

Beekeeping Throughout the Year

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So, you want to be a beekeeper.....

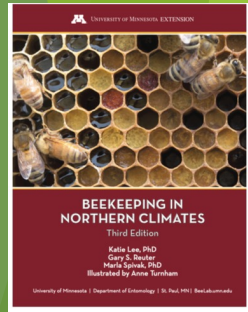
- ▶ Beekeeping is applied bee biology.
 - ▶ Understand the biology to understand the needs of your bees.
- ▶ *Apis Mellifera* - our honey bee is non-native and is livestock.
 - ▶ Care for as we care for other livestock: shelter, food, water, protection from disease



4 Principles of Productive Beekeeping



- 1—Every colony must be protected in equipment with removable frames and located in a good apiary site.
- 2—Every colony must have a young, prolific queen.
- 3—Every colony must have adequate honey and pollen reserves at all times.
- 4—Every colony must be monitored and managed for diseases and mites, and treated only when necessary.



Why keep bees?

- ▶ Honey
- ▶ Pollination
- ▶ Beeswax
- ▶ Fascinating hobby
- ▶ The bees need you?



Before you start:

- ▶ Time—Do you have time to do this. Bees are livestock.
- ▶ \$\$--Used Equipment vs New Equipment. Start w 2 hives (best) \$1500.
- ▶ Location—Is your back yard the best location?
- ▶ What else can I do? Plant flowers.



Before you get your bees:

- 1—Order your bees. (The best suppliers run out.)
- 2—Assemble your equipment.
Paint exterior surfaces.
- 3—Build a hive stand.
- 4—Choose a location. (If in doubt, ask an expert.)
- 5—Make syrup 1:1



April 15th -More than tax day

Year 1:

Arrival and installation of package bees and/or nuc colonies. You have begun.

Usually fruit bloom and dandelion time in NE Kansas



Year 2:

Is your hive healthy?
Does your hive need
to be split?
Does your queen
need to be replaced?

Why Feed?

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- Improved queen acceptance
- Add food reserves
- Stimulate queen to lay
- Stimulate nest cleaning
- Draw foundation
- **Always feed new packages**

