

RETAIN FOR REFERENCE
NEW ZEALAND
HONEY MARKETING AUTHORITY

Election of Members
1967

An election of two producer Members of the N.Z. Honey Marketing Authority will be held during SEPTEMBER, 1967.

The Members retiring by rotation are:—

J. W. FRASER, of Ryal Bush.
J. D. LORIMER, of Hamilton.

Dates in connection with the election which should be noted:—

Rolls available for inspection — 14 days from JULY 26.
Nominations close — Noon, AUGUST 16.
Poll closes — Noon, SEPTEMBER 13.

All correspondence in connection with the election should be addressed to:—

The Returning Officer,
Honey Marketing Authority Election,
C/- Department of Agriculture,
Private Bag, Auckland.

NOT THE N.Z. HONEY MARKETING AUTHORITY.

CORPORATE BODIES AND SUPPLIERS TO PACKERS

Please note special requirements.

The Returning Officer has advised that in accordance with the Honey Marketing Authority Regulations 1964, copies of the roll of producers qualified to vote will be deposited at the Department of Agriculture, Head Office, Wellington, and at Auckland, and at the following Post Offices:—

Alexandra	Gisborne	Masterton	Tauranga
Amberley	Gore	Christchurch	Te Aroha
Ashburton	Greymouth	Motueka	Timaru
Balclutha	Hamilton	Napier	Waimate
Blenheim	Hastings	Nelson	Waipukurau
Cromwell	Hokitika	New	Wairoa
Culverden	Huntly	Plymouth	Wanganui
Dannevirke	Invercargill	Oamaru	Warkworth
Dargaville	Kaikōhe	Palmerston	Whakatane
Dunedin	Kaikōura	North	Whangarei
Eketahuna	Kaitiāia	Rotorua	Westport
Geraldine	Levin	Roxburgh	

The rolls will be open for public inspection during ordinary office hours for 14 days from July 26, 1967.

The Returning Officer has advised that any person who is remote from an office where a roll is available for inspection may write to the Returning Officer for verification that his name is on the roll. The full name of the person concerned should be supplied and the enquiry should be made during the period the roll is open for inspection.

Provision is made in the Regulations for the issue of special voting papers where a voter's name has been omitted from the roll. Any such voter should make application direct to the Returning Officer.

The number of votes which may be exercised by a voter is based upon the amount of honey supplied and/or the amount of levy paid over the preceding two years. This is provided for in the first schedule of the Regulations.

Suppliers are advised that in order to qualify for votes, consignments of honey must reach one of the Authority's depots by June 30, 1967.

ATTENTION CORPORATE BODIES

The attention of corporate bodies is drawn to Clause 3 of the Schedule to the Regulations which reads as follows:—

“Any producer being a corporate body may, by writing under its corporate seal delivered to the Returning Officer, appoint some person whose name shall be entered on the rolls as a voter on behalf of that corporate body.”

A form of appointment is attached and it should be noted that a new appointment is required for each election.

ATTENTION SUPPLIERS TO PACKERS

Producers who wish to vote at the forthcoming election on the basis of honey supplied to packers will be required to furnish a declaration showing the amount of honey supplied. A form of declaration is attached and when completed should be mailed direct to the Returning Officer.

**NOMINATION OF PRODUCERS' REPRESENTATIVE ON
THE N.Z. HONEY MARKETING AUTHORITY**

I (We), the undersigned voter(s), do hereby nominate

..... (Full name)
of (Address)
..... (Occupation)

with his consent, as a candidate at the election of persons for appointment to the Honey Marketing Authority established by the Honey Marketing Authority Regulations 1964.

Dated at, this day of, 1967

Signature of voter
Full name of voter
Address of voter

I,
do hereby consent to the above nomination.

Signature of Candidate

Within seven days of accepting nomination each candidate must deposit \$6 (£3) with the Returning Officer.

**APPOINTMENT OF NOMINEE BY A CORPORATE BODY
TO BE ENTERED ON ELECTION ROLLS**

..... (Registered Name of Body)

of (Address)
hereby appoint.

..... (Full name)

of (Address)

..... (Occupation)
as nominee, to be entered on the rolls of the Honey Marketing Authority

Election as voter on behalf of said
(Registered Name of Body)

Dated at, this day of, 1967



DECLARATION FORM

(This Declaration Form is for the use of producers who are entitled to votes as suppliers to packers. See previous reference.)

