



SEMBA NEWS

Volume 21 Number 4 Newsletter of the Southeastern Michigan Beekeepers' Association
July-August 2011

SEMBA SUMMER PICNIC

When: Sunday, July 17, 2011

Where: MSU Tollgate Education Center,
Novi, Michigan
8115 Meadowbrook Road (corner of 12 Mile
and Meadowbrook)

1:30 p.m. - Potluck dinner. Please bring a dish to pass, your own table service, and chair. Beverages will be provided.

PROGRAM

3:00 p.m. - Rich Wieske will use a demonstration hive to make a summer split and conduct a mite count using the sugar roll method. This will be your opportunity to seek answers and get help for all those pesky questions you have been asking yourself this season.

Tour the Beginning Beekeepers' Class apiary.

Queen, queen cell and beekeeping equipment sales or exchange.

Discuss SEMBA's possible participation in the Great Lakes Agricultural Fair.

SEMBA VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Coordinator for the March 2012 SEMBA Beekeeping Conference.

Coordinator for a SEMBA booth at the Great Lakes Agricultural Fair to be held at the Silverdome in Pontiac, September 2-5, 2011. (The decision for possible SEMBA participation will be made at the SEMBA summer picnic.)

Contact Roger Sutherland 734-668-8568.
rsuther@hotmail.com for further information.

PROCEDURE FOR HONEY BEE MAGAZINE ORDERS

To order beekeeping magazines at bee club discounted prices, call the publishers directly and indicate to them the name of your local club.

For *Bee Culture* call: 1-800-289-7668. For *American Bee Journal* call: 1-888-922-1293 or 1-217-847-3324.

PROCEDURE FOR MBA MEMBERSHIPS

Local clubs are no longer accepting MBA memberships at the discounted rates.

Membership applications are available on the MBA Website:

<http://www.michiganbees.org/> For further information contact Steve Tilmann, MBA treasurer at 517-543-5525 or by e-mail: treasurer@mba-bees.org

Michigan Honey Production Up 3 Percent

Michigan Ag Connection - 03/01/2011

Michigan honey production for 2010 totaled 4.06 million pounds, up 3 percent from 2009, according to the USDA, NASS, Michigan Field Office. This estimate included honey from producers with 5 or more colonies. Nationally, Michigan remained ninth in honey production in 2010, as in 2009. Yields from Michigan's 70,000 colonies producing honey averaged 58 pounds in 2010, compared with 60 pounds the previous year.

Michigan honey price averaged \$1.64 per pound, up 9 cents per pound from last year. Value of production totaled \$6.66 million, up 8 percent from 2009. Honey stocks were 1.50 million pounds, down 0.02 percent from 2009. Nationally, honey production in 2010 from producers with five or more colonies totaled 176 million pounds, up 20 percent from 2009. There were 2.68 million colonies producing honey in 2010, up 7 percent from 2009. Yield per colony averaged 65.5 pounds, up 12 percent from the 58.6 pounds in 2009. Colonies which produced honey in more than one State were counted in each State where the honey was produced. Therefore, yields per colony may be understated, but total production would not be impacted. Colonies were not included if honey was not harvested. Producer honey stocks were 45.3 million pounds on December 15, 2010, up 21 percent from a year earlier. Stocks held by producers exclude those held under the commodity loan program.

Honey prices increased to a record high during 2010 to 160.3 cents, up 9 percent from 147.3 cents in 2009. U.S. and State level prices reflect the portions of honey sold through retail, cooperatives, and private channels. Prices for each color class are derived by weighting the quantities sold for each marketing channel. Prices for the 2009 crop reflect honey sold in 2009 and 2010. Some 2009 honey crop was sold in 2010, which caused some revisions to the 2009 crop prices.

TIPS AND GLEANINGS FROM BILL SIRR

While going through one of my bee journals, I came across this question: When should I remove the wraps from my hives?

Good question. In Detroit it will be much sooner than Lapeer and the further north one goes, the longer it will be and it will change from year to year. So let us ask Mother Nature. Her answer is simple: "Wait until the dandelions bloom." What do you think? Is this about right?

The following information was published in the *Badger Bee*: Dr. Zachary Huang, MSU, looked at colony performance following various disruptions to normal routines. When bees are placed on trucks and bounced around for awhile, this interferes with their ability to keep the temperature correct in the brood nest. Also, their food glands shrink after a move. This is especially noticeable in bees that are bounced around at the age of one or two days. Their glands remain shrunken for up to two weeks. (I have to assume that this also applies to package bees.)

