

The Official Newsletter of the Kansas Honey Producers Association

www.KansasHoneyProducers.org

Come Join Us at the Kansas State Fair

The Kansas State Fair is in Hutchinson and is fast approaching. It runs September 6 to 15 and we start setting up on the 4th. This year the sales area will have a new look as we have been asked by the fair administration to adhere to some new guidelines. The times to volunteer have shifted a bit as well because the building is opening an hour earlier and closing an hour earlier. Signup genius will be up and live the first part of May. If you have used this app in the past to sign up to volunteer you will be sent an email when it goes live. If you are new go to signupgenius.com to create an account, and look for the signup “2019 Kansas State Fair” or you can look for it by the creators email which is sandersonk09@gmail.com. It’s not password protected so don’t pay attention if it asks for a password. If you would prefer you can always contact me at 913-768-4961 by phone or text and I will help you sign up for the date and time you wish to volunteer.

Thank you and see you in Hutchinson

Kristi

Kansas State Fair

2019

September 6-15



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Next Capping's

Aug. 1st 2019, Articles due
July 20th, 2019.

Editor :

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OUR PRESIDENT JIM KELLIE

It is April here in Central Kansas and winter refuses to leave. It is mid-day with a temp of 37 degrees and another heavy freeze tonight. So what pollen and small nectar sources were out there will not be out there by morning. The bees will have to wait a few days for the trees and plants to re-group and start again.

I hope you are diligently watching and monitoring your bees for food and pollen to keep them healthy until the real spring shows up. I have heard of a few heavier losses than normal around the state. Some as much as 40%. The majority of our bees are still in Texas where they have been split, queens added and are enjoying warm weather along with rain showers off and on. Our Kansas bees however are far behind in comparison with last year. Still, for the weather, they are struggling through, they are coming along with some help of feed and a little pollen sub to get them by. While packages and nucs are running late because of winter in many parts of the US, there seems to be a glut of packages and nucs this year in Kansas. I have heard from several of our package buyers that they still have some left and have more coming if needed. Looks like a buyers' market this year.

The KHPA team has been busy having successfully completed our March program that was in Lawrence this year. We had a large crowd attending both days. Joli is working on the next meeting which will be October 18th and 19 in Wichita, KS. Our team, including past President Greg Swob has also been giving speeches, demonstrations and helping out many of the bee clubs throughout Kansas. There seems to be new ones starting up more frequently these days.

Some exciting news is that the progression of the Great Plains Masters Beekeeping Program from the University of Nebraska is getting closer to launch and their Web Page is up. KHPA is part of this program to bring classes and courses to Kansas. We are just getting this part started and courses accredited. This is a great opportunity for Kansas with so many beekeepers beginning to experience plus learn more about Beekeeping and all the activities that go with it. In the future KHPA is looking at having these hands-on classes throughout the state and other possibilities are being considered through the Governing Board of which we are a part of. So stay tuned, we will try and keep everyone updated.

Our New Governor is going to continue with the Ag. Summit in which all the Ag organizations get together with legislatures, and state officials to work on the future of Agriculture in the State of Kansas. I am happy to be a part of that group to dig in and keep our part of Agriculture protected and moving forward in our state.

Last is another Big Event here in Kansas that gets bigger every year. That is the NEKBA Fun Day which is in Lawrence Ks. There will be more information I am sure in our newsletter with dates, location, and needed detail. I intend to be there to help this year. It takes many people to run such a huge event and hats off to the NEKBA club with their many Volunteers to pull such a huge event off. This year is full of information including the latest for Commercial operators. Randy Oliver will be there, a biologist who also runs 1500 colonies in California, plus does a lot of scientific work and is currently working on Genetics for resistance to Varro Mites. Dr. Katie Lee from the University of Minnesota who worked on improving health and survivability to commercial Honey Bees will be speaking. Dr. Judy Wu Smart, Dr. Mathew Smart, from the University of Nebraska along with Dr. Marion Ellis emeritus of the entomology dept of the University of Nebraska will also be speaking. This is a big opportunity for everyone from just beginning to Commercial operators to learn, educate themselves, and have a little fun with all that goes on that day.

I think I have burned up enough paper for today. Hope to see you at our next meeting in the fall or one of your club dates or at Fun day. Lets hope the nectar flows freely this year.

