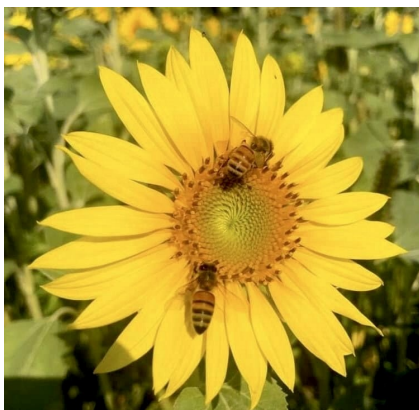




CAPPINGS

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
- Fall Conference

Inside this issue:

State Fair	2
President's Corner	3
Around Kansas	4-7
Scholarship News	7-9
Fall Conference	9-11

The Legislative Update by Buck Bradley

BeeCAUSE Alliance: Uniting Beekeepers for a Stronger Future

Not much to report on the legislative front here in Kansas. HB 2158 will be picked up again in the next legislative session. This bill would exempt small-scale beekeepers from the licensing requirement for selling honey in retail settings, a step that could make it easier for small producers to bring their products to market in their community.

We're also preparing for the Bees Under the Dome event on February 4, 2026 which presents a great opportunity to educate legislators about the importance of honey bees and the beekeeping industry in Kansas. If you'd like to help with this effort, please let us know!

In the meantime, I

came across a new organization that is taking on some of the broader challenges beekeepers face at the national level, with the potential to influence future legislation and agricultural policy. What caught my attention most was their proposal to pay beekeepers who keep their colonies alive.

Across the United States and Canada, beekeepers are dealing with mounting challenges from pesticide exposure and habitat loss to shifting regulations and a lack of unified representation. Recognizing these issues, the BeeCAUSE Alliance has emerged to bring together commercial beekeepers, suppliers, and allied industries under a single, coordinated voice.

BeeCAUSE Alliance is structured as a 501(c)(6) nonprofit trade asso-

ciation, which allows it to advocate and lobby on behalf of the beekeeping industry. Its mission is to professionalize beekeeping, elevate it to the level of other agricultural industries, and ensure that beekeepers have consistent, dedicated representation at both national and regional levels.

For decades, beekeepers have managed hives, produced honey, and advocated for pollinators — often without the time or resources to address policy and regulatory challenges effectively. BeeCAUSE Alliance seeks to change that by establishing a professional leadership team focused on the long-term health of the industry.

Membership is open to commercial beekeepers, state and local associations, and industry

partners throughout the U.S. and Canada. The Alliance believes that a unified effort is essential to address shared threats to pollinators and to strengthen the economic sustainability of beekeeping.

One of BeeCAUSE's most innovative proposals is to financially reward beekeepers for successfully keeping colonies alive. Similar to conservation programs that pay farmers for environmental stewardship, this initiative would recognize the ecological and agricultural value of healthy hives. By incentivizing survival rather than compensating loss, the program aims to promote hive health, resilience, and sustainable management practices across the industry.

In addition, BeeCAUSE is tackling key issues such as EPA regulations, GMO and herbicide policy, habitat restoration, invasive species management, and honey quality standards. Through advocacy, applied research, and strategic partnerships, BeeCAUSE Alliance hopes to give beekeepers a unified and influential voice in the future of agriculture and pollinator health.

For more information or to learn how to support the organization, visit www.becausealliance.org.



We were awarded Grand Champion for indoor booth at the Kansas State Fair out of all the buildings on the fairgrounds! It truly takes a lot of effort from everyone to have received this award. Thank you to everyone who helped to make this happen!

Kristi Sanderson, 2nd Vice President



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PRESIDENT'S CORNER by Becky Tipton

Signs of fall: Asters blooming, pumpkin patches open, fall festivals, falling leaves, crickets chirping, days getting shorter, Chief's football, and the Kansas Honey Producers Fall Meeting. You won't find a better meeting opportunity anywhere! Take a look at the program highlights here in the Cappings.

