

of so valuable and practical a character as to render its transfer to our columns of some value to our readers:

Bees for Money.

BY R. C. AIKINS.

In any line of business the question comes up, Does it pay? Our business is no exception. The problem certainly is, how to make it pay?

In all common affairs, there is a strife to excel, both in producing the best and the most of it, and, in order to draw trade from others, produce the cheapest.

Practically, there is but one thing that will advance prices; that is the law of supply and demand. If the producer has not enough to supply the demand, prices rise. Likewise, when the supply is greater than the demand, prices fall.

It is common custom to do business on borrowed capital, directly or indirectly. As a result of this, mortgages are foreclosed; merchants urge collections; crops are prematurely sold, and prices suffer. Prices seldom, if ever, go higher than the law of supply and demand brings them, while because of the afore-mentioned causes our product often goes lower than supply and demand would require.

The government helps the sugar manufacturers by a bounty, and it is said cheapens sugar. If sugar be cheapened, other sweets suffer more or less by a reduction in price. Cheap sugar means that more sugar syrup will be used and less high-priced honey.

Not many years ago I produced honey where I could sell comb at 15 and extracted at 12½ cents. The small producer with plenty of prosperous neighbors who like honey, but do not keep bees, can do so yet.

Let us figure a little. We will suppose a city of 5,000 inhabitants; allowing five individuals to a family, we have 1000 families. If each family buys 100 pounds of honey, the city will consume 100,000 pounds. Twenty apiarists, with 100 colonies each, at 50 pounds per colony, would supply the city.

It is commonly estimated that one man cannot care for more than 100 colonies. One hundred colonies at 50 pounds per colony gives us 5000 pounds. This, at 10 cents per pound, would bring \$500. How much will it cost me to raise this honey?

To produce 5000 pounds we will use about—

6000 sections @ \$3 50 per thousand.	\$ 21 00
Foundation for 50th @ 50c.....	25 00
Shipping cases (about 1c. per lb) for 5000 lb.....	50 00
Total.....	\$ 96 00

INVESTMENT.

100 colonies bees @ \$4.....	\$400 00
Shop and honey house.....	200 00
Tools and fixtures.....	100 00

Total.....	\$700 00
Ten per cent interest on \$700.....	\$70 00
Ten per cent for wear and tear....	70 00
Taxes on \$700 (¼ val.) at 3 per cent	10 50
Add cost of supplies above.....	96 00

Total.....\$246 50

This deducted from the \$500 received for the crop leaves \$253.50 to pay the labor.

I have shown how a city of 5000 inhabitants, consuming 20 pounds of honey per head, would employ 20 apiarists with 100 colonies of bees each, yielding 50 pounds per colony and 10 cents per pound for the honey, leaves the apiarist \$253.50 to live on. But there is not a city that consumes one-quarter that much honey per capita. So the bulk of this honey must go on the general market. Then too, 50 pounds per colony is more than the average yield with the average apiarist, and 10 cents per pound is more than the average net price when shipped on the general market.

Now let us see what is necessary to make money by raising honey. Let us say that the apiarist will need \$500 per year to live on; that he can handle 200 colonies of bees; that this number of colonies will require an investment of \$1500, besides the necessary residence property, ground to do business on, at, say \$1000—a total investment of \$2500.

STATEMENT.

The apiarist's living taxes on investment of \$2500, at one-half valuation and 3 per cent tax, \$37.50; 10 per cent interest, \$250; to keep up wear and tear \$250—a total of \$130.50—that must be made before the apiarist is one cent ahead.

No doubt many will say that 20 per cent for interest and wear and tear is too much. But we must not forget that bees and bee fixtures are very perishable property and need constant additions to keep in good shape. Also, it is a rare thing that such property can be sold at first cost.

The apiarist with 200 colonies, and an average yield per colony of 50 pounds at 10 cents per pound, as per above calculations, has \$462.50 for a living. But the average apiarist does not, will not, and cannot do it.

We do not deny that money can be and is made with bees. But to do so one must learn the business. The farmer beekeeper cannot make money this way. While the novice is climbing up, the expert is still advancing, and so long as the supply is sufficient to fill the demand, or more, none but the expert apiarist will make money out of bees.