



B-PLUS

BEEKEEPING REPORT FROM MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

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NOSEMA

Nosema disease is maybe one of the most insidious of all the maladies that affect bees. If the bees were killed or the colony died outright then we would be alarmed. As it is Nosema just keeps on reducing honey yields and causing winter losses -losses that are probably not recognized for the real culprit. It may be hard to give absolute numbers to the amount of winter kill that is directly attributable to Nosema but it must be substantial. And for the effect on honey yield here is a quote from John Smith in **The New Zealand Beekeeper**: "What about the beekeeper who worries over one hive of American Foulbrood when his other hives have a Nosema count of over 10 million spores per bee and cost him more per year than the loss of one hive! Are our priorities right: is American Foulbrood the most important disease in New Zealand or should we take more notice of Nosema which costs us hundreds of tonnes of honey a year?" The feeding of fumagillin syrup (Fumadil-B or Nosema-X) in the fall will reduce the amount of disease and cut down on dysentery and early death of the bees. This should greatly help reduce winter loss.

I reported in an earlier issue of B-Plus that Dr. Woyke, in Poland, found that spring feeding of fumagillin increased honey production as much as 58%. As I also said in the last issue, that the removal of old combs or the fumigation of the combs with ethylene oxide (ETO) also helps reduce the amount of Nosema found in the colony. I am becoming more and more convinced that we do not do enough recycling of old combs. It would probably help us make a decision to do more culling of combs if the price of beeswax was just a little higher. However, there is evidence that the increase in honey yield may more than offset the cost of the replacement. A good control program for nosema make take a couple of years to implement completely. If you feed EVERY colony in a given year you might be able to lessen the effects of the parasite. Otherwise several feedings might be necessary. Total elimination of the disease might be impossible, so either continued feeding or careful monitoring of the disease may be necessary. I would suggest that some of the larger beekeepers should select some of their worst wintering yards and try to see if control of nosema will not improve their record.

National Honey Board Chosen

The National Honey Committee, those representatives that came from 39 of the 50 states, elected a National Honey Board on August 15-16, 1986. Now the real action can begin! This 13- member Board will be responsible for selecting the staff, or promotional organization, to operate the national honey

advertising campaign. It may be a little while for the staff to get organized and any effective program to get underway. A real concern is that we now sit back and let "them" do it. I suspect we need to keep up a real effort to maintain all the promotion we have been doing, even though it may have been small, because if we all now drop back our advertising then the overall effect will be approximately the same. Additionally, now may be the time to increase your own advertising since there should be greater demand for honey, and the first one to make the sale may be the beekeeper that gets the new, and hopefully the repeat customers.