

PREPARING FOR THE MAIN HONEY FLOW

Seasonal Notes for the Domestic Beekeeper

CAREFUL and diligent management will be necessary during the month to ensure that the maximum of field bees are available for foraging work just before the main honey flow begins.

TO ensure that brood production is kept at its absolute maximum at this time of the year it is essential that the hive be headed by a strong, vigorous queen and has ample supplies of both stores and pollen.

The amount of surplus honey gained each season is governed largely by the production of brood in the hive 6 to 8 weeks before the start of the main flow.

If necessary, brood rearing may be stimulated by feeding small quantities of sugar syrup in the proportion of 2 parts of water to 1 part of sugar.

If the amount of brood in the hive is not as great as expected, the beginner sometimes has the impression that the queen is failing. Although queens often fail at this important period of the year, this is not always the reason for the lack of brood. A common cause in domestic apiaries is that combs are full of pollen and honey, thus preventing the queen from laying. Although laying room can be given by providing an additional super and lifting the combs of honey out of the brood nest and replacing them with foundation and empty combs, care should be taken to see that the brood is not separated to any great extent, as a sudden change in weather may cause chilling of the brood and a serious setback to the colony.

If it is considered desirable, medium-strength colonies can be given added stimulation by transferring surplus frames of brood from stronger hives. In the reverse manner a weaker colony which will not build up to sufficient strength in time to catch the main honey flow may be reduced to a

nucleus, and all surplus brood used for building up other hives in the apiary. When carrying out these manipulations extreme care should be taken to ensure that all brood transferred in this manner is taken from disease-free hives.

Supering

If foundation is used in supers, the endeavour should be to alternate with combs of honey or drawn combs, but if this is not possible, it is most desirable that there be 10 foundation frames in the super. The beekeeper should realise that bees, to secrete wax, must cluster for heat and they are enabled to do this much more readily when the frames are closer together. If the flow has started, one frame can be withdrawn when all the foundation comb has been drawn out by the bees.

When colonies are in need of further room to provide additional storage space they should be given one super at a time. If two or more supers are added, there is a possibility of honey being stored in a few frames in each box, thus causing more work for the beekeeper.

To prevent the queen laying in the supers, an effective check is sometimes obtained by placing in the super directly above the brood nest combs



[Rendell's Photo Service photo.]
Placing the super in the correct position above the queen excluder.

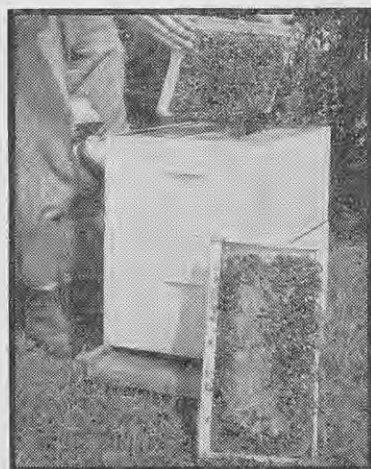
filled with honey. However, this method is not altogether reliable and it is therefore advisable to make use of a good queen excluder.

In many districts there is a break in the nectar flow this month, and if hives are full of brood, stores are rapidly used; unless the stores are watched carefully, there is a great danger of the bees dying from starvation.

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METEOROLOGICAL RECORDS FOR SEPTEMBER

Station	Height of station above M.S.L. (ft.)	Air temperatures in degrees (Fahrenheit)				Rainfall in inches				Bright sunshine hours	
		Approx. mean	Difference from normal	Absolute maximum and minimum		Total fall	No. of days of rain	Difference from normal	Maximum fall		
				Maximum	Minimum				Amount		Date
Kerikeri	201	53.5	+ 1.1	67.0	38.5	2.59	11	—	0.44	12	176.6
Auckland	160	55.0	+ 0.5	65.6	40.8	2.04	14	— 1.94	0.60	18	154.1
Tauranga	10	52.4	+ 0.0	67.0	32.9	4.56	13	+ 0.37	2.31	18	200.5
Ruakura	131	50.2	— 1.3	66.8	27.8	1.22	10	+ 2.60	0.38	16	164.4
Rotorua	980	49.6	+ 0.1	65.0	26.0	5.29	10	+ 0.40	3.17	18	180.0
Gisborne	12	51.4	— 0.7	68.8	32.0	2.22	11	— 0.36	0.95	13	192.1
New Plymouth ..	160	51.0	— 0.5	64.2	31.9	3.25	18	— 1.73	0.68	17	148.7
Napier	5	51.6	— 0.2	66.8	30.2	1.03	6	— 0.98	0.39	19	208.7
Taihape	2157	45.4	— 0.4	59.9	25.7	2.40	17	— 0.76	0.40	18	—
Wanganui	72	50.7	— 0.8	66.2	33.0	1.60	16	— 1.27	0.46	19	155.0
Palmerston North	110	50.0	— 0.3	65.5	29.8	1.42	13	— 1.66	0.40	26	154.7
Waingawa	350	48.6	— 0.7	67.7	25.5	1.52	12	— 1.96	0.63	19	195.6
Wellington	415	49.9	— 0.2	63.8	34.6	2.01	12	— 1.64	0.47	8	201.4
Nelson	24	50.6	+ 0.3	66.3	31.3	1.12	11	— 2.36	0.28	11	203.7
Blenheim	12	50.0	— 0.5	68.4	28.2	0.77	5	— 1.55	0.27	16	212.9
Hokitika	12	46.8	— 1.3	59.8	29.9	6.12	14	— 2.90	1.18	7	161.3
Hanmer Springs ..	1225	46.2	+ 0.3	70.0	21.0	1.25	9	— 3.34	0.37	13	184.8
Christchurch .. .	22	48.6	— 0.1	72.5	25.3	0.29	5	— 1.72	0.18	29	192.1
Ashburton	323	48.1	+ 1.1	76.8	25.0	0.61	7	— 1.95	0.19	1	189.0
Timaru	56	47.4	— 0.4	71.2	25.4	0.17	2	— 1.74	0.14	12	175.2
Alexandra	520	47.9	+ 1.1	71.8	27.0	0.24	5	— 0.57	0.12	18	193.4
Taiari	80	46.4	— 1.3	75.7	25.9	1.02	13	— 1.05	0.37	11	—
Invercargill .. .	32	45.8	— 1.1	64.0	26.0	3.13	17	— 0.30	0.85	27	132.9



[Rendell's Photo Service photo.]
Method of examining interior of a hive.