

# Lake Cumberland Beekeepers Association



October 2018 Newsletter

## LCBA meeting Monday, October 15, 2018 Annual Potluck Dinner

The October LCBA meeting will be held on Monday, October 15 2018. Doors open at 6pm.

The main topic for this meeting is the election of new officers who will help direct the Association's activities for the coming year. Join us and make your vote count!

Following the meeting, the most important event of the evening: the Annual Potluck Dinner. Take time to enjoy a good meal and celebrate the beekeeping year. Friends and family are welcome to join in! Bring your favorite dish to share. LCBA will provide meat, drinks and paper ware.

### Mike's Ramblings: A note from LCBA Vice President Mike Wooton

#### Winter is near! October 2018

Winter will soon be upon us. Hope that all have been preparing your bees for winter. I have been treating for mites and feeding where needed. I am using some of the treatments taught to us by Mr. Brock and if my bees make it through in good shape I will be praising him. If not: I may have to follow him around to see if I did everything right. It seems like the more I learn the more I think I need to learn. As a hobby, bees provide work for an old retired gentleman, new learning experiences, exciting events, a better understanding of God's creation and many new friends. I greatly encourage anyone who wants an exciting hobby that could grow to be a profitable business to join our bee club or a bee club near you and get enough valuable free information to start a successful apiary; even if it is only one hive. The internet has many videos that will also help new beekeepers. Join the fun!

Our October meeting is coming the third Monday of this month and will be one in which new officers are announced and a great fellowship pot-

luck meal will be served. The club will supply the meat and members are bringing a dish. There is always ample food and exciting dishes. Looking forward to seeing you all.

We have had a successful year with several new beekeepers participating. We have encouraged the schools to start bee keeping with 4H clubs and classroom teachers are requesting our input in teaching students about bees.

I would like to thank all members for supporting our club and all officers and their spouses for their work in the betterment of our club.

Bring an appetite to the next meeting!

*Mike Wooton*

Vice President, LCBA

[Mikewooton@hotmail.com](mailto:Mikewooton@hotmail.com) 606-492-5228

Check out the LAKE CUMBERLAND BEEKEEPERS website for information on our club and for additional information about bees. BEE KIND TO OUR BEES!!!!

**Editor:** Hilary Forsyth

**LCBA email:** [lakecumberland.beekeepers@gmail.com](mailto:lakecumberland.beekeepers@gmail.com)

**LCBA website:** [www.lakecumberlandbeekeepers.com](http://www.lakecumberlandbeekeepers.com)

**LCBA President:** Ginger Renaker

Phone: 606-416-0041

**LCBA Vice-President:** Michael Wooton

Cell phone: 606-492-5228

Email: [mikewooton@hotmail.com](mailto:mikewooton@hotmail.com)

## Getting Bees Ready for Winter

Following the LCBA business meeting on September 20, 2018, David Gilbert, Pat Rizenbergs and Mike Wooton discussed mite treatment and getting bees ready for the coming winter.

David Gilbert spoke on using oxalic acid to treat hives for varroa mites. He uses a heating rod to vaporize the acid, taking 10 minutes to treat each hive from which the honey supers have been removed. This treatment works best in temperatures 20-30 degrees usually in Nov/Dec/Jan and is very reliable.

Pat Rizenbergs spoke on preparing hives for winter. She stressed determining the number of bees in each hive and the quality of the queen. She recommended having at least a basketball size cluster of bees to make it through the winter (5-8 frames of bees) and to look for signs of a laying queen. If you see eggs and larvae and a good laying pattern of capped brood then the queen is viable. If the number of bees in a hive is small and/or the queen seems to be failing then your best option this late in the season is to combine this hive with a stronger hive using a sheet of newspaper in between the brood boxes.

Beekeepers need to determine if there is enough

food in the hive for the bees to survive the winter. A rule of thumb is 50-60 pounds of honey per hive. That is about 10-12 deep frames. Pat lifts each hive from the back of the bottom box and if it is light, she feeds 2:1 sugar syrup (usually 2-4 gallons per hive) during September and October until she is unable to lift the hive. You can feed syrup inside the hive using inverted glass jars with perforated lids, using plastic bags, feeder trays, or feeder boxes to feed inside the hive. Lastly, the hive equipment (boxes and frames of comb) that are removed from the hive should be put in the freezer for 24-48 hours to kill insect eggs and then stored with paradichlorobenzene (Paramoth) in airtight stacks until ready to use in spring after airing out.

Mike Wooten closed the program passing out handouts on getting hives ready for winter, and added that entrance reducers should be put in now. He showed a tray of cedar shavings that he places under the inner cover in each hive to control moisture during the winter.

