



WAKE COUNTY BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

OCTOBER 2009



Next Meeting: Tuesday, October 13th 2009 @ 7:30 pm

Location: Wake County Commons Building, Cary Drive.



Our Guest Speaker will be WCBA Member Sarah Jo Pleasants. She will be speaking about her experiences with beekeeping in Japan. Sarah is a knowledgeable young member of our club thanks to years of beekeeping with her father and doing well in Dr. Tarpay's Entomology class at NCSU.

Barry Pulley, Ralph Boyette and Edward Jordan are signed up to bring refreshments. As far as I know, we still need a couple of people to sign up to bring refreshments for our Nov. meeting as well as Jan 2010.

September Meeting Summary

Thank you to Gordon Grimes for taking notes for me and having them in such great form! Already typed beats the heck out of deciphering handwriting- even my own can be difficult! Thank you to Michelle Barry, Tim Huffman and Langley Rooney for bringing refreshments to the September meeting.

Danny encouraged people to buy raffle tickets because of the leftover food from the Bugfest. Big thanks to Tim Huffman for doing such a good job coordinating and heading up Bugfest this year!! Also, much thanks to our many volunteers!

Old Business:

- The State Fair was discussed and we would like to win the booth this year at the State Fair. Ricky will be displaying how to make mead at the State Fair. It was discussed that we need to cook at the State Fair to help us get points. We also should record every activity that you do relating to bees this coming year. This would include all the presentations we give on bee keeping. We have a 5% discount at Brushy Mountain because we won the best State Beekeeper's Chapter of the Year 2008. If you want to volunteer put your name on the attendance sheet.
- Honey bee presentation put together by Claudia Linkous is now on the website. This is a great resource for those speaking to schools. The club also has display materials to borrow if you need visual aids.

New Business:

- Nomination committee – we need people to sign up for 5 positions next year. President, Vice President, Secretary, Program Chairman, Board and Newsletter. Please contact James Knox. It is hard work but very rewarding work to be an officer of the Wake County Beekeeper's Association.

Entering the State Fair with Children – Michelle Barry.

Note the dates on the booklet. Entry forms in by Friday September 25th. You can complete the form on line. Exhibits needs to be in place by Tuesday October 15th at 5pm. We are local and have an advantage over many of the other chapters. You cannot have your name on anything. Everything needs to be labeled with your entry number. All entries entered must be produced by the exhibitor. It has to be a hive that the child worked and it has to have been their hive. A limit of one entry per person in each category. If you want your entries back you need to go on Monday between 8-12 am. There is a senior and junior honey competition. The junior competition goes up to 21 years of age. You need to decide which categories. There are 3 categories a child can enter: color entry of a honey bee, black and white print and educational booklets. Michelle's son entered the black and white category last year and won 2nd place. You can use photo shop to help make color pictures black and white. In the Educational booklet category they are looking for knowledge and information about bees.

Another category they can enter is food cooked with honey. There are no points for originality; they want the one food they have listed cooked well. Do not need to have original recipe but must use honey. Look at the W category for the culinary information.

There is a \$50.00 best in show award and sweepstake ribbons for each category. By entering the fair it provides the children something to look forward to at the fair. They like to see their entries at the fair. Our club gets points for children and grandchildren who enter the fair.

Photo, Cut Comb and Wax - Tim Huffman

Pictures at the fair - Pictures from last year's fair were shown and the rating they received. The pictures need to have a caption and need to be a certain size. Look in the premium book for specifics on categories in which you want to enter.

Cut comb honey Chunk honey there is a challenge to keep is on the bottom, straight up and down and to get 3 bottles looking the same. You get extra points for good angles.

Wax molds - Need to be careful on the temperature. 130 degrees was about the degree. He had to make multiple molds to get it right. You need to clean out the mold after every mold you make. Any kind of mold will work it does not need to be a wax mold. Getting all the imperfections out of the wax mold is the key. To strain your wax (like you do with honey) all you need is a nylon curtain. You can buy them at any store and go through about 4 layers. Look in the remnant bins at the cloth stores as one source. If the wax is too hot you will get bubbles when it cools and hardens. Practice helps.