IN THE MATTER of the Honey Marketing Authority Regulations 1964.

I, _____ (Full name)

of _____ (Address)

_____ (Occupation)

do hereby solemnly and sincerely declare as follows:—

1. That during the year ended on June 30, 1966, I supplied to

_____ (Full name)

_____ (Address)

_____ (Occupation), who is a packer of honey

_____ lbs. of honey in respect of which I did not purchase any honey seals.

2. That during the year ended on June 30, 1967, I supplied to

_____ (Full name)

of _____ (Address)

_____ (Occupation), who is a packer of honey

_____ lbs. of honey in respect of which I did not purchase any honey seals.

AND I make this solemn declaration conscientiously believing the same to be true and by virtue of the Oaths and Declarations Act, 1957.

DECLARED AT _____

By the said _____

(Declarant to sign here)

(Full name)

this _____ day of _____
1967, before me

A Solicitor of the Supreme Court of New Zealand
or a Justice of the Peace.

Further supplies of these forms may be obtained from:—
THE N.Z. HONEY MARKETING AUTHORITY,
P.O. Box 2615, Auckland.

For
CONTINUED SOUND MANAGEMENT
and
STABILITY OF THE HONEY INDUSTRY

RE-ELECT
DUDLEY LORIMER



Your Proven and TRUSTED Representative
AT

NEW ZEALAND
HONEY MARKETING AUTHORITY
ELECTION
1 9 6 7

★
POLL CLOSES NOON 13th SEPTEMBER

To the Beekeepers of New Zealand:

My Record of Service . . .

. . . TO THE HONEY INDUSTRY

- Member of H.M.A. since 1961 and Deputy Chairman.
- Member of Dominion Executive of N.B.A. for four years.
- President of South Auckland Branch of N.B.A. 1955-57.
- Secretary of South Auckland Branch of N.B.A. 1944-51.

. . . TO THE COMMUNITY

- Returned serviceman World War II.
- Chairman of Hillcrest Normal School Committee, 1957-1963.
- President of the Rotary Club of Hamilton, 1957-1958, and Member of Board of Directors, 1955-1959.
- Member of the Vestry of St Francis', Hillcrest.

MY INTEREST IN THE HONEY INDUSTRY

- Commercial honey producer since 1943.
- Managing director of Hillcrest Apiaries Ltd, which operates 2000 hives.
- Today a producer, packer and SUPPLIER.
- SUPPLIER of 20 tons of white clover honey to H.M.A. for season 1966-67.
- Holder of Honorary Diploma in Apiculture.

I Offer Myself for Re-election to THE HONEY MARKETING AUTHORITY on the following Policy Platform . . .

1. Continuation of the present sound marketing system.

2. Higher returns for producers.

Responsibility for obtaining higher returns for producers rests on both the Honey Marketing Authority and producer-packers. Higher returns can be achieved by—

(a) Producer-packers stopping price cutting and adhering to the Authority's current schedule prices.

(b) The Authority making the highest possible payout to suppliers for all grades of honey, particularly as a result of its increasing export trade in speciality packs, and the development of its main order business, both in Britain, and on the Pacific Coast of North America.

3. Maximum possible utilisation of the Honey Marketing Authority's packing plant to reduce overhead costs.

4. Careful consideration of all proposals for changes in our marketing methods.

I undertake that, if I am re-elected, consideration will be given at the October meeting of the Authority to the suggestion that New Zealand honey be sold on the British market as a quality New Zealand product.

" THE BALE REPORT "

A paper of great interest to the honey producing industry has recently been published. It is "A Study of the Marketing of New Zealand Honey", by M. D. Bale, Junior Lecturer in Horticulture, Massey University, of Manawatu.

It is unfortunate that this study was published too late to permit informed discussion within the industry on the issues it raises before the election of your producer representatives to the Honey Marketing Authority. It is equally to be deplored that the dead-line set for publication precluded more detailed research, thus contributing to the admitted obvious limitations of the study, and did not allow a check to be made of the accuracy of the contents.

I find myself very much in agreement with Mr Bale's statement that his study "is intended to stimulate informed discussion within the industry, rather than to offer a cut-and-dried blueprint for future planning".

But if Mr Bale's real object was to inform the industry of the problems and issues relating to the marketing of honey, then it seems to have been quite unnecessary for him to reach a self-contradictory and hybrid conclusion, hastily drawn from unchecked false assumptions and factual errors.

