



# SEMBA NEWS

Volume 19, Number 2 Newsletter of the Southeastern Michigan Beekeepers' Association  
March 2009

## 71st SEMBA BEEKEEPERS' CONFERENCE

SATURDAY, March 21, 2009  
8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

SCHOOLCRAFT COLLEGE  
VisTaTech CENTER

18600 Haggerty Road  
(between 6 & 7 Mile Roads)

LIVONIA, MICHIGAN

**Please enter through the VisTaTech Center entrance.** (Parking is available in the North Campus Parking Lot.)

You are invited to attend the 71st Annual SEMBA Beekeepers' Conference. This one-day event is designed for all beekeepers as well as those who are considering keeping honey bees for the first time. There is no registration fee for SEMBA members. Registration fee at the door for non-members is \$10.00 for individuals and \$15.00 for families. No pre-registration is necessary.

Major speakers are Diana Sammataro, Ph.D., U.S. Department of Agriculture and Ken Schramm author of *The Compleat Wine Maker*. Workshop sessions, featuring a variety of beekeeping topics, will be conducted by Master Beekeepers and others who have kept bees for many years.

Specially featured again this year is a series of beginning workshops, each dealing with a different aspect of beekeeping, to help the new beekeeper get started.

## CONFERENCE PROGRAM

**8:00-9:00 a.m.** VisTaTech Center  
Registration

**8:45 a.m.** Video "Tales from the Hive"

**9:20 a.m.** Welcome by Roger Sutherland

**9:30 a.m.** Bee Mites, What are they?

--Diana Sammataro, Ph.D.

**10:25 a.m.** Introduction to Concurrent Sessions  
--Dennis Holly

### 10:30 a.m. First Concurrent Session

- 1) Follow-up with keynote speaker  
--Diana Sammataro
- 2) "Integrated Pest Management"  
--Mike Siarkowski
- 3) Beginner's Seminar I  
--Ed Nowak
- 4) Breeding for Winter Survivor Bees  
--Winn Harless/ Rich Wieske

**11:25 a.m.** Ask the Beekeeping Experts

**Noon: SEMBA Potluck or lunch on your own at local restaurants**

**1:10 p.m.** CCD and a Review of Other Honey Bee Research  
--Ken Schramm

**2:15 p.m.** Introduction to Concurrent Sessions  
--Winn Harless

### 2:20 p.m. Second Concurrent Session

- 1) Follow-up with keynote speaker  
--Ken Schramm
- 2) Beginner's Seminar Session II  
--Winn Harless
- 3) How SEMBA Can Assist You With Presentations,  
--John Kates and others
- 4) Migratory Beekeeping  
--Rich Kusmaul/Don Schram
- 5) Counting Mites on Sticky Boards  
--Diana Sammataro, Ph.D.

### 3:15 p.m. Third Concurrent Session

- 1) Beginner's Seminar Session III  
--Larry Connor, Ph.D.
- 2) Wax, From Frame to Candle  
--Larry Yates
- 3) Structural Bee Removal Basics  
--Don Schram
- 4) Making Your Own Equipment  
--Fritz Sanders

### 4:10 p.m. Concluding Session

Questions and Answers, Hive-Raffle Award and Silent Auction  
Conclusion.

## SPECIAL FEATURES OF CONFERENCE

### (NEW THIS YEAR)

#### BEEKEEPING VIDEOS SCHEDULE

**10:30 a.m.** "Tales from the Hive"

**11:30 a.m.** "A Guide to Swarm Catching"

**1:00 p.m.** "The Honey Harvest"

**2:00 p.m.** "The Life Cycle of the Honey Bee"  
(Great for kids)

**2:30 p.m.** "The World of Bees"

**3:30 p.m.** "Silence of the Bees"

#### DOOR PRIZES

All bee-conference attendees will receive a door-prize ticket when they register.

#### BEE HIVE & PACKAGE BEE RAFFLE

A complete hive, donated by Dadant & Sons of Albion, Michigan will be raffled. Tickets for the raffle at \$1.00 each or 6 for \$5.00 may be purchased at the beekeeping conference.

#### POTLUCK-LUNCH INFORMATION

A potluck lunch will be held at noon. If you wish to participate, bring a food item (with serving utensils), which will serve six to eight persons. Also, bring your own table service including plates, silverware, and cups. SEMBA will provide tea and coffee. Please label any utensils that you bring with your name so that they can be easily identified.

#### BEEKEEPING SALES, DISPLAYS AND CRAFTS

If you have displays or crafts that you wish to display or sell, we encourage you to bring them. Please call Dennis Holly at 248-542-1316 to reserve table space (no charge for SEMBA members). Dadant & Sons will have a beekeeping-supply sales table.

#### SILENT AUCTION

Any beekeeping-related item may be placed in the Silent Auction. Bidding takes place throughout the day during the beekeeping conference. You may keep the profits or you may consider sharing the proceeds with SEMBA to benefit the Association.

