

SWEET TALK

The newsletter of the Greene County Beekeepers Association

BEE Aware-- Odds and Ends:

Bill Starrett

Now that we are in March our bees have awakened and are beginning to seriously and increasingly raise brood as the temperatures and their numbers warrant. On warm days and sometimes on not so warm days the bees are foraging for pollen which they are probably getting from the silver maples trees and willows. Seeing the yellow pellets on rear legs as they return puts a smile on my face because that signals brood rearing and the presence of a laying queen. So long as cold nights and not too warm days remain the bees will not allow the queen to lay more eggs than they have bees enough to cover and keep warm the developing brood. That's good because several days of unusually warm temps can cause the colonies to overextend the size of the brood nest and if followed by a sudden cold spell brood on the edges of the brood nest will chill and die when not enough bees exist to keep them at 95 degrees. If that happens the resources to raise the brood will have been wasted and the evidence will be dead larvae and pupae removed and deposited at the entrance to the hive.

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The Place to Bee on Tuesday, March 15th 7:00 p.m.

Agenda

6:45 – 7:00 Open Bee Discussion
Welcome and Introductions

GCBA Business

- Lists (refreshments, swarm removal, special interest/project groups,
- Updates from outreach- OSBA, 4-H and Recap
- Beekeeping Session

Refreshment Break

Speakers: Bill Starrett and Dave Foubert
Topic: Swarms

GCBA 2016 Board Members:

President:	Dave Allen
Vice-President:	Dave Foubert
Secretary:	
Treasurer:	Tom Davidson
Communications Director:	Terry Lieberman-Smith
Webmaster:	Dan O'Callaghan
At-Large:	Sam Bernard Fran Davidson Jeannie Doe Joe Valentour
Past President:	Dan O'Callaghan

Looking For Gift Ideas?

Honey Jars! Its never too early to plan your gift giving. Bill Starrett has a wide variety of honey jars, only \$5 each. He will bring them to the upcoming GCBA meeting. These adorable containers will sell quickly.



President's Letter

Welcome! At February's meeting we had several new members and new beekeepers. It was great to see the good turnout and to be able to introduce new beekeepers to everyone.

We have a great lineup for our next meeting. It is time to start getting ready for the season to begin. We have packages coming, queens to raise, swarms to thwart and if not, swarms to collect! This month's main topic will be how to manage swarm prevention and how to collect swarms just in case.

Swarming activity is a natural way the hive multiplies itself. Most mature hives will swarm each season. Problems arise for beekeepers when this happens because approximately one-half of the hive leaves and locates in another part of the county. If it is your hive, you will not be too happy about it! Come to the meeting to learn about what is going on and how to manage your bees. You will also learn how to collect a swarm, both yours and your neighbors who call in a panic! Bill Starrett and David Foubert will be our speakers. You can bet I will be taking notes.

During last month's meeting we introduced a monthly planning concept of being prepared for what is going to happen in the bee yard. This month we will review and dig a little deeper into our expected bee actions for April. April is a very active month for beekeeping, so I am sure you will want to hear all about it! We plan to give you a heads up at each meeting as to what your bees will be doing the next month in your bee yard. For example, how do we prepare for and install a new package of bees?

I want to thank everyone who generously signed up to bring refreshments to our monthly meetings. There are a few spots left and we will have the sign-up list available, but again thank you for volunteering. It makes a big difference when everyone helps out.

The Club has several events we sponsor each year to promote beekeeping. The primary event each year is the Honey Harvest activity held at the Narrows Reserve. This is an all day event where we show our community how honey is harvested, demonstrate what it takes to be a beekeeper, and promote beekeeping as a way to naturally improve our food supply and environment. We are asking for volunteers to donate some time on July 9th to help out and showcase your beekeeping talent. Helpers in all areas are needed from set-up to final clean up; currently all time

slots are available. We will have a signup sheet starting this March 15th meeting. See Vice President David Foubert for details.

What a bargain our dues are these days! We collected a lot of dues at the last meeting and we thank everyone who paid. We will also be collecting dues at the next meeting. If you were not at the last meeting or will not be at the next meeting, would you mind making arrangements with Tom Davidson, our treasurer? I would appreciate this so we can keep our books in order.