Spring goal: Grow the colony

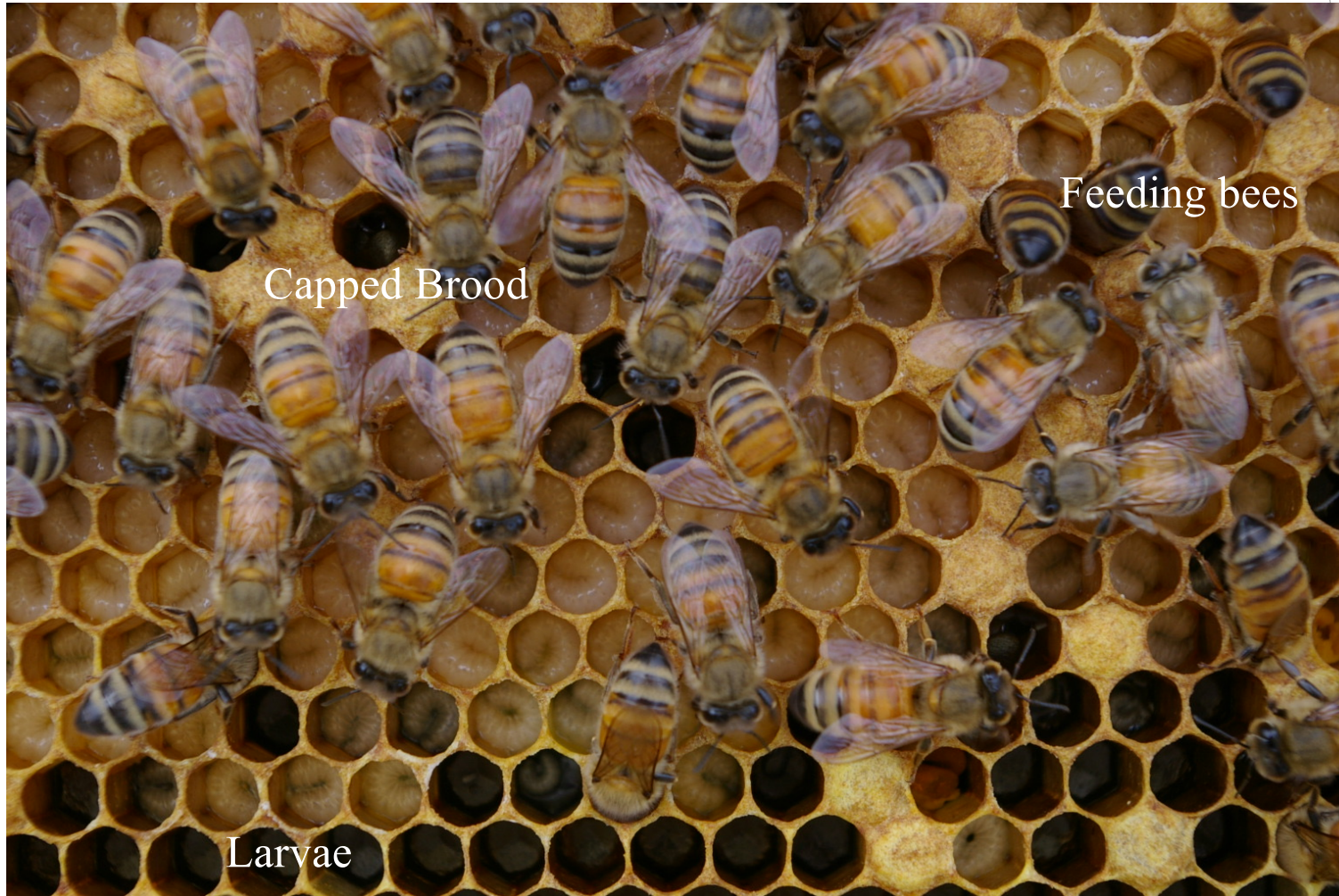


Feed Feed Feed

- 1:1 white sugar and water by weight
- Heat water to near boiling
- Stir in sugar to dissolve --do not boil
- COOL
- Discard if syrup becomes moldy
- May choose high-fructose corn syrup



What does healthy look like?



Open
Teaching
Apiaries and
Mentoring

Who is
qualified to
be a mentor?

What's a
"Bee Buddy"?

How often to inspect—what are you looking for?

- During hive growth, inspect every 7-10 days.
- Is the colony queen-right?
 - All stages of brood?
 - Eggs?
- How many frames of brood?
- How many frames of food? (pollen and honey)
- Evidence of swarm activity?



SWARM SEASON!

MAY 1 - JULY 1

(May extend, March 1 - September 1)

- ❖ Reproduction Swarms
 - ❖ Asexual reproduction
 - ❖ Seasonal ????
 - ❖ Abundant floral sources
- ❖ Absconding swarms—the result of hive trauma



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Signs of swarm preparation.



You see this....

Mature, capped queen cells.

No other eggs seen in the hive.

LOTS of brood.

Lots of food.

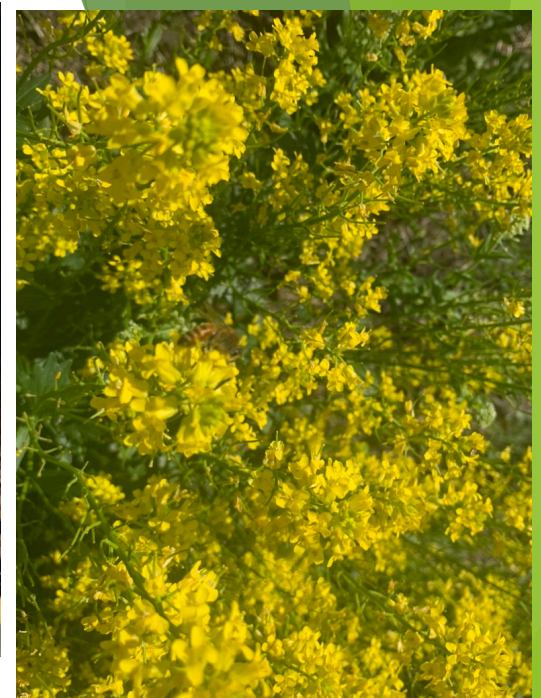
Little undrawn space.



Close it up and check back in 3 weeks.

Your hive swarmed.

S U M M E R



Am I ready to super for honey production?

*1st year hives may not make a honey surplus.

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The Count... frames of brood,
frames of food, empty frames.



