product and the registered trademark of:

Veto-pharma S.A.,



14, avenue du Quebec F-91945 Courtaboeuf Cedex France

BK236

Continued from page 4

the report, a conclusion can be drawn that some 30–40% of our exports are reliant for the most part on adequate pollination. That the beekeeping and associated pollination sector is largely invisible in both reports suggests that it is not within the mindsets of any of our major agribusiness leaders or KPMG. Some justification for this omission might be that no comprehensive, independent economic analysis on the value of pollination to our economy has ever been done. Our own omission is that we have not developed a significant conversation leading to greater understanding and collaborative actions with the wider agribusiness community, let alone Government, as to the value of pollination to our economy.

Conference 2012

It is with some foresight that Hawke's Bay Branch members have chosen the theme 'the future of beekeeping' for our 2012 conference. It will be a timely, thought provoking and thoroughly enjoyable conference I'm sure.



Response from MAF regarding RWC border protection

What extra measures is MAF taking to maintain adequate border protection with the increased international traffic that the Rugby World Cup will generate?

Maintaining a world-leading standard of biosecurity is the key focus for MAF, regardless of whether we are processing high volumes during major events such as Rugby World Cup 2011 (RWC2011) or in times of disruption such as during the recent Christchurch earthquakes.

We acknowledge that there will be an increase in the volume of passengers, cargo, and craft arriving and requiring biosecurity clearance during the RWC. However, a recent report prepared by the Ministries of Economic Development and Tourism finds that the increased visitor volumes expected mostly sit below the levels experienced during the peak summer tourism season at Christmas.

To prepare for the anticipated increased flow of visitors and cargo during RWC2011,

MAF, along with other government agencies, has participated in detailed planning over the past four years. MAF is confident it has systems in place to process arriving passengers in a timely manner without compromising biosecurity standards. Most of the processing of arriving cargo associated with RWC2011 is already complete.

Major events such as the FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup, FISA World Rowing Championships, Super 14, Bledisloe Cup and Tri-Nations rugby have enabled us to refine our clearance processing.

The type of biosecurity risks posed by major events is, in essence, the same as during any other time. MAF does not anticipate any particular increase in biosecurity risk, and, at the time of writing, there are no specific biosecurity concerns, including disease risk, associated with RWC2011. We routinely monitor emerging global disease issues and adjust border measures to manage any risk that may present.

There are layers of protective measures in place to ensure passengers are not bringing risk goods into New Zealand. All arriving passengers will be subjected to a combination of the following measures: communications through their travel agents; the in-flight video setting out what to declare; their arrival cards; passenger profiling; roving risk assessors; detector dogs; risk assessment by inspectors; X-ray and search.

To meet the additional RWC2011 demand, extra staff have been rostered to border duties. These are not new appointments, but staff redeployed from other work areas.

Over and above this frontline coverage, MAF has increased its border biosecurity messaging (Declare or Dispose. It is New Zealand law) to passengers entering New Zealand. This includes both airport display signage and pre-flight messaging. RWC2011 teams, officials, VIPs, government guests and official travel agencies have been informed of New Zealand border requirements. And a border travel advisory has been produced in a number of languages for distribution through international travel agents

accredited to the RWC2011 and tour groups booking with them.

It is important at this time that beekeepers themselves are aware that everyone has a role to play in biosecurity and are encouraging any visitors they themselves have arriving to follow the biosecurity rules.

The recent case where a jar of honey arrived in New Zealand and was reported to MAF by a beekeeper is a good example of a community member playing their part and the wider biosecurity system working.

Our biosecurity system is based on layers of protection that start offshore with exporters assuring that risk has been eliminated, including border inspection and finishing with onshore response activities.

Occasionally risk goods slip past the offshore requirements and the border controls. For example, food products may not always be declared as such on parcel documentation. Some 37 million mail items cross the border each year. All items are screened in some manner—either by inspection where risk is flagged on documentation, or by X-ray, detector dogs or random survey. It is, however, simply not feasible to physically inspect every item which is why the system includes an 0800 reporting number to report such incidents to MAF.

MAF thanks the beekeeper who reported this situation and enabled it to be managed.



New NBA Members' benefit

Shell Fuelcard has released a special offer for NBA members only. Receive a 5 cent a litre discount off pump prices on Shell fuels, diesel and LPG. Cardplus Shell Fuelcard is available to members' businesses, work colleagues and family members.

Join the NBA today to access this great offer!

GIA on the horizon

By the NBA Secretariat

The GIA looms as the big issue on the NBA's agenda.

The secretariat is busy putting together a detailed plan to brief all industry members about what the GIA means and how it will operate, and to consult with them as to what they, as an industry, wish to do about it.

The briefing and consultation plan is expected to be rolled out over the next nine to 10 months with, hopefully, some kind of decision indicated by industry at next year's conference.

As a starting point, we plan to produce a GIA 101 document—a 'plain English' and straightforward Q & A document that tries to answer beekeepers' questions from a beekeeping point of view. We are working on that with MAF now.

We hope to have that available for the October issue of the journal. Because we can't hope to predict every question that every beekeeper will have, we expect the GIA 101 to spark a lot of feedback from industry.

We'll then take those new questions and get answers from MAF and feed those answers back to industry.

The plan is to keep on doing that—sending out information, getting feedback and new questions and providing answers—for as long as it takes to ensure everyone feels they know what they need to know to make a call.

So keep an eye on your emails and the journal over coming months!

And don't be shy about sending in questions. The more questions we get from industry about how the GIA will work and how it will affect beekeepers, the more we can do to make sure you know the score. And that way you can make a properly informed decision as to whether the GIA is the right or wrong path to go down.

As part of consulting on GIA, we will also be having a series of meetings with other organisations like Horticulture NZ, Zespri, Federated Farmers, etc. to see how they feel about GIA and how they would work with us under a GIA scenario if there were an incursion. Busy times.

Governance and liaison

In other news, the Executive Council will have been through a governance training course by the time you read this. This training will better prepare them for addressing some of the strategic issues facing the NBA and the industry.

We met with NZFSA to discuss ways we might improve communication and education around tutin, and encourage beekeepers to complete their harvest declarations. From July 2012 there is a two-year period for a compliance survey whereby if MAF Food Safety can receive good data, a delimiting survey could be undertaken to then clearly define the boundaries.

"As a starting point, we plan to produce a GIA 101 document ... We are working with MAF on that now."

Strengthening the NBA

A meeting with EPA opened discussions on an application to register oxytetracycline for emergency use in preparation for when EFB arrives in New Zealand. We just have some detail to collate and provide to EPA before the process can be advanced to the next stage.

Growsafe approached us recently with the idea of working together to improve the education of those attending their certification courses by contributing to the development of a Growsafe training resource on the subject of protection of beneficial insects.

