



CAPPINGS

The Official Newsletter of the Kansas Honey Producers Association

www.kansashoneyproducers.org

Promoting Mankind's Most Beneficial Insect - The Honey Bee!

Special points of interest:

- Legislative Update
- President's Corner
- Regional News
- Extracting More \$\$\$

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The Legislative Update 2024 by Buck Bradley

Let me first introduce myself. I'm Buck Bradley. I joined the legislative committee a few months ago. I was born and raised in Kansas and recently moved to Baldwin City after retiring from the Marine Corps.

In Kansas, individuals can sell honey directly to consumers without the need for it to be bottled in a certified kitchen, thanks to the cottage food laws. Moreover, honey can be sold in bulk to businesses for use in products or resale without a food processing license. However, there's a catch: while a beekeeper can legally sell honey to a bakery, it's illegal for that honey to be placed on the bakery's shelf if not bottled in a certified kitchen.

KHPA believes that this current law is burdensome for small beekeepers and places an unnecessary barrier to entry for an inherently

safe product. The main cost driver for a food processing license is the need for a certified kitchen, which needs to be a separate facility from one's own kitchen. Unfortunately, incubator kitchens can't offset this cost because most communities lack access. To compound this issue, the State of Missouri has exempted small beekeepers from needing a food processing license to sell honey in a retail setting. This means that under Kansas law, Missouri beekeepers can sell honey that is not bottled in a certified kitchen in a retail setting in Kansas, while it is illegal for Kansas beekeepers to do the same in their own state.

Some might say that a food processing license/certified kitchen is needed because of food safety, which is undoubtedly greatly im-

portant. However, KHPA contacted the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE), and in the last five years, "it has not had a foodborne illness or outbreak investigation related to Honey..." The KDHE went on to say, "Raw honey is shelf stable because its properties inhibit bacterial growth. The only foodborne risk that KDHE looks out for with honey is botulism because those spores can survive in honey and cause botulism in children less than one-year-old. The agency has not had any cases of infant botulism linked to honey in the past five years." While KHPA agrees infant botulism is a risk, it is essential to note that the CDC, American Academy of Pediatrics, and the National Honey Board don't recommend honey to be fed to children

under 12 months. Furthermore, neither state nor Federal regulations require a warning label.

With this in mind, KHPA was a co-sponsor of House Bill 2720, which would have exempted Kansas Beekeepers from the requirement of a food processing license to sell honey in a retail setting if they met a few basic requirements (sell less than \$50,000 annually, properly labeling, and follow basic food safety guidelines). Unfortunately, the bill didn't make it out of the Committee of Agriculture and Natural Resources, so it didn't make it to the House floor for a vote. However, it was not all bad because we learned a lot during the process and received a lot of positive feedback from members of the House and Senate that we spoke to.

We will work to reintroduce the bill during the next legislative session. We plan to start earlier in the session and get in front of as many elected officials as possible. We are confident that if we can get the bill out of committee, it will pass both the House and Senate. Please let us know if you would like to assist us in that effort.

Kansas State Fair 2024

ENTRY DEADLINE IS AUGUST 1, 2024

Online entry available May 1, 2023

- All entries are required to be done online.

If you need assistance with entry, please contact the Fair Office.

Please check the receiving schedule.

August 2 (12:01 a.m.) to August 15 (11:59 p.m.) - \$5.00 late fee, per exhibitor.

August 16 (12:01 a.m.) to August 20 (11:59 p.m.) - \$25.00 late fee, per exhibitor.

No entries will be accepted after August 20 (11:59 p.m.)

Agriculture Receiving Times: Tuesday, September 3, Noon – 5

Wednesday, September 4, 11 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Thursday, September 5, 8 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

Release/Pick Up Times: Sunday, September 15, 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Monday, September 16, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Think about entering your honey in the Kansas State Fair. Above are the scheduled times to enter as well as the times for receiving and releasing entries. Classes available to enter are art design in bee wax, bee wax, bee wax candles, chunk honey, section comb honey, crystalized/creamed honey, cut comb honey, extracted honey light and dark, frame of honey and honey gift package. For a complete list of judging guidelines go to the Kansas State Fair site and click under competitions and then agriculture. You may also contact Kristi Sanderson by phone or text at 913-768-4961 for information.

Reminder—The Kansas State Fair is September 6-15. Volunteers will be needed starting on September 3rd.

Kristi Sanderson, 2nd Vice President

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PRESIDENT'S CORNER by Becky Tipton

Where did you come from? Where will you go? What do you love?

