

## Honey Production Reported in Maryland

Maryland bees, busy producers of that delicious and flavorsome sweetener, honey and of beeswax, were fewer in number and less productive in 1974 than during the previous year. The Maryland Delaware Crop Reporting Service, the cooperative statistic gathering center of the USDA and the Maryland Department of Agriculture, says that the state's 12,000 bee colonies produced 284,000 pounds of honey and 6,000 pounds of wax in 1974. The 1973 yield was 442,000 and 8,000 pounds respectively.

There were 1,000 fewer bee colonies active than in 1973, when colonies numbered 13,000. Last year's 12,000 colonies yielded 22 pounds

each, some 12 pounds less than in 1973, a substantial production fall off, mostly attributable to weather factors.

John Lindner, beekeeping inspector for the Maryland Department of Agriculture, who operates out of Cumberland, says that the decline in honey production last year was primarily the result of unfavorable weather in spring and fall, which came just at the time of the honey flow. He also pointed out that these climatic conditions adversely affected bee swarming to reduce the number of colonies.

By Maryland law, beekeepers and apiaries are required to be registered with the Maryland Depart-

ment of Agriculture, Apiary Inspection Office, Pest Management Section, College Park, Maryland 20742. Last year there were 582 beekeepers and 750 apiaries so registered. Mr. Lindner inspected more than 6,000 colonies and rendered valuable assistance to hundreds of beekeepers.

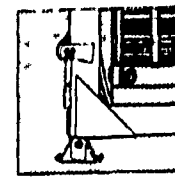
A major purpose of the registration law is to control and eliminate bee diseases, which reduce honey production. Only three apiaries had to be quarantined in 1974. Most of the state's apiaries are located in Western Maryland, where apple and peach orchards abound. The pollination function of bees is essential to the production of these and other fruits.

Maryland's 1974 honey is bringing an average of 67.1 cents per pound, as contrasted with 58.9 cents in 1973. The 1974 yield is valued at \$177,000 and the wax at \$7,000. At mid-December, Maryland producers had 32,000 pounds of honey on hand.

U.S. production of honey reached 185,338 million pounds in 1974, down from 236,657 million the previous year. The average bee colony produced 44.2 pounds, while in the 20 major beekeeping states, the yield per colony was 60.2 pounds. Thus, Maryland production ran about 50 percent less than the U.S. average.

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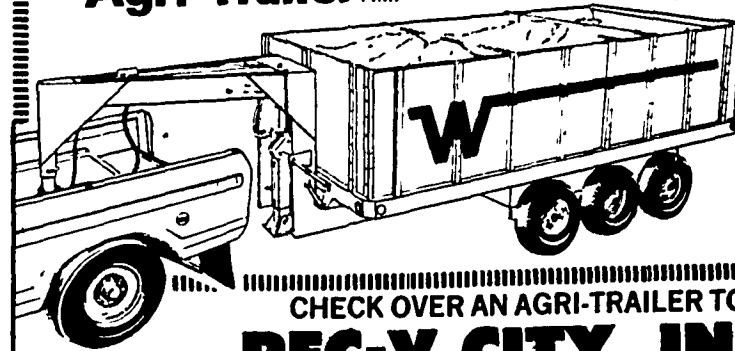
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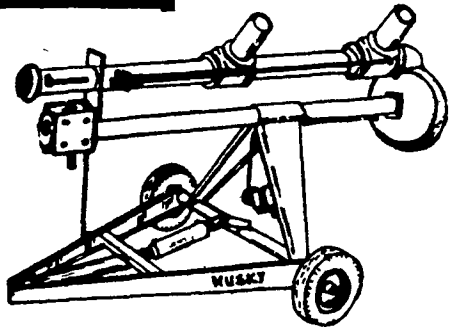
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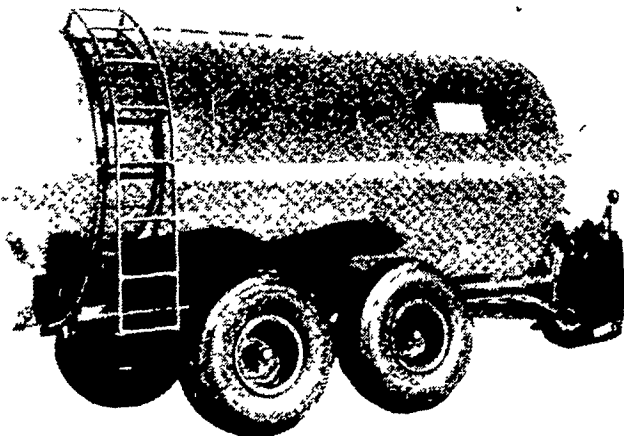
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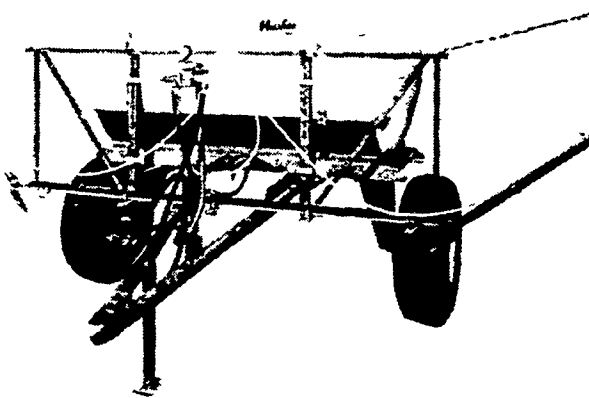


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