

# Honey-selling body 'should be disbanded'

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Mr Percy Berry, Hawke's Bay apiarist and longtime critic of the New Zealand Honey Marketing Authority of which he was once a member, believes the authority has outlived its usefulness and should be disbanded.

Mr Berry's criticism of the authority has been directed at its policy of allowing one English firm sole rights to market its honey in Britain and Europe.

Now, he says, he has discovered that this firm is a majority shareholder in another honey-marketing firm, and is thus in a position to "sell its own honey to itself at a price determined by itself."

Today Mr Berry recalled that the firm of Kimpton Brothers, London, had been appointed sole agents for the New Zealand Honey Marketing Authority in England and Europe.

He had fought this arrangement and contested a seat on the authority on a platform of exposing what he believed to be serious weaknesses in the selling system.

## NEW AGREEMENT

Last year, said Mr Berry, the marketing authority gave notice that it would terminate the sole agency contract of Kimpton Brothers at the end of this year.

"Now the chairman of the authority, Mr R. Poole, has told me that the authority

has been negotiating a new sole-agency agreement with Kimptons to continue after 1971, with only minor amendments to the original agreement," Mr Berry said.

"My inquiries have revealed that a major English buyer, packer, and distributor of New Zealand honey in the United Kingdom is a firm owned to the greatest extent by Kimpton Brothers.

"This is Manley Pure Foods Ltd which was formed early this year and which is more than half-owned by Kimptons.

## SELLS TO ITSELF

"This means that Kimptons draw a commission from New Zealand beekeepers to virtually sell to itself at a price determined by itself."

"It is my personal belief," said Mr Berry, "that the honey marketing authority has outlived its usefulness, if it ever was useful; to the New Zealand honey producers."

He said the Government, which demanded that producers make up their minds on various marketing issues, was careful not to express an opinion of its own.

Comb-honey producers who were not covered by the marketing agreement had been able to sell through free channels of trade at economic prices, but extracted honey, which was tied to the sole marketing agreement, was being sold at very uneconomic prices through closed channels.

"Single channel sale of exports lends itself to abuse, and beekeepers should examine very carefully what is happening in their industry," Mr Berry said.

He was endeavouring now to obtain the support of beekeepers and the Government for the abolition of the honey marketing authority which was quite superfluous to the needs of a small industry.