You should have received a registration form in the mail from the Ohio State Department of Agriculture. The fee is a very reasonable \$5.00 per apiary location. It is important to accomplish this task. The bee inspector will use the information you provide to inspect your hives. If you did not receive one, you can get one on line at: www.agri.ohio.gov/apiary/

I have a couple of hives in trouble, but am pleased that the majority are looking good so far. I plan on using the surviving hives to reproduce and make up for the ones that did not make it. In theory, the surviving over wintering queens will be the strongest stock with which to reproduce new hives. I am a proponent of Ohio bees for Ohio apiaries.

March can be a hard month for bees. As the queen starts laying in March preparing for the season start in April, there is an additional stress of caring for the brood. The brood has to be kept warm as well as cared for.

Late in March several years ago we had a deep freeze for three days at the very end of the month. It was too much for one of our strong hives that had laid a large area of brood. The hive froze to death trying to spread out enough to cover the brood. What can we do? If you have some old blankets, consider covering the hives with these blankets at night to help hold as much heat as possible during an abnormally cold night. Wind breaks help a great deal also. It is still not too late to put some up if you have time. Hives are at risk until the bees can forage. Feed sugar bricks or fondant to give them enough energy to combat the cold.

Looking forward to seeing you at our March 15th meeting.

Dave Allen

Need Equipment?

Did you miss out on the opportunity to attend the conferences and pick up your equipment without paying shipping costs? Do you just need a few items, or containers, and you don't qualify for the free shipping from the bee supply vendors?

As in past years, the Beekeeping 101 Class is compiling a bulk order with Kelley Beekeeping. We are extending to GCBA members, the ability to add-on to the bulk order. We get discounts on most woodenware and wax. If you need equipment, and your order is less than \$150...Kelley charges you shipping...We don't!



Consider ordering your containers and glassware for your upcoming honey harvest!!

Send your order to Terry Lieberman-Smith ([REDACTED]) by March 12th!

GCBA Minutes:

73 people in attendance

President Dave Allen welcomed everyone to the meeting. Introduced members of the GCBA board. Discussion included updates on wax moth, insulating hives, and feeding.

Bill Starrett mentioned that the Beginner Beekeeping Classes have started. Discussion about the bulk Kelley order and the Wicwas Press Book order.

Dave Foubert mentioned signing up for the Apiary Visits.

Terry Lieberman-Smith brought honey based snacks for the refreshment break.

During the break, people signed up for the swarm list, refreshment list, and apiary visit list.

Dave Allen presented information about a Beekeeper's Calendar, and activities that needed to occur throughout the year.

GCBA Treasurer's Report

Tom Davidson, Treasurer

Balance 1/1/2016	\$3983.72
1/21/2016 Dues	85.00
3/2/2016 Dues	<u>530.00</u>
Balance	\$4598.72

Get Your Gardens Ready for Blooms

Pollen Sources: Alder, Elm, Maple, Forsythia

Nectar and Pollen: Dogwood, Crabapple, Willow, Dandelion



The Basic Buzz in the Apiary



March

- Continue emergency feeding, if necessary.
- Feed pollen supplements or substitutes, if needed.
- First quick inspection of brood nest, if weather permits.
- Check for and clean up dead colonies.
- Clean out entrances and bottom boards.
- Attend conferences

April

- Monitor colony stores, esp. if weather is cold & wet.
- Inspect brood nest for laying queen, disease, etc
- Introduce package bees on drawn combs.
- Requeen colonies with failing queens.
- Reverse brood chambers when weather moderates.
- Add supers to strong colonies at maple or dandelion bloom.
- Unite weak colonies.
- Equalize strength of all colonies.

Made at Home—The Recipe Corner :

Saltine Honey Toffee Treats

4 oz. saltine crackers
1 c. butter (unsalted)
1/2 c. brown sugar
1/2 c. honey

2 c. semi-sweet chocolate chips (or stripe it with white choc chips)

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees.
2. Line a rimmed cookie sheet with foil. Lightly spray with Pam.
3. Place saltines in a single layer, covering the foil. Overlap if you need to.
4. In a saucepan, melt together the butter, brown sugar and honey. Bring to a boil and simmer for 3 minutes. Pour over saltines and spread to make sure all are covered.
5. Bake at 400 for 5 minutes. Remove from oven. Sprinkle chips over the hot mixture. Wait 5 minutes and then carefully spread the melting chocolate.
6. Cool. Remove foil and break into pieces.
7. Store in an airtight container.



