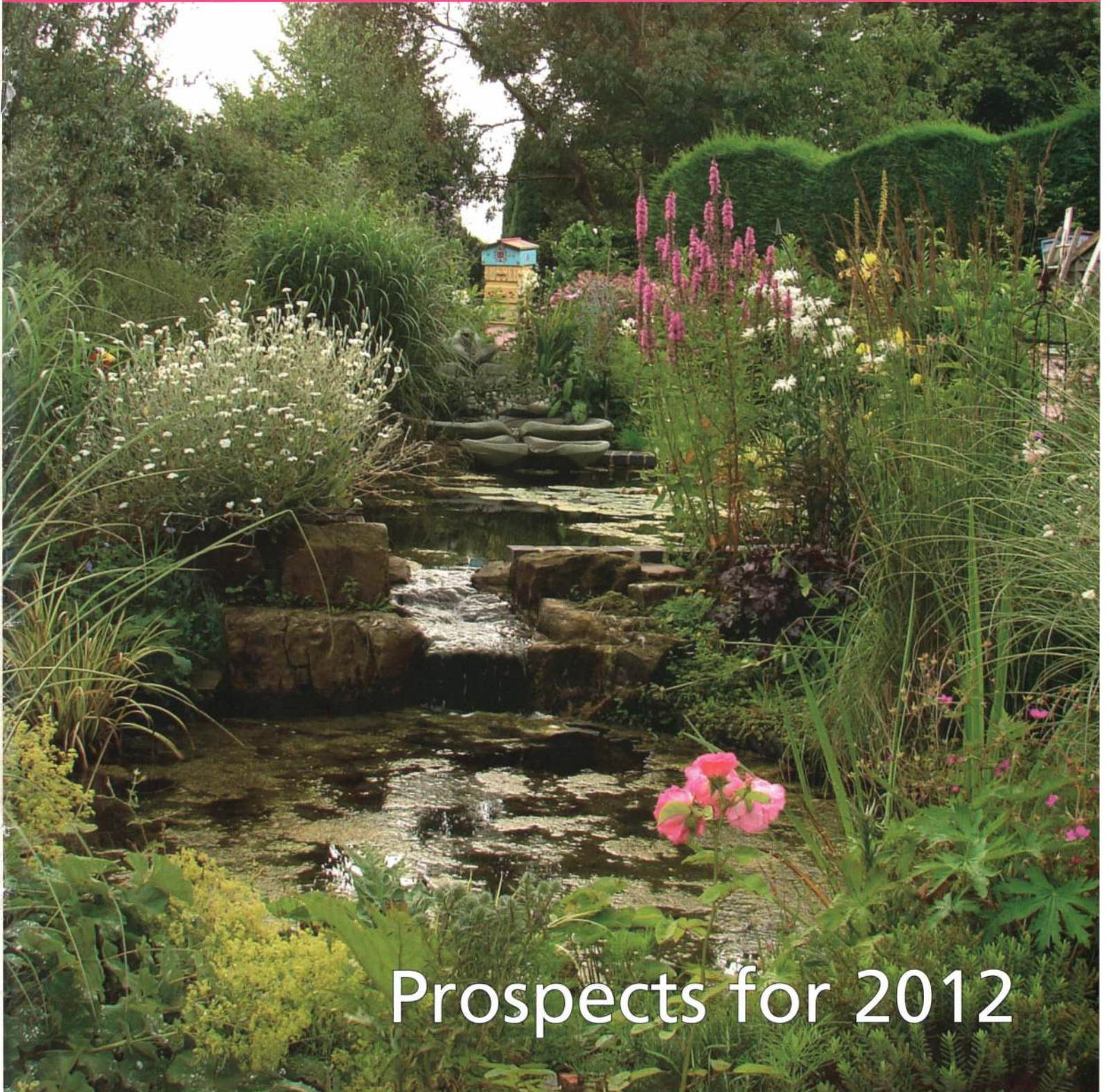


February 2012, Volume 20 No. 1

The NEW ZEALAND BeeKeeper



Prospects for 2012

- EPA decision • MAF rules review
- Women's work • Pollination as a priority

BEE HEALTH – NUTRITION



Use it in Spring
Use it to build strong Nucs
Use it for Hives going into Pollination

USE IT FOR AUTUMN
To boost wintering over bee health.

Contact
Apiary Services Ltd – Neil Farrer
7 Nixon St, Wanganui
Phone 0274 579 634

South Island Beekeepers Contact
Ecroyd Beekeeping Supplies

FOR SALE

Approx. 50 $\frac{3}{4}$ brood beehives
Two high with Nov 2011 Italian Queens

Phone 03 542 3355

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

If you want to promote your product or service to bee industry colleagues, contact:

South City Print
Telephone 03 455 4486, Fax 03 455 7286
Email sales@southcityprint.co.nz.
See page 3 for more info.

*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



Tunnickliffe's

Tunnickliffe Timber Company Limited

Beehive Boxes

Full Depth
 $\frac{3}{4}$ 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.tunnickliffes.co.nz

37 Kowhai Ave, PO BOX 54, Edgecumbe, Fax 07 304 8208

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 [VACANT]
(including NBA Membership & Journal Subscriptions)

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: 04 478 3367
Email: lindsay.s.apiaries@clear.net.nz

JOURNAL SUBSCRIPTIONS:

— 11 Issues —
NZ \$135.00 GST inc - incl P&P
Australia NZ\$160.00 + TT Fees NZ\$25.00 and incl P&P
Rest of the world NZ\$170.00 + 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 80 99 66
www.biosecurity.govt.nz

Contents

- 4 Prospects for 2012
- 8 EPA decision on Yates Super Shield
- 9 Frequency and timing of AFB inspections
- 10 Independent review of reporting rules
- 13 La Niña persisting
- 15 Trees for Profit and for bees too!
- 17 It's women's work after all
- 18 Letters to the editor
- 19 AgExcel endorsement for quad bike tutors
- 20 From the colonies
- 23 Pollination as a priority
- 25 Extracting honey and treating hives

Front cover: 'Heidi's Bee Garden—London'. This photo of a water garden was the winning entry in the Class B (Scenic Print) category of the third annual NBA Photography Competition 2011, sponsored by Ecroyd Beekeeping Supplies Ltd. Photo: Jody Mitchell.

Prospects for 2012

By Barry Foster, NBA President

The American business magnate Donald Trump once said, "The old saying that 'success breeds success' has something to it. It's that feeling of confidence that can banish negativity and procrastination and get you going the right way."



Here in New Zealand, with the rest of the western world largely still in recession and likely to remain so through 2012, our industry has some good reasons to be confident. My theme for this month's report is to look at the year ahead and outline some reasons why we should be confident in 2012, should the reasons behind this confidence be forgotten or compromised.

In December I asked a range of our packers and exporters how they see their business evolving and growing over the next year. All were confident or cautiously optimistic about export growth prospects for their companies over the next 12 months. Prices for export honey received and by extension prices paid to beekeepers should remain firm—and in many cases should increase—due to the demand for our honey. In particular, demand for high-value manuka honey should exceed supply, resulting in an increase in its value. As of late December some regions have done well and others not so well. Production in the South Island has been stupendous according to one comment I received.

In 2010 the world economy, led by emerging markets, staged a remarkable rebound from the deepest global recession since the 1930s, with growth moderating in 2011. Forecasts for the world economy for 2012 are not good, with fears of a double-dip recession or at least shallow growth. With the continuing Euro sovereign debt crisis and the USA in a state of flux, it doesn't look too good for 2012. As in 2011, it will be wise for us to expect the unexpected again in 2012. These sorts of tensions in global markets could see the New Zealand dollar remain high and further depress export growth.

We know that Asia and in particular China has enjoyed sustained economic growth in recent years that has mitigated New Zealand from even deeper economic recession. In 2012 the Chinese president is to step down and a new team of younger leaders will take over. Commentators expect no radical changes as a result, but all the same an ideological debate is taking place in China as to its future direction. Oil prices have a big effect on the global economy, especially during recession that has seen a lowering of demand for oil. It is likely OPEC will decide to increase supply, thereby moderating prices and dampening further global recession in spite of oil supplies now being beyond their geological peak.

"As in 2011, it will be wise for us to expect the unexpected again in 2012."

We are not immune from these macro events in our markets, so it is important to question why New Zealand—and in particular New Zealand honey and bee products—are seemingly bucking global trends.

Comments from those exporters I questioned fell into three categories of why prospects for our honey in export markets will remain good:

1. global perception of New Zealand as a quality producer with a good reputation
2. our food safety laws and robust risk management programmes underpin the integrity of our reputation

3. many of our exporters have good and sustained relationships and/or contractual relationships in key Asian markets that continue to perform well.

Other exporters derive benefits and brand integrity by the use of various certifications such as those organic certifications from BioGro or AsureQuality. Guarantees of origin through Oritain, the UMF trademark for manuka honey and the carbon footprint certification under carboNZero are all good examples of international trademarks that set those that use them apart in export markets. They reinforce confidence and our reputation as food producers abroad.

At the March 2011 conference 'Mapping our Future', arranged by a group of prominent business leaders as part of the organisation Pure Advantage (<http://www.pureadvantage.org>), Kiwibank 'New Zealander of the Year' and physicist Sir Paul Callaghan spoke at length about our advantages as a country. More importantly, he discussed the myths, challenges, poor productivity, poor research and development expenditure, decline in prosperity per capita, and lack of direction that bedevil us. He said, "We are poor because we choose to be poor". It's a video worthy of a look at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OhCAYllnXY>, through the Pure Advantage website, or by Googling 'Sir Paul Callaghan'.