Also on the secretariat's agenda is the work associated with developing a strategy to 'strengthen' the NBA—we've started that and are working on it alongside all the GIA stuff. And a review of the NBA rules should get under way in the next month or so. We should be able to announce formally who's on the Rules Committee and what the terms of reference will be.

We expect this process will also involve a fair amount of industry consultation because what the committee comes up with affect all members of the Association. So we do need to consult with you guys to make sure you are happy with any new constitution.

Coming up next month are more meetings with MPs and officials as we continue the work of building our profile with these important people.

And we are seeking quotes and expressions of interest to get a formal Bee Losses Survey done, and a detailed economic analysis of the industry. More on those things later.

Cheers,
Daniel, Pauline and Jess



Overheard at conference

A well-known beekeeping couple had just ordered an omelette for dinner when the waiter asked, "Would you like an egg with that?"

Regarding notice of motion 2 at the AGM ("Having one organisation to represent beekeepers"): After it was moved to lie on the table, one of the Bay of Plenty Branch members said, "I'm sorry for creating so much discussion".



Effects of thyme oil on varroa

By Gary Jeffery

Now that varroa mites are widespread throughout much of New Zealand and also becoming resistant to some of the usual treatments, what do we do?

Fortunately, varroa do not appear to be resistant to some of the organic oils like thyme oil (thymol is the active ingredient).

As we are certified organic and want to remain that way, we decided to use a thymol patty based on that used by an English friend. It contained organic sugar, organic palm oil and organic caster sugar. As the bees eat the patty, the thymol gets into their blood supply and poisons the mites when they suck the bees' blood.

We tried some over the winter and in the spring found that the apiaries with the patties had few mites, while others nearby had big numbers. This was our first season with mites.

When spring arrived, we found we had varroa in a lot of our apiaries next to other beekeepers' hives that had mites. We put some patties on these hives, but the bees refused to eat them and the mites built up to dangerous numbers. The flow had started, which probably made the sugar less attractive.

So should we give up on organics?

We had purchased some thyme oil from the UK in liquid form to give it one last try: kill or cure.

We selected two hives badly infected with the mites to the extent that the bees were crawling out of the hive. We sprayed the thyme oil on the floorboards and a week

later the hives appeared back to normal. So we selected another two strong hives with three or four mites in each opened drone cell. These hives were also showing a lot of mites with a sugar shake.

These hives were given a sticky board, and we also sprayed the floor and the bees with a fine spray of pure thyme oil. The next day the sticky boards were covered in mites (too many to count), but not one dead bee. Amazing. Going mad, we then decided to spray all hives in apiaries where mites had been seen. The plan was to give three sprays a week apart to cover the emerging period for the worker brood.

The honey flow started after we gave the second spray, so to avoid giving the honey a thyme flavour we only gave the two sprays. We again checked the drone brood and found only one mite in one of the cells in one hive and none in the other. We discovered some mites on the sticky boards put in with the second spray, but I expect they were from the brood that was emerging.

“The next day the sticky boards were covered in mites ... but not one dead bee.”

Some hives only received one spray before the flow. By February, mite levels were still low in the two sprayed hives but building up in the single sprayed hives.

Mistakes to avoid

We intended to remove the crop in February and put on a patty for a long period of control. But due to illness, the honey was removed as late as April in some apiaries.

Also, instead of putting on patties, we thought that a spray as the honey was removed would keep the mites under control and we would put patties on just before winter.

What we didn't realise was how quickly reinvasion from dying hives being robbed by our bees would build up mite numbers again. With our forested areas being full of wild hives, we started having a lot of hives dying before our return visit to give another spray.

What we now realise is that the spray system works well over the spring period when the bees are not robbing dying hives, but a patty is essential as soon as robbing starts again in the late summer. Also, the crop has to be removed more quickly to allow treatment by late February at the latest.

The bees do not like the thyme spray, so a single spray over the bees will probably do the job. Likewise, if you are using a patty it works best if put into a small paper bag with the end open so the bees can chew away the paper gradually. We tried a patty just on the rear of the brood frames, but the patty accidentally spread when the honey super was returned. Instead of being compact, the exposed thyme oil in the patty was too strong for the bees and actually killed a couple of hives.

Spray technique

We just spray over the top of the brood box (we use a single brood box) and put the lid on. The bees tend to run away from the spray but if they come out of the entrance in large numbers, you are giving them too much. I suspect the spray works better when it is warm as the bees blow it out of the hive quickly then, and in the process I believe the mites are contacted with it.

We did try some pure thymol for patties, but it is nasty stuff to use. You really need a gas mask, gloves, goggles, etc., when playing with it. We find the thyme oil less of a problem to use, but you soon learn not to stand down wind when spraying a hive. The patties are even nicer to use.

Patty recipe

This recipe is working well for us. Using a concrete mixer, we put in 20 kilograms of

organic caster sugar. (If your business is not organic, you can use 10 kilograms of caster sugar and use 10 kilograms of raw sugar to make a firmer patty. We use this mixture for our non-organic business.)


Next, add three kilograms of thyme oil to the sugar and mix thoroughly. Finally, melt up 10 kilograms of organic palm oil (Kremelta or Chefaid fat, if not organic) and add to the sugar mixture. Then put into a 20-litre pail for use later. You will need probably about a heaped tablespoon for each hive.

Other observations

Incidentally, we produce queens. As part of this operation, we put raw sugar on the bottom board at the back of the nuc to keep the bees working. We placed a patty on this sugar in November and found that this worked best of all in our mating nucs. Perhaps this is because we have induced brood breaks each time we put in a new queen cell, leaving the varroa nowhere to hide.

We tried a number of spray atomisers but found the really cheap ones (\$3.00) were the

only ones that lasted more than a couple of days of use. The dearer ones from Mitre 10 worked just fine.

Before applying the thyme oil, we checked with the NZFSA as to whether this oil was approved for use in a beehive. After getting the specification from the UK, the NZFSA approved the product for owner's use only. (You can't use this treatment on somebody else's hive or sell the product as a miticide as this would require ACVM approval.) 

Work Wanted

Two young and enthusiastic workers looking for job in beekeeping. One animal science student from Lincoln University and one with some experience with bees. Flexible schedule but mostly available Jan and Feb. Call Rink on 033254347 or email (rink.tacoma@windowslive.com)

NBA preferred supplier

Resene

the paint the professionals use

www.resene.co.nz

P: 0800 RESENE (737 363)



CHRIS BERKERS CLIENT SERVICE MANAGER



I'LL WORK WITH YOU TO HELP GET YOUR HONEY TO THE MARKET

WE OFFER A RANGE OF TESTS FOR BEEKEEPERS AND DELIVER QUALITY RESULTS ON TIME, TO HELP YOU GET YOUR HONEY READY FOR THE MARKET. SO CALL US ON 07 858 2000 TO DISCUSS WHAT WE CAN DO FOR YOU.

