

Even though the bees are active at this time of the year gathering nectar and pollen, they are not safe in regard to stores, for it is at this time that there is the greatest danger of starvation. The hive is stimulated by the early flow, brood rearing is rapidly increased, and heavy inroads are made into stores. The colony will therefore require 30lb. of honey or six full combs.

If the beekeeper does not have any frames of honey on hand for feeding, a solution of sugar syrup is a convenient substitute. On no account should honey be fed to bees unless there is certainty that it has come from disease-free hives.

A sugar syrup is prepared by mixing one part of sugar to one of water by volume. The sugar will dissolve readily in hot water and the syrup should be fed to the bees when it is lukewarm. A simple type of feeder to use is a 5lb. honey tin with a few small nail holes punched through the lid. The tin is reversed over a hole cut in the hive mat. An empty super is placed on the hive to provide space for the tin. The syrup should be fed to the bees as late in the day as possible.

### Condition of the Queen

From now on the queen is called on to lay sufficient eggs not only to maintain the colony strength but to increase it so that by the time the main honey flow is about to begin the hive will have reached maximum strength. If the queen fails at this stage, as old queens often do, any surplus honey which may have been gathered will now be lost.

If there is no brood or eggs at this time, it may be assumed that the hive is queenless. No worker brood but plenty of drone brood would indicate that the hive has a drone layer or laying workers. A queen should be procured without delay or the hive put on top of a colony that has a queen.



Equipment for handling bees consists of a cork topee hat, a wire bee veil, gloves, cuffs, a smoker, and a hive tool.

The two hives should be separated by a sheet of newspaper. When this has been gnawed through the bees will unite peacefully.

The condition of the queen may be gauged by examining the frames of brood. A good queen will have her brood laid in a compact group, whereas a poor queen lays patchy brood.

### Disease

A careful watch should be kept on the brood. If the cappings over the brood cells are all even in colour, well rounded, and compact, the brood may be considered clean. Should American foul-brood (*Bacillus larvae*) be present, some of the cappings will be

darker in colour than those of the surrounding brood and some sunken or punctured. When a doubtful cell is found the capping should be removed. If the cell is healthy, the white larva or the head of the bee will be seen, but if there is a dark mass lying in the cell, a match stick or twig should be inserted into it, twisted, and withdrawn. If the mass adheres to the stick and may be roped out for a short way, foul-brood is indicated.

### Bulletins for the Beekeeper

#### Free Bulletin

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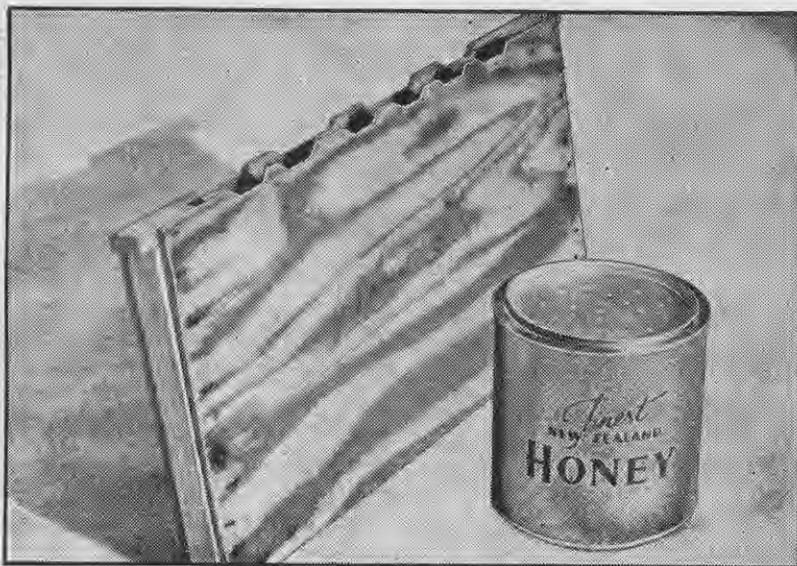
242 Bee Diseases

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Left—A division-board feeder. Right—A handy feeder made from a 5lb. honey tin.

When this disease is discovered the hive should be closed. The hive tool should be scorched in a fire and any other equipment washed in disinfectant. Too much care cannot be taken to avoid carrying the infection to other hives.

Advice on the best way to destroy the hive should be obtained from the Apiary Instructor for the district.

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