

Lake Cumberland Beekeepers Association



October 2017 Newsletter

Next LCBA Meeting and annual Pot Luck Dinner: Monday, October 16, 2017

Join us for our annual get together and pot luck dinner to celebrate the end of the season. Family, friends and guests are welcome!

6:00pm Doors open for informal discussion with fellow beekeepers.

6:30pm Pot Luck Family Dinner. LCBA members, friends and family are all invited to our annual Pot Luck Dinner. This is a wonderful time to get together with all our fellow local beekeepers, and to celebrate (or commiserate on) the 2017 beekeeping year. Please bring a dish to share, and LCBA will provide meat and drinks.

Meeting venue: Basement meeting room at the Pulaski County Extension Office, 28 Parkway Drive, Somerset.

Mike's Ramblings : Getting Ready for Winter

Hello again,

We are coming to the end of another year of the LCBA Meetings. Thanks to all who have participated and I hope to see you at the last meeting of the year.

Hope you are getting ready for winter. We need to be sure we have mites and hive beetles under control and have ample stores of food for the winter. I have been trying a couple types of treatment and plan to see that everything is working. I will be visually checking my hives for any problems and applying treatments as needed. I will be placing bee blankets on my hives to help in temperature control and also moisture control.

Thinking about the aftermath of the hurricanes and flooding in the South. We should be making plans for re-queening in the Spring. It is my understanding that Dorothy Morgan will be having queen installation classes in the Spring where she will have some virgin queens available. Contact her if you want more information.

I recently attended a queen rearing class with the Kentucky Queen Bee Breeder's Association where we learned how to transport queens, install new queens, and how to store several queens at one time. A lot of information was presented. Starting a queen rearing operation is a little more complicated than I want to get into but it is possible to raise your own queens on a small scale. We need to keep the queens that are best suited for our area. Swarms from feral bees that have survived in our area are a good way to get good queens.

Hope to see you at our October 16 Meeting where we will be having a pot-luck meal and a general good time discussing bees. See you there!

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LCBA Meeting September 18, 2017 Highlights

Fall/Winter management

Following on from last month's presentation by Laura Rogers about Fall Winter Management, a handout on Getting Bees Ready for Winter was available for everyone at the meeting.

KQBBAI event

Dorothey Morgan spoke about the KY Queen Bee Breeders Association one day event to be held at the KY State University Research Farm in Frankfort on Saturday, October 7 from 9-5 pm. She will conduct a free Friday night session 7-9 using microscopes to examine mites for evidence of bee chewing behavior.

Dorothey also announced that she will have virgin queens available next spring for \$20 each. There may be a shortage of bees and queens next year due to the hurricanes of 2017.

4-H Beekeeping Club

Megan Lucas, one of the Pulaski County 4-H extension agents, reported on plans for beginning a 4-H Beekeep-

ing Club for students 9-18 years of age in our area. They will canvas schools during September/October seeking out at least 5 students to start a beekeeping club that will meet at the Extension Office beginning in November.

Roger Baird, LCBA member has volunteered to help Megan with the club. She would like other LCBA members to share their expertise during the upcoming year.

Megan has applied for a grant from KY Pride to help with expenses for the beekeeping equipment for the club. She will know in January 2018 if the grant is approved. Dorothey Morgan has donated a hive of bees to the 4-H club to meet the matching funds requirement for the grant.

- Pat Rizenbergs

From KY State Apiarist, Dr. Tammy Horn Potter

Included in her email of September 27, 2017 sending the October edition of the KSBA Beelines newsletter, Dr. Tammy Horn Potter shared the following report:

"From the field: Today is supposed to be our last really warm day. Please take advantage of the cooler temperatures coming our way and **sample** the varroa mite populations your hives. I have taken four straight samples in which mite levels were 13-14 mites per 100 honey bees. **The USDA recommends no higher than 3 mites per 100 honey bees.**

This month, I have noticed many cases in which hives have high numbers of "greasy" bees (see picture).

These "greasy" bees look shiny and black, almost like wasps. This "greasy" appearance is often associated with a virus, which is often transferred by varroa mites. Every sample I have done in September in which the beekeeper and I saw "greasy" bees, there was also a high mite count, although researchers are still reluctant to make a direct correlation between the two. Please do not ignore these "greasy" bees when you are doing inspections. If you see them, go ahead and sample and if appropriate, treat.