“Resin technology applied to honey creates products which cannot be labelled as ‘Honey’”

From ABJ Extra

Introduction

At the end of February, 2016, we received an official letter from U.S. government authorities confirming that the application of resin technology to honey results in creating products which cannot appropriately be labeled or marketed as honey. This is a major development, as it helps to clarify the status of a technology which, it is believed, has been widely used in recent years to disguise honey origin.

The American honey industry is acutely aware of the grave threat imposed upon the market by phenomena associated with the circumvention and adulteration of honey.

The balance and integration of the incentives to produce and consume honey have not been reached. Instead a grave imbalance persists, which distresses and threatens the survival of beekeepers throughout America, Canada, Argentina and Europe, putting in jeopardy agriculture, agricultural production, food security, food safety and the sustainability of ecological systems whose fragility and vulnerability are appreciated now more than ever before.

Resin technology

Resin technology has been legally and properly applied to different types of foods to remove various contaminants. But its application to honey is novel. The Chinese manufacturers of the technology began to openly and aggressively offer the technology to producers and exporters of honey about 2-3 years ago. Resin technology can 1) disguise country of origin as assessed by usual scientific methodologies; 2) remove not only pollen but also antibiotics and residues, thereby reducing risks to importers, exporters and packers; 3) remove chemical components which

give color to honey, therewith allowing tropical and semi-tropical countries to export large amounts of white honey (Remember when Indonesia, prior to the successful work of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), exported to the U.S. 100% white honey); and 4) remove chemical components of honey which add flavor and aroma, the components which led to the honey's award in 2015 for Flavor of the Year. By removing or reducing flavor components, such manufactured honey is easy to blend as “hamburger helper” into honey. As an illustration, “sunflower honey” has been reported to have flavor profiles that were not sunflower and which crystallized like rapeseed honey.

The manufacturers, users and sellers of the resin machinery have claimed that resin technology was FDA approved. A letter from the FDA clarified this as follows:

“[The]..resins may be safely used as articles or components of articles intended for repeated use in producing ...food, in accordance with ...Federal Regulations....the regulation does not address the use of the resin for any specific food products or contaminants, including carbendazim in honey, nor is such specific use elsewhere addressed in FDA regulations.”

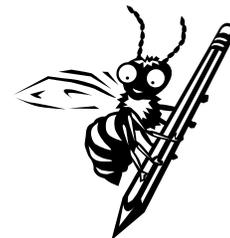
“...calling the product that has been treated with the resin technology simply “honey” would not accurately identify the food generally understood to be honey. The product should be labeled with a name that sufficiently describes its characterizing properties in a way that distinguishes it from honey which has not been treated with resin technology.”

Bee Aware (Continued from page 1)

Because it takes a cell of honey and a cell of pollen to raise one bee both need to be in good supply until those resources are available naturally. Sugar bricks are primarily winter maintenance food to keep the adults alive rather than an adequate source of food for large amounts of brood. So if hives are really out of honey it may be necessary to feed colonies a very heavy syrup (5 to 1, 4 to 1, 3 to 1) in increasing water portions as the weather warms and enables the bees to get rid of the moisture, always remembering that the moisture remains a serious obstacle to colony survival if it condenses above the cluster and drips on the bees. Wet bees are dead bees.

A reliable source of water is always necessary for brood rearing and especially now to dilute honey or syrup and to maintain brood nest humidity so don't wait until water won't freeze before making water available close to the apiary. Until a large volume of pollen is available naturally now is the time to provide pollen supplement to reduce the number of foragers needed to search for natural pollen. This is when winter patties are worth their weight in gold for the bees. Laid on the frames above the cluster puts it right where the bees need it. Good hive management demands starting our beekeeping now.

Staying Ahead in the Hive



March

16 Tues GCBA Meeting–

April

9 Saturday Spring Clinic– Russ Nature Center– Noon

20 Tues GCBA Meeting

Remember to register your hives:

http://www.agri.ohio.gov/public_docs/forms/plant/Plnt_4201-002.pdf

Greene County Beekeepers Association Membership Form 2016

Membership dues are \$15 per calendar year

Membership benefits include:

- Monthly meetings (exp. For Dec/Jan) with educational speakers
- Monthly e-zine with beekeeping articles and other features
- Discount on American Bee Journal magazine
- and more!**

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Make checks out to: **Greene County Beekeepers Association**
and Remit Payment to:

Greene County Beekeepers Association
Tom Davidson
10131 West National Road
New Carlisle, OH 45344