

many different varieties of corn from different companies and make the research available at the end of the season. Some of the things measured are yield, dry down, and standability. I can set at home and study these results and have a good idea what to buy next year. Each time a company has a good one, the competition has to do a little better. Thus, they are always raising the stick on each other and the farmer gains. Testing honey bees is much more difficult because of their nature. I am told you must have at least five colonies in a study to prove anything and since a normal area will support only 20 hives, you are limited to testing from different companies' bees. However, if we took PA, MD, NJ, DE, NY as examples and put four yards in each state, we could test a total of 20 yards with 20 breeders' bees being compared against each other. Each breeder would have 20 hives in the study, but only one at each location.

I do not see us moving forward as an industry until we start some kind of a test-

ing program on a beekeeper's level. There is no real reason at the present for a breeder to spend money on research and development—just keep filling those cages up. I am not running down the breeders, but I think we have to start doing more and one person cannot do it by himself. This would be a wonderful way to compare different lines for mite resistance, temperament, honey production and overwintering etc. The only way I can see this happening is for several association groups to start asking for it to be done. There is grant money available for large projects like this, but you have to ask the right people to do it. In the Mid Atlantic region we have MAAREC which is made up of several universities of which P.S.U. is one of them. They would be an excellent group to oversee a project like this.

To sum up the two years of research, I learned that there is a tremendous difference in queens and we must learn to cull out at least the bottom third or better, the bottom half. New foundation didn't stop

swarming or affect the mite levels. I also inspected a lot of hives treated with Api-Life VAR or Formic Acid that were in excellent condition, so perhaps we can move away from the hard chemicals. I used Formic this fall and I haven't had bees look this good for a long time in the fall. They may all be dead next spring, but at least I feel real good about them right now and that's worth something.

I'm also writing another grant for 2006 about dividing all colonies in the spring and reuniting them back after the flow, saving only the better half of the queens. Another part will address the question of feeding in August during a normal 6 week nectar dearth.

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