INLAND BEEMAIL

Monthly newsletter of the Inland Empire Beekeepers Association

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Presidents Corner:

December 2007

From the President of IEBA

Greetings and salutations

This is the last newsletter from your current President.

The 2007 year has gone fast and I have enjoyed every minute of it. The beekeeping has been a challenge this year, more than in the past years.

The Meeting is December 14th and the meal will start at 6:30 PM. The yearly meeting will start at 7:30 PM with a short business meeting and then election of officers for the 2008 year.

Ag Expo
Brian Smith will do the one hour presentation on Wednesday, February 6th at 3:00 PM. The AgExpo will cover three days and Margaret Dahmen-Burns is in charge. Does the IEBA want to purchase a space and man the booth for three days? The cost would be $375.00 for a 10x10 booth and the cost is ½ price.

Al Bell
Al is in a nursing home and has given up beekeeping. Chris Fisher has 99% of his hives and equipment. I have picked up some of the clothing and related equipment plus a wax melter. Al wants the items to go to new beekeepers. We will use the clothing and related equipment as door prizes during the class this coming year. The wax melter and hive equipment need to be cleaned and repaired. I am suggesting that anyone who is interested come to Chris Fishers home on Saturday, December 15th at 10:00 AM. At that time we can go through the equipment. I would suggest that everyone that takes some of the hives and the wax melter donate some money to the Joy in Beekeeping in Al's name. I will be there, so let me know if you are interested.

Al also has a painted smoker. He did enter it at the fair. I think this should remain part of IEBA. We will bring the smoker to the December meeting for everyone to see.

Jenine and I are expanding our business a little and are looking for some assistance. Frank Merickel, Victory Christensen, Matt Hutchinson, Jenine and I have started to develop a Lab. We are interested in looking for Nosema spores in honeybees. The equipment has been purchased and we are in the process of establishing a procedure. Once we have established the procedure we will be offering the service for a fee. During the time of establishing the procedure the process will be free. We are looking for several beekeepers that would be willing to help with this process. For more information contact Jenine or I.

The past year has been a good year for IEBA. I have enjoyed the opportunity of being president again and I hope everyone else has enjoyed the year in Beekeeping also. The beekeeping class has 75 students registered for the 2008 class and Joan Nolan has started a roster for 2009. With the number of calls I have received I am sure we are about ¼ full for 2009. The association and the teaching team should be proud of what they are doing and have done for the beekeeping industry in the Inland Northwest. Keep a positive attitude and we will get over the CCD problems and have the best honeybees in the Inland Northwest.

Enjoy the holidays.
Jim Miller

Please come early for our

IEBA Christmas Potluck & Gift Exchange

to be held at 6:30 pm Friday December 14th.

Please bring your choice of accompanying side dishes and deserts

The association will provide Drinks, Condiments, Ham, Plates, Silverware and More

COLONY COLLAPSE DISORDER UPDATE

Essentially, the honey bee industry is waiting to see if yet another outbreak of Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD) will decimate our bee hives again this fall and winter. A clear cause has not yet been established though a virus, the Israeli Acute Paralysis Virus (IAPV) has been found in affected bees and is presently being researched to determine if it is an important factor in CCD. Due to the attention that CCD and the newly found virus have been receiving, I have used some Dr. Diana Cox-Forster's comments directly.

"We examined all organisms (viruses, fungi, bacteria, protozoa, parasites, etc) that were present in both CCD and non-CCD bees using a metagenomic approach. We have found a single virus (Israeli Acute Paralysis Virus) to be highly correlated with CCD samples from 10 different operations and found in one non-CCD sample (Australian imports). With our data, we CANNOT at this time declare this to be the direct cause of CCD. The next phase of research needs to test whether or not IAPV is a direct causal agent of CCD or just a really good marker for CCD. In either case, we do believe that detection of IAPV will be important in determining the probability that colonies are apt to undergo CCD and that this will enable closer monitoring of bee health. We also do NOT believe that IAPV can be acting alone to cause CCD, but rather that the virus requires additional triggers. Other pathogens (such as KBV, Nosema apis and Nosema ceranae) may be important in triggering CCD, but by themselves are not the cause of CCD. Also environmental chemicals (pesticides, herbicides, fungicides) and/or nutritional stress may also act as triggers. Of course, the varroa mite may also help to stress colonies and allow for onset of CCD; however, our data clearly demonstrate that Varroa, tracheal mites, and Nosema do not underlie CCD by themselves."