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OPEN

Editor

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The winter of 2019 was a doozy. I began to feel like we were living through an episode of “Game of Thrones” and our winter was going to be ten years long! But, spring has arrived, (I believe they just announced shutting western I-70 for blizzard so that opinion may not be shared by all Kansans.) Unfortunately, for many of us, it was a brutal winter in terms of colony loss. So, why did your colony die? It’s usually pretty simple with a lot of confounding variables to consider. There are really just about 5 reasons for colony death.

1—Starvation. Making sure your colony has enough food to last them through the winter seems pretty straightforward. Generally, we try to make sure we have one deep box completely full—about 50+ pounds available in late fall. We feed 2:1 sugar syrup until it’s too cold for them to metabolize it. When we check bees, and we see them nestled up against the inner cover, it’s a sign that food is running low. We’ll provide a solid, sugar cake. On mild days, frames of honey can be moved closer to the cluster giving bees easier access. Once the queen starts laying eggs, the open brood is so attractive to the worker bees, they will not leave it to access more feed. If the cluster is small and they cannot reach stored food, they will starve. We have seen this often this spring; a small cluster of bees, dead, heads in the cells, tails out, and food available just a few frames away.

2—Freezing. This is the reason many new beekeepers think their bees died. They froze. Bees can withstand -40°F for an extended period of time IF they have a good wind break and they are not wet. Bees respire (breathe) and that causes moisture within the hive. Condensation collects on the inner cover, freezes, thaws, and drips on our bees. Big frames of honey act like blocks of ice and also form condensation during wild tem-

perature changes that we often see in Kansas winters. Most of Kansas does not experience the sustained cold that warrants wrapping a hive and because of condensation, wrapping can actually contribute to the condensation issue. Hives need ventilation even in the winter. Do not kill them with kindness, let them breathe but protect from strong north winds.

3—Disease. The number one reason bees die (any season) is now related to varroa management. The varroa vectors diseases that kill our bees. Varroa also reduces overall body weight of the bees. The bees you have in late fall are the bees that will have to raise your first brood cycles in the spring. If they are skinny, virus infected bees, they have no chance. Treating with a miticide EARLY in the fall allows your bees to raise several healthy brood cycles before winter sets in and all brood rearing is done. Use an approved (scientifically tested) mite treatment. We like to follow our early fall treatment with an Oxalic Acid application in late fall (usually end of November) when there is no brood and all the remaining mites are riding on the adult bees. If you have questions about what miticide is appropriate for your conditions, consult:

www.honeybeehealthcoalition.org.

4—Small Cluster Size. It is extremely hard for a small cluster of bees to survive the winter. We recommend combining small colonies in the fall to create a colony that can thermoregulate efficiently (tiny clusters must work much harder to warm brood). But, you should also ask yourself why your colony is small. Is the queen of poor quality? Have they struggled with some underlying disease issue? Was this a late season swarm that missed the optimal nectar flow? Are they struggling with hive predators like varroa or small hive beetle? If the issue is poor queen quality or late swarm, combining will likely be the best solution. If there is another underlying causation for the small colony size, not addressing that just spreads your problem to your more prolific colony.

5—Failing Queen. Not all queens are created equal. Extreme weather patterns in the part of the United States where our queens are reared have created a stress on queen availability. Queens cannot be mated properly during windy, rainy weather. Another factor is the quality of our drones. Drones exposed to pesticides, particularly fungicides, have very low sperm counts. Queens mating with poor quality drones are more likely to fail. As you go into fall, evaluate your queen's laying patterns. Do you see a lot of drone brood (unfertilized eggs) scattered among the worker brood? That could be an early sign that your queen is running out of sperm. If your queen runs out of sperm as the colony is building up in February and March, there is no chance that the colony can successfully replace her and there is little chance that you can observe the problem and purchase a queen to replace her. How old is your queen? Trying to take a queen through a second winter is pretty risky. Can you

really know how old your queen is if you don't mark your queens? Even very dedicated beekeepers may not examine hives as closely as needed in July or August to observe that a hive swarmed or superseded their queen....it's easy to miss.