Understandably and with good reasons, Sir Paul sees increased research and development expenditure from Government and private sources as the best way to lift the New Zealand economy up the OECD rankings. Manuka is our flagship honey, the result of R&D spending over several

Continued on page 6

Timing of Autumn treatment is critical to ensure good hive health and strong colonies in the Spring. Mite numbers will now be at their highest levels and brood area is diminishing and under greatest mite pressure. Treatments should be applied before Autumn brood is damaged as these will be your winter bees.



**The most reliable Varroa treatment available!
Now used in the vast majority of
New Zealand 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

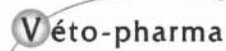
Factory: 44 Gladstone St South, ORARI, South Canterbury

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

decades. Confidence in our export markets is well founded stemming from the three reasons mentioned earlier. While not generally recognised as such, they may be as important as the manuka success story is to our industry. However our reputation is always open to being challenged along with our clean green image. What might replace these advantages in the future, should they be compromised or lost, is uncertain. The business leaders behind Pure Advantage state, "New Zealand exporters need to be aware that sustainability is a market driver. It is also a trend that is more prevalent in many overseas markets." Many of our honey exporters build their brands on this image and reputation.

2012 may see the beginnings of importation of Australian honey into New Zealand. The Government, including MAF and MFAT, is not allowed to recognise potential negative impacts on business confidence as part of evaluating political and practical risks in developing import health standards. Business confidence and its underpinnings are vital drivers in export achievement that should, from this experience and that of other industries, be ranked alongside the benefits of various trade agreements. The fact that they are not is one example of the poor lack of direction that Sir Paul Callaghan talks about.



Disclaimer, *Honey bee care - Challenges and solutions* by Bayer Crop Science AG

The National Beekeepers' Association of New Zealand Inc has allowed the inclusion of the above-mentioned booklet by Bayer Crop Science into this issue of *The New Zealand BeeKeeper* in the interests of informing our members and readers.

The inclusion of this booklet should not be seen as an endorsement by the National Beekeepers' Association of this booklet as being at all complete in outlining all of the challenges and solutions to honey bee care.

Yours sincerely,

Barry Foster
President
National Beekeepers' Association of New Zealand (Inc.)

The NBA needs you!

Be sure to pay your NBA subscription as soon as possible to continue receiving *The New Zealand BeeKeeper* journal and access new member benefits for 2012. See the form on page 16 or visit our website nba.org.nz and click on Join the NBA. You can find a list of membership benefits on page 15.

Beekeeping Club subscriptions

In the last quarter of 2011, the Executive Council increased the subscription for hobbyist clubs with over 11 members by \$5 per member per year. Unfortunately, this increase has caused some concerns among hobbyists. The Executive Council is very concerned to ensure hobbyists remain an involved and important part of the NBA's membership and the Association is keen to grow hobbyist numbers where it can.

The Council is therefore planning a strategy session to get a better feel for how to add value to hobbyists' membership of the NBA. We want to involve a number of prominent hobbyists in this process so we can get valuable feedback that will enable us to make decisions that will benefit existing hobbyist members, and encourage others to become active participants in NBA affairs.

We want to run this process within the next four weeks and we will then report back on the outcomes.



Virtual sales assistant seen at Apimondia, 24 September 2011. Bees flew in, she opened a jar of honey and used a dipper while explaining the advantages of Estancia honey. Awesome to watch. The real sales assistant was there the first day, then her life-size virtual self was there at other times, talking about the company and their honeys. She would pick up a jar of honey and drizzle a dipper into it and then some bees would fly past. It was quite cool, and would be great for those busy beekeepers—almost as good as a clone! Real live *Star Trek*.

Photos: Maureen Maxwell.



The bee suit this fellow was wearing has ventilated mesh on the back: a great idea for hot weather.



CHRIS BERKERS CLIENT SERVICE MANAGER

SEAL280BMJ

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

- **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.
- **Methglyoxal**
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

EPA decision on Yates Super Shield

By Don MacLeod, NBA Technical and Submissions Committee

The EPA has decided to approve with controls the release of the product Yates Super Shield Advanced.

This product can now be sold to home gardeners and be used in the home garden for application to ornamentals only.

The decision on application ERMA200839 can be read on the EPA website <http://www.epa.govt.nz/search-databases/Pages/applications-details.aspx?applID=ERMA200839#>

This is a brief summary of what I feel the decision missed as a result of the submissions made to the EPA committee at its public hearing on 24 November 2011.

The decision made no reference to the environmental effects of systemic insecticides, especially those with known toxic effects to bees, either by the active ingredient or its metabolites which may form in the plant.

The EPA decision process perhaps is constrained by the HSNO Act in that it restricts the decision process to the substance containing that active ingredient that is released to the environment, and does not consider either the environmental properties of the active ingredient or its metabolites within the plant (the systemic properties of the active ingredient). I am endeavouring to confirm this definition with the EPA.

If this is confirmed to be the case, then we have a major problem as the HSNO Act will not then protect beneficial invertebrates such as bees from systemic persistent insecticides that act within plants.

This decision means that Yates Super Shield Advanced can be used right up to just before flowering, and the effects of the residual life of the chemicals in the plant do not have to be taken into effect by the applicator.

The purpose of introducing ERMA Decision HSR100355 (on the insecticide Cyrus®) in our submission was to show that controls for preventing application of the product at least 10 days prior to flowering were very important to protecting bees. It appears to me that this has been overlooked in the decision process for ERMA200839.

“...the HSNO Act will not then protect beneficial invertebrates such as bees from systemic persistent insecticides...”

The ERMA200839 decision primarily relies on label statements to protect bees. This is first indicated in Section 5.4 where the Decision report states, *“The Committee considers that this can be achieved by requiring specific statements to appear on product labels to prevent exposure to terrestrial invertebrates.”*

This product includes two insecticides designed to kill terrestrial invertebrates, so clearly the EPA wants to protect all terrestrial invertebrates, not just beneficial terrestrial invertebrates. So why does the EPA permit this product for release?

Secondly, in Section 6.13 the lack of bee life cycle knowledge by the EPA hearing committee is of major concern. Section 6.13 details the label statements that the EPA requires to be stated on the Yates Super Shield Advanced label and the key statement for bee protection is to be stated on the label: ***This product is highly toxic to bees. Do not apply this product to any plant or tree, including weeds, likely to be visited by bees at the time of application or immediately after, or in areas where bees are foraging.*** (Note that the words I have underlined are my reference to the comments I have made below.)

Of interest to all beekeepers is that the following terms are not defined:

- bee visits: what is a bee visit? Bees scouting in gardens, overflying a garden, collecting water in a garden pool? Is a bee visit different from a foraging visit referred to later in the required control statement?
- “time of application”: there is no attempt to define best times for applying the product to protect bees, such as early morning or evening.
- “immediately after”: what does this mean with respect to time? If I use Yates Super Shield Advanced at 7 am and the bees were noted visiting the garden at 8.30 am when the temperature is warmer, is that immediately after?
- “areas where bees are foraging”: what is the defined area? The garden, the neighbourhood or gardens? Bees as we know forage over wide areas and in NZ mostly all year round. The NBA and my submissions made this very clear to the EPA that gardens are food resources when other crops are not flowering.

Based on my beekeeping (amateur) and gardening experience (my wife says I am only good for lawn mowing), this means that this product should never be used in our home garden—that is right: never! The reason: my bees forage in our garden year round (located near Pukekohe), except on rainy days.

So one wonders why the EPA in fact approved the product with a control that will most likely be broken the first time a home gardener uses the product on a fine day.

Am I disappointed with this decision? Absolutely. I had thought the EPA would have been smarter in their use of controls, and may have used the Cyrus® decision as the template. I am also extremely disappointed in the EPA’s decision process and their ability to evaluate the consequences of their decision.

Legally, with this control statement, no one can safely use this product! So why was it approved?



Frequency and timing of AFB inspections

By Dr Mark Goodwin, Apicultural Research Unit, Plant and Food Research, Ruakura

The frequency and timing of American foulbrood (AFB) inspections have a major impact on the success, or otherwise, of a beekeeper's disease control programme.

Along with the number of frames inspected, timing and frequency of inspections are the most important factors.

Hives can be checked at any time for AFB as long as brood is present in a hive. Even when there is no brood present it can still be worthwhile checking frames for the remains of diseased larvae.

Some beekeepers devote a specific time, or times, to carry out inspections while others carry out a full or partial inspection every time they work on a hive. At a minimum, a full frame inspection should be conducted on all hives twice a year: one inspection in the spring and a second in the autumn.

The frequency with which beekeepers carry out inspections varies and should depend on the disease history of their hives. If little AFB has been found, the inspections can be carried out less frequently. However, where disease is a problem, inspections should be both frequent and thorough; i.e., inspecting all frames in a hive.

Although badly infected colonies can be easy to identify, lightly infected colonies are much harder. One reason for this is that adult bees in hives with AFB, especially those bees with good hygienic behaviour, are continually uncapping diseased cells and removing the contents so that diseased larvae may not always be present in a diseased colony. A second inspection one week after finding AFB symptoms may result

in finding no diseased larvae. Many AFB inspectors have been accused of wrongly diagnosing a hive as having AFB when a beekeeper has checked the hive a week after the inspector had failed to find any AFB.

One hive in a group of AFB hives we were regularly checking had two cells with AFB symptoms on day one. However, none were found when the hive was inspected a week later or in any of the four inspections carried out over the following three weeks. The inspection on day 50 revealed ten cells with AFB symptoms and on day 70 there were 30. For the disease to reappear by day 50 there was either still enough spores present in the hive to infect further larvae, or that for a month the bees were able to remove diseased cells fast enough so they were not found when the hive was inspected.

Because disease symptoms can appear and disappear, the more frequently inspections are carried out, the more likely the AFB infected hives present will be detected and removed before the disease has a chance to spread.

"It is particularly important to carry out an inspection as the honey supers are removed."

