



MAY 2009

Taranaki Beekeeping Club



What's happening in Taranaki

Greetings Fellow Beekeepers. It has been raining all day and the temperature has just managed to struggle into double figures so I guess that winter has arrived ! I have spent the whole day in the shed scraping extracted frames. It is amazing how tightly the propolis and wax sticks to the woodware, but if life is to be made a little easier next season, then it has to be done. If you are keeping the scrapings, it is advisable to keep them as separate as you can, as each is more valuable when pure. Both propolis and wax are worth saving, even if you only have a small quantity, as they both will keep for 'ever' and can be added to each scraping, until a commercial quantity is gathered or you could combine with a friend both lots of scrapings and share the results.

Remember to store those valuable combs in a cool draughty dry place to deter both the wax moth and the mice. Putting rat poison near or under the stored supers is a must as mice have a great sense of smell and when hungry they will gnaw through the wooden boxes to reach the meagre rewards within and make a terrible mess of your valuable assets. If you put rat poison in a plastic milk bottle under the hives in the field only the rodents will be poisoned not the cat, dog or hedgehogs.

Heard on the radio today that scientists are investigating the possibility of using natural predators to combat Varroa. Apparently we have some insects that will eat Varroa – but will they eat enough to stop the exponential explosion in the spring? There are pseudoscorpions in Africa that will eat Varroa but can they live and thrive in this country in the beehives and will the bees tolerate them ? Watch this space.

Next meeting will be the Honey Competition evening. Same rules as last year. Same classes. Remember that your honey looks best in clear glass jars. Good luck !

Classes will be confined to liquid honey and crystallised honey as few people now are producing comb honey due to the scare regarding Tutin poisoning.

Also just a forewarning that the AGM will take place in June so please think of who could manage to keep the Club on an even keel for another year. All positions are up for grabs ! I have tentatively arranged to hold it at the Uruti Honey Extraction Plant where hopefully we may also be lucky enough to get a look through a modern extraction plant, one that is capable of handling Manuka honey.



Next club meeting

18th MAY 2009

In the PLUNKET ROOMS

6.30pm

Next to New World Supermarket

Third Monday of every month

A LITTLE BEEWAX INFO

Beeswax is a byproduct of honey production. It makes wonderful lip balms, hand lotions, hand creams, moisturizers, in cosmetics, wood finishes, waxes, leather polishes; waterproofing products, and dental molds.

It is impervious to water and unaffected by mildew. It has a melting point of 143 to 148 degrees F. and should only be heated using a double boiler as it is flammable when subjected to fire and flames. It is pliable at 100 degrees F.

Beeswax is produced by the (female) worker honeybees. The wax is secreted from wax glands on the underside of the bee's abdomen and is molded into six-sided cells which are filled with honey, then capped with more wax. When honey is harvested, the top layer of wax that covers the cells, the cappings, must be removed from each hexagonal-shaped cell.

Bees use their wax to "glue" together the wooden frames in their hive, and that must be scraped off so the frames can be separated. The beeswax, which contains some honey, bee parts, and other impurities, must be melted and filtered or strained.

Most beeswax is gold or yellow but can also be in shades of orange, brown, etc. The color of the wax is in most part determined by the type of plants the bees collect nectar from. Beeswax has a delightful, light fragrance of honey, flower nectar and pollen.

Beeswax makes superior, slow burning candles. Beeswax burns more beautifully than any other wax. It exudes a faint, natural fragrance of honey and pollen. When candles are made with the proper size of wicking, they are smokeless, dripleless, and burn with a bright flame.

If you wonder why beeswax is so expensive, consider this: It has been estimated that bees must fly 150,000 miles to produce one pound of wax. Bees must eat about six pounds of honey to secrete a pound of wax. For every 100 pounds of honey a beekeeper harvests, only one to two pounds of beeswax are produced.

Manuka honey: important conditions identified

Monday, 4 May 2009, 3:10 pm

Press Release: Plant and Food Research

Power of manuka honey

Research identifies conditions important for antimicrobial properties

Auckland, New Zealand. 4th May 2009 Research has identified what makes manuka honey good for treating and preventing bacterial infections.

Studies at Plant & Food Research have shown that manuka honey, a high value honey made by bees who feed predominantly from flowers of the tea tree bush, has a specific mixture of compounds which results in its antimicrobial properties. The research also showed that the activity of this antimicrobial mixture, which stops bacteria from growing and halts the development of infection, depends on the oxygen levels and acidity of its surroundings.

The research, partly funded by the Foundation of Research Science and Technology, is being conducted with industry partner Comvita, who are investigating the use of manuka honey as a natural ingredient for foods with added health benefits.

In addition, trials tested the safety of manuka honey in humans, and it was shown to have no deleterious effects.

"Manuka honey is known to be an effective antimicrobial, and this research is aiming to understand what controls these properties and how they could be utilised in foods," says scientist Douglas Rosendale. "For example, we've shown that, when treating stomach bacterial infection, the antimicrobial activity of the honey does not affect the natural balance in the gut. We also know that the antimicrobial compounds are mostly active under certain environmental conditions, so we can assume that eating natural manuka honey will likely be effective in controlling bacterial infection in the stomach, but will probably show less activity in the lower gut where concentrations will be lower and there is less oxygen."

"Comvita products provide added health benefits derived from New Zealand's natural fauna," says Ralf Schlothauer, Comvita's General Manager Technical. "By understanding the properties and safety of substances like manuka honey, known to have antimicrobial qualities, we can responsibly harness the power of nature and develop products that will enable people to live healthier lives."

Plant & Food Research and Comvita are also investigating properties of manuka honey which may be useful in wound healing.

ENDS

Apitherapy News

The Internet's Best Source of Information About the Medicinal Use of Bee Products

<http://apitherapy.blogspot.com/search/label/Apitherapy%20and%20Beekeeping>

Vaseline Type Jelly

This makes a great vaseline type jelly.

1 ounce (weight) beeswax
1/2 cup baby oil

Melt the beeswax in a microwave or a double boiler. Stir in the baby oil.

Remove the mixture from the heat and stir until cool.



HAND CREAM

2 ounces beeswax
1 cup sweet almond oil
1 cup water
10 drops essential oil (if desired, for fragrance)
Heat beeswax and sweet almond oil until the wax melts. In another container, heat water until warm. Both mixtures should be warm, but not so hot as to be uncomfortable to the touch.

Place warm water in a blender. Cover the blender, leaving open the small opening in the cover. With the blender running on high speed, slowly pour in the beeswax-oil mixture in a thin stream. When most of the oil has been added, the mixture should begin to thicken.

At this point, add the essential oil. Continue to add oil and blend until the mixture is sufficiently thickened. Turn off the blender. You should have a thick cream. Spoon into salve jars or metal tins.

Club Contacts

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