Let's think about all of these pit-falls another way. What can you control? Can you prepare your hive for winter by securing good honey stores and monitor your hive's feed regularly throughout the winter to be sure they have emergency feed available? Yes, you can—beekeeper responsibility. Can you provide protection for your hive as well as provide adequate ventilation? Certainly. Can you monitor the varroa count in your hive and take precautions to ensure that your hive is as healthy and disease free as possible? Their health is your responsibility as is the health of any other animal in your care. Combining hives and monitoring hive size can be part of a beekeeper's fall management routine. Can you control a failing queen? Here is the only reason for a winter loss that may truly be beyond your control. Queens run out of sperm and the hive dies. You cannot visually determine an inferior or poorly mated queen. You have to choose young queens from responsible breeders.....and may still encounter loss. It happens. Clean up the colony, split those healthy colonies, and keep on keeping bees. It's what we do. Let's do it the best that we can.

Becky

Youth Grant Project. Both 2019 Youth Grant groups are off and running. Although 2018 grant groups experienced some minor set-backs, both are now back on track and hoping for nice honey harvest this fall. If you know of a group that works with youth and would like to add honey bees to their curriculum, please encourage them to apply for our grant. Complete grant information is available on our website: www.kansashoneyproducers.org. Questions??? Please contact Becky Tipton, bstbees@embarqmail.com

Compete in the Honey Show

All open class entries are due on / or must be postmarked by August 15. To enter the honey classes go to kansasstatefair.com and hover over participate tab and select competitive exhibits from the drop-down menu. Next click on the Agricultural, Creative & 4-H/ FFA Exhibits icon and proceed to the honey classes and select the entries you wish to compete in. You can also download and print a form and mail in your entry selections.

Last year a new class called black label was added where the honey was judged on taste only. A portion of the honey submitted was transferred into a container so the judge couldn't even see the color of the honey submitted. We had 12 or so contestants enter and this was a boost to the honey show. This class will remain and each contestant entering this class will need to enter 2 other honey classes to compete in the black label class. If you win this class you can brag that you have the best tasting honey in the state of Kansas.

This year the Sunday after the honey is judged our judge has volunteered to stay and talk about how to make your entries better for next year.

We need to fill up the honey show area with entries as the state fair administration is taking a hard look at how many entries are being submitted in all departments. Space is at a premium during the fair and they want to use it in the best way possible. Let's fill up the honey show area to overflowing and show how proud we are of our honey.

If you have any questions feel free to get ahold of me and I will help you in any way I can.

Kristi Sanderson

Western Ks beekeepers meet at Garden City

Due to low populations of beekeepers in western KS, a few years ago past KHPA Region Directors banded together to offer region meetings for beekeepers west of US 183 Highway. The intent was to see that a good-sized group would result at meetings. Sunday afternoon, April 7, 29 western KS beekeepers met at the Garden City COOP Safety Building at 109 S. Main St. Garden City, KS. Local beekeepers John Ross Harmon and KHPA member Robin Wolking hosted the afternoon event. The attendees covered a good portion of the SW KS, from communities and rural areas such as Liberal, Minneola, Kendall, Scott City to name a few. Introductions proved the group was primarily new or newer beekeepers, helping the presenters bring their messages to the right level of instruction.

Starting with some announcements and attendee introductions, four presentations followed. Announcements included mention of Univ. of Nebraska's new Master Beekeeper program, Smokey Hills Public TV program ***Honey***, promotion of KHPA membership along with an invitation to the fall 2019 KHPA meeting in Wichita and spring 2020 meeting in Hays. Advantages of registering hive locations with Fieldwatch® was mentioned. Announcements wrapped up with Greg Swob's program, **Bee Lives Matter**. BLM is beginning to work with the Nebraska Beekeepers Association with the intent of helping hobby beekeepers replace hives lost from recent devastating floods. The program is in the beginning stages and hopes to raise funds over the next year to help some beekeepers replace hives in time for spring 2020. Presentations followed, including coverage of the Four Major Concerns of beekeepers stated by KHPA President, Jim Kellie in his February Cappings article - Forage, Honey, Queens & Varroa Mites.

Forage was to have been presented by Sharp Brothers Seed Co. from Healy, KS. who have several seed mixes available for small and large pollinator planting areas. Unfortunately, the intended speaker had just recently left the company and Sharp Brothers was unable to provide a replacement speaker on short notice. The discussion on Forage was turned into a round table talk of suggested planting varieties, where to find seed mixes, etc.