James E. Tew

"We do not believe that we have solved CCD, contrary to what the media may have claimed. Rather, we have narrowed the suspects and there remains a great deal to do. It is also important to ensure that the public, legislators, and our worldwide colleagues also understand that much research is needed by all of us to help ensure bee health and develop methods to prevent CCD onset."

Source: Dr. Diana L. Cox-Foster, Department of Entomology, Penn State University

Colony Collapse Disorder – What should you be doing?

There has always been many unsolved beekeeping mysteries. I have referred to some of them elsewhere in this newsletter. Though this may be a fact, it does not make it a fact with which we are comfortable, but live with it we must. At this point, CCD has no clear cause, but research has been conducted and initial progress has been made. Certainly, we are optimistic that some cause and remedy will be found. Until that time, what should you as beekeepers be doing to prepare your hives for another onslaught of this syndrome? The answer is unsettlingly simple – do what you have always done to keep your colonies vigorous and productive. I have offered some general recommendations below that are intended to keep colonies strong.

SOME PRACTICAL MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS ARE:

James E. Tew

1. Control mites as best you can in ways that are the least disruptive to the colony.
2. Monitor for American foulbrood and aggressively get it out of your apiary once it's found.
3. Treat for Nosema with Fumabil-B. It seems to be more important than ever.
4. Requeen on a regular basis and be proficient when performing the procedure.
5. Super before the bees need it and super with more equipment than they can fill. Essentially, the top super should always be empty.
6. More so than in the past, only set up good yards – yards with protection from prevailing winter winds and protection from summer's hot sun. If you are uncomfortable in your yard, so are your bees.
7. Winterize the colonies and promptly summarize them the next spring.
8. Keep mice out of wintering colonies.
9. When colonies need working, work them. Otherwise, leave them alone.
10. In all ways, stress colonies as little as possible.

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Beginning Beekeeping

When I found this article as I was searching for newsletter ideas I thought of our annual IEBA Beekeeping Class and that this might help folks to have lots of good questions during the class. It is pretty long and will likely need two or three installments to complete. Here is the first installment.

Freely adapted from the *Beginner's Notebook*, provided to participants of the Eastern Apicultural Society's (EAS), Year of the Hive meeting in 1995 by Dr. James E. Tew and colleagues at The Ohio State University's Agricultural Technical Institute (ATI), Wooster, Ohio.

These topics have been chosen because they stem from most frequently asked questions about beginning beekeeping.
Rearing Queens
Selecting Queens
Testing for Hygienic Behavior
Wearing Protective Equipment

Rearing Queens
Bees will produce queens under the stimuli of: (1) supersedure, (2) swarming, and (3) emergency conditions. Most, if not all, queens produced commercially are produced under the swarming stimulus.
Any beekeeper can produce queen cells by simply removing the queen, creating an emergency status. Within a day or so, around 5-15 emergency cells will have been started. After these cells are capped, they can be cut out and transferred to another colony. After emerging and mating, the colony is thus requeened with a queen of the type chosen by you, the beekeeper.
Most common methods of commercial queen production use variations of the" Doolittle method." The elements of this technique are:

1. Breeder Colony (or colonies): this colony has characteristics that you want to incorporate into all your colonies and, thus, the source of queens of "good stock.". You can select for almost any common characteristic (gentleness, productivity, color, winter-hardiness). Larvae, three days old or younger are selected from this colony for the grafting into beeswax queencups in the Starter Colony.

2. Starter colony (or colonies): A Queenless-colony having a population depending on how many queen cells are to be produced - a small population is required for only a few cells, while 4-5 pounds of bees is needed to produce hundreds of cells. There should be no eggs or young larvae in this colony.

3. Cell Building Colony (also called a cell Finishing Colony). Since the starter colony may require large numbers of bees and extensive manipulation, "started" cells are moved to Cell Building Colonies to be finished after twenty-four hours, while grafted larvae are again placed within the Starting Colony if desired. Started cells are placed near emerging brood above a queen excluder. The Cell building Colony allows the Cell Starting Colony to be used much longer and start many more cells. "Ripe," capped cells must be removed before the 16th day of their development, which means at the latest ten days after they are put in the starter colony.

4. Queen Mating Nuclei. Ripe cells are transferred to queen mating nuclei (Nucs). Thee is no standard size or style nuc. Warmer climates use smaller nucs (baby Nucs), while colder climates must use larger nuclei. Queens emerge from their cells here, take mating flights and begin to lay. Queens are then inspected to see if eggs are present in the nuc and them introduced to their permanent hive.