Beekeeping is agriculture. Whether you have one hive or one thousand, you are at the mercy of this blue marble and all the whims as it spins. This week, the weather ranged from perfect; 70° balmy and beautiful to 90° with humidity, to 50 mph gusts on a 50° day (horizontal rain), and a frost warning. All in a single week. Welcome to Kansas! Lack of moisture last winter and into this spring may make nectar in our beloved clover nonexistent. The black locust flow is usually interrupted by wind and rain, but our trees are often a more reliable source of nectar. Those roots go deep. Beekeeping, like other farming, is tied to the weather for nectar flow, queen rearing and mating, swarm activity (colony prosperity), and ability to work the hives. Farming is tied to the weather for planting, growth, ability to work the soil, and harvest. Recent farming news included the sharp increase in crops being grown indoors to eliminate the effects of extreme weather. News flash, it does not rain indoors. These set ups rely completely on subsurface water to meet their needs. Our wells are running dry at an astounding rate. Will we rely upon technology to mitigate the harsh environmental changes? That seems to be the trend. What does that do for our bees?

I try not to be a gloom and doom person, but it is extremely hard when we see the harsh reality of global climate change every day. Everything matters and the decisions we make at the ballot box carry the greatest impact. If the earth isn't our number one concern, how will we get along without her?

Shawnee County is haggling over how to assess land used in beekeeping. Homeowners with small acreage are requesting a break on their property taxes because their land is being used in agricultural pursuit. I agree, we cannot tax the farmer at the same rate as the city lot or no one would be able to afford to farm, and we need farms. We have seen Johnson, Douglas, and Shawnee County all enter this conversation and each seems to be coming up with different criteria and different results. As an industry, some consistency would benefit all. How many hives are kept, is product from the hive sold (honey, beeswax, pollination), and is the land owner paying income tax, sales tax, or other tax revenue? Some land owners are requesting bees for their property to glean this tax benefit. They are not the beekeeper, just the landowner "renting" apiary space. This is NOT my area of expertise. I recognize that all our counties are struggling with budgets and projects and lack of funds. There aren't easy answers. If your county appraiser reaches out to you as a beekeeping expert, please direct them to one of these other counties that have worked on the issue. I'm not suggesting that they have all the answers, they have just started working on the solution.

Kansas Honey Producers works to benefit all Kansas Beekeepers, all levels, all abilities, all business focus goals. What does you and your community need? The KHPA board wants to provide support and educational opportunities across the state. Please reach out to your Ag Extension Agent, FFA leaders, 4-H coordinators and talk to them about beekeeping and support in their area. We are considering advanced sessions in value-added products as full day workshops, queen rearing, or specialty areas of beekeeping. We need to know what you want and where the need is. Let us know. If you haven't checked out our

website, please do. You can send us messages directly from that site or our individual email addresses are provided. Newest feature—Swarm catching information! You can add your name to the list for your area. Plan now to join our meeting in November.

News from Northeast Kansas

High winds made for a challenging day at the NEKBA open apiary on April 7th. Cecil Sweeney, Joli Winer, and I, along with six beginners in attendance, faced strong winds at the apiary, located at Pendleton's Country Market, 1446 E 1850 Rd, Lawrence, KS 66046. Cecil demonstrated a package installation technique typically used during cold weather but is just as effective during high winds. It was hard to imagine, but the bees in the four existing colonies were foraging on dandelions while the wind almost knocked us off our feet at times. Cecil and Joli finished the session by making two splits from the pre-existing four colonies. A veteran scholarship recipient who moved out of the area donated her dead-out hive to NEKBA. A demonstration and discussion on colony autopsies led to an additional learning opportunity. One of the two splits was moved to the donated hive. This hive with bees will be included in the silent auction at the NEKBA Funday, June 1, 2024. The NEKBA educational apiary is currently home to eleven colonies. On-going sessions are scheduled at the apiary. Dates and times are posted on the club's website, www.nekba.org.

Steve and Becky Tipton have resumed their beekeeping classes at the Shawnee County Community Center, in Topeka. A recent class had 25 in attendance. Classes meet monthly through September and are free of charge. More information is available by contacting Becky at bstbees@gmail.com.