It is best to time inspections so they are carried out immediately before hive manipulations that could spread AFB are going to be conducted; e.g., before bees or equipment are removed from a hive. It is particularly important to carry out an inspection as the honey supers are removed. Failure to carry out an adequate inspection at this time is one of the major causes of the spread of AFB. During the honey removal and extraction process one or more supers are removed from each colony and then placed on completely different hives in the spring. There is usually no other beekeeping activity that redistributes more equipment between hives.

The risk of taking honey from an infected hive at this time depends on how badly the colony is infected. Failure to carry out any form of inspection while honey is harvested can result in honey being removed from badly infected colonies. These honey supers are a high risk for disease spread. During the extraction process the frames may be spread between other supers, creating an even larger potential for disease spread. Two honey supers from a badly infected colony might therefore infect three or four other colonies.

Autumn is however the hardest time to carry out inspections because the extra time spent in an apiary increases the robbing problem. An alternative to carrying out the inspection while the honey is being removed is to number each hive and put the same number on the supers that are removed. This can easily be done with a permanent marker pen. The hives can then be inspected at a later date and if an AFB hive is found the supers of honey can be located and destroyed.

In addition to the above, those beekeepers without a Disease Elimination Conformity Agreement must get a certificate of inspection signed by an approved beekeeper in the spring. This means that each colony must have a full frame inspection between 1 August and 30 November.

[Editor's note: This is the third article of a series that has been written for the Management Agency for the American Foulbrood National Pest Management Strategy. These articles were first published in 2003, and have been reviewed and updated where necessary.]

We will run these articles on a regular basis over the year. The articles will cover a range of aspects of American foulbrood control, including how to inspect for and identify diseased colonies, the management of colonies to prevent American foulbrood and a beekeeper's legal obligation with regard to American foulbrood.]



Independent review of importing rules

From the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry

The Director-General of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF) is commissioning an independent review of its importing rules as part of ongoing work into how the kiwifruit vine disease Psa entered New Zealand.

Director-General Wayne McNee says the review is a sensible step to ensure that MAF's systems are as good as they can be and will be welcomed by the kiwifruit industry which had previously requested such an inquiry.

The review follows a series of investigations that MAF has undertaken since the outbreak of Psa in Bay of Plenty orchards.

He says in order to help the kiwifruit industry manage the disease's spread, MAF has looked into a number of possible ways the bacterium could have entered New Zealand and has produced a report summarising the results of those investigations.

"The report does not identify a definite means of introduction, but does find there are a number of potential pathways, including people, equipment, and pollen."

Since the tracing report was finalised last month, MAF has completed additional preliminary research that shows live Psa bacteria can be found in kiwifruit pollen taken from inside closed flowers.

MAF's importing rules at the time of the Psa outbreak permitted imports of overseas kiwifruit pollen by the kiwifruit industry and others under strict conditions.

Any imported pollen had to have been sourced from unopened flowers to avoid any issues of bacterial contamination. At the time of granting pollen import permits, there was no internationally published science that indicated pollen was able to spread Psa.

"Given the new information that has emerged on the potential for pollen to spread the disease, I want to review our processes for assessing risk, and incorporating changing science. We still cannot categorically say that Psa in pollen can infect healthy vines—there's more work to be done to prove that—so we still cannot definitively say that pollen was the way that Psa entered New Zealand," Mr McNee says.

Imports of pollen were suspended at the time of the Psa outbreak.

Mr McNee says the independent review will look at the current importing rules, how they were developed, decision making around them and what should happen in future.

"I want to be confident that we are doing absolutely everything we can to manage biosecurity risk around products imported to New Zealand. If there are improvements we can make to the way we set standards then I want to identify and implement them."

The Psa Pathway tracing report is at: <http://www.biosecurity.govt.nz/files/pests-and-diseases/psa-tracing-report.pdf>

Questions and answers

What will the review cover?

The review will be commissioned by the Director-General of MAF to examine the way science relating to kiwifruit pollen is/was researched; how importing rules were developed, including consultation with industry; the information and risk analysis that informed the rules; the process for updating the rules; and the processes and decision-making around pollen permits.

Why is the review being commissioned?

Since the Psa outbreak, MAF has investigated a range of different ways it could have been introduced into New Zealand (the tracing report referenced below). This work looked at

a number of possible entrance pathways—pollen, pollen application equipment, travelling people, scientific trials and imported plant material. Reliable information available enabled science research and plant material to be assessed as presenting a low likelihood of being the entry pathway. There is, however, considerable uncertainty around pollen, pollen equipment and people movements, and for this reason they remain assessed as 'possible' pathways.

It is not possible (and it may never be possible) to determine exactly which pathway brought Psa to New Zealand. But some new information from research undertaken by MAF for the kiwifruit industry body established to manage Psa—Kiwifruit Vine Health has suggested that the level of risk associated with imported pollen may be higher than previously thought. As a result, the Director-General has decided that a full review looking at MAF's importation processes around kiwifruit pollen is prudent to ensure the biosecurity system is providing the best possible level of protection.

Does this mean pollen is to blame for the Psa outbreak?

Pollen is only one of a range of possible entry pathways for Psa. MAF and KVH's most recent research shows live Psa bacteria can be found in kiwifruit pollen taken from inside closed flowers from both diseased and apparently healthy vines. It does not show that Psa in pollen can infect healthy vines. Also there is uncertainty around the timings of pollen imports, and the appearance of the disease in Te Puke. And there is little correlation between orchards using artificial pollination (the machine application of pollen as opposed to bee pollination) and orchards infected with Psa. About half of infected orchards have used artificial pollination and half have not. So there remain a lot of unanswered questions and MAF is planning further research.

Did MAF make a mistake in letting in kiwifruit pollen imports?

MAF granted permits to import overseas pollen on the basis of analysis of the most current international science. At the time,

there was no international published reference to pollen presenting a risk of transmitting Psa. There is still no established scientific evidence to suggest that Psa can be transmitted by pollen. The current review will check that the most rigorous processes were followed and look to identify any areas found that require improvement or change.

Why was kiwifruit pollen imported in the first place?

The New Zealand kiwifruit crop is largely bee-pollinated, however some growers supplement this by collecting pollen and artificially applying it to flowers. Most pollen applied to vines by New Zealand growers is sourced from other New Zealand orchards, however, some overseas pollen was imported in 2008, 2009 and 2010.

When MAF considers applications for imports, it has to balance the best interests of those who want to import products with any potential risks posed by those products. It considers the risks and provided there is no scientific evidence to exclude the products, permission is granted with import requirements to effectively manage any risk.

New Zealand is a member of the World Trade Organisation. It is bound by rules that prevent the imposition of unjust trade barriers. World trade rules must be based on sound scientific evidence and cannot be based on perceptions of risk.

What pollen was imported?

Imports of kiwifruit pollen occurred in 2008, 2009 and 2010. Six consignments of pollen were imported from China and Chile. Small amounts of pollen were also imported from Italy for use in scientific research only. This material is held in secure containment and destroyed after use.

MAF has been informed that pollen from China was not applied to kiwifruit in New Zealand, but was used for testing purposes. Of the Chilean pollen, some was applied to kiwifruit crops in the Bay of Plenty in early 2010.

All these imports complied with the MAF permits issued to fulfil the requirements of MAF's Import Health Standard (the rules covering imports of potential risk goods). The permits required imported kiwifruit pollen to be hand-collected from unopened

flowers. This is done to mitigate any risk of contamination with hitchhiking pests (e.g. fungi, bacteria) associated with bees and wind dispersal. Also, there are no records of pests or pathogens that are pollen-transmitted in Actinidia (kiwifruit) species.

Are we still importing pollen?

No. All pollen imports were suspended at the time of the Psa outbreak in November 2010.

New Zealand exports pollen to other countries. What does that mean for the sector?

The new research information means that MAF is not currently able to provide accurate official phytosanitary assurance needed for exports of pollen to countries currently free of Psa or actively managing Psa. MAF is working with trading partners to confirm their market access requirements.

What is the tracing report?

The tracing or pathways report is a summary of MAF's investigations into some of the possible ways in which Psa could have entered New Zealand. It was prepared to provide information to help the kiwifruit industry manage the spread of Psa. The report looks at the possible pathways—scientific trials, pollen, pollen application equipment, plant material (e.g. nursery stock) and people movements.

What did MAF find in its investigations?

The report did not find a single likely pathway that brought Psa to New Zealand. It finds there is a low likelihood of most of the pathways looked at being the entry route, but does identify pollen, pollen application equipment and people movements as possible pathways due to uncertainty of information around these possible entry routes. None can be concluded as the definite means of entry. It is unlikely there will ever be absolute certainty about how Psa arrived in New Zealand.

Why are people movements classed as a possible means of Psa entry?

There are a range of groups of people that pose a potential risk of accidentally importing Psa. These include tourists, particularly tour groups from overseas, kiwifruit orchardists returning to New Zealand, and scientists and industry

representatives travelling between New Zealand and other kiwifruit growing locations. They could potentially transfer Psa in soil on footwear or clothing, or on personal effects such as camera bags.

The risk from people movements depends to a large degree on the persistence of viable Psa V bacteria on shoes, clothing and other personal effects that are taken into orchards here. In ideal conditions some Psa bacteria may be able to survive on these objects for several weeks. However, the next steps through to infection of vines—mechanism for transfer to vines and infection—are not well understood.

The risk from people movements comprises a range of different activities but overall MAF assesses the risk from this pathway to be unknown and difficult to define, but probably low.

Why is pollen application equipment rated as a possible entry pathway?

While Psa can survive and remain viable on inanimate objects such as equipment for several weeks, the viability of the whole pathway including shipping to New Zealand, border inspection, and infection of vines is less well understood. There has been some movement of mechanised and hand operated pollen application and dusting equipment between New Zealand and Italy. Some of this activity took place before Psa V was reported in Italy, and the timing of later imports does not align well with the first detections of Psa V in New Zealand.

This route has been rated as uncertain but probably low risk due to uncertainty.