Honey was discussed by Greg who showed the group samples of very light clover, light amber and amber wildflower along with very dark buckwheat honey. Discussions on adulteration of honey, and various marketing terms to describe honey was included. When is a licensed food processing facility necessary? Label requirements were also part of the honey agenda.

A presentation on Queens by Brenda Seader, KHPA member from Sharon Springs followed. Brenda offered suggestions on shopping for queens from commercial producers – questions to ask the producer upon ordering queens were suggested. Brenda gave a short description of selecting quality traits a breeder queen should have. Western KS beekeepers group intends to plan a queen rearing workshop for one of their future gatherings.

The Varroa Mite discussion included methods to inspect or count colonies and treatment options for this economically devastating pest. Visual, Powdered Sugar, Alcohol Wash systems to detect and count Mites were presented. No live bees were present, but a teaching/training hive was available to show attendees hive inspections. How to look for the queen and to protect her once found; frame 'shake' demonstration; along with home-made and commercially available kits were shown to the group using the training hive.

The afternoon wrapped up with everyone's favorite – Show & Tell. Don Morrell of Garden City showed a Flow Hive® super and how it is intended to make work easier for the beekeeper; Brenda Seader shared the kit she uses for transporting her Oxalic Acid vaporizer and accessories to an apiary; Amy Dikeman from Syracuse displayed an insulating winter cover 'quilt box' and bee escape inner cover her husband had made; Greg Swob shared his 'Wildcat Bee Vac' kit for removing swarms and safely installing them into hives.

The meeting was wrapped up with a honey sign door prize donated by Robin Wolking won by Gary Schnellbacher of Satanta, KS (and cleaning up some powdered sugar). The next meeting for Western Ks Beekeepers is to be in June, 2019 at Hays.

Greg Swob

Northeastern Kansas Beekeepers Funday-Birkenstocks and Bee Veils

This year's Funday has something for everyone. Mark your calendars for Saturday, June 1. This will be a great opportunity for you to hear notable beekeeping speakers and educators. This all-day event will be held at the Douglas County Fairgrounds, 2110 Harper St., Lawrence, KS. The program will be from 8:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m. The fee includes snacks, lunch, home-made honey ice cream, and a day full of fun. Bring your veil and protective clothing if you would like to work through hives. A catered BBQ dinner is offered, with an extra fee of \$20, at the close of Funday. The deadline to sign up for the dinner is May 25th. To register online go to www.nekba.org. There is a discount for registering prior to May 22. For those from out of town, there are a group of rooms reserved at the Country Inn and Suites, 2176 E 23rd St, Lawrence, KS. (785) 749-6010. Use the phrase Beekeepers Funday for the group rate.

Randy Oliver owns and operates a small commercial beekeeping enterprise in the foothills of Grass Valley, in Northern California. He and his two sons manage 1000-1500 colonies for migratory pollination, queen production, nuc production, and honey. He has been keeping honey bees since 1966. Randy researches, analyzes, and digests beekeeping information from all over the world in an attempt to not only broaden his own depth of understanding and knowledge, but to develop practical solutions to many of today's beekeeping problems, which he then shares with other beekeepers through his various articles in bee magazines, his speaking engagements worldwide, and on his website:

www.ScientificBeekeeping.com. Randy will be speaking about small scale queen rearing, oxalic acid treatments, and practical beekeeping best management practices.

Dr. Katie Lee received her PhD. from the University of Minnesota. Katie's dissertation focused on improving the health and survivorship of commercial honey bee colonies. Most recently she conducted research with Marla Spivak at the University of Minnesota Bee Lab. She also worked on *A Practical Standardized Sampling Plan for Varroa destructor on Apis mellifera*. Dr. Lee will speak on Breeding for Hygienic Behavior and Varroa mite biology and treatment.

Dr. Judy Wu-Smart is the Extension and Research Entomologist at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Department of Entomology. The UNI, Bee Lab pursues research questions and extension programs focused on stressors impacting pollinator health in both managed and wild bee communities. We certainly appreciate Dr. Wu-Smart presentations at past Fundays, and we are most fortunate that she has accepted our invitation to share with us again. Dr. Wu-Smart will troubleshooting at the hives again this year as well as speaking on pesticide residues and pests and diseases.