The following aspects of his study require comment—

Downward Trend in Production

Mr Bale attributes this to the Authority's failure to assist in the orderly development of the honey industry (p. 33).

I consider that this downward trend is mainly due to varying climatic conditions and changes in farming practices, both of which are beyond the Authority's control.

Mr Bale admits the first problem in his paper (p. 8).

Authority's Operating Costs

Mr Bale quotes (p. 37) a depreciation rate of 10% on the Authority's Plant and Building value, giving depreciation costs of \$18,000 per annum on a plant and building value of \$180,000.

In fact the rate of depreciation on the reinforced concrete building is only one per cent, and approximately \$160,000 of the \$180,000 is land and buildings.

The Authority's Statement of Accounts shows the depreciation as:

Plant and equipment (20% diminishing value)	\$4478
Building (1% capital value)	\$1706
On an output of 500 tons, this gives an overhead cost of \$12.40 per ton, compared with Mr Bale's figure of \$36.00.	

Decentralisation of Authority's Packing

Mr Bale's proposal (p. 38) to allocate tenders to packers in each production area to blend, pack and store honey sold to the Authority is completely impracticable for the following reasons:

1. Private packers lack the storage space for large quantities of bulk honey and packed lines, and for the considerable range of packing material required for the Authority's packs.
2. The impossibility of obtaining uniform blends and quality over all production areas.
3. The problem of organising packing schedules to accommodate both the Authority's and producer-packer's requirements.
4. The non-availability of a large pool of honey in a central store to blend with honeys of low specific gravity and problem-flavoured honeys.
5. The costs incurred in delivering the Authority's packing materials to the producer-packers throughout New Zealand, and in freighting honey to the Authority's major consumer market—metropolitan Auckland. Mr Bale does not seem to be aware that bulk honey is cheaper to transport than packed lines.

Mr Bale states (p. 38) that an immediate saving of at least 514,950 in freight costs would be achieved if the Authority allocated tenders to packers in such production areas. However, reference to the Authority's 1956 Accounts for Freight and Carriage shows this item as being:

Local sales—selling and distribution charges	- 57734
Freight and Carriage	- 56836
Freight on transits from depots to Australand Stores	- 56836

The first item cannot be eliminated by moving the site of packing.

Speciality Packs

Mr Bale seems to be under the misapprehension that individual floral source honeys are minor in quantity (p. 57) when in fact the Authority is developing a rapidly-increasing export market in retail packs of these honeys which are commanding prices consistently in advance of those obtained for clover blends.

Advertising

In planning its advertising, the Authority has accepted the advice of experienced advertising specialists as to how to get the most effective results from a limited budget. Yet Mr Bale describes (p. 49) these expert methods as "tired and orthodox".

Local Selling Agent's Commission

This is the cost of selling the Authority's product to the retailer and is probably less per pound than the cost incurred by those packers who themselves deliver to retailers.

Mr Bale is under the illusion that such costs can be eliminated (p. 53), but obviously this is not so.

Despite his various suggestions for reducing or eliminating costs, Mr Bale has failed to produce a method of avoiding the Authority's greatest overhead cost — its plant.

This valuable asset cannot be disposed of without a considerable loss to the industry as a whole. Surely the most economical way of reducing this cost is by spreading it over the maximum possible output through increased utilisation of the Authority's existing assets.

★ I would urge YOU to cast YOUR vote for the present sound policy of the Authority rather than throw it away on what can only be described as a gamble.

Yours faithfully,
J. D. LORIMER.

★
VOTE
JOHN DUDLEY LORIMER
NOW

★

POLL CLOSES NOON WEDNESDAY, 13th SEPTEMBER

N.Z. HONEY MARKETING AUTHORITY

1967 ELECTION

Follow Beekeepers:

Every Elector, including my two opponents will have received my election manifesto - all mailed at the same time.

It is regrettable that circumstances have arisen which make it necessary to contact you all again. Whether this circular has any bearing on the outcome of the election is not the only matter of importance. The plain fact is that if I had known that Massey University would have been associated with the politics of our Industry, I would not have supported the Study that our Whangarei Conference asked for and Arataki Apiaries Limited paid for. It has clearly been implied that the cards are not all on the table relating to the timing of the Study. I certainly wanted it before us at this time if possible. Surely this is logical. But it so happens that Mr. and Mrs. Bale are leaving next month for America. They are to take up positions with Iowa State University, so obviously for personal reasons the Study could not have been allowed to drag on.