The rule of 7.

- Stop feeding when 2 deep **brood boxes** are filled



Supering



Time to make surplus honey—add a super! (and a queen excluder)

Supering—making honey!



How much
honey does a
colony make
in a year?

Queen
Excluder?!?

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Supering



Sign of nectar flow

Inspect supers weekly—every 4-7 days

Rotate and exchange partially filled frames for filled/capped frames—outside to inside.

Rule of 7—7 full frames, add another super!



Superring

Varietal honey--take advantage of seasonal harvest.



Beekeeping is farming—everything is weather dependent.

Wax production is seasonal



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Water—essential in summer

- Not too close—20 yards away
- Set it up before they really need it
- Moving water is attractive
- A little rock salt is appealing
- Plants or floats keep bees alive



Honey Harvest



Honey for you,
honey for the bees.

Control Varroa Mites

- Check mite levels MONTHLY
- Know the signs of high mite infestation
- Understand treatment choices



ids on the hemolymph of both adult bees and their brood.



Know your treatment options:

TOOLS FOR VARROA MANAGEMENT

A GUIDE TO EFFECTIVE VARROA SAMPLING & CONTROL

HEALTHY BEES • HEALTHY PEOPLE • HEALTHY PLANET™



**HONEY BEE
HEALTH
COALITION™**

Free download—see your resources pages

Randy Oliver



ScientificBeekeeping.com

Oxalic Acid research and applications.

Timeline is variable

- Everything is weather and climate dependent
- Honey Harvest—mid summer
- Mite Treatment
- Feeding—as needed Early Fall
- Protection—First hard frost

Wintering is the basis
for next year's success.

F
A
L
L



Beekeeping has two seasons,
winter
and getting ready for winter.

F
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Hive inspections & Manipulations

- Take your losses in the fall—decision time
- Winter # of bees ~ not # of hives
- Combine weak colonies with stronger colonies
- Evaluate health of queen
- Arrange brood in the bottom hive super



Wind Break

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Protect the colony



Mouse Guards

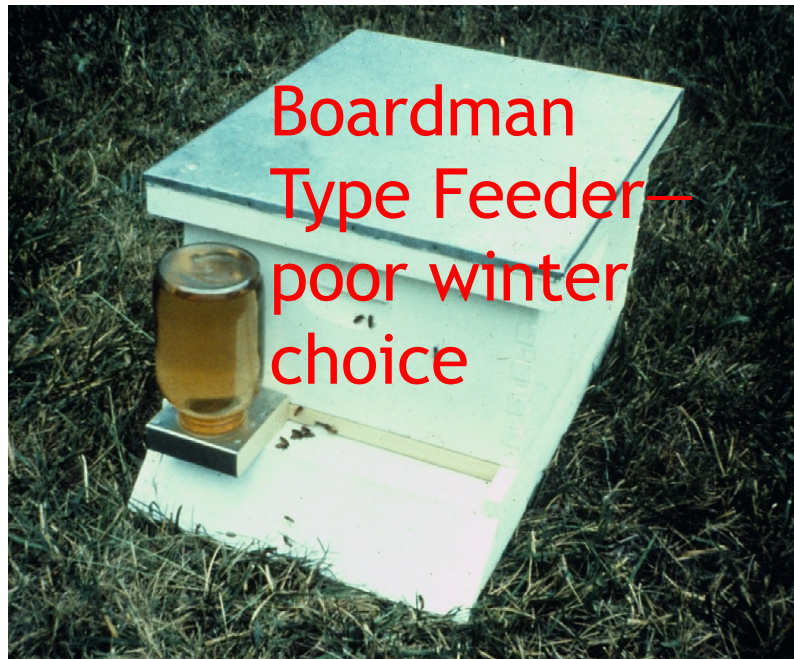
Place in colony before
first hard frost.