What will happen once the review is completed?

MAF's Director-General will consider the findings and if recommendations are made, will ensure any required actions are undertaken.

Source

Email from the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, 16 December 2011. For further information, contact: Lesley Patston, Communications, Ph 029 894 0163.

The media release and a link to the questions and answers is at <http://www.maf.govt.nz/news-resources/news/maf-to-commission-review-of-kiwifruit-pollen-import>



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

Resistance?

We are still selling over one million strips per year with 99% of customers happy with efficacy, however it's now more important than ever before to ensure that you use the correct dosage – being 4 strips per full depth single brood chamber - and to test their effectiveness after the treatment has been completed.

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 October 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 (since 1913) 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

NBA preferred supplier



Rural Fuel Card

Members are entitled to apply for a Rural Fuel card to receive the following Discounts:

Service Stations

3 cents per litre off the National Retail Price for Diesel

5 cents per litre off the National Retail Price for 91 Unleaded and 95 Premium

Truck Stops

5 cents per litre off the National Retail Price for Diesel

In some regions throughout NZ, fuel prices are above NRP in which case you will receive a larger discount depending on the pump price e.g. If the pump price is 3c above NRP, your fuel card discount is 5c which means you will receive an 8c discount.

This card can be used at any BP, Gasoline Alley or Spirit Service Station.

And we are very pleased to advise that we have negotiated a special member's card rate of only \$7.00+ GST for NBA members.

You will receive an itemised statement and hassle free direct debit on the 20th of the following month.

To apply for a Rural Fuel Card, please contact Rochelle Eade on 0800 383 582 or 021 444 055 or send an email to rochelle@ruralfuel.co.nz

WEATHER

La Niña persisting

The NIWA National Climate Centre's outlook for late summer, January to March 2012, indicates that seasonal rainfall is likely to be above normal for all North Island regions, normal or above normal in Nelson-Marlborough, and below normal or normal for the remainder of the South Island.

Soil moisture levels and river flows are both predicted to follow a very similar regional pattern to rainfall: they are likely to be above normal for all North Island regions, normal or above normal in Nelson-Marlborough, and below normal for the remainder of the South Island. For the season as a whole, temperatures are likely to be average or above average for the eastern South Island, and above average in all other regions.

A moderate La Niña is in place in the tropical Pacific and should persist into early autumn 2012, according to the NIWA National Climate Centre.

For the January to March season, mean sea level pressures are likely to be above normal across the South Island, but below average to the north of New Zealand, with more north-easterly air flow than normal over the North Island.

For the tropical cyclone season through to May 2012, fewer than the normal number of cyclones is expected overall. January to March is typically the most active part of the

cyclone season. However, the chance of an ex-tropical cyclone passing close to New Zealand is expected to be below the long-term average. On average, at least one ex-tropical cyclone passes within 500km of New Zealand in 9 out of 10 cyclone seasons.

Overall picture

Temperature: For the January-March period as a whole, air temperatures are likely to be above average throughout the North Island and in the north, west and south of the South Island. In the east of the South Island, temperatures are likely to be average or above average. Sea surface temperatures in the New Zealand region are likely to be near average or above average.

Rainfall, soil moisture, and river flows: The National Climate Centre projects that late summer rainfall totals are likely to be above normal throughout the North Island, and normal or above normal in the north of the South Island. For the west, south and east of the South Island, late summer rainfall is likely to be below normal or normal. Soil moisture levels and river flows are likely to be above normal in North Island regions, normal or above normal in Nelson-Marlborough, and below normal in the west, south and east of the South Island.

© Copyright NIWA 2012 (National Institute of Water & Atmospheric Research, National Climate Centre), abridged from 'Seasonal Climate Outlook: January-March 2012'. See <http://www.niwa.co.nz/seasonal-climate-outlook-january-march-2012> for full details.

NBA preferred supplier

Resene

the paint the professionals use

www.resene.co.nz

P: 0800 RESENE (737 363)



Out and about

Hives in Mendoza, Argentina. Maureen Maxwell, President of the Apimondia Oceania Commission, took this photo during her visit as part of a technical tour associated with the Apimondia Congress, September 2011.

We want your burning questions!

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 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*.

BULK HONEY WANTED

**Clover • Clover Blend • Kamahi
Manuka • Bush Blend • Rewa Rewa
Organic Clover • Organic Kamahi
Organic Manuka**

Contact: Des Hansen
Orini Honey Packers Ltd
PO Box 12296, HAMILTON
Phone (07) 824 4700 • **AH** (07) 858 3303
Fax (07) 824 4754 • **Mobile** 027 493 2615
Email orini.honey@xtra.co.nz

Best Monofloral Honey Competition Enter Now!

First Prize winner receives the Gold Award and \$1,000. Additionally Airborne guarantees to purchase the complete honey lot at a premium price per kilo.

Call 03 324 3569 and ask for John or Kay or go to our website for the competition details www.airborne.co.nz



The National Beekeepers' Association of New Zealand

National Honey Show
www.nba.org.nz



Airborne Est 1910

Airborne wants to buy your honey.

For over 100 years we've been sourcing the finest honey from bee keepers around New Zealand & marketing it under the Airborne brand.

Contact us today and we will give you a competitive price and payment terms.

Contact John Smart or Kay Samson
p: 03 324 3569
e: info@airborne.co.nz
www.airborne.co.nz

Trees for Profit and for bees too!

By John McLean, member, NBA Research Committee

The New Zealand Farm Forestry Association held a 'Trees for Profit' workshop on 17 November 2011, hosted by Nick and Pat Seymour on their Wensleydale property north of Gisborne.

During the field trip associated with the workshop, farm foresters, joined by sustainable farming and conservation professionals, discussed the best—and most profitable—use of the steep, erosion-prone high country on the East Coast.

In the photo below taken at this site, a recently logged pine stand (at left) and a maturing pine stand (at right) show how this adaptable, fast-growing tree can stabilise steep slopes with thin soils. In the draw between the two pine stands, willows have been planted to stabilise the seep areas and the native kanuka bush retained to protect the thin, less-productive (from a livestock viewpoint) soils.



Photo by Meg Gaddam.

The protection of these slopes leads to better-quality water supply in the lower reaches of the farm. In addition, the willows and kanuka also provide pollen and honey resources for bees. Stands of timber were also noted as providing protection for stock during severe weather conditions during lambing and also after shearing. Protecting the health of the local environments has many benefits that in turn lead to economic gain.

While the emphasis of this NZFFA-sponsored 'Trees for Profit' workshop was on diversifying the economic opportunities for farm foresters, Meg Gaddam also discussed the protection of native forests remnants in the area with QEII national trust covenants that enhance patches of natural biodiversity.

At a morning panel discussion, NBA Research Committee member John McLean was able to remind attendees of the need for suitable trees and shrubs as pollen sources for pollinators. The local NZFFA section has a byline of 'Trees for all Reasons', and they are well aware of the important role of bees in pollinating the clover crops that are an important source of nitrogen for the livestock industry. Local farmers also plant other shrubs such as tree lucerne that provide pollen for bees in the spring, as well as food and habitat for the native wood pigeon.

Pollen research in 2012

In 2012, the "Trees for Bees" research team, led by Linda Newstrom-Lloyd of Landcare



Research, will be working with NBA President Barry Foster and local beekeepers to detail the quality of pollens provided by trees and shrubs in the East Coast area. This will enhance the current regional guide by identifying the time of year when quality pollen sources are available; especially those trees and shrubs that will support the spring colony build-up phase, as well as preparation of the hives for overwintering.

2012 NBA Membership

A membership subscription for 2012 entitles you to the following benefits and discounts:

- 11 issues of *The New Zealand BeeKeeper* journal
- 20% discount off all Swanndri clothing
- Exclusive weekly leisure 'Deals of the Week' and business travel deals with Corporate Traveller
- 5 cents a litre discount off pump prices on Shell fuels, diesel and LPG, plus joining bonus offers
- ANAPEN, an adrenalin auto-injector. Buy one and get one free
- Rural Fuelcard discounts on petrol at any BP, Gasoline Alley or Spirit Service Stations
- Up to 25% discount on Resene Paints
- Access to a dedicated 'members only area' on the website
- A members' library for books and magazines
- A generous discounted rate at annual conference in Napier, 24–28 June 2012

Please see the subscription form on page 16.

Membership packs containing a numbered membership card and benefits information will be mailed to you soon.

If you require any further information please email secretary@nba.org.nz or pauline@nba.org.nz



National Beekeepers' Association of New Zealand 2012 Member and Journal Subscription Form

PO Box 10792, Wellington 6143, New Zealand

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

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

**Payment can be made by internet transfer. Bank of New Zealand Paraparaumu Branch
 Account No. 02 0733 0057338 00, SWIFT BKNZNZ22.**

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

| | | | |
|--|--|-------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Date: _____ | | Contact Name: _____ | |
| Name on Membership card: _____ | | | |
| Postal address: _____ | | | |
| Postcode: _____ | | Phone No: _____ | |
| Email Address: _____ | | | No of Hives: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Existing Member | | <input type="checkbox"/> New Member | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Life Member | | | |
| Sub. encl: \$ _____ or Internet banking date: _____ (Please use surname as reference) Receipt required: <input type="checkbox"/> | | | |

The membership year runs from 1 January – 31 December. There are 11 issues of The Beekeeper journal from February to December. A journal subscription is included in the membership fee.