A more extensive and expensive study could have been beneficial but this does not mean that a great deal of work by well qualified persons has not gone into this project. I have sought opinions from Massey lecturers on a number of occasions over the past few years and specific research for the Study began in January last. My opponents are clearly not worried about any weakness of the Study, but how the strength of it may affect their chances in the election. Their position on the Authority does seem to mean pathetically much to them, but beekeepers and their families must be able to make a living. No election manifesto from Mr. Fraser to me has been received. He is apparently running true to form, as the last time he was a candidate he mailed his document of doubtful merit to only a selected section of the voters. Mr. Lorimer has at least forwarded me his manifesto, received 29th August, but Mr. Bale did not receive the courtesy of a copy. Like Mr. Fraser, Mr. Lorimer seems very concerned that the Study was planned to be completed at what seems to me to be a most appropriate time.

Looking at Mr. Lorimer's manifesto and a copy of Mr. Fraser's, (sent to me by a friend), it is very hard to know what they would have found to write about without this Study before them. It is very significant that neither of them make any comment on my clearly stated policy and my clearly defined suggestions for implementing that policy. Do they propose to get themselves elected and then use my policy? Are they capable of implementing it if they can see no merit in the most comprehensive and valuable assessment ever placed before our industry?

Mr. Lorimer has of course written himself up as YOUR PROVEN AND TRUSTED REPRESENTATIVE. I have worked on the Authority with both Mr. Fraser and Mr. Lorimer and you have my assurance that you can trust them both to continue rendering the same type of service (?) in the future as they have rendered in the past. You also have my assurance that when they show more enthusiasm in collecting dollars for the Industry and less enthusiasm in collecting votes for themselves, or getting themselves on heaven knows how many Committees, it will be plenty soon enough to entrust to either of them the responsibility of running your business. If you decide to elect me, you are still stuck with one of them. I cannot see that it matters which one, so I have run a line through both their names on the voting paper. The voting paper does not make it clear that this is a valid procedure, but it should.

My opponents seem to be depending on the technique used in the "Kimpton round" to break down any constructive proposals that would lift the industry out of the rut in which they recline on a substantial honorarium. They make no proposals, but Mr. Lorimer, after six years in office promises to "consider" in October, if you elect him now.

I do not doubt that they are both completely unaware of new major problems the Industry is likely to face in the near future. At the end of July I wrote for the Journal that, from information at my disposal, the Australian bookkeepers are bound to experience the worst setback in the history of their industry and that I felt we may be affected. Enclosed is a copy of an extract from "The Financial Times" written on the 10th August 1967, and recently received from London.

If any electors really believe Mr Fraser's apparent suggestion that I have the strength to push Massey University around, they should block vote for me. I would be just the Hercules the Industry needs right now.

Mr Fraser's statement that Mr Bale is of Havelock North is not correct, as the electoral roll will show. I had never met Mr Bale before the industry had declared its interest in a Massey Study. Mr Bale's parents live in Havelock North, but to the best of my knowledge I have never met them either.

It would not be wise for the Industry to believe that I try to push my fellow bookkeepers around. For instance, Mr Lorimer appears qualified for 30 votes on behalf of his Company as shown on the original roll made available for inspection. On the Supplementary Roll, which is not generally available for inspection, we now find that Mr Lorimer qualifies for 30 more votes on his own behalf. If I had used the same tactics I would have won the last election, but I do not think a candidate should use multiple voting to elect himself. I will cast 30 votes for Arataki Apiaries. No other votes will be used, although my Company has had a total production of between 400 tons and 500 tons of honey over the last two years. The matter of HOW we win is still important. Without recognition of this fact the industry can never win.

Mr Fraser, before he reaches the half way mark in his statement, writes "Finally, I would like to say a word about the marketing study made at Massey University by a Mr Bale of Havelock North and financed by Arataki Apiaries, and which according to Mr Berry's advertisement in the August "Bookkeeper" he intends to use as the basis of his policy statement". This is also not correct. My Journal statement reads "my election manifesto will be based on a policy of reducing marketing costs and achieving an economic price for honey at the point of extraction". The need for this policy was sticking out a mile and what I wanted from the Massey Study was a lead on how this policy could best be applied. I made use of that lead. I often seek professional advice much of which I pay for and some of which I accept.

Mr Fraser states "In a letter ~~to~~ the Authority, Mr Bale regrets that this 'deadline' for publication did not permit a check of his facts."