TESTS OFFERED

* TEST EXCLUSIVE TO HILL LABORATORIES

■ Tutin

Testing for Tutin in honey is now regulated under a standard produced by the NZFSA. Our Tutin testing uses the latest technology offering superior sensitivity for more accurate results.

* Methyglyoxal

An indicator of the activity in Manuka honey

* Dihydroxyacetone (DHA)

DHA has the potential to more accurately predict the future MGO content level in fresh honey

* Non-Peroxide Activity (NPA)

NPA is an indicator of the activity in Manuka honey

■ Hydroxymethylfurfural (HMF)

■ pDCB

Test wax, propolis or honey for pDCBs

■ Flumethrin and Fluvalinate

■ Multiresidues & Heavy Metals

■ Water testing for Bee Keepers

CALL US TODAY ON 07 858 2000 TO TAKE THE TEST

For more info visit www.hill-laboratories.com

Memo to all NBA members



From the NBA Executive Council, August 12, 2011

Clarification re. points raised by the recent GIA paper prepared by **Keith Garratt and Russell Berry**

Dear members, in recent days you may have seen a paper prepared by Keith Garratt. The paper was Mr Garratt's analysis of the Government Industry Agreement (GIA). Russell Berry asked Mr Garratt to prepare the paper.

The Executive Council believes that, unfortunately, the report raises a number of points and makes a number of statements that will create confusion and about which NBA members need some clarification.

A key concern is that the report seems to indicate that there is still scope to amend the design of the GIA. Very unfortunately this is not possible.

Members should note that the GIA concept has been under negotiation with industry groups since 2005. There has been extensive consultation over that time, including discussion documents, workshops, seminars and meetings, most of which, if not all, have involved the NBA and Federated Farmers Bees (BIG).

During many and varied discussions with MAF, the Minister for Biosecurity, David Carter, and other affected industry groups over the last four to five years, the NBA, like many similar industry bodies, has made its view on the GIA well known.

Like most agri-sector groups, we believe the GIA presents industry with numerous challenges. It is by no means a perfect system and, as yet, the Executive Council is still undecided about whether or not it is better for industry to sign up to the GIA, with all that it involves for beekeepers, or to ignore the GIA and to take our chances on our own if a biosecurity incursion does occur.

We are currently preparing a detailed consultation plan to explain to beekeepers what the GIA means, how you'll be affected by it and what the pros and cons of signing are. We hope to have that process started in time for the October journal and we

anticipate being in a position at the 2012 conference to have an industry discussion on whether or not to sign up to GIA.

In the meantime, and contrary to what is suggested in the report, MAF and the Minister have confirmed on many occasions that there is no longer scope to completely re-design the overall concept of GIA.

By all means, David [Carter] has said, continue to talk to MAF about the **technical details**, but the principles of the GIA are no longer negotiable and the time for consideration of an alternative such as an MOU has passed. It was in fact NBA's view that an independent body be formed, much as Mr Garratt suggests in his report. Other industry groups have also supported this position but it has been rejected by Government.

Both MAF and David have stressed that, whether industry groups like it or not, government is committed to the GIA proceeding. In a media statement on 3 June this year, David reiterated the Government's commitment following a round of meetings with key industry representatives. Both Daniel Paul and John Hartnell attended those meetings.

The Minister's full media release is at: <http://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/partnerships-key-better-biosecurity-system>

We should also point out that, as you'd expect, MAF has taken extensive legal advice when preparing the GIA deed.

We'd like to address a handful of other issues in the report that need clarifying. For example:

- MAF investigations—the paper suggests that MAF can incur costs as part of investigation then pass those costs on to industry. Actually, MAF has committed to undertaking investigations of reports to the 0800 pest hotline as a baseline commitment, which means that those costs are borne by MAF only. This is generally seen as a positive for industry. Cost sharing with industry only starts once the investigation phase is complete and industry have agreed to take part in a response.


- Allocations where no cost share agreed—the paper suggests that beekeepers may be liable for the cost of responses that do not affect bees. This is not the case at all—beekeepers will only share the costs of responses to pests and diseases of bees, and only when the NBA and BIG have decided to respond. Beekeepers are not liable for the costs of responses that NBA and BIG have decided not to join.
- Response activities without MAF—the paper suggests that MAF can require a signatory to participate in a response. This is untrue. Industry signatories (NBA and BIG) choose whether they respond to an incursion or not. MAF can not make them do this.
- Shared decision making—the report suggests in a number of places that the GIA does not reflect joint decision making, but that MAF has over-riding decision making rights. This is not the case at all—all participating signatories have equal decision making rights and decision making is by consensus. This applies to the Governance Group and also to readiness and response decision making.

As we said, the above are just some of the areas in the report that the Executive Council felt the need to clarify. There are others.

The EC will soon circulate a full and accurate explanation of GIA to all beekeepers in the country. We will work with BIG to do this. We will take legal advice to ensure our explanation of GIA and how it will affect you is totally accurate.

We will consult with you on many occasions over the coming year and you'll all have numerous opportunities to ask questions and provide your views on whether the industry should, or should not, sign up to the GIA.

Regards,
Barry Foster and the Executive Council of the NBA

Note: This memo has been sent directly to all NBA members with an email address. 

‘Hive Mate’ proves a winner

By Stephen Jones

The winner of the Roy Paterson Trophy for 2011 reports on what prompted his invention.

Hi, my name is Stephen Jones. I am a beekeeper from Rotorua. As an introduction to beekeeping, the first thing I noticed beside the odd sting was the very sharp ache in my back due to the constant bending over, and lifting of heavy boxes. I soon figured out this was one of the main complaints of beekeepers.

A friend of mine noticed the dilemma and suggested we buy a lifter of some sort or other, so with much surfing on the web and pricing different lifters, the dilemma was one hive, two hives or a whole pallet of four. The question was which way to go and how much to spend?

The decision was made to build our own and make it cheaply. We thought we would construct it to lift one hive at a time, which would suit sole operators. We also wanted it to serve more than one purpose. As well as lifting single hives, we wanted to be able to lift honey supers off the hive and to load things onto the back of the truck.

We decided to use a standard handcart as a starting point but over time many alterations were made, and the only things left of the cart were the wheels and axles.

The two sides of the handcart were replaced with a single handle so the lifting chain could go up and down the inside frame. One wheel was welded to the axle, becoming a drive wheel. We then bought a winch motor



Stephen Jones (at left) receives the Roy Paterson Trophy from Russell Berry. Photo: Frank Lindsay.

to drive the wheels, with a different motor for the lifting mechanism.

Making forks for lifting a whole hive was easy; a clamping system just to lift supers was a different matter. The whole lifter fell forward when we lifted anything heavy, so we made a swing leg that came out the front, which added stability. The clamps couldn't hold enough weight, so we made longer clamps with a clamping mechanism that really grabbed on. In the end we were able to clamp and hold up to 60 kilograms.