Tax Invoice GST No. 14-437-525

| Categories | Total hives | GST Incl. | Please Tick |
|--|-------------|----------------------------|-------------|
| Standard Hobbyist | 1-10 | \$145.00 | |
| Sideline Commercial | 11-50 | \$180.00 | |
| Small Commercial | 51-250 | \$355.00 | |
| Commercial Level 1 | 251-400 | \$570.00 | |
| Commercial Level 2 | 401 - 800 | \$1045.00 | |
| Commercial Level 3 | 801-1200 | \$1545.00 | |
| Commercial Level 4 | 1201-1500 | \$1900.00 | |
| Commercial Level 5 | 1501-3000 | \$3790.00 | |
| Mega Commercial | 3001 + | \$4760.00 | |
| Corporate Membership <i>(Affiliate companies with no hive holdings)</i> | | \$300.00 | |
| A) NZ Beekeeping Clubs 1-10 members - incl. 1 journal | | A) \$200.00 | |
| B) NZ Beekeeping Clubs 11+ members Base rate plus \$5 per club member – incl. 2 journals. <i>Please request separate order form</i> | | B) \$270.00 (Base rate) | |
| Beekeeper Journal Subscription Only | | | |
| New Zealand | | \$135.00 | |
| Australia | | \$160.00 | |
| Rest of World | | \$170.00 | |

| Donations | |
|--------------------------|----|
| NO GST | |
| General Research: | \$ |
| | |
| Varroa: | \$ |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| Total: \$ | |

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

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

Signed: _____

Date: _____

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

Office use
Payment date:

Chq no:

Despatched:

It's women's work after all

Book review by Kushla Haenen, Bay of Plenty Branch

When I started beekeeping, my first introduction to other beekeepers was a local DECA course.

I entered a room filled with feral-looking blokes and thought, *'My god. What am I doing here?'*

A few years on, and I'm more aware of other women doing the beekeeping thing. But I still feel severely outnumbered. In the back of my mind there has always been the thought that beekeeping is heavy, hard work, better suited to my husband than to me.

Then along comes beekeeper Tammy Horn and her book *Beeconomy: What Women and Bees Can Teach Us about Local Trade and the Global Market*.

Far from being another how-to on beekeeping, Tammy travels the world continent by continent, capturing the shared history of women and bees across diverse cultures. She shares ancient bee myths and rituals, relating them to the social norms and beliefs of their time, and connects the dots across history to the present day, sharing modern-day stories of women involved in beekeeping, bee research and bee-focused economic development projects.

Despite the amazing things being done by women around the globe on the beekeeping front, Tammy acknowledges that many of the myths around women and their roles in society arose originally from a lack of understanding of bees and the hive. She acknowledges women as beekeepers, nurturers and business women, and brings home the fact that beekeeping is not simply a job: it's a lifestyle inherently linked to nature. She states that services traditionally provided by women—childcare, education, retail and agriculture—are undervalued in today's economy. It wasn't always this way, and she suggests that the current economic

climate indicates a need to return to our previous values.

Beeconomy is a well-researched comment on the role of women and femininity in society. However, I did note one glaring error in her mention of former New Zealand politician Marilyn Waring, who is mistakenly referred to as "former prime minister". I suspect she means MP rather than PM!

Tammy proves that beekeeping is not only something women can do well, it's something women have been doing for centuries and should continue to do, for themselves, for their community, for the environment, for the global economy.

Available in hardcover, this book is 392 pages of fact, inspiration and encouragement. It particularly appealed to me as a woman, of course, but there wasn't much complaining when I read the odd paragraph to a usually reluctant husband, so I suspect men will find plenty to be inspired about too.

"I decided that the world needed more beekeepers, not English professors."

Publishing details

Beeconomy: What Women and Bees Can Teach Us about Local Trade and the Global Market. University Press of Kentucky. \$29.95 USD (cloth or as an e-book). ISBN: 978-0-8131-3435-2 (cloth); 978-0-8131-3436-9 (e-book). Go to http://www.kentuckypress.com/live/title_detail.php?titleid=2503 for more information and brief reviews.

A conversation with Tammy Horn

How did you first become involved with beekeeping?

My maternal grandfather from Leslie County, Kentucky, was a beekeeper. After years of shunning the agricultural and scientific worlds because of the difficulty I associated

with them, I was literally transformed by the bees and by my grandfather's unconditional love of bees one day when I assisted him in the beeyards. Suddenly, emerging from the opacity of academe, the world became specific in nice ways: trees had names and definitive bloom seasons; honey bees had roles and responsibilities in the hive. My grandfather, too, transformed in front of me, talking very gently to the bees in a conversational tone I had not associated with him before. Of course, as I learned more, I began to fill in the gaps of my education: I had had no idea of the relationship between pollination and food/flowers. Much of the quality of my lifestyle, I realized, depended upon honey bees and other insects. As our country has continued to lose one in every three hives of bees, I decided that the world needed more beekeepers, not English professors.

This book explores the historical role of women in beekeeping around the world. Why did you choose this particular theme for your work?

My paternal grandmother from Harlan County, Kentucky, had been a beekeeper, but no one could tell me why she started keeping bees. I wasn't born when she kept bees, and I didn't keep bees until long after she had died. I didn't realize until I was about two years into *Beeconomy* that my first book, *Bees in America*, is very much my maternal grandfather's book; *Beeconomy* is very much my paternal grandmother's book. It is an effort to conjure my grandmother's gentle smile, her soft Cumberland River accent and self-effacing laugh from sepia-toned photographs and share with her this love of bees. Finally, of course, those memories deflate and dissolve in dreams, but the women profiled in this book have inspired me with their creativity, tenacity, and clarity.

You also delve into the spiritual and cultural connections of bees with femininity. In a quick summary, where do you believe these relationships came from?

Around the world, the honey bees' ability to communicate, proliferate (seemingly →

without intimacy), and produce honeys from all types of flowers have become time-honored symbols for a human world filled with complex relationships. Being natural sign-seekers, people concern themselves with how to negotiate intimacy (chastity being a time-honored value), difficult emotions (how to keep your cool instead of being a hothead), conversations, and struggles with mortality (my legal will specifies that in lieu of a funeral I want my bees to be told and the hives draped with black clothes—no need for fancy coffin). The bee hive has been a convenient source of signs to some of those questions as societies struggle to define cultural norms. But, the bee hive has also led to some fallacies regarding human relationships, specifically concerning women's roles in society, that need to be re-examined.

In doing your research, it appears that you have traveled to every continent, save Antarctica. What is your most memorable experience from your travels?

From a beekeeper's perspective, there were two major international experiences. The first was a 2006 visit with Las Cachinallas in Mexicali, Mexico. The women were doing "bare-knuckle" beekeeping in such difficult environmental and cultural conditions with such grace and dignity that the visit was a "watershed" moment for me. I realized that we could use their cooperative model in Appalachia—and should. The only reason we weren't doing it was because no woman, including myself at that time, would dare walk away from a conventional career to try to create a new type of economic model. A 2007 visit to Peabody Coal in Queensland, Australia, was when I began to see the value of pollinator-habitat and to work with industries as partners instead of adversaries. So, I left teaching to concentrate on forest-based beekeeping and extension in eastern Kentucky.

Source

Promotional material dated 28 October 2011, provided by University Press of Kentucky. 

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Metarhizium

By Neale Braithwaite

About three years ago we were informed that a method had been found to utilize metarhizium in the struggle against varroa.


It was said to be 90% effective—great stuff one might say. No build-up of resistance from the bug. A good result all round.

Rumour 1: it needed to be impregnated into a plastic strip. As the technology was not available here, it was going to be manufactured in Australia.

Rumour 2 (sometime later): it was going to be manufactured in the USA, because there was more choice of manufacturers there.

Rumour 3 (most recent): EPA has become interested because of the possible damage to bumble bees by the [metarhizium] fungus.

We often read in *The Beekeeper* about being "proactive" (whatever that means), and growing the industry, etc. Perhaps the best way to do both would be to set up a metarhizium processing plant in NZ, with input from all concerned parties. Then producer organisations could export honey, and varroa treatment as well.

Maybe overseas drug companies would be displeased with this; however, rather they suffer than the New Zealand beekeeper. 


Beekeepers' ballet

By Gary Jeffery

Beekeepers, are you also involved in the production of the Food Safety Beekeepers' Ballet?

After a year at great expense the production appears to have hit the doldrums. And yet

we are told that we must continue with the production for at least another year.

Perhaps the Tutus, being forest green, are the problem? Would changing to white Tutus help us arrive at a production resembling *Swan Lake*, or would it be better to abandon the whole idea and leave it for an amateur production to bring Tutu to the public once again? 

Late swarms

By Ron Morison

I still get calls about swarms with the latest yesterday. Has anyone a theory for this late swarming in Hawke's Bay?

AgExcel endorsement for quad bike tutors

Media release from AgExcel, 19 December 2011

Endorsement by the training quality mark AgExcel has now been extended to agricultural vehicle training tutors, AgExcel evaluator Andrew Donohue says.

A group of nine tutors were evaluated as part of a pilot programme in November. The tutors have been awarded AgExcel endorsement for the quality of their quad bike, tractor, motorcycle and light utility vehicle training.

"These tutors have been recognised as having significant experience in using agricultural vehicles and teaching and assessing trainees in this subject," Andrew says. "They also have excellent knowledge of the Department of Labour guidelines around quad bike use and general issues of on-farm safety in this area."

"People who wish to gain their Quad Bike Farm Licence will have to achieve it by training with an AgExcel endorsed tutor. We are inviting quad bike tutors from across New Zealand to apply for AgExcel endorsement."

Tutors interested in gaining AgExcel endorsement will go through an evaluation process that looks at details of their experience. They will also be interviewed and observed teaching and assessing trainees.

Andrew says he expects the extension of AgExcel endorsement to individual tutors to have a run on effect in the industry,

increasing the quality of training in the agriculture sector.

"This gives tutors something to aspire to and to continually develop themselves. It also means that trainees can be confident they are receiving quality training and learning what they need to know."

AgExcel tutor endorsement will be extended to tutors of other agricultural programmes as well in 2012.

AgExcel recognises those who deliver superior quality agricultural training. It bridges the gap between basic quality assurance standards and the delivery of training and education that meets industry best practice requirements. The quality mark is endorsed by AgITO's industry partners DairyNZ and Beef + Lamb New Zealand.