Dr. Matthew Smart, a published author, did graduate research at the University of Minnesota, Department of Entomology. He is currently a wildlife biologist at the USGS Northern Prairie Wildlife Research Center. Dr. Smart will be talking about native plants on the Great Plains and which species our honey bees rely on.

Dr. Marion Ellis, professor emeritus of entomology and researcher from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, will be a featured speaker. Dr. Ellis has spoken at our Funday events on several occasions. Dr. Ellis will be presenting a session on comb honey production. He will also be doing a special session with youth scholarship recipients at the hives.

Dr. Chip Taylor, professor emeritus University of Kansas, founder and director of Monarch Watch. Dr. Taylor will be conducting our annual swarm demonstration. It's always interesting to hear his anecdotes about honey bee research.

Kristi Sanderson will be telling us how to find the queen and mark her.

Robin Kolterman will be leading youth activities that include Bee Bingo and Candle Dipping. If children age 5 and under are attending, we ask that they be accompanied by an adult.

Warren and Jane Nelson will be demonstrating wax rendering and candle pouring.

Joanna Wills, with the Kansas Rural Center, will be educating us on the KRC's program regarding Apiculture Insurance.

For those that would like to know how to digitally capture their bees at work, **Susan Ellis** will conduct "Bee a Shutterbug".

There will be a Honey Extraction demonstration presented by **Golden Prairie Honey**.

Debbie McCaigney will walk us through the steps of Hot Processed Soapmaking as well as demonstrating how to make lotions and balms using products from the hive.

Kansas Honey Producer's Fall Meeting

Friday and Saturday October 18 & 19, 2019
Best Western Wichita North
915 E 53rd ST. N., Wichita KS

The Kansas Honey Producers meetings are for anyone who is interested in beekeeping. It is for folks without hives or who have 1 or more hives. We are a small group who get together twice a year to share information about beekeeping. We typically have two national guest speakers.

The Fall meeting of the Kansas Honey Producers Association will be held in Wichita this year. Please mark your calendars now for this event. We have confirmed several guest speakers for this meeting. We will have Dr. Jennifer Tsuruda from the Department of Entomology and Plant Pathology Extension at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville will attend. Also, one of our favorite people will be at this meeting too, Dr. Judy Wu-Smart. Judy is an Extension and Research Entomologist at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Department of Entomology. Judy received her doctorate in Entomology from the University of MN under the direction of Dr. Marla Spivak. Another guest speaker will be Louann Hauser from Lenexa. Louann is a past American Honey Queen who will give us a presentation on Media Training-Beekeeper Tips and Tricks about how to talk to the Media.

You may make your room reservations by calling the Best Western Wichita North by calling 316-832-9387 and mentioning the Kansas Honey Producers Association to get our discounted rate of \$89.99 per night. To get this rate reservations must be made by September 26th.

Please mark your calendars for upcoming KHPA meetings:

March 6 & 7, 2020 possibly Hays KS

October 16 & 17, 2020 Guest: Tammy Horn Potter, Kentucky State Apiarist

Kansas Honey Producer's Association
Robert Burns
7601 W. 54th Terrace Shawnee Mission, KS 66202
Address Service Requested



Kansas Honey Producer's Association Membership Application

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip Code _____

Phone# _____ Email Address _____

Membership Kansas Honey Producer's Association per year (Jan.-Dec.) \$15.00 _____

Additional family members wanting voting rights \$1.00 per person \$1.00 _____

Additional family names: _____

Youth Membership (18 years of age or under) \$7.50 _____ American Bee Journal 1 year subscription \$24.00 _____

Bee Culture Magazine (formerly "Gleanings") 1 year subscription \$25.00 _____

Donation Amount _____ Total Due _____

Make checks payable to: KHPA or Kansas Honey Producer's Association. Email: rburnshoney@gmail.com

Mail to: Robert Burns, 7601 W 54th Terrace, Shawnee Mission, Kansas 66202 Phone# 913-831-6096

The Kansas Honey Producer's Association is a nonprofit IRC 501(c)5 agricultural educational organization, run by dedicated volunteers, and supported primarily by membership dues (subscriptions).

The IRC status means that the association is a tax-exempt organization.

While donations are always welcome, they are not tax deductible as a charitable contribution.

However, membership dues and subscriptions may be deductible as ordinary and necessary business expenses.

Renew On Line
www.kansashoneyproducers.org