I was reading *The New Zealand BeeKeeper* and saw that there was a trophy for new inventions to be presented at the conference, so the rush was on to get it finished and field tested.

The week before the conference we finished our invention and named it 'Hive Mate' (that extra pair of hands that doesn't talk back and does all the heavy lifting hopefully!).

I went to the nearest apiary to see if our invention really worked. Unloading was a cinch, no lifting for me! I put my new Hive Mate into gear and easily raced over to the hives! A breeze! Clamping and lifting the supers was no sweat. Yahoo! I figured it should be a breeze to put escape boards on. I put the forks on the Hive Mate. The forks are for lifting a whole hive. I then went to put the forks under the hive to lift it. Bugger!

The front of the Hive Mate was too low to the ground and got caught up in the grass. I wiggled and jiggled, managing to get the forks under the base. It was no sweat to lift the hive onto the truck, and simple to lift the hive up on to the tray, an easy one-man operation.

We have since lifted the front of the Hive Mate so that only the forks come down on to the ground, and added variable speed controls.

As I write this 'Hive Mate 2' is on the drawing board, so watch this space ...



Stephen Jones demonstrating how his 'Hive Mate' works to help beekeepers carry, clamp and lift boxes. The photos were taken by Nigel Poole, an engineer who assisted Stephen with the design of the 'Hive Mate'.

Hobby day a resounding success

By Frank Lindsay, NBA Life Member

The hobby day on 26 June that preceded the Auckland conference was a resounding success and well attended: the room was full.

Gilles Ratia (Apimondia President and President of the International Federation of Beekeepers' Associations) set the scene with an overview of beekeeping from around the world. David Yanke talked about the differences between Italian and Carniolan queens but most interesting was his explanation of queen cages, catching, holding and marking of queens.

Rex Baynes covered the essentials of the NPMS and beekeepers' responsibilities. Byron Taylor talked on exotic diseases and what to watch out for, Auckland being one of the places where these are likely to appear first.

Maureen Maxwell repeated her excellent presentation 'products of the hive and soap making' with a basket of samples. Blake Shook (USA) told us how he first started in beekeeping and some of the products he makes from hive products. Unlike other commercial beekeepers, he markets everything he produces himself.

Minina Strioukova told us how she keeps bees organically, their unusual by-product of bee venom and the products she makes from it.

Randy Oliver told us we don't need to reinvent the wheel. Soon Apistan® will fail and there will be a lot of hive deaths but it doesn't have to be. What happens is that viruses which have not been a problem are woken up and spread more quickly with varroa. We may not notice it but it's happening all the time. Deformed wing virus uses varroa as a stepping stone. These viruses

are constantly changing and becoming more virulent so now fewer mites are required before a hive falls over. It's not the varroa that kills the hive but the virus. Learn to manage the viruses. The best thing we can do to protect our bees is to keep varroa at low levels. He also offered the following advice to protect our bees.

1. Genetic diversity. Have different breeds of bees in your gene pool.
2. Good nutrition. Make sure you always have adequate pollen reserves in your hives all the time: an inch of pollen around the brood. A hive requires two pounds of pollen per week. Any time there isn't adequate pollen virus infections will build. Commercial beekeepers feed pollen supplements when there are pollen shortages.
3. Vector control. Control mites in your hives. This may mean treating your hives five to six times a year; before, after and between honey flows. Don't let the mite levels reach a point where they start to become a virus vector.
4. Use resistant bees. Support Michelle Taylor's Plant Research breeding programme. Breed resistant bees. Breed from your best bees (wall to wall brood in the spring) that have low mite

numbers. Test your bees regularly, which entails rubbing alcohol wash or doing a sugar-shake if you don't want to kill your bees. Don't let mite populations go over two mites per 100 bees.

5. Reduce pesticide load. Stop using systemic miticides in your hives. Only queens should be put into your hives. He advocated using natural organic acids and essential oils three to four times per year. Control in early autumn is essential (by 15 February). You can find tables on his website: www.scientificbeekeeping.com Rotate treatments, as there is only a small margin of error.
6. Other strategies. Regularly split your hives, drone brood trapping. But other strategies are less effective. (Look at his papers on www.scientificbeekeeping.com).

Tony Roper (AsureQuality Limited, Christchurch) has honed his talk on "six keys to successful beekeeping" (something every new beekeeper should strive to obtain). Tony also covered the basics of food handling.

Linda Newstrom-Lloyd told us of her research project to identify what are our most important and richest sources of protein. They must be over 24% crude protein,



Some of the attendees at the Small and Hobby Beekeepers' Forum at Conference, Auckland.
Photo: Mary-Ann Lindsay.

of which gorse is one of our highest, but unfortunately gorse is also on most regional councils' noxious plant lists.


Anne Hulme gave a demonstration of three practical things to fight varroa mites using meshed bottom boards with food grade mineral oil on cords and fogging. Gilles Rattia then covered the heady subject of crystallisation of honey: how and why.

During one of Gilles' presentations, a cellphone sounded with a well-known polka and he immediately went into a jig until the sound stopped. A lovely bit of humour from an annoying distraction. There was something in the day to suit all new and not-so-new beekeepers. Even one known large-scale commercial beekeeper admitted he learned something new. Those who participated will soon receive notes from


each speaker and a DVD. (Unfortunately, it doesn't include Randy Oliver's talk; however, he said before leaving that he would produce something for the journal on what he had presented.)

Wherever Randy Oliver goes, he spreads light and knowledge from the viewpoint of a scientist and a beekeeper. The beekeepers in Australia have been known to talk at the back of the room during seminar presentations, but Randy said you could hear a pin drop when he is speaking.

Perhaps something new happened to him here in New Zealand. During one of his presentations, he noticed a beekeeper in the front row was going to sleep, so he jumped down from the stage, shook the beekeeper's knee and said, "Wake up, wake up!" much to the amusement of the audience.

For those who don't know Trevor Corbett, he was a steward in the military for a number of years. This meant that he often was on call for long hours and has got into the habit of shutting his eyes whenever he could. This method of relaxing wherever possible has carried on into civilian life, so he quite often listens with his eyes closed, but he sometimes does go off to sleep. This time Trevor was listening to Randy's presentation, heard the stop in flow and was just on the point of wondering what was going on when he felt his knee being shaken and being urged to wake up! If you are going to shut your eyes during a presentation, best not to sit in the front row. 

Keep an eye out for the remainder of the NBA Conference coverage in the October issue.