For more information about AgExcel, please visit www.agexcel.co.nz or email info@agexcel.co.nz





200 LITRE DRUM



AUCKLAND DRUM
Sustainability Services



1000 LITRE IBC

BE SUSTAINABLE, USE RE-MANUFACTURED OPENHEAD AND CLOSED HEAD 200 LITRE DRUMS.

NEW AND RE-MANUFACTURED

Please contact Steve 0800 373 747 info@auckdrum.co.nz

Visit our website www.auckdrum.co.nz

FROM THE COLONIES

Auckland Branch

Sitting here on a wet summer day, reading the forecast that predicts rain, rain and more rain until at least March with some breaks in between, so it is not all doom and gloom.

The paddocks are full of white clover flowers that are nice and short, ready for a bee visit when the H₂O stops.

The pollination in the Auckland area went quite well and early bush seems to have yielded reasonably well. Hopefully the rain will stop and maybe we'll have a long flow.

In our area it is important that we alternate varroa mite treatments. Many are using organic treatment, which appears to be working very well.

Happy new year to you from the Auckland Branch.

- Graham Cammell, Branch President

Waikato Branch

Most beekeepers had a good start to the season. But the gains made early on could be cancelled by the poor weather we have had though December and early January. I have not caught up with many beekeepers recently: like most other beekeepers, I have been working hard at keeping up with my bee management jobs.

- Stephen Black, Waikato Ward representative

Bay of Plenty Branch

Where to start? Another kiwifruit pollination season has passed and midsummer feels more like spring.

It has been pretty quiet with not a lot of local news, or maybe I have been just keeping my head down. The pollination season was later and more drawn out than most. My observation was that spring flowering was a couple of weeks later than in past years. This slowed hive strength build-up, but with kiwifruit flowering a little later than last year, the timing worked out. There were plenty of hive movements out of late orchards and dumpsites right up to Christmas. Orchards reported Psa infections were coming in at

alarming numbers during pollination, but seem to have slowed now. Demand for pollination hives was high, possibly due to a reduced number of hives available and differences in pollination fees. There was a big increase in the amount of spray applications occurring during pollination. I will be interested to learn what if any impact this will have, long term, on hive health and honey quality.

Speaking of honey, there was good flowering early on, but very few flight days and cooler temperatures, so not looking good so far. The weather outlook is looking more favourable from mid January, so maybe time for a late honey crop yet.

"Wet, wet, wet!" says Jody Mitchell. "We can't believe the amount of rain we are getting. We are trying to get honey off hives before we take hives away down south [but have been] struggling with the weather.



The big wet. Photo: Jody Mitchell.

"This photo was taken during a massive downpour on 10 January that caused an instant river down to the our sheds, causing a lake around our hives, which were luckily on pallets."

- Greg Wagstaff

Poverty Bay Branch

Spring was a very stop-start affair; with great conditions one week followed by wet, cold weather the following one. The willow flow was good and early November saw the start of a honey flow, but cold, wet conditions in December stopped what looked like a good manuka flow. Manuka crops in Gisborne/East Coast are similar to last season, being at least 50% lower than average.

For beekeepers gathering multifloral honey around Gisborne the conditions are the opposite. As of mid-January the hills are still green and there is more clover around than has ever been seen before. Even with the on-

off weather conditions, a good crop is being gathered and should continue into February.

This season once again is a reminder not to put all your eggs in one basket: diversification helps to spread risk.

- Paul Badger, Branch President

Hawke's Bay Branch

We certainly haven't had the worst of the weather but it has been frustrating to have so much flower around and little or no weather for the bees to do anything with it. Everything is extremely late this year so we hope the weather will improve and we get some sort of a crop.

Planning for this year's conference is well under way and we look forward to seeing old and new faces.

Many beekeepers in the area are reporting higher than normal queen failures, this seems to be getting worse every year and is a major concern for all of us. I wonder if we should be trying to get some research done on why these queens are failing.

- John Berry, Branch President

Southern North Island Branch

Crop conditions

Kamahi and rewarewa (early-spring flows) seemed to have produced well. Here in the Wellington region and in the Wairarapa, manuka production to date is a failure: beautiful flowering but not a bee on the manuka as it's been too wet and cool.

On farms, it's great to see clover making a comeback after the last five years of clover weevil attack. It's now flowering profusely after the first cut for bailing but the ground temperature is too cold for it to secrete nectar. We need it to be a lot warmer and drier to produce a crop. Having said that, lotus major thrives in the wet so perhaps we'll get a crop from it.

Wanganui: Clover and general honey in the backcountry flowed very well up to this last rain (now stopped), and so we wait. The rewarewa flow was also good, but there's been no manuka flow because of the rain.

Taranaki: Conditions are the same as in other regions. Early bush flows were reasonable

but the main crop is late due to the weather. A good showing of clover, but way too wet to produce. Hives are in on the manuka and beekeepers are hopeful of a good crop. Further south, bush sources were reasonable, but the manuka flowering is patchy and late. A very good showing of clover with a little bit coming in when it's warm.

Beehives are moving into the later-flowering areas in inland Taranaki and the central North Island to collect manuka; however, it appears that not all beekeepers play the game. I have just had a report of an unknown beekeeper moving several hundred hives on to DoC land in the Waimarino district without permission. The concession holder has paid a considerable amount to secure the land, only to find it now being used by another beekeeper. No registration numbers were visible on the hives: not a good look. What should be done under these circumstances?

North of Wellington: A quick round of inspecting tutu bushes in my area in early January saw only a few tiny juveniles on the odd tutu bush where leaves were touching the ground, while there are the odd hot spots where blackberry bushes are already covered with passion vine hoppers producing dew. Note that because of all the rain we have had, wasp numbers are low and therefore are not preying on the hoppers. I'm fortunate in that scolypopa and tutu are not really a problem but we are still bound by the regulations. It's costing some beekeepers thousands of dollars for testing that produces a nil return. When are we going to see some science backing up hopper distribution and the need for these wide-reaching regulations, when basically the problem is related to only several distinct regions?

No meetings are scheduled in the immediate future with both the president and treasurer scheduled for shoulder surgeries. Support the Federated Farmers farm day coming up in mid March.

- Frank Lindsay and others

Canterbury Branch

Happy new year to all the 'colonies' readers. I hope everyone managed to get a few days off and enjoy the festive season before getting back to the busy season.

The weather in Canterbury has been very dry since the middle of December: Canterbury farmers have been relying on irrigation for all growth since then. While the season was shaping up to be one of the best in a while, all the swarming that continued well into December, and the above-mentioned dry spell, certainly have lowered expectations considerably. Beekeeping is never straightforward, but perhaps that is part of the enjoyment of it.

With harvest under way, it is time to start thinking about the best options for our product and our business. Many of us are in a rush to get it in a barrel and out the door. Is this the best option going forward? The world will be a vastly different place in 10 years. In the worst case, we will see a major currency bite the dust, or at best we will see a couple of new ones created. Best not be part of any of that.

Another consideration is the timing of any sale. With commodity prices on a relentless climb (who hasn't noticed it at the supermarket?), are we as beekeepers better to store our 'wealth' in a barrel rather than in the bank? At least in a barrel it is tangible, we are in control of it and there is a good chance it will be worth more later in the year (or, for that matter, in several years' time), especially compared to the interest that a bank offers over that time. All in all, a double win.

Several of my farmers this year have commented to me while we have been chewing the fat that, "I am lucky that I produce a product that is non-perishable and can be stored anywhere". Maybe it is time to take advantage of these attributes.

Anyway, food for thought—or should I say 'honey for storage'? Cheers, and happy extracting!

- Brian Lancaster, Branch President

Otago Branch

We only need one word to describe this season: "Fantastic!" Beekeepers have been run off their feet for six weeks now trying to keep up with the flow.

- Peter Sales, Branch Secretary

News from the Chatham Islands

In the roaring forties life is rarely dull. We had an informal visit from Les Stowell, CEO of Whakaari International, an East Coast tribal group of manuka honey producers and exporters. He advised us to look seriously at developing pollen collection as an additional stream—good advice.

The welcome news is that the Chatham Island Queen Bee research and development breeding programme is on target. We have a 2B5 Carniolan hybrid breeder in her third year and exploding. We have two Carniolan hybrid 2B1, 2B2 breeder queens now in their fifth to sixth year of life and still performing vigorously. The other day we had a supersedure Carniolan 2B31-2B1/2/5 hybrid queen emerge. She came from the grub of an Italian 2B31 parent that was killed, we think, by a spider in the hive.

We have weka (introduced swamp hens) on Chatham Island. They are very inquisitive. When they peck at the plastic dials on the front of nuc boxes they can break them or turn them around so the entrance is sealed. Perhaps this happens at night while the bees are inside. We discovered the effects a couple of days later. Most of the bees were dead, the uncapped honey eaten out and the remaining bees on wobbly last legs. Where is the queen? What do we do here? Can this situation be rescued? Well, we found the 2B31 Italian queen walking slowly on the hive mat. We dumped the bees on the grass, sprayed them with sugar syrup and cleaned out the nuc box. We rushed to a hive nearby to get frames of brood and bees and a frame of pollen and honey. We reassembled the nuc, put the lid on and walked away, emotionally drained. We now tape up the plastic dials on the nuc boxes. The tin plate dials are fine.

The other day we helped out a fellow beekeeper by delivering to her a couple of frames of brood, bees and two queen cells. We reassembled the hives with her surviving

Continued on page 23

AFB course upcoming

New Plymouth, 3 March 2012

For details, please contact:

Stephen Black
06 752 6869
Stephen@beesrus.co.nz

Cambridge Bee Products Ltd.