This is also not correct, as what Mr Bale really said in his courtesy letter to the General Manager was:
"I regret that owing to the deadline for completion being so close I was unable to discuss the contents of this Study with you before it was printed. However I trust it is factually correct and if you would like to discuss any aspect of it with me I shall be happy to do so".
Mr Bale's reference to "factually correct" related to the alternative marketing policies which he put forward, and certainly not to the facts upon which his conclusions were based. If Mr Fraser had said "permit a check of his facts by the Authority or by Mr Gosse", the whole sense of his statement would have been altered and could have been related to the truth.

Great emphasis is placed by my opponents upon Mr Bale's apparent "error" in assessing depreciation on plant and buildings at 10%. The calculations on page 37 are made to illustrate the relative difference in costs between the Authority and a substantial private packer, the actual depreciation rate used being only of academic interest. Whether 10% or 1% had been used in the calculations, the relative relationship between the Authority and the packer would of course have remained the same.

N.Z. HONEY MARKETING AUTHORITY

1967 ELECTION

Fellow Beekeepers:

In again offering my services to the industry as a producer representative on the N.Z. Honey Marketing Authority I would remind electors of my basic policy -

TO PUT MORE MONEY IN THE POCKETS OF NEW ZEALAND PRODUCERS.

The beekeeping industry in New Zealand is sick. Instead of production increasing and returns to beekeepers improving, the national honey output is declining and returns falling. And production will continue to decline unless the financial returns from beekeeping are made attractive enough to encourage expansion of hive holdings and improved production methods. The General Manager of the Authority is to be congratulated on his realistic appraisal of the industry's difficulties in the May "Journal".

WHY IS BEEKEEPING ON THE DECLINE?

We are all well aware of the answer - because the in-tank value of the honey which we produce is too low.

There is no escaping the fact that the activities of the H.M.A. dominate the beekeeping industry. The in-tank value of honey in New Zealand is dictated by the H.M.A. pay-out price. Unless and until the H.M.A. lifts its pay-out, or until some alternative to the present setup is devised, we cannot hope for an improvement in the economics of our industry.

WHY IS THE H.M.A. PAY-OUT SO LOW?

I am satisfied that the pay-out is well below what could and should be achieved.

Factors which contribute to the low return include:

1. The failure of the H.M.A. to pursue the most economic channels for the sale of our exports.
2. The excessive costs incurred by the H.M.A. in relation to the amount of honey which it handles.
3. The unnecessary costs incurred in the administration of the Authority's affairs.

WHAT SHOULD THE H.M.A.'s FUNCTION BE?

I have always recognised that the Authority has a place in the beekeeping industry.

I consider that the Authority should continue to regulate exports in the same manner that it now regulates comb honey exports, thus ensuring that:

- (a) New Zealand honey is not offered on export markets at out prices.
- (b) No honey is exported in a condition that will damage the name of the New Zealand product.
- (c) Sufficient honey is retained in New Zealand to promote orderly marketing and to ensure that no grounds exist for imports.

Under this form of H.M.A. control, the direct export of comb honey from producers to buyers has proved particularly successful. This is evidenced by the fact that comb honey exports during the past five years show an increase of 500% over the previous five, and at substantially higher prices.

The H.M.A. renders a service to the industry in providing an assured outlet for honey which the producer does not wish to pack or sell to another packer. There is no need however for the Authority to provide elaborate and costly packing facilities to handle this comparatively small quantity of honey. Why not operate a system of regional packing by tender, as suggested in the Massey University's study of the industry?

WHAT WILL I DO IF ELECTED?

I shall use my best endeavours to achieve my basic objective - better returns for honey producers. With this in mind I will propose:

1. That packing at Auckland for domestic markets be phased out over a period in favour of more economic procedures such as packing by tender.
2. That the Authority's property and plant in Auckland be disposed of as soon as a satisfactory sale can be negotiated. Substantial savings in interest and other overheads will thus be achieved.
3. That the Authority cease to physically handle exports as soon as the present commitment can be terminated, in favour of the procedure I have outlined.
4. That a substantial cut be made in the honoraria being paid to Authority members, to reduce payments to a level which can be justified by the time and responsibility involved.
5. I will oppose any suggestion that the H.M.A. retain packing plant to supply retail packs to overseas markets, because:
 - (a) The volume would be insufficient to justify the overheads.
 - (b) The high cost of New Zealand containers compared with those made in the United Kingdom would place us at an immediate disadvantage.