Tunnickliffe's


Tunnickliffe Timber Company Limited

Beehive Boxes


**Full Depth
3/4 Depth
Top-feeders
Beehive Floors
Etc. etc.**

*Untreated Kiln Dried
or bee friendly*

Tanalised® Ecowood™

ECOWOOD™
www.tanalisedecowood.com 

Contact Daan



NEW ThermoWood®

**Revolution in
Bee Woodware**

**Thermally Modified
Radiata pine**

High durability

*Free of any
chemical*

Check our Website

Call us free on 0800 657 934
Visit our website: www.tunnicliffes.co.nz
37 Kowhai Ave, PO BOX 54, Edgecumbe, Fax 07 304 8208

FROM THE COLONIES

Waikato Branch

While on my travels in Scotland I came across the following in the *Evening Express* on 27 July 2011:

"Shoppers have answered an appeal to help keep bees alive though the winter. Customers at Tesco stores in Buckie, Elgin and Forres have been donating bags of sugar to Moray Beekeepers Association for the bees to keep them going until spring. Harsh winters have contributed to the dramatic decline in bee numbers."

Maybe an enterprising beekeeper could get Foodstuffs or Progressive to set up a similar scheme.

Beekeeping around the Waikato is just starting to kick off. When returning from Hamilton the other day, I spotted a crew of six or so beekeepers having lunch on the back road between Otorohanga and Ngaruawahia. To see that many at one time gives the impression that the beekeeping year is about to commence.

- **Stephen Black, NBA Vice President and Waikato Ward representative**

Bay of Plenty Branch

Despite the Antarctic weather bracing the country as I write this, early signs of spring are appearing in the Bay. There are green shoots on Gold kiwifruit vines and bees are busily collecting pollen from various sources between the rainy squalls. By the time this is read, I expect most beekeepers in the area will be back in full swing readying hives for the first round of pollination. Psa disease control is top of mind.

The Psa Priority Zones and High Risk Areas are increasing (see August 11 update map at <http://www.kvh.org.nz/vdb/document/116>). The situation is extremely serious, and with limited science to confirm the way the disease spreads, extra precautions are needed. The way beekeepers operate in orchards this season will be affected and will potentially require significant changes to the way hives are delivered, fed sugar, and maintained while operating in the affected areas.

Another question that remains unanswered is: are pollinating bees a vector for Psa



Attentive beekeepers at the August discussion group meeting.

disease? Dr Mark Goodwin explained at the branch discussion meeting on 10 August how research that is currently under way, may go some way to assessing this risk. The Branch discussion meeting was well attended by Bay of Plenty and Waikato beekeepers and covered a range of topics, including Ray Duncan from Beetek promoting his support for industry product innovation, Dr Mark Goodwin explaining the findings from a recent trial on Movento spray effects on honey bees, as well as Psa research. Also, representatives from Zespri and contract orchard sprayers contributed to a useful forum discussion on this season's spray programme and working together.



*Dr Mark Goodwin addressing the group.
Photos: Greg Wagstaff.*

These branch discussion group meetings are proving to be very informative and helpful. I would encourage all beekeepers in the area to attend future meetings.

On a positive note, comments I have received are that hives have generally wintered over well and are in good condition. Let's hope for kind spring conditions.

- **Greg Wagstaff**

Poverty Bay Branch

Winter finally arrived in July after a very warm dry June. Early August also brought dry conditions. It is great to be able to drive to most sites at this time of year: a big change from the last two years.

Most hives have come through the winter in very heavy condition. Some singles have needed a feed of syrup but most doubles are OK. Brood levels in early August seem to be lower than normal, with the odd exception where a queen has started too early and the hive has run out of feed (should have been round two weeks ago for them; maybe next year).

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

- **Paul Badger, Branch President**

Hawke's Bay Branch

Hawke's Bay has been given the honour of running next year's conference and though it is a lot of work, everyone on the committee is really looking forward to it.

If anyone knows of any really good overseas or New Zealand speakers that may be suitable for the conference, please let me know.

Early stonefruit pollination has started but as I write this, I have yet to look in a hive this season and have had few reports from other beekeepers. Like most of the country it is very wet here, and a lot of areas will need to dry out before much work can be done.

I have been away on my big OE, mainly in Norway, and I did get the chance to see two beekeepers. Their summers are not very long or warm but the daylight hours are huge and the amount of wildflowers has to be seen to be believed. They were having a summer similar to ours last summer with lots of rain. In general their honey crops seem to be similar to ours, with wild raspberry often the main crop.

- **John Berry, Branch President**

Southern North Island Branch

We were to have a meeting after conference but the weather turned on us. Wairarapa

members could not get through as roads were blocked with snow.

Our beehives in the colder areas are still sitting and many have not even started their first round of feeding and checking. Some of us around Wanganui have completed the first round. Most hives have come through all right but many are low in stores. As I write this we are enjoying another very cold snap so no apiary work for a couple of days, but it gives us a chance to prepare boxes, frames etc.

A few points that I picked up from the NBA Conference: replace frames regularly (I was doing this); constantly monitor varroa levels; be prepared for varroa resistance to the early treatments. I wonder whether nosema is another major factor that we have not identified as yet. We certainly live in interesting times. I know a couple of commercial members from our area who are very serious about replacing frames and boxes—something for our next field day to talk about.

Branch field day

Sunday, 16 October, 10 am at Chris Valentine's honey house in Kai Iwi, half an hour north of Wanganui. All beekeepers welcome. Contact Frank Lindsay, branch secretary.

Looking forward to a good spring.

- Neil Farrer, NBA Life Member

Nelson Branch

For those of us in the top of the South, 1 August sees the first hive lid popped in preparation for the coming season. With raising queens we need to get an early start: drone comb went into our drone mother hives a couple of weeks ago and we have been feeding them a light syrup mixture to stimulate the queen into laying.

So now it's time to do our first round of hive inspections with disease checking. Cleaning up top bars and bottom boards are the main focus, as well as sorting out any hives that have gone queenless or queens who have become drone layers.

Plenty of pollen is coming in from gorse and tree lucerne and the hives are looking really good for this time of year.

- Gareth Ayers

News from the Chatham Islands

Ten beekeepers gathered for an inaugural meeting of the Chatham Islands Beekeepers Group (yet to be officially named) on Friday, 20 July 2011. However, we do have about 15 beekeepers on the islands now and each year this number is increasing by two or three. Formalities like official club name, logo, Charter, officials, etc are being worked on. Watch this space.

The news of the emerging club is exciting for the islands. I recently logged the AFB return and the number of hives now on the Chatham Islands is up to 90. Three years ago there were fewer than 10 hives on Pitt Island and Rekohu, the two inhabited islands of the Chatham Islands where beekeeping is carried out. And there is plenty of room for hundreds more hives. However, we are all concerned about the movement of bees to the Chatham Islands through our ports (air and sea). This is a very big issue for us and we are currently debating strongly about 'closed borders', the pros and cons.

It takes a couple of seasons to learn the vagaries of the weather and feed conditions on the islands. But once these are harnessed the hives can be managed through the most adverse conditions. The honey produced is excellent and is mostly consumed on the islands. One or two beekeepers have their sights set on 'exporting' clover honey to the 'New Zealand' shops in the very near future. So keep an eye out for it, you will be amazed at how white the honey is. And the flavour is so delicate.

