

Lake Cumberland Beekeepers Association

Newsletter
June 2016

Message from David Gilbert, LCBA President

Fellow beekeepers, we only have a few weeks left of what many call the Spring honey flow. I have checked around on the Kentucky Beekeepers' Facebook page and see many throughout the state have had fairly poor results in their honey stores, compared to a few others in Western and Eastern Kentucky who have plenty. The rains we had during prime poplar and locust blooming hurt the bees' food supply. Fortunately, they have had a good clover crop this year. I planted a large plot of yellow clover last year and the bees are absolutely covering it every day. If you plant clover, remember it takes a second year to start blooming.

Another view from Kentucky beekeepers was the problem of swarming in the Spring. Most agree they lose approximately fifty percent of their potential honey harvest if a colony swarms.

I hope to see all of you at our June monthly

meeting next Monday night at 6:00 p.m. for the question and answer session, business meeting at 6:30 p.m. and then our own Kentucky State Beekeepers' Association President, Ray Tucker, who will be illustrating proper honey extraction.

Best wishes in beekeeping,
David Gilbert

Do you have Honey for sale?

The LCBA website is a very good place to spread the word about honey for sale. If you would like to add your name to the honey for sale contact list on the website, please let me know at the meeting, or email me at

lakecumberland.beekeepers@gmail.com

- Hilary Forsyth



Next LCBA meeting will be held on Monday June 20, 2016

6pm Doors open for general discussion and advice on bees and beekeeping

6.30pm LCBA business meeting

7pm How to prepare your honey for show at the Kentucky State Fair in August.

PLUS—**Extracting honey.** LCBA members will demonstrate how to uncap honey, and the LCBA extractor will be used to extract honey from a

couple of frames. Join us to see how the process works, to share information and experiences with fellow beekeepers, and to taste the honey
Venue: Pulaski County Extension Service Office.

LCBA meetings are free and open to the public. Invite your friends, family and neighbors to join in and talk bees!

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May 2016 LCBA meeting presentation

Following the regular LCBA business meeting on May 18, 2016, LCBA member Pat Rizenbergs gave an excellent presentation on two of the most important pests of bee hives: varroa mite and small hive beetle. Of these pests, varroa mite is by far the most devastating and, left untreated, can cause total loss of a badly infested colony.

Pat emphasized the importance of monitoring hives for the presence of varroa mites using a variety of sampling methods, including sugar rolls and inspection boards. Pat then went on to discuss the lifecycle of varroa mites in the hive, and various treatment methods aimed at reducing mite numbers.

Pat keeps an annual record of the number of hives managed by LCBA members, as a way of monitoring the percentage of annual hive losses. Following up on this information, Pat concludes that in many instances beekeepers who lose the greater number of their hives have not treated for varroa mites.

The lifecycle of small hive beetles was covered, and the damage caused by the beetle larvae. Non-chemical strategies to reduce the populations of

these beetles in the hives were discussed, including plastic beetle traps that fit between the frames, and an oil tray that fits underneath the meshed bottom board of a hive.

Ray Tucker, KSBA President and LCBA member, assisted with the presentation, as did President David Gilbert.



Above: Pat Rizenbergs discusses the importance of treating for the varroa mite, *Varroa destructor*

Bee News from Casey County

May/June bee reports

Don't things change around quickly? Last newsletter, we were concerned about too much rain washing out flowers and preventing the bees from getting out of their hives. This time around, it's a different story: June has been hot and dry, with above-average temperatures and low humidity.

So far, our bees are as busy as ever, though we wonder whether a lot of that activity involves carrying water into the hives to cool everything down. The hives are humming with the sound of bees fanning their wings to keep cool. We have removed the inspection boards and opened up the entrances to give the bees as much air circulation as possible. Make sure your bees have easy access to water—they will need it to keep their hives and brood cool.

So far, white clover is still managing to flower in the fields, despite the heat. Sumacs are coming into bloom, too, which will help sustain the bees for a while. High temperatures are a worry because flowers shut down nectar production when it is over 90 degrees F. Let's hope temperatures drop back down to normal soon, and we get some rain to keep the plants producing flowers.

Honey in the hives is capped and ready for harvest now. However, we are only taking frames from the supers, and leaving honey frames in the brood boxes because the bees will need good supplies as the nectar flow comes to an end.

We will be talking honey at the upcoming LCBA meeting on Monday, June 20. The LCBA extractor will be in action!

- Hilary Forsyth

LCBA outreach

Interested in talking about bees?

Bob Price, Program Manager of Active Day in Somerset, has sent out an invitation to LCBA members to give a presentation to Senior Citizens, at a date and time to be arranged. If you are interested in helping out, contact David Gilbert for details.

LCBA at Wolf Creek on June 18:

Following their successful exhibit at the Wolf Creek National Fish Hatchery Earth Day back in April, LCBA has been invited back to the venue. This time, the event is in celebration of the Longest Day of Play, and takes place on Saturday, June 18, 2016, from 9am to 12 noon CST. We plan on having lots of information about bees and beekeeping to share with the visiting public. We will also have the LCBA observation hive on dis-

play, which is always a big hit with kids of all ages. All LCBA members—and their friends, families and neighbors—are welcome to come and visit the LCBA exhibit. Entry to the event is free! Details at <http://www.fws.gov/wolfcreek/>

Donate your beekeeping books to the Pulaski County Library

Do you have books on beekeeping that you have read but no longer need? Free up your bookshelf space and share them with people who would appreciate the chance to read them. Donate beekeeping books to the Pulaski County Public Library, where they will be much appreciated. Or bring your books to the next LCBA meeting and we will arrange to send them along to the library.