In an article by Mr. Terrence Ingram, published in *The Small Beekeepers Journal* September 1994, Pg. 13/15, bottom supering and top supering are discussed.

Top supering: Remove the top cover, the inner cover, add an empty honey super, replace inner cover then top cover, move on to the next hive and repeat.

Bottom supering: Remove top cover, the inner cover, full/ half full honey super, add empty honey super over queen excluder (if using), half full/ full honey super, inner cover, top cover, move on to the next hive and repeat. Wow a lot of lifting and manipulating! Why? If you were to go out at night and check on the girls you would find the field bees sleeping in the empty cells above the queen excluder above the brood nest, still able to get the effects of the queen pheromones. When these cells are filled with nectar it is past the time to add another

honey super. By bottom supering you will give the field bees a place to sleep, avoid over crowding and the girls wanting to leave.

RESEARCH SHOWS BEES CAN SEAL OFF PESTICIDE RESIDUES

Dr. Jeff Pettis, research leader at the USDA-ARS Bee Research Laboratory in Beltsville, Maryland, told the British Members of Parliament that he and Penn State University researcher Dennis van Engelsdorp have discovered that bees have the capability to detect pesticide residues in the pollen. Once they bring the pollen back to the hive and detect pesticide residues, they isolate it from the other pollen in the colony.

They use propolis to seal up wax cells full of pollen to put it out of use and protect the rest of the hive from their contents. The pollen stored in the sealed-up cells was found to contain dramatically higher levels of pesticides and other potentially harmful chemicals than the pollen stored in neighboring cells, which is used to feed growing young bees.

"This is a novel finding, and very striking," Pettis said. "The implication is that the bees are sensing the pesticide and actually sealing it off. They are recognizing that something is wrong with the pollen and encapsulating it. Bees would not normally seal off pollen." But he said the bees' attempt to save themselves appears to be unsuccessful because the sealed off pollen is found in many hives that subsequently die off.

"The presence of entombing was the biggest single predictor of colony loss in one of our studies," Pettis said. "It's a defense mechanism that has failed." He said these colonies were likely to already be in trouble and their death could be attributed to a mix of factors in addition to pesticides.

The bees that entomb the cells are not the bees that collect pollen from plants, but are rather likely the housekeeping bees.

Pettis said it appears the pollen-collecting bees cannot detect high levels of pesticides, but the pollen underwent subtle changes when stored.

A lack of microbial activity compared with pollen that has fewer pesticide residues may be involved in triggering the entombing effect.

Pettis said the bees are also sealing off pollen that contains substances used by beekeepers to control pests such as the Varroa mite, a sign these substances may also be harmful to bees. To read the entire article go to:

<http://home.ezezone.com/1636/1636-2011.04.11.22.15.archive.html>

~CATCH THE BUZZ - Pettis Talks To Parliament About CCD April, 12, 2011

SEMBA EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING MINUTES, April 17, 2011

SEMBA PICNIC will be held at Tollgate Farm on Sunday, July 17, 2011. A honey recipe contest, chaired by Mary Hobart and judged by Clay Ottoni and Mary Hobart will be held. Details and categories to follow. There will be a queen exchange and an opportunity to sell or trade beekeeping items.

The 2012 SEMBA Beekeeping conference was discussed. Possible speakers were mentioned. Richard Mendel and Don Schram will chair the conference speaker committee.

The future use of Schoolcraft College for the SEMBA Beekeeping Conference was discussed. Schoolcraft College will allow SEMBA to use its facilities for another two years at no charge.

A motion was made by Richard Mendel to ask the membership at large for a volunteer to act a conference coordinator. Seconded by Bill Sirr. Item to appear in the SEMBA newsletter.

Historical note: Schoolcraft College has been the site for the SEMBA Annual Beekeeping Conference since 1974. Under the auspices of the Schoolcraft College Student Activities Office and Schoolcraft College Beekeepers' Club facilities in the classroom buildings were used free of charge. In 2002 the Sutherlands established a Schoolcraft Charitable Remaining Trust which allowed the club and SEMBA to use the Waterman Center. In 2011 the Bee Club and SEMBA began using the VisTaTech center facilities for the entire program.

A motion was made by Roger Sutherland, seconded by Don Schram, to amend the SEMBA by-laws to eliminate the requirement to issue SEMBA membership cards. Motion passed.

Clay Ottoni and Rich Wieske will serve on a panel to answer questions and discuss the movie "COLONY" which will be shown at the May 25th meeting held at the Birmingham Congregational Church.

