## Honey of a job for Stephanie

COUNTRY LIVING

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Honey has provided a sweet opportunity for Stephanie Lynch to be a stay-at-home mum for her two sons, and enjoy the challenges and stimulation of operating a small business.

Together with beekeeper and energy management consultant husband Martin, she runs Sweetree Honey from their home in Horsham Downs.

Stephanie had been working for an IT company, producing marketing videos to showcase its new software but felt she was missing out on quality time with Daniel (10) and Matthew (8).

Now she is using her marketing and IT skills to promote and sell the unique range of honeys, pollen and propolis produced from 150 hives, online, through a number of retail shops and direct to the public at farmers markets. Friends Harald Aalderink and his daughter Isa help with the farmers' market sales - and the face-to-face contact with customers is an aspect of the business they all enjoy.

Sweetree has won a Farmer's Markets Taste Award two years in a row and its Hakarimata honey won silver; and bee pollen won a bronze at the National Beekeepers Association honey show in 2012. The company's ĥoney also appears in Master Chef judge Simon Gault's new cookbook 'Homemade'.

Martin has been keeping bees since he was 11, learning from his father, and he continued in a small way through his university years, but always as a hobby.

When he and Stephanie moved to Horsham Downs in 2003 they expanded hive numbers to collect bee pollen for selling to wholesalers. Now hive numbers have increased again and they harvest around four As a point of difference, Sweetree honeys aren't

blended. "The bees have access to a wide range of flowering plants, and honeys from different areas are not blended with each other,

a honey based on the location shown on the jar, such as Horsham Downs, Marokopa, Four Brothers Reserve and Hakarimata, with each having its own special characteristics."

The 2013 honey Marokopa manuka honey has been tested at Hills Laboratory and found to have a beneficial bacterial activity of 5+.

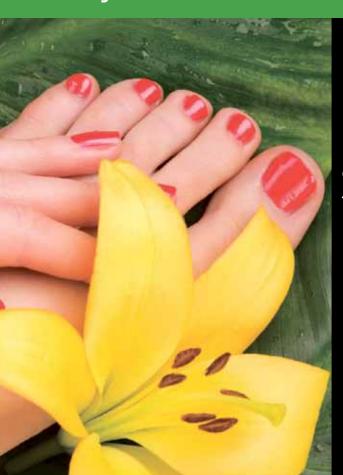
Manuka honey is sought after for its natural antibacterial, anti-fungal and anti-inflammatory properties. Stephanie and Martin have also begun producing propolis, currently on a small scale, from their hives. Bees collect sticky resins and gums from trees and add special antibacterial properties to create propolis.



Martin and Stephanie Lynch have won farmers markets awards for their honey. 

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#### COUNTRY LIVING Coast & Country July 2013

## Horsham Downs Honeys put fruit and recycled jars to good use

It is used in the hive to block up holes, as an antiseptic, and to guard the hive against disease. Bee propolis, which has been used by numans for centuries for healing, invigorates the immune system.

Caring for the health of the bees as well as the quality of their product is important to Stephanie and Martin, who leave enough honey in the hives to feed the bees through winter.

Once harvested, the honey is extracted in a local honey house and bottled into glass. "I don't like the idea of putting a food, especially one as pure as honey, into

Man-power not motor

power was what

drove this month's

mystery item from

the Katikati Heritage

Museum.

If you know what it was for

and perhaps have a story to

share about memories

of using something

similar, or seeing

one used, we'd

thesun.co.nz or post to Mystery Item, PO Box 240,

Tauranga 3110, to arrive no later than July 17. The

winner will be announced in August's Coast & Coun-

Last month's mystery item was a mystery to even the

museum staff but Coast & Country reader Paul Tombleson of Te Kuiti thinks he knows what it is.

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love to hear

about it.



Sweetree Honey is not blended so remains true to the area in which it was harvested.

middle of a

tent, then you

can hang your

he writes.

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And you could be in to

sterilising them for re-packaging honey is not straightforward, so Stephanie puts them to another

Together with other members of the Horsham Downs Rural Women group, she collects surplus fruit from friends and neighbours and makes jams and preserves for the local food bank or to sell to raise funds for charities.

"We call ourselves the 'Horsham Downs Honeys' and I'm probably the youngest in the group. We have a lot of fun, and collectively,

We checked that out with the people at Camp-

ing and Outdoors they agree it was probably used

on the old Boy Scout kind of canvas tents, which

had large wooden centre-poles. Today's modern

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