We have a couple of beekeepers 'exporting' 'Chatham Islands Queens' to beekeepers in other parts of the country. This is very successful and growing rapidly. These beekeepers have learned the art of queen-rearing by themselves and share their knowledge with local beekeepers regularly in order to keep the bee numbers up.

Please note that we (the Chatham Islands) do not have the varroa mite or AFB. All our bees are clean. We (the club) are working hard on a border security policy to ensure no infected bees or equipment comes to the islands. This creates obvious limitations for us, but we are looking to have a number of queens artificially inseminated next year and then probably about every two to three years after that. This will ensure a diverse gene pool. We are also working with farmers with timber lots to get suitable timber for our boxes. This will take time.

I am very keen to increase the number of people to inspect hives annually for bee diseases. We are looking for resources to run the disease recognition course down here very soon. We can accommodate and feed you and take you to see the sights but we cannot pay for much else. Is there anybody out there?

We have a bee friendly day today (5 August) where the wind is slight, the patches of blue sky are growing bigger and the bog is drying out. What is it like at your place? Cheers for now.

- Michele Andersen and Mana Cracknell 

IN BRIEF

Quad Bike Farm Licence launched

Farmsafe, in association with Agriculture ITO (AgITO), has launched the Quad Bike Farm Licence. The licence is gained through a practical on job training package that covers safe quad bike riding practices as well as teaching participants to effectively identify, minimise and isolate potential bike riding hazards and make safe riding decisions.

To launch this initiative, AgITO is offering a free approved safety helmet for everybody who signs up and completes the training (for a limited time only, until 30 November 2011). To receive a Quad Bike Farm Licence application pack and for more information, call AgITO today on 0800 691 111.

(Source: Abridged from AgITO media release, 15 July 2011.)



Bay of Plenty Queens

QUEENS AND QUEEN CELLS ORDER NOW

Contact: AUREL 021 153 2610
aurelbraguta@yahoo.com

*BEEZONE QUEEN CELLS *CARRICELL INCUBATORS

*BEEZONE QUEEN BEES *QUANTITY DISCOUNTS

*John & Judy Dobson

*67 Poporangi Rd RD1 Hastings 4171 New Zealand

*Ph: (06) 870 7070 *Fax: (06) 870 7077 *Mobile: 0274 494 396

*Email: beeline@xtra.co.nz *web address: www.carricell.com

POLYSTYRENE MATING NUCS

Easy to use • Cost effective • Proven results

1-100 \$13.00 plus GST 100+ \$12.00 plus GST

Phone Steve, Apiflora NZ Ltd

07 543 0984 027 4923 937

Beekeeper Position

Energetic competent beekeeper required for a 900 hive operation on the Kaikoura Coast where honey production and queen raising is the main focus. Kaikoura offers a wide range of recreational activities to enjoy and the township fulfils all your practical needs.

Some beekeeping experience necessary. HT preferred as are legal NZ work documents. You should be prepared for a variety of non beekeeping practical work too. Honesty, integrity, punctuality and striving to produce quality work are important values to us.

Initial term from Sept 2011 to April 2012 but likely to become permanent to right applicant.

For employment package and more information email Mark at: clarenceharvest@ihug.co.nz

FOR SALE

Six frame nucs. Young queens.

Numbers to suit.

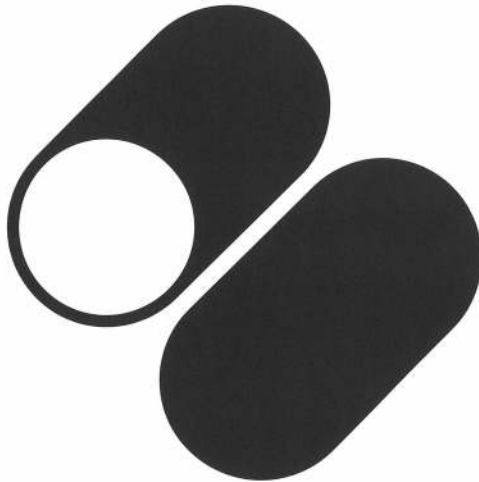
Ready from mid October onwards.

\$130 excl. GST.

Contact James and Richelle Corson

on 03 318 2960 or at

Gowanleagold@farmside .co.nz



AUCKLAND DRUM
Sustainability Services

HONEY DRUM SALE

Beat the new season price increase.
\$47 per drum for orders of 100 drums
or more dispatched prior to 30th
September.

DRUMS ARE FDA / EU APPROVED FOR
EXPORT

For further information please
contact Steve on (09) 622 4000 or
steve.mead@auckdrum.co.nz

*limited stocks, conditions apply

*prices exclude GST and are ex. Works Auckland

Visit our website www.auckdrum.co.nz

Preparing hives for spring

By Frank Lindsay, NBA Life Member

Spring has sprung—well, almost.

Daffodils are up and the pussy willow catkins are just about ready to burst, but the cool weather is holding them back. Gorse (pollen), tree lucerne (pollen and nectar), and wattle (pollen) are still flowering. Another good source during winter for nectar and pollen in coastal areas is banksia. For those in frost areas, ceanothus produces large amounts of pollen on its bright blue flowers. Native trees flower a little later.

Look around your neighbourhood and see what nectar and pollen plants are available to your bees. Remember that when it's really cool, bees will venture out only about 100 metres so if there's nothing handy, consider planting nectar- and pollen-producing species along your road reserves or in your garden. Things like lavender and rosemary—species that don't seed but grow easily from cuttings. If your hives are on rural land, ask if you can plant a corner gulley with nectar and pollen species. Real pollen is much better than artificial pollen, so plant for your bees and in a few years you should see a difference in the early development of your hives.

The bees are building in numbers but in some areas are now getting short of pollen and may need a pollen frame or two. If you have recently had hives with AFB, then consider purchasing a pollen substitute to boost your bees. As a comparison, those hives that are close to winter/early spring sources are expanding well, but they have chewed through the honey reserves and may need feeding with sugar syrup soon.

Checking stores and feeding sugar

It's now getting fairly hard to determine just how much reserves are in a hive. Brood can weigh as much as honey unless you take a quick look. Apply a little smoke to the entrance and over the top bars of a hive on a warm day and remove an outside frame. Then slide the next frame over and lift it

out. Generally, the side facing out will be completely empty, while the inside half of the frame will have perhaps half a frame of honey. Look at a couple more frames without disturbing the brood nest and judge just how much honey is in the hive. Don't let the honey reserves fall below three full frames of honey—about a week's reserve for a two-super hive.

If your hives are getting down in reserves, the hive will have to be fed. It can be a problem for new beekeepers to determine how to feed and how much to feed. To get a 60% sugar:water solution, mix white table sugar into a five-litre container (fill a container seven-eighths full and pour in boiling water to fill and stir). When cooled, put it into a top or frame feeder.