Kentucky State Fair Honey Princess

Kentucky State Fair, August 18-24, 2016

Tabitha Mansker (pictured at right), the 2016 American Honey Princess, will visit Kentucky August 18-24. She will make appearances at the Kentucky State Fair with the Kentucky State Beekeepers Association during her stay, speaking to fairgoers about the importance of honeybees to the public's daily lives and how honeybee pollination is the foundation of a billion dollar industry. She will also share information about the many uses for honey, including how it has a healing touch. Tabitha will make appearances throughout the fairgrounds and will be present and the Kentucky State Beekeepers Association exhibit.

Tabitha is the 20-year-old daughter of Gary and Wanda Mansker of Nevada, TX. She is pursuing studies in business and marketing and hopes to become a teacher. Tabitha stays busy helping to manage her family's 16 hives of bees and extracting honey for many commercial beekeeping operations.

As the 2016 American Honey Princess, Tabitha serves as a national spokesperson on behalf of the American Beekeeping Federation, a trade organization representing beekeepers and honey producers throughout the United States. The Honey Queen and Princess speak and promote in venues nationwide, and, as such Princess Tabitha



will travel throughout the United States in 2016. Prior to being selected as the American Honey Princess, Tabitha served as the 2015 Texas Honey Queen. In this role, she promoted the honey industry at fairs, festivals, and farmers' markets, via media interviews, and in schools.

The beekeeping industry touches the lives of every individual in our country. In fact, honeybees are responsible for nearly one-third of our entire diet, in regards to the pollination services that they provide for a large majority of fruits, vegetables, nuts and legumes. This amounts to nearly \$19 billion per year of direct value from honeybee pollination to United States agriculture.

Press Release, American Beekeeping Federation
www.abfnet.org

Visit the LCBA website for reports and photos of LCBA outreach events, www.lakecumberlandbeekeepers.com

June news from the FSA

Keeping good records is essential for participation in FSA programs for beekeepers

Farm Service Agency offers a handful of programs specifically for beekeepers, concerning either the actual bees or the honey they produce.

Colonies and Hives:

For example, the Emergency Livestock Assistance Program includes disaster payments in instance of eligible losses of bee colonies or hives (due to a specific list of weather conditions or Colony Collapse Disorder). In addition to the requirement to report such losses to FSA within 30 days, this program also requires applicants to be able to document how many colonies they had before and after the weather condition, as well as the management of those hives. Filing a FSA-578 "Crop Report" with FSA each year is the preferred method of proving your inventory. We will simply locate your farm on a map, and ask you how many hives are at that location. (If you've never registered your farm, bring proof of ownership such as your deed or land contract when you visit the FSA Office.) We can take a report on farms you don't own, as well, by adding you as a tenant on the farm for the purpose of reporting the colonies.

Keeping a running record of your hive management in a notebook or on your computer would be a great start. If you apply for colony losses, we will also ask for proof that you treated your bees for diseases and mites, and followed other best management practices. Receipts for those expenses would be a great record to have.

Honey:

The Noninsurable Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) is generally thought of to be a "crop insurance" type program. For example, a producer has a history of producing 3 tons per acre for her hay crop, but due to a drought this year, she only produces 1.5 tons per acre. NAP is a program that provides financial relief for that loss. Likewise, producers of honey who sign up for NAP coverage, could receive payments if their honey yield was low due to eligible weather conditions. The program uses 4 to 10 years of history to establish an Approved Yield for each producer that signs up for NAP. If you don't have good records to establish a yield, you're required to use a percentage of the county average to establish your Approved Yield, which probably won't be as high as your actual yield.

Even if you aren't currently participating in NAP, keeping good records of how much honey you yield and how many hives it came from is highly recommended. November 20 is the deadline to sign up for 2017 NAP coverage on honey. Many producers can get the basic level of coverage for FREE, if they meet the definition of Beginning Farmer, Limited Resource Producer, or are a Socially Disadvantaged Producer (including women and minorities).

As always, please contact your local FSA office if you have any questions.

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Upcoming events

Heartland Apiculture Society Meeting, July 14-16, 2016

HAS will hold its annual conference in nearby Bowling Green, KY July 14-16, 2016. Visit their website at www.heartlandbees.org for the program and registration information.

The Heartland Apicultural Society event will be held in Bowling Green, KY on July 14–16, 2016. Topics cover everything you ever needed to know about bees! These are divided into sections, and include presentations for beginners, for experienced beekeepers, queen rearing and biology, and special topics such as a honey swap, observation hives in operation, native pollinators.

Speakers include Dr. Greg Hunt of Purdue University, Dr. Jennifer Tsuruda of Clemson University, Dr. Tom Webster of Kentucky State University—and more!

For full details and program schedule, visit their website at www.heartlandbees.org

Register by June 26, 2016.