Steve and I teach a beginning beekeeping class. We meet at Ward Meade Park in Topeka. Another area beekeeper put one of his goals into action and planned a NEW area event. He called it The Honey Festival, and it was also held at Ward Meade Park in Topeka. They graciously asked me to present and talk about our class and opportunities for new beekeepers in our area—it went very well! When someone tries something new, you are never quite sure what you will get. This Honey Festival was pretty sweet (pun intended). Approximately 1500 folks attended. Lots of honey was tasted, lots of conversations about bees and beekeeping were heard, and a good time was had by all. Congratulations to the planning crew! SPECIAL THANKS to Robert Burns. Robert drove to Topeka and, alone, manned a table with information about KHPA and NEKBA! He took this on out of the goodness of his heart for the promotion and betterment of our associations. That is the kind of dedication that keeps our clubs buzzing.

How do you promote your honey products? You may be a very small backyard beekeeper and only harvest enough honey to supply your own table (and a few lucky friends). But if you've grown to several hives, you likely produce more than you can consume. Giving it away is not hard but it's rewarding to get a little money back for all your hard work. There are many opportunities for sales, but all require a bit of hustle from the beekeeper. A simple sign and a self-serve honesty stand may work for you. I've seen vegetables and eggs both offered in this trustworthy manner. But, if you are trying to join a market or a fall festival, it's best to find one that doesn't have three other honey vendors. Many towns now have an "art walk" or special area that offers regular activities; food trucks, live music, and fun craft tables – local honey will be a hit! Honey is considered a non-potentially hazardous food. To sell to the end consumer (baker, brewer, or individual) takes no special license.

Several of our KHPA members have worked for the past couple years to change the honey sales laws in Kansas. As the law is written now, to put your honey in a local hardware store or gift shop for sale, you must have a licensed commercial kitchen. That is both costly and time consuming and unless you are a large sideline beekeeper, it can seem a daunting task (and often cost prohibitive). Buck Bradley has spearheaded this effort to align our Kansas laws with other neighboring states. In short, the change would allow small scale beekeepers to sell pure, raw, honey (their honey—no purchased honey) through a third party. This would be for extracted honey or comb honey; no infused, creamed, or otherwise processed honey would be allowed. The commercial kitchen is only concerned with the bottling process. It is frequently argued that since honey poses no health risk to the consumer, why is a licensed kitchen needed? Good question. This change would benefit small beekeepers with another way to sell their product and benefit communities with another way to get wholesome honey

from their community into their kitchens. In January, we will again work with the Kansas legislature to try to move this bill to become a law. You could all help this effort by contacting your representatives and encouraging them to support the bill. I would like to thank several of our KHPA members who, although they have already invested money in a commercial kitchen, are fully supporting this bill. They are strong advocates for beekeepers and the beekeeping industry. That is the altruism of the hive.

News from Northeast Kansas

There has been no shortage of festivals, county fairs, farm tours, markets, and pollinator events in the NE Region. They provide lots of opportunities for beekeepers. Beekeepers can sell their products from the hive, as well as, promote and educate the public about honey bees and beekeeping. The Kansas Honey Festival is a new event that took place at Old Prairie Town, Ward Meade Botanical Garden, Topeka, KS, on September 27, 2025. Local beekeeper, Curt Wiebelhaus, partnered with the Shawnee County Parks & Recreation department in planning and implementing the event. The day included speakers, vendors, crafts, children's activities, food trucks, and informational tables. There were approximately 1500 visitors. Guest speakers included Becky Tipton, Meridan, KS, and others. Robert Burns, Shawnee Mission, KS, manned a table with flyers promoting KHPA and NEKBA.

The Open Teaching Apiary, located at Pendleton's Country Market, Lawrence, KS has also been busy. Joli Winer reports that they hosted over 200 attendees over the beekeeping year. Educational activities included making spring nucs to make up for losses, testing for varroa mites at each visit, and going through hives looking for eggs, larvae, queens etc. They were able to learn about queenless colonies, requeening, and setting up a swarm trap. This fall, Varroxxsan strips were ineffective on the hives at the apiary. They recently completed three rounds of Oxalic Acid vaporizations. Mite testing will be done during the last session in October. A September farm tour at Pendletons, offered an opportunity to sell some of the 400 pounds of honey produced by the apiary, provided educational materials, and displayed an observation hive. The Open Educational Apiary was made possible by a grant from the Great Plains Master Beekeepers program.