THE BEEHACKER

Pity the poor beekeeper. While bee researchers play with high-frequency dancing robotic bees, DNA scanners, and forensic pollen analysis, beekeepers must scavenge 19th-century feed

scales off eBay. Tom Rearick, an electrical engineer, and some fellow "beehackers" are trying to change all that. He wants his site, BeeHacker.com, to become a hub of on-the-cheap development of appropriate technology for beekeepers, with projects ranging from simple hive scales to laser-based bee tracking. For example, a \$20 luggage scale augmented with \$5 to \$10 of scrap hardware can check the weight of dozens of hives a day. That would give a rough idea of how much honey the bees are producing and of the general health of the hive. With Rearick's hack, you just lift one side of the hive gently with a pry bar connected to the scale by a cable. Assuming that honey and bees are evenly distributed inside the hive, the scale will stabilize at half the hive's weight.

~<http://news.discovery.com/tech/bee-keepers-bring-cheap-widgets-110425.html>

UPDATE ON OBSERVATION HIVE AT HERITAGE PARK

In the last SEMBA Newsletter, we announced that SEMBA member Charles Durbin had established a vertical top-bar hive at the Heritage Park Nature Center in Farmington Hills. The following is an update provided by Charles: "Thank you for your continued interest in the hive. I installed a 3lb package of bees the second week of May. I gave them 5 partial bars of new comb from another hive to help get them started. They released the queen in just two days and they have accepted the hive. I've been feeding them a sugar water mix a couple of times a week. To date they have expanded all of the existing comb and they have made 3 more bars of comb. I expect the population to greatly increase just in time for the thistle that will bloom in a week or so. The hive has been positively accepted by the people that visit the nature center. I provided a very short introduction presentation on bees with questions and answers in April during the Great Campout at Heritage Park".

We are saddened to learn of the passing of Larry Yates SEMBA member and leader of the Oakland Bee Club.

BEES' ROYAL JELLY SECRET REVEALED

There's more than one way to turn a commoner into royalty. Honey bees create queens by feeding their larvae royal jelly, the secret ingredient of which has now been identified. Masaki Kamakura of Toyama Prefectural University in Imizu, Japan, stored royal jelly at 40 °C for 30 days, feeding it to bee larvae at intervals. Its regal effect gradually weakened, suggesting the key ingredient was decaying. He then fed larvae deactivated jelly with each batch laced with a different compound that was subject to decay. Only one caused the larvae to turn into queens: a protein Kamakura calls royalactin.

To find out how royalactin works, Kamakura added it to the diet of fruit fly larvae. This made them grow larger and lay more eggs, as in bees. Kamakura found that royalactin works by switching on the gene that codes for Egfr, a protein found throughout the animal kingdom. This suggests a pre-existing mechanism was repurposed to produce the bee caste system, says Francis Ratnieks of the University of Sussex in Brighton, UK. When insects first formed eusocial colonies, queens and workers must have been physically identical, he says, and the distinct castes came later, created by royalactin or something like it.

From: *New Scientist*: 26 April 2011 by Michael Marshall

SEMBA Bargain Corner

For Sale:

Telescoping Covers, Inner Covers, Screened Bottom Boards, Hive Stands, Metal Stands (to elevate Hive off ground), Medium Supers Prime & Painted (6 5/8), Medium Frames, Deep Super (9 1/2), Nuc Box (6 5/8), Frame Wiring Jig, Entrance Reducers, Smoker, Smoker Fuel, Hive Tool, Bee Brush, Tetra-Bee Mix 2x Medicated, Bee Veil, Bee Suit. Call: Shelly, 248-881-9188.

Two-frame motorized extractor for rent. The rent is \$25 a day, plus a deposit. The inside wall and floor have been freshly coated with food grade epoxy. The baskets which hold the frames are ten inches wide. This extractor is mounted on a table with its motor and 110 volt outlet. If you have any questions please call Mazin . [313-999-3180](tel:313-999-3180) e-mail, m7mav@yahoo.com

Locations available for placing hives

Near Dexter on 10 acres (farm area). I have fruit trees, lots of clover and pines but an absence of honey bees. The property has easy off the road access . Contact Mike Mioduszewski [734-395-3166](tel:734-395-3166)

Near Frains Lake, northeast of Ann Arbor. Lots of fruit trees. Does not use any chemicals on property. Contact Ann Borders at 734-635-2355, annborders@gmail.com

Honey vendor needed Redford Township Farmers Market. We are open each Sunday June through Oct. 23. People can find us on Facebook and applications are available at www.redfordtwp.com. Contact Ilona Klemm market@redfordtwp.com [313-387-2504](tel:313-387-2504)

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Affiliated Chapters
Oakland Beekeepers' Club



Schoolcraft Beekeepers' Club

