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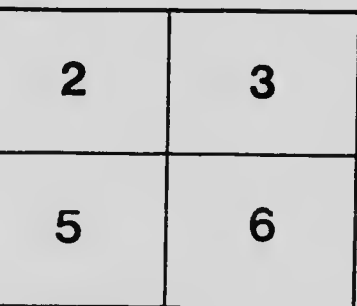
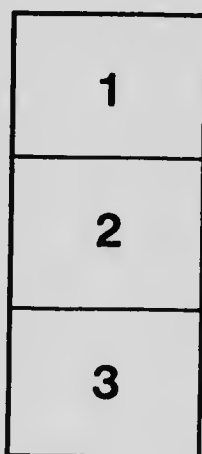
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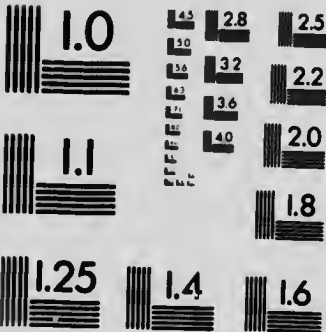
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PROVINCE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE (HORTICULTURAL BRANCH).

Honey Production in British Columbia Season of 1915.

By F. DUNDAS TODD, FOUL-BROOD INSPECTOR.

ON the first day of October, 1915, there were listed on the records of the Department of Agriculture the names of 1,100 bee-keepers in the Province. From all of them there was requested a honey-crop report for the season, and 326 responded. Briefly stated, we get the following result:—

Year.	Colonies in April.	Crop.	Average per Hive.
1915	2,417	Lib. 57,245	Lib. 23

Assuming that those reporting are fairly representative bee-keepers, a little calculation will show that the total honey-crop of the Province in 1915 was probably about 100 tons.

By districts, the reports are as follows:—

REPORT OF HONEY-CROP BY DISTRICTS FOR 1915.

District.	Bee-keepers on List.	Bee-keepers reporting.	Hives reported.	Crop reported.	Average per Hive.
Burnaby	68	24	81	Lib. 2,950	Lib. 36
Chilliwack	70	18	156	4,081	30
Coquitlam	6	2	30	748	24
Delta	57	6	87	3,625	41
Dewdney	9	...	...	...	...
Howe Sound	14	...	...	...	...
Pemberton Meadows	1	1	17	1,400	82
Kent	19	...	7	110	15
Langley	35	1	71	2,551	35
Maple Ridge	15	...	38	1,798	47
Matsqui	27	5	64	2,030	31
Mission	35	5	23	535	23
Nicomen	7	3	26	1,450	55
North Vancouver	42	12	87	1,142	13
Point Grey	35	8	13	441	33
Richmond	41	8	47	1,750	37
<i>Carried forward</i>	481	111	747	25,211	...

REPORT OF HONEY-CROP BY DISTRICTS—Concluded.

District.	Bee-keepers on list.	Bee-keepers reporting.	Hives reported.	Crop reported.	Average per hive.
				lb.	lb.
<i>Brought forward....</i>	481	111	747	25,211	...
South Vancouver	67	30	273	5,173	18
Sumas	42	10	50	2,005	36
Murray	62	17	154	3,172	20
Vancouver	61	22	114	3,344	29
Comox	20	6	12	240	20
Duncan	12	4	20	307	15
Gulf Islands	22	6	39	610	15
Nanaimo	48	5	42	700	18
Victoria	56	13	60	1,434	14
Okanagan Lake	113	36	328	6,761	20
Thompson River	39	11	128	4,347	33
Arrow Lakes	28	17	100	331	3
Kootenay Lake	104	48	200	3,400	11
Totals	1,160	326	2,417	57,245	23

The oldest bee-keepers in the Province are unanimous in stating that the season of 1915 yielded the poorest honey-crop in their experience. Our oldest bee-keeper, the most successful in the Lower Fraser District, has kept bees for thirty years, and he considers his crop as being only one-third of an average, and as being the poorest in his time.

We all know how unreasonable the weather was during the spring and summer months, and so must attribute the poor crop to weather conditions. Reports in the Bee Journals indicate that the unfavourable conditions were prevalent all over the North American Continent, and that the honey-crop as a whole was much under the average.

The warm weather of April had a most extraordinary result in the bush country in Matsqui, where soft maples abound. On April 15th the writer found an average of 75 lb. a colony of delicious maple honey, all sealed in the supers, a record worthy of note, and clearly indicating the importance of strong colonies early in spring.

The most noticeable feature of the reports from the Inspector's point of view was the fact that nearly everybody had at least a little honey, a marked contrast to previous years, when a very large percentage had no crop at all. Undoubtedly our bee-keepers are becoming more skilled in their calling, and in an average season will probably surprise themselves with their success.