Mead – Ricky Barbour

There is still time to get everything together except for making the mead. You do not have time to make the mead but you do have time for everything else. Ricky showed a good way to make mead earlier in the year. You can also look online for recipes.

Mead is judged for 7 characteristics:

1. Clarity
2. Color
3. Taste
4. Body
5. Bouquet
6. Bottles
7. Bottle Closure

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Back copies of newsletters and the bylaws are available on this yahoo group.

Location of Club Extractors:

The club owns extractors that are available for members to borrow.
Ricky Barbour: Zebulon 269-0108
Whit Joyner: New Hill 387-0164
Raleigh Myers: Raleigh 787-0058
James Knox: Raleigh 847-5098.

Ricky showed us cherry mead that he was hoping to enter but he does not believe that it has the clarity needed. He also showed some blackberry honey. It needs to be entered in the correct size jar that was shown at the meeting. They are 26 ounce jars. Need to have entry in by September 25th. Two bottles need to be entered for a valid entry.

Anytime you have a new product that really works for you, bring it in and share it with us. When you go to feed your bees, there are a lot of ways you can feed them. Take old paint gallons and put some holes in it and put 4 gallons on top of you hive in an old hive body.

Ricky also demonstrated a Solar Wax Melter: Jack Tapp @ Busy Bee Aparies in Chapel Hill has produced the plans for a solar wax melter and now sells these. This is an excellent wax melter. It gets fairly hot inside and does an excellent job at melting the wax.

Ricky also slipped in some advice: When you go to rob your hives, the product he likes to use to remove the bees is "Bee Quick". Ricky recently tried some Honey Robber but it has an odor drawback: "It is so stinky" he tells us. Putting this on your fume board and in 5 minutes they will be gone. Make sure you have old gloves and a place to place your clothes because it really works in about 5 minutes. Ricky commented positively on the fact that it removed the bees in 5 minutes and he would use this product again even with the smell.

To Do In the hives in September:

1. You need to check the weight of your hive. If it is light you need to really put the sugar water in the hive to feed them so they can build up the hive. You still have 4-5 weeks left to feed the bees to build up the hive.
2. Excellent time to re-queen.
3. Do not feed honey that is not from your hives to your bees.
4. Put pollen pad on the hive with the honey to build up the hives.
5. Check for mites. Take a pint jar, and fill it with 2/3rd full of bees. Take 2 tablespoons of powdered sugar and put over the bees and wait for a period of time. Shake out on a piece of aluminum and if you have 12-15 mites then you need to treat for the mites.
6. You can combining nucs to create stronger hives.

A man was driving down the road and ran out of gas. Just at that moment, a bee flew in his window...

The bee said, *'What seems to be the problem?'*

'I'm out of gas,' the man replied.

The bee told the man to wait right there and flew away. Minutes later, the man watched as an entire swarm of bees flew to his car and into his gas tank. After a few minutes, the bees flew out.

'Try it now,' said one bee.

The man turned the ignition & the car started right up. *'Wow!'* the man exclaimed, *'what did you put in my gas tank?'*

The bee answered,



You can thank Member James Finsel for sending this one in!

For those of you who have not seen the current issue of Mother Earth News...there are 2 good articles on beekeeping in the October/November 2009 issue. One is on top bar beekeeping, the other is on chemicals implicated on honeybee deaths.

<http://www.motherearthnews.com/Sustainable-Farming/Top-Bar-Beekeeping-Method.aspx>

“Keeping Bees: Pollinate your crops and get fresh honey with this natural beekeeping method that’s better for the bees and easier for the beekeeper.” This article details that beekeeping this way is more similar to how bees keep themselves in caves and hollow trees. They say that swarms are more likely to populate an empty top bar hive (with a few drops of lemongrass oil as bait) than traditional hive. There advantages and disadvantages to top bar and Lang “box” style beekeeping. There are also plans to build your own top bar hive if you want to try this next year.