NEKBA's annual Funday Expo is scheduled for June 1, 2024. It will be held at the Douglas County Fairgrounds, 2110 Harper, Lawrence, KS. Guest speakers include Jennifer Tsuruda, Blake Shook, Rogan Tokach, Judy Wu-Smart, and Autumn Smart. The fun includes a swarm demonstration, silent auction, homemade honey ice cream, lunch of grilled burgers and hot dogs. Vendors will be Beekeepers.com, Dadant, HillCo, and more. HillCo is offering a discount on preorders that are to be picked up during Funday. Use this discount link to order <https://hillcobees.com/discount/NEKBA>. The code "NEKBA" should be used at checkout. This is for pre-orders HillCo will bring to Funday. Pick up only. For those attending from out of the area, hotel arrangements can be made at The Country Inn and Suites, 2176 E. 23rd, Lawrence, KS 66046. (785) 727-1825 Group: Heartland Honey ZZ58M4.

A queen rearing workshop, hosted by NEKBA, on May 10-12, 2024, will be held at the Johnson County Extension Office, 11811 S. Sunset Dr., Olathe, KS 66061. Gary Reuter, from the University of Minnesota Bee Lab, will be instructing this class. Attendees must be present for all three days. Sign up can be done at www.nekba.org. The cost is \$250. For further information contact Joli Winer at 913-593-3562 or heartlandhoneyks@gmail.com or Kristi Sanderson at 913-768-4961 or sander-sonk09@gmail.com.

Jo Patrick, Northeastern Region Representative

North Central Region News

Hello Bee Friends!

It's that exciting time of new bees and new learning for beekeepers!

Whether the new colonies are from packages, nucs, swarms or splits, and whether the person is re-searching beekeeping, starting their first colony or their 100th, there's always something new to learn. It's one of my favorite parts of beekeeping.

There are so many different ways to keep bees and infinite situations we can find ourselves in. The plan and answer to any given situation are rarely the same.

For beekeepers installing bees this past week, we had temperatures near 90 degrees. Three years ago, we had snow. Beekeeping isn't on a schedule; it's assessing the situation and making your best plan of action based on your knowledge and experience.

The common and best advice in beekeeping is to join your local club. It's where new beekeepers can learn and where experienced beekeepers can share and commiserate. I hear from so many beekeepers with a specific question to their immediate situation, but they're missing out on the broader knowledge of beekeeping as to the "Why". I can give you the answer, but are you learning the big picture?

While bee clubs are spread out thinly across Kansas and meetings often take place in the evening when attendees can't get into hives together, we're fortunate the Great Plains Master Beekeeping program out of the University of Nebraska Bee Lab has introduced Open Apiary opportunities to Kansas.

I've been hosting an Open Apiary yard in the North Central region for the past year. While I plan a seasonal topic that attendees may think doesn't apply to them, in the end, the most popular lessons were the ones they didn't expect. Last weekend, I had saved a dead-out hive to inspect and clean up together. The necropsy turned out to have the biggest feedback and impact of the session, rather than the other topics of swarms or making splits.

So, while we think of bee clubs as meeting and talking about bees, I encourage everyone to find your closest Open Apiary and attend at least once, even if it's a long drive and you feel confident in the topic listed. You may learn helpful hints and bigger lessons than you expected.

I'll be offering an Open Apiary twice a month west of Manhattan until October. I invite anyone to join us there or at the regular North Central meetings every other month at Rolling Hills Zoo near Salina.

May dates include: Sunday, May 5th at 2 pm; Monday, May 20th at 6 pm for Open Apiary near Manhattan; and Sunday, May 19th at 2pm to meet at Rolling Hills Zoo.

Email me to join the email list for details and more dates. NikkiBFarm@gmail.com

Nikki Bowman, North Central Region Representative

News from Western Kansas

Lessons From the Hives

Northwest Kansas is its own gem, sometimes a diamond in the rough, but always a treasure trove of unpredictability. Dear Mother Nature seems to hold the keys to the alluring, never-ending quest for productivity and prosperity. Within the last 45 days, weather here on the Mazanec farm has reached record high temperatures, record low temperatures, record wind speeds, and record drought. We can grumble and scowl about unpredictable conditions or we can take lessons from the bees.

Daily walks routinely take me to weather-beaten green, hand-me down, metal lawn chairs that sit in my apiary. Secluded, they are a perfect place to sit and observe the activities around the hives. Some days the bees are hunkered down, snuggled in, yet placing my ear to the hive, sounds of a sweet hum can be heard. Other days, masses of swirling and swooping bees circle the hive, spring cleaning, foraging, visibly moving with a purpose. Each bee has a task, no matter what the conditions, with the humble purpose of supporting the best interest of all.

Hmmm! Since unpredictability is probable, what lessons can we take away from the hives?