Feed, Feed, Feed (while it's still warm)

Winter feed:
2 parts sugar
1 part water

* Hive weight is critical for successful wintering

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L
L



Cold temperature biology- Thermoregulation

- F • @ 57°F —bees cluster loosely
- A • @ 30 °F - bees cluster tightly
- L (smallest cluster)
- L • Bees on outer mantle will maintain 46 °F
- 55 °F -internal cluster w/o brood



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Phoretic Mite Treatment

Oxalic Acid

Loose Cluster—50°
day



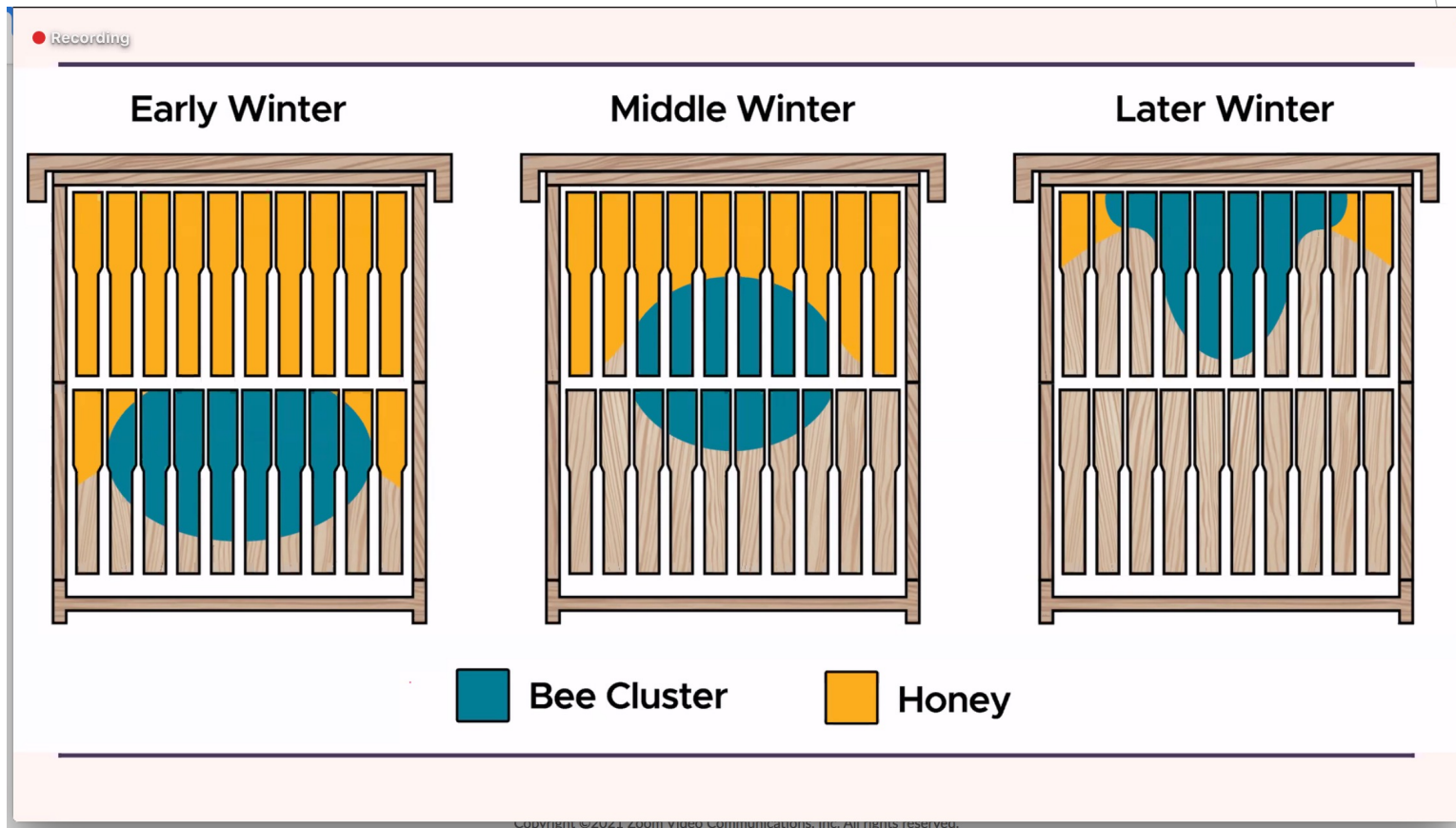
To Wrap or not to wrap?

F Ventilation is
A important—
L moisture =
L ice = dead
bees.