<http://www.motherearthnews.com/Nature-Community/Colony-Collapse-Pesticides-Bees.aspx>

A couple of these chemicals we already know are bad- banned in France and Germany but not the US. The EPA identifies two specific neonicotinoids, imidacloprid and clothianidin, as highly toxic to bees. Both chemicals cause symptoms in bees such as memory loss, navigation disruption, paralysis and death. However, in reading further you learn there are NUMEROUS chemicals >170 chemicals found and 35 different compounds in 1 pollen sample. Even healthy bees contain more numerous chemical compounds than you would think!

The following is an excerpt from the article:

While [Bayer CropScience](#), the primary producer of both pesticides, maintains honeybee deaths reported in Europe were caused by unusual application errors, they don’t dispute the proven toxicity of their products. Instead, they maintain bees do not encounter enough of an exposure to cause harm. Now even that assertion is under the microscope.

A report by Maryann Frazier, senior extension associate at Pennsylvania State University, points to a new study from Italy suggests honeybees may be ingesting neonicotinoids at levels 1,000 times higher than that in pollen or nectar via water droplets expressed from the leaves of corn grown from the pesticide-coated seed. This “guttation water” is a common source of liquid for forager bees. The concentrations in the droplets were high enough to kill bees within five minutes of consumption.

Frazier also highlights a study from North Carolina University that found the neonicotinoid Terraguard and the fungicide Procure had synergistic affects when combined, increasing the danger of the neonicotinoid to honeybees to over 1,000 times its original toxicity. The researchers at Penn State are concerned that even sub-lethal doses of these pesticides, while not killing the bees, are impairing their behavior and suppressing their immune systems.

“Their use has increased dramatically over the past few years and they are now the most widely used group of insecticides in the United States,” writes Frazier.

As usage skyrockets, regulation lags behind. Clothianidin was approved in 2003 with the condition that Bayer must provide research on the chemical’s effects on honeybees. The EPA has received the research, but has yet to release all of it — despite requests from the NRDC, thus prompting the lawsuit. The EPA has also provided 163 emergency exemptions for imidacloprid in 26 states, all with little to no research on the sub-lethal affects being reported by researchers in both the US and abroad. (Emergency exemptions allow unregistered use of a chemical for a limited period of time.)

Diane Cox-Foster, professor of entomology at Penn State and co-director of the CCD Working Team, wrote that the outcome of the tests was “startling.” More than *170 different chemicals*, and some individual pollen samples, contained as many as 35 different compounds. But, Cox-Foster notes, “None is likely to be the smoking gun.” Even the healthy colonies contained massive quantities of pesticides, herbicides and fungicides. (Although neonicotinoids weren’t found in this testing, the researchers say they are not discounting them as a possible contributor to colony collapse.)

What to do in the Bee Yard: October (from the piedmont beekeeping calendar):

THE BEES: There are less reasons for the bees to leave the hive. Flying is cut way down. The queen is laying very few eggs. They are now shifting to winter mode.

THE BEEKEEPER: Prepare your hives for winter. A wind break should be considered. Entrance cleats should be placed in the front opening to restrict mice from entering the hive. A word about bees and winter. A large hive will not die from cold weather. They stay warm by clustering in the hive. They keep each other warm. The temperature in the hive is only warm within the cluster. They do not warm the entire inside of their hive, only the cluster. They can survive extreme cold weather. But, moisture can develop within the hive as bees do give off moisture like we do. If this moisture gathers above them, it can drip onto the cluster. This is what can kill bees during the winter. They are much like us. We can be cold and get by. But, we cannot stay alive long if we become wet and cold. Bees can get wet in the summer and it is not a problem. But you must prevent your hive from becoming cold and wet from condensation developing within the hive. Some people continue to leave screened bottom boards open in winter for moisture reduction purposes. Winter winds can be strong, so place a heavy concrete blocks on your hives.