As nectar was scant, comb-building was practically an impossibility. The best crops consequently were got by those who had plenty of spare combs. In British Columbia we need at least thirty combs to the colony, ten to winter on, ten to increase the dimension of the brood-chamber on May 1st, and ten for the start of the honey-crop. No bee-keeper will ever have too many spare combs, and it is such seasons as 1915 that demonstrate their value. In many instances, practically the whole honey-crop was stored in one day. Where extracting combs were ready and colonies were strong, as much as 30 lb. per colony were stored in twelve hours; bee-keepers without combs got nothing.

One bee-keeper in the Wet Belt, who reported an average of 60 lb. to the colony, says that a double-walled hive with an air-space between the walls gave, as in former years, a yield just double that of the average of the other colonies. Evidently the greatest need of our bee-keepers is not to keep more bees, but to keep their present colonies better.

The writer wishes to state that, while in British Columbia we can point to very few expert bee-keepers, he considers that our average bee-keeper will compare very favourably with an equal number in any other part of the world, and that from now on honey production in the Province will progress at a very rapid pace.

Thousands of tons of nectar that at present go to waste every year on our mountain-sides and in our great valleys will soon be gathered for human food, and British Columbia will advance to the very front rank as a honey-producing region. The delicious flavour of our honey will always ensure for it a ready market once its quality is known.

The one dark spot in the field of vision is the presence of foul-brood. The outbreaks in Vancouver, Chilliwack, and Essondale have been vigorously fought all summer. In Vancouver, 10 colonies were found affected as against 34 last year; Essondale, none as against 5; Chilliwack, 18 as against 5. The increase in Chilliwack was probably due to feeding back affected honey in the open air, spreading the infection to every colony in two apiaries.

New outbreaks were discovered in Nanahuo, Salmon Arm, Rutland, and Lardeau.

All affected colonies have, as in the past, been destroyed by fire.

The rapid development of apiculture in the Province is naturally resulting in a widespread movement of colonies from one district to another, also in the importation of queens from regions outside of the Province, and it is by such movements that foul-brood is largely spread. Up to the present, practically all cases of disease have been discovered by the Inspectors, but the bee-keepers themselves must become interested in the condition of the brood-nests and examine them at least in the months of April and May, reporting at once to the Department any suspicious conditions.

Through the kindness of over a score of the biggest producers in the Province, a very creditable exhibit of British Columbia honey is now on display at the Industrial Bureau, Pender Street, Vancouver. Though the exhibit is small, the manager has staged it in a very prominent position, and has given the assurance that as soon as the bee-keepers are in a position to make it bigger, not only will the necessary space be gladly allotted, but every effort will be made to give it appropriate setting. The writer therefore hopes that every bee-keeper will keep this idea in mind and be prepared to provide a sample jar of extracted honey at the end of the season of 1916.

The honey exhibits at the various agricultural exhibitions have not been as well patronized in the past as they could have been. The Inspectors have made definite recommendations in the direction of simplifying the classes, so that every bee-keeper, even the one with only one hive, could take part. The directors of the Vancouver Exhibition are taking the matter into consideration, and it is probable that in 1916 that exhibition will have only three classes, one for twelve jars of extracted honey, any size; one for twelve sections of comb-honey; and one for an exhibit of bees and queen.

ORDERING SUPPLIES FOR 1916.

In response to the suggestion in last year's circular, most bee-keepers ordered their supplies early, and the dealers were able to handle nearly all orders promptly; in fact, in most apiaries all the needed bee-ware and foundation were on hand before the middle of April. Those who ordered later experienced considerable delay.

The colonies in the Province increase fully 25 per cent. annually, and it is a fair estimate that at least 3 tons of wax foundation are needed to take care of this increase, and in addition much is used in the betterment of existing colonies that have been neglected in the past. As every pound of this foundation comes from outside of the Province, and as it necessarily comes by freight, at least six weeks usually elapses between the placing of an order by a dealer with a manufacturer and its arrival in British Columbia. It is therefore of the utmost importance that each dealer should be informed as early in the year as possible by his customers as to how much foundation they expect to use in the course of the season.

HIVE FACTORIES AND DEALERS IN BEE SUPPLIES.

We now have three efficiently equipped hive factories in the Province, their output being satisfactory to the Inspectors. They are situated at Vancouver, New

Westminster, and Nelson. Full details with regard to these and also as to the dealers in bee supplies will be forwarded on application to the Department of Agriculture at Victoria.

BEE LITERATURE.

A.B.C. and X.Y.Z. of Bee Culture. By A. I. Root. Price \$1.50. (Published by W. Briggs, Toronto.)

How to Keep Bees. By A. B. Comstock. Price \$1. (Published by W. Briggs, Toronto.)

ISSUED BY DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, VICTORIA.

Bulletin No. 30 (2nd Edition). Guide to Bee-keeping.

Bulletin No. 42. Apiculture in British Columbia.

Circular No. 7. Honey Production in British Columbia, 1913-14.

ISSUED BY DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, OTTAWA.

Bee-keeping in Canada. By F. W. L. Shaden.

Bees, Facts About. By F. W. L. Shaden.

ISSUED BY DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, WINNIPEG.

Bulletin No. 18. Bee-keeping in Manitoba. (Very useful for beginners in the industry.)

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