Commercially
available
through
Better Bee



Movement of winter cluster



Dead out—Clean it up

- Remove all dead bees
 - Brush and blow bees out of cells
- Remove all usable resources and transfer to needy hives
- Secure hive to eliminate chance of robbing and or mice.
- Store equipment in a cold environment OR store frames w/o honey with Paramoth crystals
- Try to determine cause of death



Why Hives Die in Winter

Starvation—Check weight frequently

Move food frames closer to cluster

Small Cluster size—Combine in the fall to make strong colonies

Freezing—condensation accumulation

Vent hives on top

Disease—Control Varroa

Failing Queen—Evaluate during final inspection

Combine with stronger colonies—HOW OLD IS YOUR QUEEN?

In Nature only $\frac{1}{4}$ of new swarm colonies survive the winter

What can you control? What can't you control?

It isn't over til it's over

Most winter-kill colonies die in March.

- Increased brood rearing
- Increased food consumption
- Wild weather swings

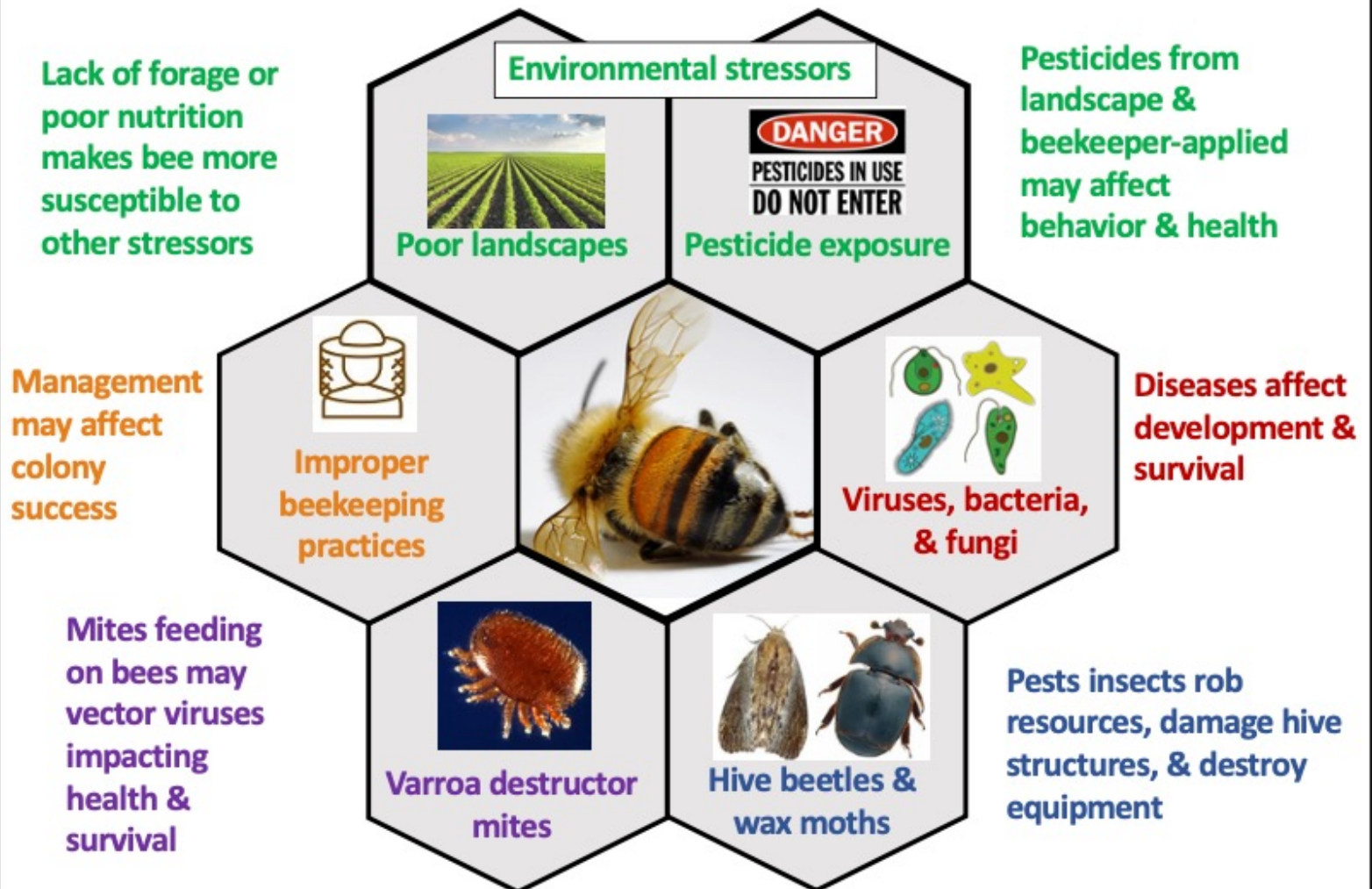



Multiple factors in bee health decline

Bee aware of
false/fad bee
Information.



