



**NO1 SELLING NZ  
SEAWEED BEE  
NUTRITION**



**No1**

# BEE NEWSLETTER

Dear Bee Keeper!

**First of all a very big & warm welcome to AgriSea.**

AgriSea NZ is a multi-award winning Family company based in the Waikato we have been providing nutrition products for the soil, plant and animal health sectors for over 20 years.

4 years ago we noticed a number of bee keepers on our books and went out to talk to a few of you to discover how our products were adding value to your bee keeping operations. A big Thank you to all of the early users who have taught us much about your industry.

The unique marine fermentation process used in the manufacture of our products means that we are able to supply all of the 10 amino acids essential for bee health, (in fact, our products contain nearly all of the known 21 amino acids), plus a complex range of micro and macro nutrients, phytochemicals, probiotics, polysaccharides, fatty acids and vitamins. When added to sugar syrup, the nutritional value of the feed is significantly increased, meaning you are giving your hives the best chance.

AgriSea is a Kiwi Family company through and through with the second generation Husband and Wife team Tane and Clare Bradley now running the day-to-day company business and loving it.

## **Preliminary results**

We have been running a study to assess the optimum concentration for bees at De Graaph Apiaries, control, 20mls, 30mls and 40mls of AgriSea Bee Nutrition per L of Sugar syrup – the study has been short term during the spring feeding rounds of 2016. The initial results are promising and point to 30mls per L of sugar syrup being the optimum concentration for increasing brood at this time.

We look forward to again continuing this research in the 2017 season.



## **AGRISEA RESEARCH**

Early in 2016 Tane and Clare headed to meet with Dr Mark Goodwin and Sarah Cross at Plant and Food Research.

The aim was simple – to scientifically assess what our Bee Keepers had been noticing in their hives – Fat Bees, Healthy Hives, Increased Production and Increased Brood. We have now come up with some really good methodology and this research will begin in Autumn 2017 – we look forward to sharing this with you.

In the mean-time we encourage you all to keep up the feedback, we know that Bee Keepers are the BEST scientists of their own hives, after all science is simple – Observe, Measure, Record and Repeat :)





# SPOTLIGHT

Each update we highlight one of AgriSeas customers across the many industries we support– for example the Wonderful Team at Mt Eliza Cheese – YUM!

We thought to highlight one of your own! Stu Fergusson - A fifth generation bee keeper from the Wairarapa with a passion for bee health and product development is excited about the benefits he is seeing from incorporating AgriSea Bee Nutrition into his slick beekeeping operation.

Stu Ferguson from Hunter Reilly Ltd married Jan, the daughter of one of the original beekeepers in the area. Sixty years on his father-in-law, Alan Simmonds is still in the industry. Following a paragliding accident the mechanical engineer was told he would struggle with an outdoor job so he went to Massey and did a Bachelor of Technology in product development.

"I almost lost my foot – they said it looked like it had been blown up by a shotgun and told me to go get a sit-down job as I would be lucky to walk again," Ferguson said. Following his study the couple ended up in Wellington but returned home every summer and helped with the bees.

"I kept on asking questions then one day arrived home to 25 hives on the front lawn and was told – enough questions – answer them yourself!"

After proving the doctors wrong the family moved back to the Wairarapa and Ferguson soon realised that in the beekeeping industry there wasn't anything you could buy that was ready to go so he started developing things in the background and Hive Doctor was formed.

A friend from his engineering days said he was about to close his injection mould tooling shop and told him to get in quickly with one of his ideas that he had seen. Ferguson survived on little sleep over the next year and half – running 400 hives, holding down a full- time job as a product manager and traveling to China while also developing the product that he released at the Bee Conference in Nelson.

"Out of that came a whole lot of conversations on better ways of doing things," Ferguson said.

"People saw I was passionate about product development and moving things ahead and not just doing things the way things have always been done for the sake of it." "The foldable Nuc Box came out of that – customers kept coming back and I kept tweaking things – I'm pretty passionate about cannibalising my own ideas and refining the products."

With the massive growth in beehives throughout New Zealand it seemed obvious the next biggest issue for beekeepers, aside from varroa, would be pressure on the existing pollen and nectar resources.

Bees need quality food, as their immune systems are fighting viruses from varroa; this was echoed when customers started calling him with requests for product development to look at products they had seen overseas.

The normal resources - quality pollen, were being foraged by a larger number of bees so hives built up more slowly; hence he soon saw a need to pump the hives up really quickly to meet a mid November flow. As the general population of hives increased he noticed the hives in overpopulated areas struggled to get to the point each year where they were capable of getting a crop, let alone getting early splits, which customers ultimately wanted.

Hive Doctor was all about hive health and one of the things that didn't make sense to him was feeding bees straight sugar and after researching he started importing Honey Bee Healthy and Amino B Boost.