#### **SEMBA's 2008 BEEKEEPING CLASS**

SEMBA's hands-on beekeeping class, initiated in 1997 by Ed Nowak, will be offered again. The instructor will be Master Beekeeper Ed Nowak assisted by other experienced beekeepers. Information will be available at the Beekeeping Conference on March 21<sup>st</sup> and on the Web site <http://sembabees.org>. You may also contact Mr. Nowak at 734-422-0508 or by e-mail at [epnowak@earthlink.net](mailto:epnowak@earthlink.net)

## **MBA's BEEKEEPING SYMPOSIUM MARCH 13-14, 2009—KELLOGG CENTER MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY**

The Michigan Beekeepers' Association (MBA) invites beginner or experienced beekeepers to attend their Beekeeping Symposium and Spring Meeting to be held in the Kellogg Center, MSU, on March 13-14, 2009.

The featured speaker for the two-day meeting will be Michael Palmer, a Vermont commercial beekeeper who will speak on; 1) A Management Plan for Sustainability in the Apiary, and 2) Honey Production Strategies and Techniques. Each day there will be breakout sessions on a wide variety of subjects to include:

Beekeeping Equipment; Starting Bees with a Package; First-year Management; Insect and Flower Relationships; Honey Bee and Colony Biology; Making Splits; Control of Diseases and Pests; Comb Honey Production; Building a Nuc Box; Extracting Honey; Honey and Health; How to Catch a Swarm; Making Beeswax Candles; Re-queening a Colony; Wintering Bees; Two-Queen Colonies; Speaking to Outside Groups; Small-Scale Honey Processing; Marketing Your Honey; CCD; and more.

For more information contact David Anthony, (810) 516-0779, [anthonybeefarms@aol.com](mailto:anthonybeefarms@aol.com); or Roger Hoopingarner, (517) 699-2428, [rahoopie@msu.edu](mailto:rahoopie@msu.edu)

#### **"Laundered Honey": The Problem of Illegal Imports**

It's getting difficult to trust the safety of anything coming out of China anymore, isn't it? You've read on this site about a variety of products that were made in China ... toys, pet food, milk and the like, all of which have been found to have been manufactured using products or chemicals that are just plain dangerous. It's a long list and stretches back years before they started reporting about them here.

For most of those years, beekeepers in the U.S. have been aware of problems with some of the Chinese honey that has been imported into the U.S. And lately, beekeepers have known about Chinese transshipping, which is sending Chinese honey into the U.S. from a second or even third country to avoid having anybody know it was originally from China. The Chinese exporters transship it through other countries to avoid paying tariffs and to reduce suspicion that it was contaminated with antibiotics, a problem common with Chinese honey.

Customs officials and FDA have occasionally intercepted loads of this not-so-sweet product that they knew had problems but their actions

have gone mostly unnoticed. And the companies that imported the funny honey and have the honey confiscated are never identified. Why is that, do you suppose?

Anyway, over the New Year's Holiday, *The Seattle Post Intelligencer*, a Hearst-owned newspaper (like *The Daily Green*), released the result of a multi-year, multi-state, multi-country, multi-agency investigative report on this problem. Andrew Schneider, the PI reporter put together a series of articles that outlined the problem, the players, and the results of illegal, contaminated honey entering the U.S. And in the process he resurrected a phrase beekeepers have known for years – laundered honey. Moreover, he detailed the techniques used by exporters and importers to avoid detection, and where the honey goes once it evades detection at the U.S. border and enters, usually, mainstream commerce in the U.S.

Not only has much of China's honey been contaminated with a variety of antibiotics, much has, by hook or by crook, avoided paying the tariff that is imposed on Chinese honey because they so undervalue it ... millions of pounds were recorded being sold in the U.S. last year priced at \$0.22 a pound yet it costs about \$1 per pound to produce it normally. U.S. Customs has placed a \$1.20 per pound tariff on any incoming honey ... making the playing field somewhat level for producers from all other countries. So not only is it bad, it's being sold below cost.

This series of articles set off a firestorm in the beekeeping industry, with beekeepers, importers and packers joining their voices in demanding FDA, Customs and other regulatory agencies do a better job of keeping incoming honey clean, legal and properly labeled as to country of origin. For the complete article go to *The Daily Green*, January 12, 2009 or access: <http://www.thedailygreen.com/environmental-news/blogs/bees/honey-laundering-88010606>

For additional articles on laundered honey go to:

[http://seattlepi.nwsourc.com/local/394053\\_honey30.asp](http://seattlepi.nwsourc.com/local/394053_honey30.asp)

### **A REVIEW OF SYMPTOMS OF CCD In COLLAPSED COLONIES**

~Complete absence of older adult bees in colonies, with few or no dead bees in the colony, on the bottom board, in front of the colony, or in the bee yard.

~Presence of capped brood in colonies during time of year when queen should be laying.

~Presence of food stores, both honey and pollen, unless a drought or time-of-year restricts availability of food resources.