Ask a true bee
expert.





The hum of
bees is the
voice of the
garden

Most important factors
to successful
beekeeping:

Immerse yourself in
bees

Learn all you can,
see all you can,
listen and ask
questions.

Kansas Honey Producers Association



State-wide organization. Spring meeting March 7-8, 2025, Salina Kansas.

Register @ KansasHoneyProducers.org



- ▶ Another Class:
- ▶ Shawnee N. Community Center

300 NE 43rd St

Topeka, KS

3rd Wednesday of each month. Follows the Beekeeping year.

FREE

Email for schedule:

bstbees@gmail.com

Shawnee North Community Center: Beginning Beekeeping 6:30-8:00 PM (3rd Wednesday) 2025

Date	Activity	Open Apiary*—Come to the farm and get inside the hives.	Notes/changes: See "Resources for Better Beekeeping" handout NEKBA membership www.nekba.org KHPA Membership www.kansashoneyproducers.org Order equipment and bees NOW. See Resources Page for recommendations. DO NOT BUY BEES without getting a recommendation from someone you know.
2/19/2025	Honey Bee Biology—the basis of modern beekeeping	*Open Apiary events will be canceled for weather or illness. You must preregister with Becky to attend the session. bstbees@gmail.com 785-554-1591 (c)	
3/19	Starting Right: Equipment assembly Installing packages & hive locations.	March 23—Open Apiary 1 st inspections of the year Hive Evaluation.	
4/16	Swarm biology, controlling swarming through colony division. Q & A about new colonies	4/20 Spring feeding and growth Making splits, installing queens	Using Q excluders Lighting smokers—smoker fuel SHB—traps
5/21	Summer beekeeping, monitoring buildup, controlling swarming impulse, supering, comb honey, recordkeeping.	5/25 Colony growth. Swarming and swarm catching	
6/7	Attend the NEKBA Funday (full day workshop—Becky will have flyers later this spring) AWESOME day of learning about bees.	DG. County Fairgrounds Register @ www.nekba.org	Amy Vu, University of Florida, Dr. Judy Wu-Smart (Univ. or Neb), Dr. Autumn Smart, Kim Mehalick, EAS Master Beekeeper. At the Hive with area experts.
6/18	What does healthy look like? Reading the frames. Disease overview: Nosema, Foul Brood, Varroa mite, Wax moth, SHB, et al.	6/22 Supering your hives Evaluating strength	
7/16	Harvesting your honey crop, extracting. Fair entries? Honey—care and handling.	7/13 Honey harvest—pulling supers for extracting at class NOTE THE DATE	Evaluating varroa
8/20	Monitoring hives, fall feeding, Varroa management IPM.	8/24 Varroa treatment options demonstrated	
9/17	Fall and winter management, emergency feeding, protecting your hives.	9/21 Winter preparation Mouse guards, wind breaks, feed	
10/15	Winter beekeeping activities		**want to learn something new, ask Becky or Steve
*Open Apiary: Work through hives with Becky & Steve. Seasonal activities. EVERY participant must wear a veil. Bring your own water please.			

Steve and Becky Tipton
9491 X Road, Meriden, KS 661512

785-484-3710 H

785-554-1591 C

bstbees@gmail.com

Open Apiary:

Tipton Farm: 9491 X Road, Meriden

March 23 May 25 July 13

April 20 June 22 August 24 Sept. 21

(Weather conditions permitting)

Topic: 1st inspections, evaluating the colony, reversing the boxes

***MUST notify Becky before attending

[RSVP—bstbees@gmail.com](mailto:RSVP-bstbees@gmail.com)

785-484-3710

785-554-1591 (text)

***MUST wear protective veil. (we have veils you can borrow)



**KIDNAPPERS RETURNING
ME AFTER LISTENING TO ME**



TALK ABOUT BEES FOR 12 HOURS