NEKBA's Funday 2026 plans are already underway. Funday is being coordinated by Milisa Suckow and her husband, Mark. Milisa and her team are in the process of lining up great speakers. Confirmed thus far, is popular YouTube blogger, David Burns. David produces a weekly video and has approximately 160,000 subscribers. In addition to blogging, he produces queens, nucs, and packages. David is a Certified Master Beekeeper through the Eastern Apicultural Society (2010). He also writes a monthly column for Bee Culture Magazine. Don't miss this day-long event on June 6, 2025, at the Douglas County Fairgrounds, Lawrence, KS. For updates, visit www.nekba.org.

The feast or famine rainfalls the NE region has received since June, have left some apiaries with lots of stored honey while other locations are at a high risk of starving. Beekeepers here are paying close attention to food stores and feeding as needed. Never underestimate the power of a well-timed rainfall.

Jo Patrick, Northeastern Region Representative

North Central Region News

Hello Bee Friends!

As of this newsletter, both Open Apiary in Manhattan and our regional meetings at Rolling Hills Zoo have concluded for the season.

It's been an honor to watch former Newbees become the mentors over the years, and a sense of community as beekeepers meet and lend each other support.

I encourage everyone to keep on learning throughout the beekeeping "off" season by reading, watching videos, and/or attending bee conferences and classes. It will keep bees on your mind until we get in the bees together again next year.

Now is an excellent time to register for the KHPA Fall meeting. If you have some mead you've made, bring it with you to the meeting to be judged in our mead contest on Friday night!

Nikki Bowman, North Central Region Representative

South Central Region News

To everyone who entered the State Fair, Congratulations! A huge thank you to all who helped run the booth and took the time to talk to people at the fair about bees. Without your willingness, Kansas Bees would not be able to share their importance with the numerous guests that attend the State Fair every year. Thank you for all your hard work.

As we head into a cooler season and prepare our bees for the winter with harvest done, we start to reflect on the year. We needed the rain, especially after years of dry weather. Green pastures and the crops (that are not flooded) look great for this time of year. The downside with the rain at times of major nectar flow, is a decrease in honey production which some beekeepers are experiencing. Though that is never what we want to happen, some beekeepers are just happy to have moisture and are optimistic that Spring will be a time to see a great flow once more.

Many of the clubs are planning the final meetings of the year. Conversations will involve preparing hives for the cold months ahead as well as sharing ways to make other bee products. South Central Kansas Beekeepers Association, for an example, is looking at a demonstration on how to make mead and perhaps other products from wax and honey. These are the meetings that are memorable. Finally, some time to slow down after working hard with the bees and share knowledge with one another; Lessons learned, plans for the future, and building a support system. You appreciate having conversations about bees with someone other than your spouse. As time moves forward, I hope you all are able to relax and enjoy moments like these. Before you know it, Spring will be here once again, and the work starts all over.

Zach Cooper, South Central Region Representative

News from Western Kansas

Lessons From the Hives

Pollinator Perspective

Controversy creates an opportunity for growth. A quick look at the list of professional and personal roles I've acquired over the last 5 decades is interesting, similar, related, and focused. However, the roles of *farmer/rancher* and *beekeeper* have not been without controversy. Our goal is to produce marketable products from the farm free of harmful insects and weeds while maintaining, tending, and attracting beneficial pollinators to support the environment.

"Food is LOVE!" In my role as mother and grandmother, I tend to prepare quantities of food much greater than consumed. When our grown children and their families visit the farm, Vic and I eat leftovers for a week after they leave! I have always wanted my family to experience feeling satisfied, having enough, being full. Knowing that they are worth the time it takes to prepare good food and that their needs are met, along with consuming quality nutrients allows them to function at peak performance academically, emotionally, mentally, and physically.

