

Timber Talk

Tunncliffe's

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Spring, Bees & Other Things

Spring is in the air, and so are the birds and the bees.

At Tunncliffe's we have little to do with birds but bees have become a significant part of our business during the last couple of years. We provide the small productive

insects with accommodation on which we have a story.

Also, as announced, further detail on Timber Treatment and Timber Quality, a little business that we thought might be useful and the usual step back in time.



Derek Slabber

Bee Boxes with Free Honey



More bee boxes...

Business is ever changing, opportunities come and go. It is always good to have some diversification as supply and demand do not always match up. At Tunncliffe's we are always on the look out to respond to a market when it fits in with what we do, as long as it does not compromise our existing customers.

The Varroa mite, a serious pest of bees, arrived in New Zealand in 2000. Hives weakened by Varroa mite are often susceptible to other infections, which generally means the hive must be burnt box and all to stop the infection from spreading. It will need little explaining that from the time of the outbreak the demand for bee-boxes in New Zealand went up quite dramatically.

At Tunncliffe's we were able to respond quickly as the production

of the components fits in well with what we generally do. As the New Zealand bee keeper is very specific in how he goes about his business and his boxes we are able to work in well with the specifications that vary from customer to customer and orders ranging from 10 to 15,000 boxes.

The production is seasonal, bee keepers attend to their boxes in the winter while the bees are in-active. We sell direct or through our distributor Ceracell in Auckland who is exporting boxes as well.

For customers who like the healthy sweetness on their bread or in their tea, we have a few complimentary pots of Clover Honey available. Give us a 'buzz' on 0800 657 934, and we will send a maximum of 2 pots per customer as long as our stock lasts.



... off the production line

Succeed the Natural Way

Getting ahead needn't be a complicated, contrived process of scheming and manipulating your way to the top. It can be as simple and natural as "doing the right thing". Here are some tips to succeed in business the natural way:

Develop a reputation for kindness:

Genuinely caring about the needs of others - customers, managers, co-workers and suppliers alike - is a powerful key to success.

Keep your ego in check:

Be willing to put aside your agenda to benefit mutual goals.

Remain positive:

Resist the impulse to get entwined in the office grapevine. Instead of complaining, try to look at negative situations another way and make a point to say positive things about people, instead of joining in on office feuds.

Work hard:

Your first priority should be to do the best you can to meet the goals of the organisation you work for. Office politics, co-workers mood swings and petty arguments will usually take care of themselves, if you overlook them.

Keep your word:

Don't make commitments you can't keep. Consider verbal promises as contracts and write them down to ensure they're fulfilled.

While sometimes it may seem that bending the truth, playing office politics and undercutting others will help you get ahead, you're much better off conducting yourself with honesty and integrity. Not only will you build a firm foundation for success, you'll also find it easier to live with yourself during the day and to sleep well at night.

Treatment and Timber Quality

At Tunncliffe's we produce treated and untreated timber products. Our treated products fall in two categories depending on the treatment process and the end-use of the product.

LOSP (Light Organic Solvent Preservative)

We use this treatment process to bring our finished profiles up to Hazard Class H3.1 level; 'above ground and exposed to weather'. The advantage of this process is the fact that it uses a solvent as carrier of the preservatives, which does not cause the timber to swell. This way we can treat the final product. All our aluminium window reveals and other profiles are treated this way. The product is clear, treatment is invisible.

Tanalised® Ecowood™

We specifically recommend using this product in situations where there is a risk of water entrapment, especially applicable to exterior wooden joinery. Tanalised® Ecowood™ brings the level of protection up to H 3.2; 'above ground and exposed to weather but with a risk of moisture entrapment'. We believe it comes closer to the robustness of the "old trusty CCA treatment."

Unlike the LOSP process, Tanalised® Ecowood™ is a water-born treatment process causing timber to swell, effecting its dimensions. The process of producing the product is not a simple one. The timber has to be remanufactured in its treated state, yet dry. Rough-sawn, kiln-dried Pinus radiata, is sent straight from the sawmill to Rotorua based Bay Treatment Ltd where it is treated. The timber is then dried a second time and sent on to us in Edgecumbe where it is remanufactured into finger-jointed blanks and profiles.

At Tunncliffe's we are always looking to improve on the quality of our products and service. Tanalised® Ecowood™ has a green-brownish colour. When you work the Tanalised® Ecowood™ blanks you notice the treatment is going right through the wood. This feature has been particularly helpful in gaining an overall improvement of the timber quality we buy in.

In Radiata pine, heartwood generally does not take in treatment to the same extent as sapwood. If the treatment is not visible you would not know if a piece of wood has taken up treatment and distinguish heartwood from sapwood. With Tanalised® Ecowood™ however this is clearly visible, after treatment the heartwood keeps its natural light wood-colour while the sapwood has the colour right through. Since we finger-joint clear 'shooks' together, an untreated piece among treated, really stands out.

The corewood or pith is the inner part of the tree, formed during its first 10 to 12 years and has the same habit as the heartwood. Corewood is an inferior, low density and unstable product, causing problems when incorporated in the final product. The visibility of the treatment therefore creates the opportunity to produce a better product by improving the quality control process, rejecting untreated heartwood and low quality corewood. Drying the timber twice, in a careful and proper manner, also contributes to quality as it seems to make the timber more stable.

We started developing our product line some 3 years ago and are now experiencing a growing demand as sales are on a steady increase. In the beginning we supplied mainly blanks but are holding more and more different profiles in stock including facings. Feedback from several customers is that the features of Tanalised® Ecowood™ are a handy marketing tool for promoting a superior product.

CCA treatment is going by the board worldwide. It is practically banned in Europe and the US and is about to be restricted from use in public and domestic areas in Australia. CCA contains Copper, Chrome and Arsenic. With health and environmental concerns surrounding Chrome and Arsenic in particular, CCA treated off-cuts and shavings are difficult to dispose of. At the heart of Tanalised® Ecowood™ is Copper Azole which contains recycled copper and an organic fungicide as its active ingredients, but no Chrome or Arsenic. Off-cuts and shavings are generally able to be disposed of through normal waste disposal services.



TanE: Undesirable corewood standing out by lack of treatment colour.

A Snippet From the Past

The name and brand Tunncliffe's have been around for years in the Bay of Plenty. We dig up an old story every now and then from the book Tunncliffe & Timber 1923 - 1974 by K.O. Tunncliffe.

In 1923 the opportunity arose to buy a small sawmill 5 miles from Te Karaka with a fairly assured market, selling butter box timber to the Kia Ora

Dairy company and barrel staves to the freezing works at Gisborne.

This again was a co-operative effort, the shareholders being my father and his sons Cliff, Ron, Keith (17 years), Jock Burns and Goldie Seabourne who married my sister Winnie. The Firm was known as Tunncliffe and Company.

White Pine being the predominant species, with any surplus going by ship from Gisborne to Australia. The fair quantity of Matai and some Rimu was sold to timber merchants in Gisborne.

It was a happy four years spent here and the Tunncliffe family had by then grown to eleven children.