If you don't have a feeder, consider using a large plastic bag. Fill it up and seal the end with a couple of rubber bands. Then place the bag on top of the frames close to the bees. Put two or three pinpricks into the top of the bag and press down on the bag so that a small pool of syrup gathers around each hole. Tip a little over the side of the bag so the bees are alerted to the presence of the syrup.

“Real beekeeping starts next month.”

Put on an empty super to protect the bag and close the hive to stop other bees robbing the syrup. The bees will come up on to the bag and take the syrup. Their weight will cause more to flow out and so the hive gets fed. Expect a strong hive to clean up five litres in a couple of days. This is enough for perhaps a week's feed for a strong hive; hence commercial beekeepers put on 15 litres of sugar syrup at this time of the year and feed again in three weeks' time.

Strong hives (two supers of bees) can be given raw sugar in a top feeder. Pour about two kilograms of raw sugar into a top feeder and introduce a little water to the

edge of the sugar, right next to where the bees' access hole is. This should dissolve a little of the sugar. Pour a little of the wet sugar down the hole to tell the bees there's sugar somewhere close. The bees will find the sugar, lap up the wet dissolved sugar and then learn to bring in more water to dissolve the raw sugar. Raw sugar takes a lot of energy to convert into nectar, so it's not a stimulant to a strong hive. Syrup feeding a strong hive could stimulate swarm cell production if the weather is warm enough.

Once brood rearing begins, it's important to keep up the bees' food supply so they continue to build up. A break in feeding will cause a break in brood rearing, which translates to fewer bees gathering nectar during the early spring flow in six weeks' time.

Spring inspections

When the weather is warm enough and the bees are flying well, do a quick inspection of the hive(s). Move old dark frames (those you can't see light through when held up to the sun) to the outside of the brood super, ready for removal or replacement with a light-coloured drawn frame. Check a couple of frames of brood where the bees are emerging in the middle for larvae that have not emerged. Flick off the cappings on a few to see why. And keep an eye out for diseased larvae, especially any that continue to rope out with a dry stick, which is a sign of AFB.

If you see lots of eggs and larvae of the same age around the outside of the brood, it means a good laying queen is present. If there are lots of missed cells, and there's a band of pollen around the top of the brood, it means you need a new queen. Order one early and hopefully you will get a replacement queen before the end of October.

If there's no replacement queen available, then consider uniting a strong hive on top of your weak hive (with the spotty laying queen) using newspaper. A replacement nucleus colony can then be established when a new queen arrives; in the meantime, the combined hive will have built up even more. Spotty/patchy brood but lots of →

BURNING QUESTIONS

Coating plastic frames

By Frank Lindsay, NBA Life Member

I have a few plastic frames and would like someone to give a bit of information on how to coat them with beeswax and how to get the bees to accept them.

Also, when they get clogged up with pollen and you strip them back, do they need coating with wax again?

I keep my plastic frames for a few months before putting them on the hives. This allows that new plastic smell you get with new frames to dissipate. Bees much prefer to draw out natural beeswax frames but will quickly draw out plastic frames on a good flow. The idea is to keep to all one sort; i.e., all plastic or all natural bees. Don't mix them as the bees will draw out the wax ones first, sometimes leaving the plastic frames entirely alone.

I use an old electric frying pan and a fluffy paint roller (cut down to fit inside the $\frac{3}{4}$ frame) to roll wax on to the frames. Use a large table for waxing as it can be quite messy. I cut a board to fit fully inside the plastic frame to support it when rolling on the wax.

I then place a block of wax in the frypan and put the heat setting to 3. (If too hot, the wax will distort the frame.) When enough wax has melted to cover half the height of the roller, I place the roller into the wax and roll so it is covered in wax.

Then place the roller at one end of the plastic frame and roll wax on to the surface. Usually there's a tiny bow wave of wax in front of the roller, which ensures all the bottom of the cells are filled. Return without lifting the roller off the frame. Then lift the frame off the

block of wood on the table, turn it over and give it a slight bang to remove excess wax at the ends or in the bottom of the cells. The warmer the temperature of the surrounding area, the easier it is to roll on the wax. Repeat for the other side, which will flow better as the centre of the frame is already warm.

It doesn't really matter how much wax you coat onto the frame as the bees will use the excess to partially draw out the cells. If the bottom of the cells contains too much wax so the indentations are lost, the bees will draw out drone comb. This isn't a problem if you use a queen excluder above the brood nest.

A word of caution: don't leave the roller in the wax to heat up or cool down. The rollers are made of plastic and don't take a lot of heat. I have melted out a couple while away from the frypan for a short while.

Depending upon how clean your wax is, the fabric on the roller will take up the bits of dirt. I use a hive tool to scrape this off while working. At the end of a day's rolling, I wash out the hot roller in Handy Andy to remove the dirt, which restores the fluff on the roller.

Any plastic honey frames with pollen in them are scraped clean with a hive tool. The bees will generally build the frame out again on a good flow. I scrape old dark frames and waterblast them clean, then re-coat them, even if there's a slight coating of wax remaining.

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 local beekeeping brainboxes on hand (Frank Lindsay for this issue) 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 a future issue of The New Zealand BeeKeeper.



eggs could mean the hive is short of pollen or perhaps mite numbers have increased during the winter. Check and treat early if the mite drop or a sugar shake shows more than two mites per hundred bees. If it's a pollen problem, get a pollen substitute.

As you go around your hive(s), note what woodware needs changing. Prepare replacements for anything showing a little rot.

Real beekeeping starts next month.

Things to do this month

AFB check: if you find any symptoms, separate off the stored supers that came off that particular hive and destroy them. If you can't identify the individual supers but know which supers came from that apiary, put an apiary quarantine on that particular apiary for 18 months, by using those supers only in that apiary.

Feed hives if necessary: hives should have a minimum of three frames of honey in them at all times. Spray or weed whack out the weeds and vegetation surrounding hives.

Checked stored supers for wax moth: scrape out any you find, or freeze frames to kill moth larvae. Cull old frames from the brood nest or work them gradually to the outside if they contain brood so they are replaced within a month.

Get the wax dipper going to dip new and reconditioned supers so that replacement hive parts are ready for another season.

Put in early mite treatments or check mite levels using a cappings fork, sugar shake or a strip in a jar for 30 minutes, or natural fall over a week with mesh bottom boards. Check your varroa manual to calculate mite numbers and treatment options. Don't forget to rotate treatments to prevent resistance developing.