What have I learned from controversy, my nurturing tendencies, and the bee hives?

Plan and plant with a pollinator perspective!

Flowers, flowers, flowers! I've planted more flowers and herbs on the farm. And - Yes, of course, there's another "pile to a purpose" adventure. I've repurposed an old rusty, dinged and dented, 50-something Chevy pick-up into a pollinator's paradise. The bed is full of purple catmint, the body surrounded by Maximillian sunflowers, zinnias, and Scarlet Sage.

We've planted more apple trees, peach trees, cherry trees, and more elderberries! The state district forester along with our local wildlife biologist visited the farm and helped us determine schematics to utilize a 5 acre "unproductive" parcel of land transforming it into wildlife and pollinator habitat. In the Spring of 2026, we'll be planting more fruit trees, more elderberries, sand hill plums, choke cherries, and currants, along with a grass buffer between the newly established shrubs and farm ground protecting the habitat from chemicals necessary for farm production.

We planted our first cover crop! It's a mix of iron & clay peas, Sunn hemp, millet, Sorghum Sudan, Forage Collards, black oil sunflower, and Clemson Spineless Okra. The goal is to increase soil health, provide pollinator foraging sources, provide winter grazing for our cattle – and – minimize the need for chemicals.

I'm reminded... we live in NW Kansas ... where weather extremes are always part of the equation, where rain and water sources are necessary to make it all happen! However, "Food is love!" By looking at the bigger picture to provide quality nutrients for pollinators while planning and planting for optimal farm production, in my opinion, there's no controversy, it's a win – win.

Breathe and Just BEE

Brenda Mazanec, Western Region Representative

Southeast Kansas News



Hello from Southeast Kansas. Corn harvest is almost over and bean harvest is beginning. The bees are starting to look for food. Time to start feeding and doing mite checks. Need to have the girls strong, healthy, and mite-free as we head (scream) towards winter.

From the wet spring to the dry fall, things are winding down. The honey has been pulled, frames prepared for winter storage, and now to start on beeswax projects.

The raffle quilt is complete. This years' quilt is big enough to fit a queen size bed with plenty of drop on the sides and the foot of the bed. Bring your checkbooks as you won't want to miss the opportunity to bid on this warm bee quilt. This would make a great holiday gift for your favorite beekeeper. Come bid and bid often.

See you in Salina in November.

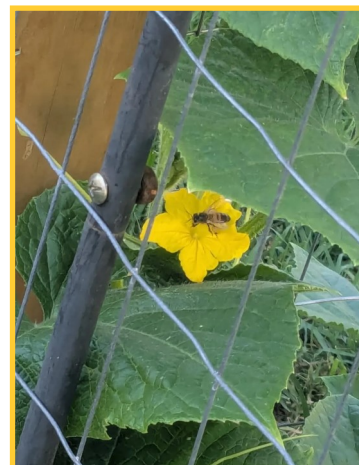
Rhonda Heston, Southeast Region Representative

Scholarship News



We are wrapping up our first season with our hives and have learned so much! We have been able to introduce the bees to several people from elementary students to retirees. Our church is diligently working on our Refugium project that will provide a community garden and natural spaces for people in our community to enjoy the outdoors and all its benefits. Our hope was that the bees would aid the gardens and help produce higher yields. We were not disappointed! Several people shared photos of our girls pollinating their vegetables. Not only have they helped our plants but they have been of benefit to our people. The kids

have learned to not be afraid of bees. They tell their friends on the playground to leave them alone while they happily buzz around the clover. Our priest has used them as sermon illustrations on Sundays. Overall, it has been a lot of work but worth every second.



St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, Derby, Kansas

As we complete the second and final year of the KHPA Scholarship, Lieb 4-H wants to send a big thank you to our mentor, Jim Raven. Jim was there for us as he dealt with his own health issues. We wish him the best.