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A cautionary tale of Bee Stings and Reactions

Someone asked if I wasn't stung in the face one time and eyes were swollen shut.

A few years ago I was walking in my cattle pasture and one of my honey bee stung me between the eyes. I drove on to work soon afterward and noticed my eyes beginning to swell. After about an hour I drove myself to urgent care beside the hospital. They refused to take me and a nurse walked me across the drive to the hospital's emergency room due to my eyes being complete shut by then.

They immediately took me to a room and began an IV and ice packs. I remember the doctor saying to me a few minutes later "It has eyes"!

I had never had an allergic reaction in my life, nor never since. But lesson learned. Keep notice on any sudden changes after any bee sting.

- David Gilbert



An almost unrecognizable David Gilbert

Casey County Bees

Late September and early October has brought us perfect weather for goldenrod and aster bloom. These plants have been literally bouncing with bees! Plenty of rain courtesy of Hurricanes Harvey and Irma, followed by warm temperatures, with calm and sunny days, must have made these plants especially bountiful. In fact, we have never seen the bees quite this busy at this time of year.

We weighed the hives in early October, using a fishing scale attached by hooks to the back of each hive. This is not a totally accurate measurement, but does at least give us some idea as to the amount of stores in the hives. In this case, excellent hive weights confirmed that the bees have indeed increased their food stores over the past 6 weeks or so, following a slow down of foraging during the hot summer weather.

In her presentation to LCBA members at the August meeting, Laura Rogers commented that it was far better for bees to have supplies of honey and pollen on hand, rather than having to rely on sugar syrup and pollen patties. Laura explained that feeding sugar syrup to bees resulted in more eggs being laid by the queens, whereas honey and nectar supplies in the hives (and sufficient storage space) encouraged the bees to increase their foraging activities. While we do want a good build up of bee populations at this time of year, having more nutritious food available to the bees is even more important when it comes to winter hive survival.

Food for bees

Now, in early October, bees are making the most of the last flowers of the season. Even this late in the year, there is a good selection for them: out in the meadows there are plenty of white wild asters; pink flowered groundcover/weed known as smartweed; the very last of the blue chicory flowers; and a few white clover flowers. In the garden, self-seeded orange cosmos (pictured below) is a good source of pollen.

- Hilary Forsyth



Deadlines Approaching for Two Programs That Can Assist Beekeepers in Managing Their Risk in 2018

Farm Service Agency (FSA) offers yield protection for honey producers through Noninsurable Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP). NAP is like Crop Insurance for honey yield. It is designed to reduce financial losses that occur when eligible natural disasters cause a loss of honey production. Basic NAP Coverage offers 50% yield protection. A \$250 fee (per county) applies to cover Honey in the NAP program, but the fee can be waived for Socially Disadvantaged, Beginning, or Limited Resource producers. Buy-up coverage is available up to 65% yield coverage, for a premium fee. Deadline to enroll is November 20, 2017, for 2018 coverage year. Contact your local FSA office to learn more. Find your local FSA office at <https://offices.usda.gov>.

USDA's Risk Management Agency (RMA), now offers Apiculture Rainfall Index policies through insurance agents. Kentucky's deadline to enroll in Apiculture Rainfall Index Policy is November 15. RMA says on their Apiculture Crop Policy website, "The United States currently produces about 163 million pounds of honey each year. The following insurance programs utilize various indexing systems to assess plant growth and vigor, which correlates to honey production. **Rainfall Index (RI)** - is based on weather data collected and maintained by NOAA's Climate Prediction Center. The index reflects how much precipitation is received relative to the long-term average for a specified area and timeframe." For more information regarding this program, contact a qualified Crop Insurance Agent. (Find an agent by visiting <https://www.rma.usda.gov/tools/agent.html>.) A fact sheet for the Apiculture Pilot Insurance Program can be found here: <https://www.rma.usda.gov/pubs/rme/apiculture.pdf>.

Annual Colony Reporting Requirement

Kentucky Beekeepers should annually report number of honeybee colonies to your local FSA office on form FSA-578:

- By January 2, if you enrolled in NAP for the current year.
- Or if you're not enrolled in NAP, report by July 15.
- Report within 30 days of the date colonies of bees are acquired, brought into, or removed from the county. This is a very important step to ensure eligibility for participation in FSA programs.

Lindsey New

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Pulaski and McCreary Counties