HADDRELL'S
— of —
CAMBRIDGE



'Direct from the Beekeeper'

**Due to increased sales,
we need more suppliers of
UMF® Manuka Honey.**

Prompt payment.
Long term supply preferred.

Richard Haddrell
Cambridge Bee Products Ltd
63 Benn Rd Cambridge
07 827 3286
027 475 9798
rick@haddrells.co.nz
www.haddrells.co.nz

Busy as a bee? Are you lifting as safely and efficiently?

From hobbyist to industry, from manually powered tail-lifts to fully hydraulic compact cranes. Quicklift offer the ultimate solutions for lifting hives, while reducing risk of back injury and labour costs. **Call now for a free Quicklift colour brochure.**



Freephone 0800 60 60 61

56 Gladstone Road, Richmond 7020, Nelson, New Zealand
info@quickliftcranes.com | www.quickliftcranes.com

QuickLIFT®

The ultimate utility upgrade

Continued from page 21

bees [Italian-feral British (2B3I-FB) hybrids]. Her six-year-old son immediately noticed that the bees went quiet when we did that. "I think they are happy now and will make lots of honey for you," I said. Yum. Cuppa tea? The view from our colleague's kitchen table is to die for and the discussion was always interesting—whose boat is taking on water, whose boat broke an oil pipe, whose boat lost its steering, who lost his oar on the way back to the jetty? Finally the conversation turned to "how much?" for the queens and nuc? The answer: "lamb chops will do the trick". We went home with a bag of homegrown, homemade sausages with lamb, rosemary and garlic in them and we went home with the phone number for a source of sausage skins to make our own. With freshly dug new potatoes (growing wild on the roadside), homegrown courgettes and packet-dried peas, dinner was on the cook soon after we walked in the door.

Our seasons are running about a month and two weeks behind mainland New Zealand. The (introduced) pohutukawa is flowering this week (January, not the end

of November) and there is a good clover pasture crop island wide. The clover seed set we are monitoring on one property has gone from 15 to 60, 90, and 150 seeds during the last four years. The canola (swaths of bright yellow growing wild on the side of the road) has almost finished the first flowering period. This has been a blessing for the bees. They have gathered lots of pollen and much nectar. The gorse is just beginning its second flowering. We have lots of grasses, harakeke (flax) and bog plants flowering as well, like tarahinai (pink, as in champagne, honey) and tree daisies (Chatham aster). Maaku (Lotus major clover), dandelion and catsear also add a dash of colour and flavour to the honey. Of late temperatures have been up in the 30s (Celsius) with a welcome splash of rain from time to time.

In 2011 we increased drone pool numbers by 80% and have also added to our DNA variety pool from across the island. Our main New Year's resolutions: to ensure that each hive has two full-depth brood boxes, one full-depth honey box (for their winter stores) and a three-quarter-depth honey box above

a queen excluder (for our purposes). We will also access and master AI beginning later this year (2012). As part of a bridging strategy we are trying to gain permanent resident status in the USA so we can build market presence and encourage offshore investment for Chatham Island Queens (vested user concept) beginning in 2013.

On another tack, island beekeepers are trying to preserve the integrity of the Chathams as a 'kingdom'—oops, we mean 'queendom'—of clean bees. We are inviting the whole island community to have input to that generational initiative. The vision-in-term is to use that clean status to underpin the New Zealand beekeeping industry as Hawaii does in the USA.

If visiting the islands, please contact us. We are not in the local phone book – 03 305 0618 – Mana & Michele. We can put you in touch with other island beekeepers too.

- Mana Cracknell and Michele Andersen
Chatham Islands Beekeeping Group 

OPINION

Pollination as a priority

By Frank Lindsay, NBA Life Member

It's interesting how different people prioritise the important issues facing the beekeeping industry.

I feel pollination (both paid and unpaid) affects more beekeepers in New Zealand than realised and its importance has to be stressed to New Zealand as a whole. Pollination should have a greater priority in the overall scheme of things.

Diversify to remain viable

Beekeepers now need multi-income streams to be viable as world honey prices fluctuate through cycles of boom and bust. While

some countries can produce honey below our cost of production, buyers, depending upon demand, will only purchase high-end honeys when they need to. Look at how the American bee industry has changed to being mostly pollinators, with honey being of secondary importance. This situation has occurred through the loss of habitat with the development of intensive farming and Americans' use of newly developed insecticides, successive losses every 10 years through varroa mite resistance and the adverse impact of cheap imports due to the US not having high honey standards.

We in New Zealand are starting to see intensive agriculture. Green deserts where every tree is removed for travelling irrigators; squash and maize crops where the seeds have been coated with neonicotinoid insecticides to protect them from insect damage, making beekeeping not as productive as previously. We may soon see

massive winter losses through viruses and pathogens brought on by incorrect timing of varroa treatments and failing to alternate treatments, which will lead to varroa mites becoming resistant to treatment.

Worldwide recession

We are also experiencing the beginnings of a worldwide recession where customers may no longer wish or can no longer afford to purchase luxury goods and foods.

The value of pollination

Some time ago commercial beekeepers in the North Island relied on pollination for cash flow rather than making a profit from the service. This has changed: beekeepers now move hives greater distances to take advantages of early flows and then use the hives for one or more pollination contracts; combined these hives are now producing a decent income. →

However, Psa has changed the kiwifruit pollination industry and will continue to do so. Fewer hives will be required with the removal of the gold variety vine; consequently, some beekeepers from outside the main growing areas will have to review how they run their businesses. Kiwifruit pollination is a young person's game, requiring very long hours getting hives ready in often adverse weather and then transporting them long distances, moving them in and out, sometimes within 10 days. The necessity to produce export fruit (and to perhaps reduce the production dependence on weather and bees) has caused a number of growers to make increasing use of artificial pollination, creating a demand to import pollen.

We hear a lot of hype that with the overseas shortages of bees, now or perhaps in the future, plant breeders are looking at producing more fruits, etc., that will be self pollinating—almonds are an example. However, there is still a great difference in production between bee-assisted pollination and self-pollination by wind and other insects, with the bees winning hands down. Pollination will always be needed but it has to be worthwhile to the beekeeper.

A number of New Zealand beekeepers have a good income stream from manuka but costs are high (moving bees long distances, helicoptering hives into remote areas or using specialised vehicles). These costs could increase further as more farmers see publicity regarding the high price of manuka honey indicating that the beekeepers are doing well, and wanting a slice of the action. Unfortunately climate temperatures are getting warmer so New Zealand will get more storms and rain. Manuka production in some areas is becoming unreliable, as demonstrated by this year's honey season.

Up until recently some beekeepers have been pollinating seed crops for the possibility of a honey crop but with higher cost of production associated with varroa, hopefully this practice has ceased and beekeepers providing this service are now charging accordingly. Beekeepers providing this service are also facing additional problems. These crops tend to flower during the honey production season so beekeepers have to make a decision to forgo their usual honey crop. Hence the price negotiated should reflect this loss. There are now other hidden costs: poor or insufficient pollen

available due to overstocking means the hives come out with considerably smaller populations, making them useless for a late honey flow should it be available. Hives could well have contaminated frames with all the sprays put on to protect the crop from insect and fungal damage. Greater winter losses for the beekeeper perhaps.

Avocado pollination

Avocado growth has brought with it the projection of requiring thousands more hives to pollinate the crop but this fruit is often not very profitable: again, it depends upon world markets. Hives are in the orchards a long time, which can coincide with our main honey production period. Can growers sustain higher pollination costs to compensate for loss of honey production? Or will beekeepers look at this pollination as an insurance against crop failure and only commit a percentage of hives to avocado pollination? The avocado crop suits North Auckland beekeepers as their main manuka crop is early; therefore avocado pollination doesn't compete.

“Pollination will always be needed but it has to be worthwhile to the beekeeper.”

Educating farmers and the public

A general consideration is that pollination contracts may need to be more stringent. Too often beekeepers are asked to prepare a number of hives, only to be told a few weeks before the hives are due to be put in that fewer numbers will be required. The beekeepers have put in extra work for no return, which could affect their bottom line. Contracts need to be altered to stipulate a given number of hives, and a deposit paid to acknowledge the extra work the beekeeper has put in to preparing hives.

We also need to educate grassland farmers to the value of pollination, which is mostly unseen, and get them to contribute to perhaps hive upkeep—the equivalent of mite treatment costs—to compensate when there is no honey production. We beekeepers know that our bees are responsible for clover seed setting, which help to keep clovers in the pasture. Clover is responsible for 30% of the milk solids (butter

fat) production or putting weight on healthy young livestock.

New Zealand hasn't faced the full costs of resistant varroa with its substantial hive losses through viruses and *Nosema ceranae*. A figure of 30% winter losses also means another 30% of hives will be very weak, so beekeepers could be faced with a possible reduction in income of 60% as hive numbers are built back up again. This is why it's important to survey all beekeepers as to their losses, dividing winter deaths into the categories of mites, queen failure (including queens that became drone layers), possible poisoning, starvation, and unknown. Hive loss surveys will enable the bee industry to tell New Zealand what's actually happening out there and why our costs are increasing.

Other considerations

Many older beekeepers, being baby boomers, are going to leave the industry in the next 10 years. There's been a huge increase in hobby beekeepers and new beekeepers hoping to cash in on the so-called 'manuka boom', but who is going to—or can afford to—take the place of those retiring? Imported labour only follows what they are told to do, and they don't have the same commitment an 'owner' has. It takes years to learn the vagaries of beekeeping and how to prepare hives to pollinate effectively as each area is different.

Our AsureQuality officers are no longer in the field to assist new beekeepers. Beekeeper education has largely been neglected.

Beekeeper profitability has to be raised and the industry automated. We are becoming smarter businesspeople and are starting to take advantages of all the streams of income available to us, but we are still doing a lot of pollination for no financial return.