“What’s good for one of us is good for all of us – what’s good for all of us is good for each one of us!” Work with the intention of supporting the best interest of not only yourself, but also the community in which you live. Sometimes it’s best to hunker down, curl up in a blanket, eat the sweets, read a book, learn something new, and HUM! Because get ready...It won’t be long... the sun will shine and it will be time to MOVE!

Breathe and Just Bee

Brenda Mazanec, Western Region Representative

South Central Region News

Spring has come a little early here in south central Kansas. Bees are building up, packages and nucs are arriving, and swarms are swarming! I got a call and collected one in Wichita while mentoring someone a couple of weeks ago. Sadly, we are still in a severe drought so rain would be very welcome, but seems to miss us each time.

Dillon Nature Center in Hutchinson has an observation hive that Ad Astra Apiary Conservatory will be maintaining and teaching visitors about bees. Bee City Wichita/Grassland Groupies has been reaching out to surrounding communities to coordinate effort to educate about pollinators as well as habitat restoration for pollinators.

Stepheni Phillips, South Central Region Representative

The Kansas Honey Producers, Third Thursday, Extracting More \$\$\$ from Your Hives, Collecting Pollen and Preparing it for Sale— presented by John Speckman

To register for the meeting and to get the link, go to our website at www.kansashoneyproducers.org and click on Extracting More \$\$\$ button-it will send you to a Zoom program to register and you will immediately get the Zoom link in your email. If you have registered before, you still may have to register again to get the link. If you have something that you would like to share with the group or have an idea for a future program, please call or text Joli at 913-593-3562 or email heartlandhoneyks@gmail.com

Freshman, Gabe Robison, of Chetopa, KS Wins \$1000 National FFA Grant for his Beekeeping Supervised Agricultural Experience, SAE.

By: Chetopa Kansas FFA Advisor Jim Nave



Gabe's interest in beekeeping began in the Spring of 2023 during his eighth-grade year. That Spring semester he took Exploratory Agriculture under the direction of Mr. Jim Nave, Agricultural Instructor and Chetopa's FFA Advisor. As a class project, Mr. Nave took the students to a beginning beekeeper workshop hosted by the Cherokee County Beekeepers Association, in Columbus Kansas. Workshop participants learned the basics of beginning beekeeping. They also received hands-on experiences by building and assembling beehives. At the end of the workshop, a drawing was held giving away one of the newly constructed beehives. Gabe's best friend and classmate, Harrison Carter, was the lucky winner. Being a true friend and good sport, Gabe was excited for Harrison, yet at the same time rather disappointed. It turns out Gabe really wanted to win the hive because he wanted to start raising bees.

Spring of 2021 on behalf of the Chetopa FFA Chapter, Mr. Nave applied for the Kansas Honey Producers Scholarship Grant. The purpose of the Kansas Honey Producers Grant is to promote learning about the art and science of beekeeping. Mr. Nave and the Chetopa FFA were the 2021 scholarship recipients. The grant provided the Chapter the necessary wooden ware and bees for two complete hives, PPE, educational opportunities, and the support of mentors for two years. David Korver and Rhonda Heston of Altamont Kansas volunteered to serve as mentors for the Chapter. Through the scholarship, Gabe would get the opportunity to work with the Chetopa FFA's bee hives when he became a freshman the Fall of 2023.

Always looking for ways to inspire students, Mr. Nave encouraged Gabe to apply for the SAE grant sponsored by the National FFA. SAE grants are designed to help FFA members create or expand SAE projects. An SAE requires FFA members to create and operate an agriculture related business, work at an agriculture-related business or conduct an agricultural research experience. Upon completion, members must submit a comprehensive report regarding their career development experience.

Mr. Nave was encouraging yet at the same time very pragmatic about Gabe's chance of being awarded an SAE Grant. He told Gabe if he wanted to have a chance to win, he would have to put in time and hard work to develop an outstanding plan for his SAE. Gabe filled out the application and applied for the grant in the fall of 2023. His hard work paid off. He was awarded the \$1000 grant in the Spring of 2024.

Gabe used the money to purchase a nuc of bees from mentors David and Rhonda, a complete hive with top feeder, bee suit and gloves, various equipment, and sugar for feed.

Gabe continues to work closely with Mr. Nave, David, and Rhonda to learn all he can about the beekeeping industry. As a beginning beekeeper, one of Gabe's primary goals is to learn as much as he can about best beekeeping practices and bee health. He also understands the importance of developing relationships throughout the industry. Beyond the relationship he has with David and Rhonda, he seeks out guidance and mentorship from experienced beekeepers. He is eager to learn from their wisdom and expertise.

