

practice it is just not possible to let hives reach a condition where they will replace their queen unless one is prepared to let them go out of production every other year in order to allow this to happen.

You ask, "Are beekeepers letting them starve at the critical time?" Usually they don't but the past season was a most difficult one and many hives were short of stores at some period. I must say, though, that the 300 hives that you mention that Mr Bartrum bought were absolutely "scratching" for stores when I saw them in mid November and yet they gathered a crop. It would seem that the darker strains do survive food shortages better but should we breed for starvation conditions? These should be the exception rather than the rule and a strain able to work with normal conditions of food supply should be the best in most seasons.

There is no doubt about it in my mind that bee breeding in New Zealand is very unsatisfactory because we have no organised approach to the matter. I will look further into the performances of queens from various sources and of different strains and let you know of any conclusion that I may reach.

Personally, I would like to see even a very modest approach made to the matter of controlled testing of queens. I feel sure that though the problem is a complicated one, some progress would soon be made towards at least finding in which direction our problems lie.

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Apiary Instructor,
Hamilton.

Yours faithfully,

Copy for your information. Letter under reply reads:

"I am writing to you to seek your advice.
Over the years we are sending queens to (I. W. Forster)
the South Island, and the results from Apiary Instructor
them never seem to be what they should.
We have had a letter from Mr Bartrum of Pleasant Point in which he states the
crop from hives requeened last autumn (150 from our breeders and 50 from his
own breeders which were not pure Italian) were a complete washout.

Formerly Mr Cloak had some and said they were not the best at production. This year we will get 30 ton from 550 hives plus winter 1,000 neucs. and have 200 boxes for feed. Others using our stock up here on bush and pumice land have done equally well using our queens exclusively. We are interested to know what the reason is for the difference, hence my writing.

We have had breeders in the past from Messrs Brays, Gumbrell, Bartrum & Glass, and have got nowhere with them. The Gumbrell and Bartrum were not pure enough, in fact some from Bartrums were nearly unworkable. The first cross from Brays have produced quite a good bee and the Glass Bros not been tried, although it does not seem to be producing better than anything we have.

We do not want to raise queens which are not going to be of any use down south. From my own finding and it seems that the majority of south bees must be not pure, and we would be better employed in raising a darker bee, which will look after themselves rather than do a starve, as an Italian would.

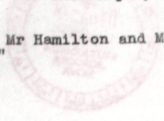
Mr Bartrum also states that from 300 hives he bought which have never been requeened, but were in the distant past from Stewart's stock, did well enough to give him a crop of honey. He does not say whether they were pure or crossbred.

I have seen other queens sent up, one from Watsons which had a poor laying pattern and bees with long stings. Also from Mr Box which were similar.

to publish
from the
press that
the
to the

could let us know just what the position is, and what bees
in the south. I came to conference especially for the remit
Bees for the South Island, and it was passed over. Are the Italians
for the south, or are the beekeepers not looking after their
to have them in condition for the crop by letting them starve at
critical time.

We have also sent bees to Mr Hamilton and Mr Mackinnon which you may
be able to use for comparison."



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(I. W. Forster)
Apiary Instructor

Superintendent,
Beekeeping Industry,
WELLINGTON.

Copy for your information.

Mr Smalley

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2/13/60

J. W. Forster

(I. W. Forster)
Apiary Instructor

obtaining all evidence from beekeepers who take a "hive
hive that produced the most honey is in my opinion. The
invariably with a queen is not pure. The high percentage
as was said based from the

30 May 1960

Mr F. Bortrum,
Pleasant Point,
~~PO BOX 100, CAMBRIDGE.~~

Dear Fred,

IMPORTATION OF QUEEN BEES

The information in your letter relative to the Dadant Starline Hybrid queen bees has been considered in consultations with Mr T. Palmer-Jones, Principal Scientific Officer, Wallaceville.

Accommodation of special circumstances by imports of queen bees in the light of development overseas and risks associated with scapine disease was also discussed. It was agreed, however, that with the increasing possibility of bees affected with scapine diseases being introduced into New Zealand, all applications by beekeepers to import bees from overseas countries should be declined.

As you know the introduction of bees into New Zealand is prohibited, except with the consent of the Minister, or the Director with the authority of the Minister.

Because of the serious nature of scapine disease and its possible effect on New Zealand beekeeping, the Department of Agriculture is not prepared to accept any risk whatever where this disease is concerned and for this reason would not recommend in any circumstances the granting of permits to beekeepers to import bees from overseas.

In the circumstances I am unable to support your application as requested.

Yours sincerely,

(E. Umellie)
Superintendent Beekeeping Industry

Mr I.W. Forster,
Apiary Instructor,
~~CAMBRIDGE.~~

For your information. Letter under reply is as follows:

"After hearing the report from Mr Eastley on the 30% increase in production since they have been using Dadant Starlite Hybrids, I am endeavouring to secure an import licence to try fifty queens from Australia. Reports from Canada also reveal that production has increased sixty pounds per hive.

As Australia is completely free from scapine disease

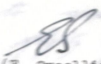
Handwritten notes:
30.5.60
off to Sir
then
filed
30.5.60

I hope you can assist me with the import licence.

Yours sincerely,

Fred Bartram

P.S. Crop has been very light here."



(E. Smellie)
Superintendent Beekeeping Industry

Mr T. Palmer-Jones,
Principal Scientific Officer,
Animal Research Station,
WALLACEVILLE.

For your information.



(E. Smellie)
Superintendent Beekeeping Industry

Asst. Horticultural Superintendent,
DUNEDIN.

For your information.



(E. Smellie)
Superintendent Beekeeping Industry

File

24 May 1960.

Mr. F. W. Bartrum,
Apiarist,
Pleasant Point,
SOUTH CANTERBURY.



Dear Fred,

I have taken a long time to reply to your letter concerning the importation of queen bees because I wished to discuss this most important issue with Eric Smaellie who has already replied to you.

First I do not think I need to stress to a practical beekeeper like yourself what a calamity it would be to the industry if acarine did appear in New Zealand.

Acarine, due no doubt to the increase in air transport, has now spread to South America being reported in the Argentine and Peru. I would expect it to be also present in Brazil, Uruguay and Mexico as these countries have little organized bee research or control. In the U.S.A. they are naturally concerned and I think it is only a matter of time before acarine gains entry there in spite of their prohibition of all bee imports.

The importation of queen bees from the U.S.A. by Australia is therefore a risk I would not permit myself. Attendant bees may be dissected and examined for acarine but the queens, which can also contract the disease, cannot be examined. The queens could be quarantined in nuclei and the bees in contact with them examined later for acarine. However, this procedure would not be foolproof and I do not favour it. If we import queens either direct from the U.S.A. or from the U.S.A. via Australia we are up against the same problem.

The tendency in countries with efficient bee research organizations is to stiffen regulations against bee imports. Recently Dr. Eckert was not granted a licence to import Kangaroo Island bees from Australia into the U.S.A.

As I saw recently for myself beekeeping conditions are totally different in Australia from ours and I would be surprised if queens that flourished there did equally well here. However, this is beside the point as I consider we should not under any circumstances allow importations of queen bees from overseas. This is the official policy of the Department of Agriculture.

I am sorry I cannot assist you but consider our policy is best for the beekeeping industry as a whole.

With best wishes.

Yours sincerely,

The Director,
Horticulture Division,
Dept. of Agriculture,
WELLINGTON.

Trevor Palmer-Jones
(TREVOR PALMER-JONES),
Principal Scientific Officer.