~Absence of pest insects such as wax moth and hive beetle.

~Lack of robbing by other bees.

~Robbing and return of hive pests is delayed by days or weeks.

### **THE MEANING OF ORGANIC**

The buzz word today in food purchases is the term 'organic'. Many consumers will pay extra to buy these products including honey. What is the meaning of organic, especially in honey?

In the January 2009 issue of *Bee Culture*, Ross Conrad writes about the meaning of organic in an article entitled *Natural Beekeeping*. He states, "Despite widespread belief to the contrary, the term *organic* does not mean that the final crop or product is free from toxic chemical contaminants. This mistaken perception has taken hold primarily due to the efforts of manufacturers and marketers, who have successfully promoted the notion that organic products are pure and chemical free. The organic approach has traditionally referred to a management style and philosophy." As of December 2006, the Michigan Department of Agriculture (MDA) did not have specific standards for organic honey. Michigan's standards basically follow the national organic standards for honey.

In Michigan, to be certified organic, a producer will have to have their operation certified by the USDA, National Organic Program (NOP). For more information contact: Colleen M. Bess, Organic Program Manager, Michigan Department of Agriculture, Pesticide and Plant Pest Management Division.  
P.O. Box 30017  
Lansing, Michigan 48909  
(517) 373-0280  
[Collier@michigan.gov](mailto:Collier@michigan.gov)

An excellent web site to learn more about the specific requirements to have honey certified as organic go to:  
[www.naturallygrown.org/honeystandards.html](http://www.naturallygrown.org/honeystandards.html)

## SEMBA LEADERS

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|---|--|
| President.....Roger Sutherland                  | SEMBA Hostess .....,Donna & Howard Laws and<br>Teresa and Walter McCurdy |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Vice President.....Winn Harless | Oakland Bee Club Leader.....Larry Yates                                  |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice President.....Dennis Holly | Historian.....Ron Forfinski  |
| Secretary.....Mary Hobart                       | Community Outreach Presentation Committee<br>.....John Kates             |
| Treasurer.....Mary Sutherland                   | SEMBA Director.....Fritz Sanders   |
| Past President.....Keith Lazar                  | SEMBA Director.....Don Schram  |
| Web Master.....Tom Lisk                         |  |
| Bee Class Leader.....Ed Nowak                   |  |

## SEMBA MEETING FORMAT

For the past 20 years SEMBA has endeavored to hold meetings or events for each month of the year. Oakland Bee Club and Schoolcraft Bee Club each agreed to be responsible for four meetings a year and SEMBA would sponsor four meetings or events such as the Annual Beekeeping Conference and beekeeping activities at the Michigan State Fair Beekeepers' booth. Oakland and Schoolcraft decided to hold meetings in the evening while SEMBA traditionally held day meetings on Saturdays or Sundays. Over the past few years, there has been a decline in attendance at evening meetings perhaps for a number of reasons—distaste for night driving, distance, high gas prices, and the economy.

At the September SEMBA planning meeting, the Board decided to hold more Saturday or Sunday meetings on a trial basis. Oakland meetings, however, will continue to be held in the evening. The success of this change will be evaluated during the year. Your opinions are welcome regarding this change. To voice your comments, criticisms, and suggestions, contact any of the leaders listed above.

## BARGAIN CORNER

~Package bees from Georgia will arrive April 26, 2009. 2# \$58, 3# \$66. SEMBA members will receive a \$5 discount per package. There is a 10 package limit. Call Mike Siarkowski, 517-545-0824 to place orders. Bees can be picked up at Shaun Shubel's home, 345 Chilson Rd., Howell, MI, 517-548-5176.

~Package bees (Italian) from Wilbank's Apiary, Georgia. Pick-up dates April 19 and May 3. 3 lb. package - \$67. Call Blanche Barber, 248-634-7017 for more details.

~Beekeeping equipment for sale: Keith Lazar, C 248-361-1710, P 248-815-5522, [kmlazar@hotmail.com](mailto:kmlazar@hotmail.com)

~Tupelo honey for sale (12 oz. honey bears at \$7 each). Call Kathryn Sampson, 313-565-9271.

~Nucs for Spring 2009. Call Bob Jastrzebski, 734-748-2185.

~Nucs for Spring 2009. Call Winn Harless, 734-453-2914.

~Wanted: kids bee suit for 7-10 year old. Call Winn Harless, 734-453-2914.

### Dues Reminder

**If your address label denotes A08, your dues are becoming due. Enclosed is a renewal form for your convenience. Please note that dues for the Michigan Beekeepers' Association (MBA) also can be paid or renewed when paying SEMBA dues**

Southeastern Michigan  
Beekeepers' Association  
*Organized April 1, 1934*  
Oakland Beekeepers' Club

SEMBA Membership  
5488 Warren Rd.  
Ann Arbor, MI 48105-9425



Schoolcraft Beekeepers' Club



Seven Ponds Beekeepers' Club