Marketing plays a crucial role in Gabe's plans. He plans to produce honey that reflects the unique

flavors of Southeast Kansas. That will be accomplished by maintaining strong health colonies. He plans on selling his honey to local consumers through Facebook and setting up at the local farmer's market. Gabe plans to use social media and community events to raise awareness about his honey and the importance of supporting local beekeepers.

Gabe's ambitions extend beyond honey production. He plans to teach others about beekeeping and the vital role bees play in our ecosystem. He is committed to sharing his passion for bees with other FFA Members. He will share his experiences into the fascinating world of beekeeping by documenting his journey and sharing them through various social media outlets. By sharing, Gabe hopes to inspire other FFA members to take up beekeeping for honey production and to become advocates for bees as pollinators. Through education, he hopes to inspire an appreciation for bees and the environment.

As he looks to the future, Gabe is excited about the possibilities that lie ahead. He is confident that his plan to harvest and market honey will not only be successful, but also contribute to a lifelong learning experience.

Submitted by Julie Cahoj, KHPA 3rd VP

Leib 4-H Club Members Learning about Beekeeping

By: Tracy Maxson, Leader

Club members have been delving into the beginning beekeeping materials with their mentors Dave Korver and Rhonda Heston. It isn't all book learning and lecture. To date, club members have taken part in hammering together two hives. Now that the classroom portion of the class is finished, the

members get up close and personal with the bees. At the last meeting the group noticed bees from a wild hive visiting the sugar syrup feeder they had set up for the club's colonies. Leib 4H members are looking forward to placing their colonies in the hives soon. Leib 4-H club is in Edna, KS.

Submitted by Julie Cahoj, KHPA 3rd VP



KHPA Scholarship Grant



Applications are being accepted May 20-October 20, 2024 .



The grant is available to community or school organizations.



The grant includes supplies, bees, and educational supports.



For more information or to apply

I was mulling over recently who makes up the world of beekeepers? What kind of people are we? Using just our bee package customer list, I came up with some interesting backgrounds. Three doctors, three CPA's, several farmers, a rancher, teachers, a professor, minister, banker, several contractors, a pharmacist, dentist, IT, sheriff and some deputies, a mental healthcare worker... That last one really struck me. Bees have a reputation for being therapeutic in many ways. To sum it up, beekeepers are everyone – all walks of life, while at the same time, not just anyone is cut out for the hobby. It is fun, fascinating and can be frustrating at the same time and that combination takes a special person. Not one lawyer... I could joke a lot about that one but will leave it alone.

A lot of the frustration in this hobby/business can be lessened by what we learn at the local clubs, from our mentors and at KHPA gatherings. The recent March 2024 KHPA meeting was interesting in many ways. What a variety of presentations and as usual, the title was only a hint of the subject line. Some speakers needed more time with their presentations, and we will work to make sure that is taken care of for your future meetings.

This November, we will gather again at Salina's Courtyard by Marriott hotel, November 8 and 9, 2024. Plans are still underway but I am pleased to announce Dr. David Peck with Better Bee will join us. He is an incredibly talented speaker and we are looking forward to his messages. A medical doctor/beekeeper is planning to visit with us about her methods of wax working and the use of herbs for her bees to help with various issues that ail them with minimal or limited use of chemical treatments. We may have some interesting surprises for you to enjoy along with some fun activities. Additional messages on those speakers and their topics as we get closer.

Mark your calendars to join us in November! For now, three years of drought are taking quite a toll and hopefully this cycle will end soon. If you recall just five years ago, we couldn't get the rain to stop... and then it did stop for a very long time. Keep your bees healthy and pray for rain.

Greg Swob, 1st Vice President

Kansas Honey Producer's Association
The Cappings
S. Koehn
P.O. Box 171
Galva, KS 67443

Address Service Requested

2024 Kansas Honey Producer's Association Membership Application

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Code _____
Phone# _____ **E-mail Address** _____



Membership Kansas Honey Producer's Association per year (Jan.-Dec.) \$25.00 _____
Additional family members wanting voting rights \$1.00 per person \$1.00 _____
Additional family member's names: _____

_____ _____
Youth Membership (18 years of age or under) \$12.50 _____
Donation Amount _____ Total Due _____

Make checks payable to: KHPA or Kansas Honey Producer's Association or pay online at www.kansashoneyproducers.org

Mail to: Sondra Koehn, P.O. Box 171, Galva, Kansas 67443 Phone# 972-849-4408 or email- skoehn@live.com
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