We lost one of the two colonies this winter and attempted to build back by making a walk-away split. With a couple of big queen cells, an abundance of bees, and a location that provided the necessary resources, we thought we were guaranteed success. Sadly, the split failed. Our remaining hive shows a good population and ample honey stores. We were able to add to our hive numbers by catching a few swarms. Going into fall, everything looks good.

Typical to a lot of youth, our club members are involved in many more activities than 4-H. It's evident the bees were something the members were excited about as we typically had 10-15 members on meeting days and days we worked the hives. With the interest the bees have generated, we are hoping the Labette County Fair will have a honey class next year.

Finally, we are wrapping up this season with mite treatments and feeding. We are already looking forward to next Spring. Thank you to the members of KHPA for allowing our club to participate in the scholarship program. It gave our club a jumpstart into the world of beekeeping.

Tracy Maxson, Lieb 4-H Club Leader



FFA booth at the local county fair. The display celebrated the knowledge and excitement that the students had for their new beekeeping adventure at Altoona-Midway.

As recipients of last year's KHPA scholarship, the Altoona-Midway Ag Education Department and AMMHS students and community have been given an amazing opportunity to not only experience the wonderful world of beekeeping but also to grow and continue to expand student knowledge of pollinators, develop hands-on skills in hive management, and build a deeper appreciation for the vital role bees play in agriculture and our environment. What started as curiosity has quickly turned into excitement and pride as students have taken ownership of caring for their bees.

Our students soon discovered that beekeeping is full of surprises. All three of our hives swarmed this season, and while it was challenging, it also provided an incredible real-life lesson. Watching the bees raise new queens and reorganize their colonies helped students understand the complexity and resilience of hive life in a way no textbook could teach. While we ultimately did end up losing one of our hives, it will give us another excellent educational opportunity in the spring when we will attempt to

split a hive to recover the one lost. These experiences and many more have sparked questions, conversations, and a deeper respect for the bees themselves.

Not every part of the journey was easy, as several students got their first bee stings while checking hives. Instead of discouraging them, those stings became part of the story; a reminder that beekeeping requires patience, courage, and care. We even had a bee sting leaderboard to track our "learning" expe-



Old Iron Days, Fredonia, KS. Students shared their knowledge of bees & beekeeping.

riences. Through it all, our bee mentor, Ron Smail, has been a steady guide, sharing his wisdom and encouragement at every step. Thanks to KHPA's support and Ron's mentorship, our students are not only learning about bees but also about responsibility, problem-solving, and perseverance. These are skills that will stay with our students long after they have graduated from Altoona-Midway High School and perhaps started their very own beekeeping adventure.

Krystle Mayginnnes, Principal, Altoona-Midway

A Message from our 1st Vice President

It's been a real pleasure serving as 1st Vice President of your organization these last few years. I hope the conferences that I helped with have met your expectations and provided some good education, camaraderie, and maybe some entertainment also. One item at our Business Meeting will be to replace me in this office. I have every intention of being in the audience for future conferences while new horizons will be taking place that will consume my time and energy.

This time around we will be focusing on taking your hobby/business beyond the back porch or local farmers market. We will look at agritourism with help from Kelsey Wendling with the Kansas Dept. of Agriculture. Amanda Murphy (granddaughter of Jim & Wanda Morford) will share their agritourism experiences at Elam Lavender Farm. Kim Hagar from Caldwell, KS will show us how she turned her passion for farming, raising cattle, beekeeping, vegetable growing, cooking, baking, (pewh...!) blended into a bustling small-town business. She will also share some tips on working with beeswax to make health and beauty products. We have not shared that topic in a long time.

Main speaker, Zachary Lamas, PhD will deliver some very interesting presentations from research, such as what happened to cause the loss of so many hives earlier this year? Brian McCornack, PhD at KSU will tell us about their booming entomology program and where it is headed along with their role in the American Honey Institute. Morgan Flax, Sheepdog Brewing Company, will talk about how he and his brother turned their passion for mead into another small-town popular business. The photo above is an example of a flight of mead and charcuterie tray that Sandy & I recently enjoyed at their establishment in Ness City, KS. The sky is the limit when we combine great ideas and knowledge with energy. Our presenters may just inspire us to move beyond the farmers market into a broader venture.

