

# Proper Care of *BEES*

By L. E. Gooch  
(President, Kentucky Beekeepers' Association)

THE problem of proper, and adequate care of bees by any farmer who desires to have a few colonies to produce honey for his family and perhaps even have a little to sell, is in reality not such a great problem. The first of a farmer's problems is contentment; satisfaction comes from contentment.

The main thing is to get a farmer to realize that he has time to work with his bees. It is important for any one who undertakes to handle bees to be thoroughly familiar with all their traits. Experience will be his best teacher.

Of course, every beekeeper should subscribe for at least one of the bee journals, of which there are several good ones. He also should obtain from the U. S. Department of Agriculture and from his state agricultural college, circulars and bulletins dealing with bee culture.

## Bees Not Dangerous

If honey bees are properly handled there is no more danger in caring for them than there is in raising poultry. However, the belief that bees learn to



L. E. Gooch, president of the Kentucky Beekeepers' Association demonstrates how to handle bees—when you know how.

know their master and  
will not sting him is  
without foundation.

During the active season, the average life of a bee is six weeks. The first two weeks are lived almost exclusively within the hive. But thereafter the bee passes most of the daylight hours in the field, when the weather is fair, in search of pollen and nectar. Since the beekeeper rarely opens the hive more than once a week there is little opportunity for the bees to become acquainted with him. Careful handling with the use of a little smoke is the best way to avoid stinging.

## Reason For Swarming

Attention must be given to a vast number of details. There is plenty of grief in connection with the bee business. Loss of bees during the winter is heavy, disease takes a large annual toll, and wax moths destroy the comb. These problems require close personal attention, and the work must be done on time.

During the building up period in the spring, and the honey season which follows soon after, the activity of the bees is like clock-work, and should be watched closely, in order to see that the queen has plenty of room to expand her brood nest. A congested brood nest is the main cause of swarming.

Many farmers think that when their bees are swarming they are progressing. Swarming usually comes at the beginning of the main honey flow and therefore greatly interrupts the storing of surplus honey. The surplus honey is the farmer's profit.

### Use Standard Hives

Too often the farmer is busy with other work on the farm and will not stop to look after the bees until it is too late. The time that a farmer often spends talking to a neighbor over the fence will more than care for a few colonies of bees.

One often can judge a man's business by his equipment, and most farmers have improvised equipment. By all means every beekeeper should use standard hives. It is far better and cheaper in the long run to buy all material from a reliable concern that makes a specialty of manufacturing supplies for beekeepers.

One should not fail to use full sheets of comb foundation in all frames, both in the brood chamber and in the super. Many farmers talk about having their bees on moveable frames, but do not use full sheets of foundation. Where foundation is not used, by the time the bees get through crossing the combs the frames are far from moveable, and there is little chance to examine the inside of the hive.

## Prospects Bright

Bees should be kept in a place where they are least likely to come in direct contact with livestock and people, and if possible where there is a good windbreak for winter protection.

We must not get too enthusiastic over a good yield, thinking we will have it every year. Through my section of Kentucky we did not get much surplus honey the past two years, but prospects look fairly good for the coming season.

The amount of surplus we get this year depends largely upon the condition of the bees in the spring.



Reforestation plays a major part in the war on soil erosion. CCC boys here are spotting in tree seedlings in the Norris reservoir area.

# Erosion Greatest Destroyer of Tennessee's Plant Food

**E**ROSION control is the big farm problem, because the loss of plant food through erosion is much greater than the loss from the removal of crops, warn farm management specialists of the University of Tennessee Agricultural Extension Service.

Statistics of the Soil Conservation Service, U. S. Department of Agriculture show that at least 126,000,000,000 pounds of plant food elements valued at \$2,000,000,000 are removed by erosion from the nation's crop and pasture land each year.

More than 85 per cent of the land in Tennessee has been damaged by erosion. Gullies have practically destroyed 3,000,000 acres for profitable cultivation and on approximately 11,000,000 acres, sheet erosion has removed from 75 to 100 per cent of the top soil.

The results are most pronounced in the East Tennessee Valley, on cleared land on the Cumberland Plateau, Highland Rim and in parts of West Tennessee.

Based on average fertilizer prices according to available plant food, the plant food removed by an acre of corn yielding 35 bushels was valued at \$4.97 by the Missouri Experiment Station. Loss of plant food from erosion on a similar plot planted continuously to corn was valued at \$36.29. Removal of plant food from an acre of wheat yielding 20 bushels per acre was valued at \$3.56, while the loss from erosion of land planted continuously to wheat was valued at \$16.47.

Loss of plant food from erosion on land where a three year rotation of corn, wheat and clover was practiced was only \$9.16, less than from land planted to either corn or wheat.

## Tennessee Cotton Production Still Remains in Doubt

**C**OTTON production in Tennessee, according to farm leaders and agricultural forecasters, still remains in doubt on the eve of spring.

The normal five year average production in the state is 468,000 bales. In 1935, production was estimated at 355,154 bales, but with reductions, have not yet exceeded 320,000, with ginnings not yet over.

Thus, it is not believed that actual production, as obtained from ginning reports, the 1935 crop will not pass the 330,000 bale mark.

Should no means of crop production control be authorized by Congress before spring planting, it is believed by cotton men that the state's 1936 yield may go very near the five year average of 468,000 bales. The unusually cold weather has killed the boll weevil, it is thought.

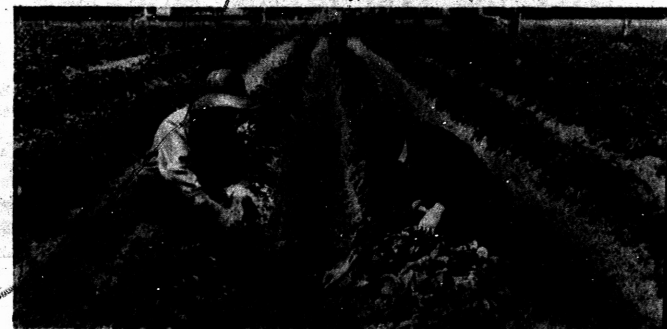
and the menace of the army worm, which caused damaging effects in a dozen counties last year, probably will be minimized this season, due to the proloned freezing of the ground.

However, it has been pointed out, should an emergency program be authorized in time to be put into effect, the cotton yield will be held well under the 400,000 bale mark.

It is a well known fact that any sort of control program will have to be in operation this month, to be effective, due to contracts necessary in advance of planting.


March also is expected to see the cotton subsidy loan setup in operation again. State offices at Nashville have been ready for orders from Washington for several months, with all preliminary work already finished.

The county agent inspects field inter-cropping of cotton and Irish potatoes on a farm near Elizabeth City, North Carolina.



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