

MARKETING OF HONEY

BEEKEEPERS TOLD OF NEW PLAN

SCHEME TO INCREASE CONSUMPTION

STATE ASSUMES CONTROL OF EXPORT TRADE

[THE PRESS Special Service.]

TIMARU, June 1.

New proposals for the grading and marketing of honey were put forward and endorsed at the annual conference of the National Beekeepers' Association at Timaru yesterday afternoon. An outline of the new scheme was given by the chairman and Government representative on the Honey Control Board (Mr W. Nelson), and were supplemented by Mr A. H. Honeyfield, of the Internal Marketing Department.

The scheme involves the following main points:—

A comprehensive advertising plan to popularise honey

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to popularise honey.

A stamp system to secure funds for advertising.

Handing of export trade to Internal Marketing Department.

Readjustment of liabilities of Honey Control Board.

After giving a long survey of the efforts of the producers to obtain adequate marketing facilities, Mr Nelson said:

"There remains, however, still much to be done before the marketing system favoured by the producers is established in its entirety. The most pressing problem is that of unrestricted competitive selling by individual producers against the Internal Marketing Department. Producers have just experienced a season of plenty, and it can hardly be disputed that the improved and stabilised conditions of the market have only been made possible by reason of the operations of the Internal Marketing Department. The non-supplier to the department is therefore obtaining the shelter of the Marketing Department's protection without any cost to himself. The board is unanimously of the opinion that prompt measures should be adopted to effectively deal with this unsatisfactory position. The board considers it to be unreasonable to expect the Internal Marketing Division over a period of successively good producing seasons to maintain a payable price to producers without risk of too great a carry-over of honey stocks.

Food Value of Honey

"With a view to obtaining fresh outlets for our honey and generally increasing its consumption on the local market, the board considers that a well-directed advertising campaign emphasising the food value of our product should be undertaken by the Internal Marketing Division with the least possible delay. The board, however, is emphatic that the cost of this advertising should be spread over all the commercially produced honey and should on no account be loaded solely on to the honey handled by the Marketing Division. The board is of the opinion that all producers selling outside the division should be required to affix a stamp on containers of honey on a basis of $\frac{1}{2}$ lb per lb. These stamps should be procurable from the Marketing Division or its agents, and used principally for advertising. The stamps are not intended to denote the grade.

"Provided the stamp system is accepted, the board is rather adverse to any restrictions on the individual packer as it is feared that any move in this direction would involve the division in the responsibility of being obliged to accept from the producers honey they were unable to sell at the price fixed. Acceptance of such honey would load the division with a great variety of retail packages and brands that could only be sold at a heavy discount under the price quoted for the division's standard brands, and further the department's honey section representative would not appreciate handling other than the department's own guaranteed standard lines."

Problem of Variety

Dealing with the problem involved in handling the great variety of New Zealand honeys, Mr Nelson said, "The board feels that it would be extremely undesirable to establish marketing regulations that would virtually mean putting producers of that class of honey out of business. It should be mentioned that the volume of honey in this category is by no means great enough to discount the principal of the central depot handling all commercially produced honey, but there is enough of it to require special consideration being given to its disposal and to those who produce it.

"To facilitate the co-ordination of export and local marketing along the lines I have indicated, the board has formally passed over its export trading to the Internal Marketing Division. In future the board will be responsible to the Minister for Marketing and will function as an advisory body to the Internal Marketing Division on all matters relating to the marketing of honey. The board will assist the Marketing Division with any technical advice in its possession that may be helpful in the construction of plant, and in further improving the methods of handling and processing all honey that comes under the control of the Internal Marketing Division.

Liabilities of Board

"The board's indebtedness to the Treasury now stands at £5142 9s 2d. It was the intention of the late board to pay £1500 of this amount, but in view of the position arising from the

VIEW OF THE POSITION ARISING FROM THE unexpected difficulties of last season, it was found that the payment of this sum would tax unfairly the small amount of honey sent forward by suppliers. The board therefore is applying to the Treasury to have this repayment now due together with a substantial portion of the amount still owing written off, or if that is not possible to have the repayments spread over a longer period of years.

"Of the many advantages that have already become evident as a result of the change over, are the following:

"(1) Unified control over both export and local market, ensuring adequate supplies of honey to the best market offering.

"(2) Prompt payment to producers of a substantial portion of the honey's market full value.

"(3) Better provisions for handling and packing -thus reducing costs.

"(4) In better position to increase consumption of honey by suitable publicity.

"(5) More stable marketing organisation enabling long range planning.

"(6) Better able to co-ordinate to the interests of producers and consumers."