Useful link

Here's a link to a great resource posted on the Bee-L mailing list: Terms in Indo-European languages for some concepts related to honey, bees and hives. This publication is online only at http://www.dias.ie/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=4771%3Aterms-in-indo-european-languages-for-some-concepts-related-to-honey-bees-and-hives&catid=27&Itemid=225&lang=en



NATIONAL BEEKEEPERS' ASSN OF NZ (Inc.) EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

<p>East Coast Ward Barry Foster (President) Tawari Apiaries Ltd 695 Aberdeen Road Gisborne 4041 Ph: 06 867 4591 Fax: 06 867 4508 Mobile: 027 449 7131 Email: bjfoster@xtra.co.nz</p> <p>Waikato Ward Stephen Black (Vice President) Bees-R-Us 685 Uruti Road, RD48 Urenui 4378, Taranaki Ph: 06 752 6860 Email: bees@beesrus.co.nz</p>	<p>Northern Ward Neil Stuckey PO Box 303251 North Harbour Auckland 0751 Ph: 09 415 5931 (w) Email: neil@whoney.co.nz</p> <p>Bay of Plenty Ward Neil Mossop Mossop's Honey 1064 State Highway 29 RD 1, Tauranga 3171 Ph: 07 543 0971 Email: neil@mossopshoney.co.nz</p>	<p>Southern North Island Ward Mary-Ann Lindsay 26 Cunliffe Street Johnsonville Wellington 6037 Ph: 04 478 3367 Email: lindsays.apiaries@clear.net.nz</p> <p>Upper South Island Ward Kerry Gentleman Ward-Holmes Road RD2, Takaka Ph: 03 525 7571 Fax: 03 525 7569 Email: frazer.kerry@clear.net.nz</p>	<p>Central South Island Ward Trevor Corbett PO Box 20 Waipara, North Canterbury 7447 Ph: 027 450 4567 Email: beeworks@xtra.co.nz</p> <p>Lower South Island Ward VACANT</p>
--	--	--	--

NBA Branches: First named is President/Chairperson. The second named is Secretary.

NORTHLAND

Sarah Peacey
Wairua Apiaries
76 Malone Road
RD 9, Whangarei 0179
Ph: 09 434 6344
Mobile: 021 031 9129
Email: sandspeacey@gmail.com

Simon Peacey
Wairua Apiaries
76 Malone Road
RD 9, Whangarei 0179
Ph: 09 434 6344
Mobile: 021 858 648

AUCKLAND

Ian Browning
1824 Great South Rd
RD 3, Drury 2579
Ph: 09 236 0764

Bob Russell
101 Kern Rd
RD 3, Drury 2579
Home Ph: 09 294 8656
Work Mobile: 027 284 8951
Email: bobrussell@kol.co.nz

WAIKATO

Cameron Martin
Haumea Road
RD 1, Galatea 3079
Ph: 07 366 4804
Fax: 07 366 4804
Email: busy-bee@xtra.co.nz

Jane Lorimer
Hillcrest Apiaries 'Kahurangi-o-Papa'
RD 3, Hamilton 3283
Ph: 07 856 9625
Fax: 07 856 9241
Mobile: 027 294 6559
Email: hunnybee@wave.co.nz

BAY OF PLENTY

Dennis Crowley
PO Box 16156, Bethlehem
Tauranga 3147
Ph: 07 579 2554
Email: crowleys@slingshot.co.nz

Barbara Pimm
448 Woodlands Road
RD 2, Opotiki 3198
Ph: 07 315 7650
Email: thikuhoney@xtra.co.nz

POVERTY BAY

Paul Badger
19A Pine St
Gisborne 4010
Ph: 06 868 4785
Email: p-mbadger@xtra.co.nz

Barry Foster
695 Aberdeen Road
Gisborne 4041
Ph: 06 867 4591
Fax: 06 867 4508
Email: bjfoster@xtra.co.nz

HAWKE'S BAY

John Berry
46 Arataki Rd
Havelock North 4130
Ph: 06 877 6205
Email: jrberry@ihug.co.nz

Mary-Anne Thomason
15 Sydney Tce, Takapau
Hawkes Bay 4203
Ph: 06 855 8038
Email: kintail_honey@xtra.co.nz

SOUTHERN NORTH ISLAND

Peter Ferris
PO Box 255
Masterton 5840
Ph: 06 378 7632
Email: happy.ferris@xtra.co.nz

Frank Lindsay
26 Cunliffe Street
Johnsonville
Wellington 6037
Ph: 04 478 3367
Email: lindsays.apiaries@clear.net.nz

NELSON

Frazer Wilson
Ward-Holmes Road
RD2, Takaka
Ph: 03 525 7571
Fax: 03 525 7569
Email: frazer.kerry@clear.net.nz

Kerry Gentleman
Ward-Holmes Rd
RD2, Takaka
Ph: 03 525 7571
Fax: 03 525 7569
Email: frazer.kerry@clear.net.nz

CANTERBURY

Brian Lancaster
1133 Coaltrack Road
RD 1
Christchurch 7671
Ph: 03 318 7989
Email: be.lancaster@xtra.co.nz

Linda Bray
Braesby Farm, RD 1,
Ashburton 7771
Ph/Fax: 03 308 4964
Email: birdsnbees@xtra.co.nz

OTAGO

Allen McCaw
Milburn Apiaries
RD 2, Milton 9291
South Otago
Ph: 03 417 7198
Email: amccaw@clear.net.nz

Peter Sales
"Te Ora"
RD 1, Port Chalmers
Dunedin 9081
Ph: 03 472 7220
Email: foxglove@paradise.net.nz

SOUTHLAND

Came Clissold
Glass Brothers Ltd
RD 5
Gore 9775
Ph: 03 207 1866
Email: came@glassbrothers.co.nz

John Stevenson
Southern Lakes Honey
PO Box 163, Te Anau 9640
Ph: 03 249 7954
Email: sl.honey@gmail.com

NBA LIBRARIANS

Roger and Linda Bray
Braesby Farm, RD 1, Ashburton 7771
Ph/Fax: 03 308 4964
Email: birdsnbees@xtra.co.nz

If your details have changed, please email editor@nba.org.nz and secretary@nba.org.nz so that we can update your details in the journal and the NBA website.



EXPORT QUALITY PACKAGING NO SUPPLY CONTRACTS REQUIRED

■ Time for a fresh alternative for your packaging requirements?

Pharmapac's new range of export quality packaging for honey is now available, including the latest 2kg square jar. Our standard range of honey jars include clear and amber with white or coloured lids available. Sizes range from 250GM - 2KG.

Pharmapac is a New Zealand owned company, with more than 25 years in the business of designing, manufacturing and producing plastic packaging solutions for not only local, but an ever growing list of international clients.

Our products are all manufactured in New Zealand and no supply contracts are required.

For more information or product samples please contact us at:

Pharmapac Limited
88 Wairau Road
Glenfield
North Shore City 0627

+ 64 9 444 9631
sales@pharmapac.co.nz

100%
NEW ZEALAND
OWNED & OPERATED

PHARMA|PAC

PPAC



www.pharmapac.co.nz