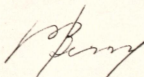
- (c) The surplus honey available for export to such a market will fluctuate so greatly as to make continuity of supply impracticable.
- (d) The freight costs on packed lines are too high.
- (e) The honey would deteriorate in quality during the long delay between packing and consumption.

If elected I will endeavour to have applied by the H.M.A. the same standards of business that I have encouraged in the development of my own Company. I will in the future, as in the past, use my best endeavours to see that honey producers are not penalised by the effects of allergic guinea pigs, erring Ministers or affluent agents.

In the past you have used your democratic rights to elect to the H.M.A. members whom I think you would hesitate to ask to operate your own individual businesses, but whom you apparently felt had the necessary qualifications to operate the collective business of all producers.

I have had no experience in kissing electors' babies but I do know how to market honey profitably - for you as well as for my own company.

To achieve this I must have not only your vote, but also active support in a campaign to break down the barriers of both business incompetence and political humbug that have for too long hindered the progress of beekeeping in New Zealand.



Havelock North,
18th August, 1967.

Percy Berry.

With this policy statement I enclose a report on a study of the marketing of New Zealand honey, undertaken by Massey University. This study should make a very real contribution towards a better understanding of the problems facing our industry today.

On page 58 of this study Mr. Bale rightly draws attention to an error I made in "Recorded Opinion 1965". However, in subsequent statements, including my 1966 election manifesto, the position has been correctly stated.

EXTRACT FROM "THE FINANCIAL TIMES"

THURSDAY AUG. 10th 1967

A BITTER TASTE OF CHINESE
HONEY FOR AUSTRALIA

Honey is flowing into Britain from China at a rate which is giving little comfort to the traditional suppliers. About 14,000 cwt. of Chinese honey - a product almost unknown in the United Kingdom a few years ago - has arrived in the first six months of this year.

The main sufferer is Australia, which last year supplied 105,000 cwt. - more than a third of Britain's record intake of 292,000 cwt from 32 countries.

According to grade, Chinese honey has been selling within a bracket of 70-80s for the kind of medium amber honey Australia offers for blending or manufacturing at around 100s a cwt.

The Australians are also feeling the draught on their home ground as well, for a leader of their honey industry recently appealed for legislation to curb Chinese imports, which, he said, were threatening beekeepers with ruin.

What makes it worse for Australia is that her honey was running into trouble even before China stepped up her exports, for Australia has not yet completely discarded the chaos she has been trying to throw off since the industry's big attempt at reform began five years ago with the formation of the Australian Honey Board, the adoption of better export standards and production methods and the mounting of a promotion campaign which has gained the product in Britain a degree of success once thought impossible.

PRICING POLICY

The Australians, however have not yet been able to produce a pricing policy to match their progress in other directions. Some misjudgement here was seen a few months ago when they pitched the value of their biggest-selling light amber honey at 120s a cwt - possibly through misinformation from individual apiarists hoping to win more by feigning shortages - when comparable Argentinian honey was available for 85s a cwt, and Mexican for 95s. - 100s.

Since then, the Australian minimum price for light amber has been reduced to 117s in early July and to 112s. 6d. at the end of the same month, and, although producers say they need at least 110s. a cwt for a reasonable return, they may have to do with less before matters improve.

Argentinian prices on the other hand, have been firming as the delivery season comes to an end, rising the past month or so by about £10 a ton. Mexican honey, a close alternative to Australian, is undergoing a steady long-term rise in quantity, quality and price. After climbing steeply, imports of Canadian prepacked honey reached a peak in 1965 and have levelled off at about 800 tons.

In the end, the Chinese and other challenges currently disturbing the Australian honey producers may be a blessing by hastening price stability and the process of upgrading their honey so that a higher proportion of it rises above the range where this kind of competition is important. There is some speculation that some of the lower Australian grades may be dropped, leaving them to Chinese.

In the long-term it looks as though the Australian producers might secure the kind of price levels they want, for the British honey appetite has begun to grow after many years of being static - a trend confirmed by the import figures for the first half of this year - and importers are buying with more confidence than ever before.

Another source of encouragement is the proliferation of new uses for honey - cereal baby foods, and the like, from grades where competition is strongest, for the new British upswing applies to both table and factory.

Meanwhile Australian, Argentinian and Mexican producers can all be thankful that Chinese honey, because of a strange incompatibility, is unsuitable for blending.