Great food, great times, education, fun, and some fundraising will be part of our gathering. Please bring your Silent Auction items to help support our causes. You are all the most generous and friendly group of people which I am proud to know!

Thank YOU ALL for your support, help, and generosity, in making this such a great organization for so many decades.

Greg Swob, 1st Vice President



Kansas Honey Producers Association Fall 2025 Conference

**Courtyard by Marriott – 3020 Riffle Dr. – Salina, KS 785-309-1300. Group Rate \$119 until 10-31-25
November 6 – 8, 2025**

Speakers and timeline subject to change

Thursday, November 6th

8:00 PM – Executive Committee Meeting (all welcome)

Friday, November 7th

8:00 – 9:00 AM – Set up and bring your items for Silent Auction fund raiser

9:00- 9:15 – Welcome and Announcements – Becky Tipton, KHPA President

9:15 – 10:00 – XXXX – Zachary Lamas, PhD – topic to be announced

10:00 – 10:20 – Break

10:20 – 11:05 – Kimmy Hagar – Hagar Acres Farm to Home – Open a Store... It'll Be Fun They Said

11:05 – 11:20 – Break – Visit Vendors

11:20 – 12:05 – XXXX – Zachary Lamas , PhD – (TBA)

11:20 – 12:05 – Breakout for Scholarship Groups, New Beekeepers in Lobby – Julie Cahoj

12:05 – 1:30 – Lunch – visit with the Vendors – bid on Silent Auction Items – Network

1:30 – 2:30 – Brian McCornack PhD, KSU Entomology – The American Honey Institute and Future of Beekeeping at K-State

2:30 – 2:50 – Break - Silent Auction ends at 3:35

2:50 – 3:50 – Morgan Flax – Sheepdog Brewing Company – Meadery in Ness City, KS

2:50 – 3:50 - Scholarship Groups meet in lobby area

3:50 – Area Regions Gather, Network, Discuss Issues/concerns

6:00 – Banquet and Dinner – MEAD Competition!

Saturday November 8th

8:00 – 9:00 – Set up and bring your Silent Auction items

9:00 – 9:15 - Welcome and Announcements – Becky Tipton, KHPA President

9:15 – 10:00 – Zachary Lamas, PhD (TBA)

10:00 – 10:20 – Break – visit vendors, bid on silent auction items

10:20 – 11:05 – Kimmy Hagar – Wax On... Wax Off (working with beeswax)

11:05 – 11:25 Break – Visit Vendors Note: Jim Raders with Dadant will leave after lunch

11:25 – 12:15 – KHPA Business Meeting

12:15 – 1:30 – Lunch

1:30 – 2:15 – Amanda Murphy – Elam Lavender Farm – Agritourism in Action

2:15 – 2:35 – Break – bid on silent auction items – Auction Closes After Break!!

2:35 – 3:20 – Zachary Lamas, PhD – (TBA)

3:20 - ? - Open Panel Questions & Answers with experienced beekeepers

Registration for Spring 2025 KHPA Conference

Names: _____

Enter # of Attendees 18 and older:

Friday Only - Lunch and Banquet Dinner _____ X \$45.00 = _____

Saturday Only - includes Lunch: _____ X \$30.00 = _____

Both Days - Lunches and Banquet Dinner included:

_____ X \$75.00 = _____

KHPA Annual Dues: \$25.00/family: _____ X \$25.00 = _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email address: _____

Check one: Renewal: _____ New Membership: _____

Check if mail only to address above: _____

* The newsletter will be via email unless otherwise specified. *

Grant Program Donation: _____

Thank You!

Total: \$ _____

Mail to: KHPA – Attn. Sondra Koehn – PO Box 171 – Galva, KS 67443

Or you may register online at: www.kansashoneyproducers.org

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

Address Service Requested

2025 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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