It takes a special type of person to love bees and young people coming into the industry (unless born into it) are not prepared to work the long hours required during the production season for just a basic wage, plus overtime or time off during winter. Many other industries have a starting salary of \$30,000 (going to \$50,000 once fully trained), and we need to match this otherwise they will milk cows—a relief milker can get \$200 per milking. Most small to medium businesses at present can't support this salary on honey production alone, with its swings in production and pricing, and still be viable.



Extracting honey and treating hives

By Frank Lindsay, NBA Life Member

It's time to get the honey off and extracted. New beekeepers should be able to remove a frame for a taste but may need to feed in March so that the hives have a full super of honey to winter over on.

This date will depend upon just how long the honey flow will last. The wet weather of late has caused catsear and lotus major to flower. Clover has had a boost in growth but needs hot dry weather to produce a nectar flow, so there's still time as we come into the hottest part of the year.

Some honeys you can take your time about extracting; however, honeys such as pohutukawa, southern rata and members of the brassica family (canola, radish, etc) need to be removed and extracted within a couple of days as once it is moved, it starts setting up crystallisation because of the high glucose content.

Treating hives

Another reason to get the honey off is to treat hives. The magic date is 18 February. This date is selected for two reasons: (1) It takes a month or so for the hives to be 96% free of mites and (2) the bees must then produce at least two brood cycles so they have fat healthy bees to form the winter cluster. This is not so important in the upper North Island and around the coastal fringes as the hives will have brood in year round. But mites build up quickly during the honey flow, and when brood production drops off because the bees have filled the available comb with honey, the mite to bee ratio gets

out of balance and mites then become a nuisance and damage the bees.

What to use is up to the individual beekeeper but it's essential that the treatment is varied from the spring treatment. Too many beekeepers are just sticking to the one product and this practice—along with late treatments—is causing hive decline that the experts are putting down to mite resistance. Those treating early and varying their treatments aren't seeing a problem.

"...it's essential that the treatment is varied from the spring treatment."

In most cases strips will work well, but it should be in the back of all beekeepers' minds that we have now had varroa mites for 11 years, so there could be spots of resistant mites out there. Varroa can spread very quickly—100 kilometres per hour—the speed of a moving bee truck.

It's also important to start experimenting with alternative treatments. Quite a few of these treatments require two applications a week or so apart to get a decent kill, but there are a lot of factors that influence the success of the treatment. If you are using acids, the width of the entrance could have a bearing, the amount of brood also has a lot to do with it and so does the temperature. Bees tend to move away from treatments so placement is also very important. Place treatments next to brood so bees can't move away from them.

Whatever you do at the completion of the treatment, monitor the results. We can no longer take it for granted that every hive will have the same even kill rate. If you have mesh bottom boards, monitor over a week to calculate mite fall and therefore mite numbers. If you haven't got mesh bottom boards, collect 100 bees in a jar and do a sugar shake, but do it two to three times on

the same bees as the mites don't all drop off on the first application of icing sugar.

If you have drone brood, sacrifice a couple of hundred by digging them out with a cappings fork to see mite numbers. You can also use the ether roll or alcohol wash methods, but make sure you find the queen first before shaking 100 bees (a quarter cup) into the jar.

It's also important that you monitor at least half your hives as alternative treatments vary between hives. Taking just two or three samples from an apiary is making a big assumption that all hives have been treated well. They won't have and it's important to spot those that haven't and repeat the treatment.

Swarming was quite a problem in some apiaries so you can bet that in mid June these hives will start to break down with varroa. If the weather conditions are warm for a few hours each day, your bees will search out these dying hives and rob them of their stored honey. The only problem is that the bees will also bring back a high load of mites and without administering another treatment, hives will be lost. Once one hive goes, varroa can quickly spread to the whole apiary. Beekeepers in the southern South Island where varroa is just appearing will also encounter this problem.

I'm looking at easy forms of treatment that don't require me to open hives in winter. I have most of my hives on mesh floors with the slide in. One of my experiments is to use formic acid on a Dri-Loc® pad on the slide. Just pull the slide open and place the pad in the centre. I can either pre-saturate the pads and put them into each hive or administer the acid with a drench gun. The question being with this 'flash' treatment is whether the bottom slide is sealed well enough for the fumes to be circulated up into the brood nest. Time will tell.

Other potential problems to consider

Nosema ceranae has spread quickly through the North Island—thanks to the migration of hives to pollination and manuka →

production—and could shortly be making its presence felt. Generally the effect of this protozoan isn't apparent to the eye but it can reduce a bee's life span, starving it by multiplying in its stomach lining. The result is a reduced honey crop or hives not expanding in the spring when good feed is available.

We can't do much to control nosema other than to change frames regularly to prevent a reservoir of spores building in the hive, but applying a thymol-based treatment could help. Thymol is said to reduce the instance of chalkbrood: something we hardly see in our hives unless they are stressed (which, incidentally, is when nosema will have an effect on our bees), and so perhaps it might have an effect on nosema. A project for our bee scientists perhaps?

Raising queen cells without grafting

February is also one of the best times to replace your queen so that you have new queens in the hives going into winter.

While there is a dribble of nectar coming in and there are plenty of drones about, the bees will build queen cells if you stimulate them to do so.

Grafting (the moving of a just-hatched larvae into a queen cell cup) is the most accepted form of raising a number of queens, but it takes a little practice and a knowledge of bee behaviour to get the bees to accept and build the cells.

For the new beekeeper this is a rather advanced skill but there are ways to make four or five queen cells rather simply. I saw the following method on the Internet and haven't tried it yet but it seems easy enough.

Take a strong colony and take away all but one super, leaving the queen and nine frames of brood with all the bees. There should be a good flow going on so the bees will have adequate food coming into the hive. Within a couple of days the bees will have built swarm cells. Then return all of the other supers. You can calculate when they are due to emerge and on day 10 (after the eggs have hatched), take out the queen cells and put them into either weak colonies

or nucs. You could split the original hive of nine brood frames into three nucs. Put a cell in each. It doesn't matter where the queen is located (if you can't find her), as she will either be superseded or the bees will tear down the queen cell if she is a good queen.

Handle the queen cells carefully as their wing buds are touching the surface of the queen cells, so any bump or dropping of the cell will mean a wingless queen. Queen cells at the bottom of the frame should be moved to the centre of the brood frame where the bees will keep it warm. Select the longest queen cell if you have more than one to choose from.

Another technique seen on the Internet after removing the queen is to take a just-hatched larva (it will be tiny: the larva is the same size as an egg, and will be in a pool of royal jelly) on the bottom part of the frame and break down the cell's bottom half, removing half the midrib also (known as notching; see www.mdasplitter.com). This technique produced a cell exactly like one in which a queen is produced (i.e., open at the bottom), so the bees produce a queen cell. Remove any larvae either side of your selected queen cell so that it will be easy to cut around when you want to remove it later.

It's really important to not leave any midrib; otherwise the bees may not accept it as a queen cell. Have some fun and with luck you will produce some nice long queen cells.

Mistakes I have made this season

Drifting

In setting up nucleus colonies for new beekeepers, I brought home strong nucs, put them on the front lawn and waited 24 hours before introducing a cage with a mated queen.

Perhaps having 10 nucs, all basically the same colour and shape around my small front lawn caused problems for the bees, as the flying bees would migrate to two distinct positions on the lawn and boost these nucs disproportionately compared to the others.

Just before they were picked up I'd check them for emergency queen cells, release the tab on the queen cage and take a shake of bees from the overpopulated nucs to even up the others.

Before I do this again I'll paint the wooden ends of each nuc in a different colour so the bees can easily identify where they came from, and perhaps spread the nucs out in a circle instead of around the edge of the lawn and hope this will prevent drifting.

Hives grow at different rates

Some hives are slow to get away; others just boom ahead. One technique to even up hives is to swap the position of a strong hive with a weak hive. The field bees from the strong hive have already homed to that site and go straight in without fighting. They may do this, but several of my bees killed the new queens and the bees ended up making new emergency queen cells that put the development of these hives even further back. The next time I do this, I'll cage the queen so that she's initially protected from the field bees that know their own queen and recognised her as an intruder.

No matter how long you are in beekeeping, you will make mistakes and you are always learning. Sometimes you get away with a technique, and sometime you don't. A technique that worked last year might not work this year as conditions vary from year to year and within each hive.

Things to do this month

It's very important to check the brood nest for AFB before removing any honey from hives. Look at the cells where brood is emerging. Flick off the cappings of those in the middle of the emerged area and check the larvae. This is the easiest place to identify problems within the hive. If you find sacbrood or chalkbrood, change the queen.

Extract honey, remove comb honey, rear autumn queens, and/or introduce purchased queens. Produce nuclei (to cover future winter losses) and check for wasps.

Control varroa mites. It's important to keep varroa numbers low all year to prevent viruses killing your hives. Look at ways of controlling mites throughout the year instead of hitting them once in the spring and once in the autumn.



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>Northern Ward Neil Stuckey PO Box 303251 North Harbour Auckland 0751 Ph: 09 415 5931 (w) Email: neil@whoney.co.nz</p> | <p>Southern North Island Ward Mary-Ann Lindsay 26 Cunliffe Street Johnsonville Wellington 6037 Ph: 04 478 3367 Email: lindsay.apiaries@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>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>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>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>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

Graham Cammell
20 Thorps Quarry Road
Clevedon, RD 2 Papakura 2582
Ph: 09 275 6457
Email: graham@cammellshoney.co.nz

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@ihug.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: hikuhoney@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: hbnba.secretary@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: lindsay.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

Carne Clissold
Glass Brothers Ltd
RD 5
Gore 9775
Ph: 03 207 1866
Email: carne@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 30 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

* The closure colours shown above are all stock colours (applies to 57mm & 60mm closures), for your own custom colours a minimum orders of 5000 units will apply.

100%
NEW ZEALAND
OWNED & OPERATED

PHARMAPAC

PAC



www.pharmapac.co.nz