*- Pat Rizenbergs, LCBA Secretary*

## Temperature guidelines for working honey bee colonies

Dorothey Morgan forwarded the following table, which she located on the website Wade's Bees under the link: <https://wadesbees.wordpress.com/category/winter-management/>

<b>Below 30°F:</b>	<b>Open the hive only in emergency, such as to feed or remove chemicals. If feeding is necessary below 30°F, use dry sugar or candy so feed won't freeze.</b>
<b>Below 40°F:</b>	<b>Open the hive only in emergency, such as to feed or remove chemicals. Because bees cannot get far from the warmth of the cluster, feed must be placed directly above the cluster.</b>
<b>Below 50°F:</b>	<b>The bees are loosely clustered. The hive can be opened but brood combs should not be removed. Remove side combs to look at brood combs, but replace quickly to avoid chilling the brood.</b>
<b>55°F:</b>	<b>Bees begin to fly at 55°F and will collect nectar and pollen if available. Hives can be opened, but care must be taken to avoid chilling the brood.</b>
<b>60°F:</b>	<b>Complete hive inspection can be made, but brood combs should be returned to the hive quickly.</b>
<b>70°F:</b>	<b>70°F is warm enough to completely disassemble the hive and frames for a thorough inspection.</b>

## 4-H Beekeeping update

During the September meeting 4-H beekeepers learned how to extract honey.

They uncapped a frame of honey and ran it through an extractor. They enjoyed spinning the honey out and sampling it.

There were several new members attending for the first time that will hopefully be back in October.

*Meagan Lucas*

Pulaski County Extension Agent for 4-H Youth Development



Meagan Lucas (center) shows a young 4-H beekeeper how to uncapping a frame of honey prior to extracting the honey

Photo: Pat Rizenbergs

## News from FSA

### Deadlines Approaching for Two Programs That Can Assist Beekeepers in Managing Their Risk in 2019

Farm Service Agency (FSA) offers yield protection for honey producer's 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. Deadline to enroll is November 20, 2018, for 2019 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 want to be eligible for ELAP in case of an eligible disaster related loss.
- 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**

*County Executive Director*

**Pulaski/McCreary Co. FSA Office**

**USDA – Farm Service Agency**

45 Eagle Creek Drive, Ste. 101

Somerset, KY 42503

## Casey County Bees

One of our hives has had a real struggle to keep going through the summer. We will have to decide whether there is a chance the bees will make it through the winter, given extra food supplies, or whether we need to combine the hive to save the remaining bees.

All started off well: The hive was a split we had taken in April, when the bees had raised a brand new queen. By mid-May there were 5 frames of brood in the deep plus 5 frames of nectar in the medium box. We marked the queen. 2 weeks later, the queen was in place, plus eggs and brood—and capped swarm cells. Our mid-June inspection revealed only capped brood, hatched swarm cells, and no sign of the red queen, so it looked as though our bees had swarmed.

By early July the new queen was in place (though we did not mark her), with a few remaining capped brood cells, and empty crescents cleaned out ready for egg laying. The July 30 inspection revealed a small brood nest with eggs and uncapped brood, no sign of a queen—and a capped queen cell. What was going on?

By mid-August, yet another new queen reigned, along with a couple of frames of brood in all stages. We marked the queen, and hoped that finally the bees would settle down. The hive was calm, and although the bee population was much reduced, the bees had stored 5 frames of nectar and pollen.

We did not inspect the hive again for another 4 weeks, when we discovered yet another new queen in place, along with some capped and uncapped brood and a few eggs. This hive has had almost as many queens as did Henry VIII back in 1500s England!

Obviously this hive had problems that we could not figure out. We decided to watch and wait, and see whether the bees could sort things out them-

selves. We could have requeened early on, or combined the weak hive with a stronger one, but then we would still not have been able to solve the problem.

We have lots of questions: why did this hive swarm when there was plenty of space? And then why did they keep wanting to requeen? Did we damage the queens when we marked them? But we never got around to marking two of the queens, which perhaps rules out that hypothesis.

We did not treat the hive for varroa mites because by August we felt the population was too small to withstand the treatment, and our tests indicated very few mites. We did not notice any bees with deformed wings; few small hive beetles; no wax moth problems; no robbing. Companion hives have thrived. No crops are grown in our immediate area that would require pesticide treatment, as far as we are aware, and no spraying is done for mosquitoes and the like.

Is the problem then something that we can't see, such as bee genetics? Perhaps there are not enough bees in our area to provide a diverse gene pool.

The main take-away from this saga is that bees that swarm or otherwise requeen any time after early June have little chance of catching up sufficiently to make it through the summer, however much we might be cheering for them.

Keeping close tabs on this hive's struggle has been an interesting and informative experience. We have plenty of questions to ponder over the winter, and we'll be looking to improve our beekeeping practices next year.

- Hilary Forsyth

*Judging by the topics to be addressed by Dr. James Tew at the KSBA Fall meeting (see below) we are not the only beekeepers with queen problems!*

## KSBA 2018 Fall Meeting

James E. Tew, Ph.D, will be the featured speaker at the Fall meeting of the Kentucky State Beekeepers Association on November 3, 2018.

In his first presentation of the day, Dr. Tew will be discussing "Wintering" and "The Desperate World of Laying Workers and Failing Queens". His

second talk will be on what a languishing colony is trying to do in its last stages of queenlessness.

For full details on this event, visit the KSBABeekeeping website, or follow the link at

<http://www.ksbabeekeeping.org/jim-tew-will-be-featured-speaker-at-ksbas-2018-fall-meeting/>