Finding it "ridiculously expensive to import the American product" he looked into making a similar product in New Zealand to make it more cost effective.

"When I started looking at the profile of what was in the Bee Boost I came across the AgriSea product and compared the amino and nutrient profile it looked pretty close, so thought it should work."

"Also it was 100% natural and widely used in the agricultural industry which seemed more acceptable than manufacturing chemicals and adding to the hive," he said. Ferguson started with 40-50mls trying to save hives that had gone downhill -trying to initiate new bees, and then he witnessed brood rearing in the middle of winter and decided it obviously had enough nutrients in it. He also noticed that the bees stored the concentrated feed around the brood chamber where pollen was normally stored adding to the conclusion that there appeared to be sufficient nutrients to utilise as they would pollen. With the business growing like crazy he was struggling to manage everything and they made the decision to sell Hive Doctor to Ecrotek a year ago.

"I had to decide where my passion was and my passion was not sitting behind a desk anymore." The fifth generation operation has a very tight family focus – they swap labour between them and as a group aim to run 4000 hives.

With close to a million hives now in New Zealand and evidence of failing treatments and diminished resources he compared it to an overstocked farm with disease outbreaks occurring randomly.

"With the massive saturation, low feedstock for the bees, lack of knowledge and failing treatments we've got the perfect storm," he said. "Varroa is the Aids of bees" – their immune system is compromised. Giving them a shot of vitamins, i.e. AgriSea, is like what they did for early Aids victims – its all about the bees immune system and not being as stressed."

His first year using AgriSea Bee Nutrition resulted in the least losses he had ever seen - the year prior he lost 170 hives to Nosema. "We haven't seen that again since using it." Three years down the track he uses AgriSea Bee Nutrition mixed in sugar syrup and his bee patties formed in one of his latest product developments.

"It is really knife edge – you're trying to get ample feed and nutrients into the bees to ensure they are boosting but at the same time starve them so their artificial resources have been used just as you're going into the honey flow," Ferguson said. He said if you manage your hives correctly by the time you hit the honey flow all the artificial inputs you have added should have been turned into bees as it will be high nutrition so they'll use that for brood rearing – they're not going to use it to put it up into honey. My theory is whatever I'm feeding my hives should turn into bees not honey."

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## Apiculture Conference 2016

Tane, Clare and Sarah attended the Apiculture Conference in Rotorua, hot on the heels of Mystery Creek Fieldays. What an amazingly well run and organised event – well done to Jude and the team and Corporate Venues and Conferences. We thoroughly enjoyed getting to meet many of you and we are looking forward to sponsoring and attending the event in 2017.

AgriSea's HQ is based in Paeroa, at 3-7 Fraser Street. You are all more than welcome to visit us anytime and call in for a cuppa and a factory tour.





## ABOUT AGRISEA

Brewing quality products since 1996 AgriSea NZ Ltd is a multi-award winning sustainable New Zealand company, family owned and operated. The company produces Seaweed Soil, Foliar, Pasture and Animal Health concentrates for Agriculture, Horticulture, Viticulture and Apiculture.

The New Zealand native seaweed species (*Ecklonia radiata*) is batch-brewed with specially selected essential herbs for up to 90 days. The natural brewing process eliminates the use of processing with heat, chemicals, freezing or dehydration that might 'denature' the sensitive nutrient balance, allowing the natural growth stimulants and micro-nutrients to be released in an active form to enhance soil and plant health. AgriSea's natural brewing methods are unique for commercial production.

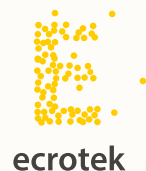


## INTRODUCING

Bee Nutrition now comes with an added PLUS!

Apifeed, a NZ made natural pollen supplement has combined with AgriSea, NZs #1 seaweed supplement to create a remarkable new product called Apifeed+

**Apifeed+ is a total solution for bee keepers!**



**Available exclusively through  
Ecrotek Beekeeping Supplies  
Call 0800 11 77 66 to inquire!**



**NON GMO | READY TO USE | NZ MADE**

// I have been trialling AgriSea for the past two years and very impressed with improved consistency of hive health throughout the year... even in areas where huge hive numbers are placing high demand on local foraging sources. The bees seem to be more robust!

We add AGRISEA to everything we feed the bees as it just makes sense that the nutrients, amino acids and vitamins in AgriSea must be assisting the health of the hives when compared to using straight sugar syrup. When used in high concentrations 30ml per litre of syrup we have seen brood rearing mid winter and believe that the nutrients in AgriSea go a long way in assisting brood development. //

**Stu Ferguson**



## THANKS TO OUR RESEARCH PARTNERS



Wishing you all the best for the season ahead,  
Tane, Clare Jill Keith and the mighty Agrisea team

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