Selecting Queens
Several races and hybrids of the honey bee, *Apis mellifera*, are available from queen producers. You can select the race or hybrid that best suits your beekeeping style, location and goals. Most commonly available races are: Italian, Carniolan, Caucasian and German Black. Most common hybrids are Midnight, Starline, Buckfast, and Yugo. There are others that are less common, not as available or little is known of their background or performance. It is good practice to ask the producer for any special information or date about queens produced; often a breeding program takes a back seat to simply producing queens for sale.

ITALIAN. The most commonly available race, *Apis mellifera ligustica* originated on the Italian peninsula, the only European bee with yellow pigmentation. They are short distance foragers, which means they are prone to robbing. They orient on color, so long rows of white colonies lend to drifting. Moderate spring buildup, peak summer populations and slow to shut down in fall can mean lots of winter bees - with the honey stores necessary for that. Low swarming is good, but can be temperamental.

CAUCASIAN. *Apis mellifera caucasica* evolved in the Caucas mountains near the Black Sea. Predominately dark, with gray or brown spots. Drones have dark hair, and queens are dark, harder to find. They are gentle, quiet on the combs and slow to build in the spring. Little swarming. Produces lots of propolis, but shut down early in the fall. They winter well.

CARNIOLAN. *Apis mellifera carnica* evolved in Austria and Yugoslavia, and most of Europe. The Yugo bee is of Caniolan decent. Build rapidly in the spring, they are heavy swarmers. Dark, with dark gray hair with some brown. Dark queens shut down in derths and early in fall. Calm and gentle, they forage in marginal weather. Robbing, drifting

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minimal.

BUCKFAST. A hybrid of several races, selected for gentleness, wintering, production and tracheal mite resistance. Available from Weaver Apiaries and some other outlets. Variable in appearance, queens tend toward leather. Moderate fast spring buildup, peak in early summer, good producers. Low swarming.

STARLINE. A hybrid of several stocks, all Italian. Fast spring buildup, lots of brood early means terrific honey production. Very uniform in appearance, they are slow to shut down in fall. Good commercial bee.

MIDNIGHT. A Carniolan/Caucasian cross. Moderate spring buildup, dark to dark gray, dark queens. Good in marginal weather and extremely gentle. Shuts down early in fall, winters well.

GERMAN BLACK. *Apis mellifera mellifera*. First bee in U.S., still very prominent in feral populations. Small, dark and mean. Very susceptible to foulbrood, but a survivor bee in many areas affected by Varroa and invasion of Africanized bees.

Africanized bees (*Apis mellifera scutellata*) have taken up residence in the southern reaches of Texas, Arizona, New Mexico and California. These are undesirable bees because of their defensiveness and are not raised for sale.

Testing For Hygienic Behavior
Hygienic behavior is a genetic trait of some honey bee colonies. Colonies that are hygienic are able to detect diseased larvae and pupae and remove them from the nest before the disease becomes infectious. Hygienic behavior has been found to be a mechanism of resistance to AFB and Chalkbrood. Hygienic behavior may also be a mechanism of defense against Varroa mites.
The following procedure is used to test colonies for hygienic behavior.
1. Find a comb containing sealed brood on both sides of the frame. Cut section of the comb containing 100 cells on each side using a serrated knife. A 2"x2.5" rectangle works. This section of sealed brood will be called an insert.
2. Freeze the insert at -10 degrees F for 24 hours. Alternatively, brood may be frozen in place using a round can filled with liquid nitrogen. This avoids having to remove, freeze and then replace the comb section.
3. Count the number of sealed cells on each side of the insert and record it. Only count whole cells; do not count cells which have been cut or damaged along the edges of the insert.
4. Put the insert back in the comb from where it was cut, and return the frame to the hive putting it in the center of the brood nest. Note the time of day.
5. Forty eight hours after the insert was placed in the colony to be tested, return to the hive and inspect it. Count the number of sealed cells remaining in the insert.
6. If your colony has cleaned over 90% of the cells you can consider it to be hygienic. If your colony appears to be hygienic, it is a wise idea to test it again. There may be some variation in response between tests, particularly if the insert was not fitted back in the comb properly. Also, the lack of a nectar flow may slow the hygienic response to some degree. There is a correlation between the removal of freeze-killed brood and the removal of diseased and Varroa infested brood.

Wearing Protective Equipment
The first and most important rule to consider when it comes to wearing protective gear is: "Wear what makes you comfortable working bees."
Most important is a veil, which protects the face, the most sought-after target for guard bees. Veils can be free standing, that is without a helmet, or attached to a pith-type helmet, made of plastic or other material. Almost any hat that keeps the veil material off the face and neck will work. Veils usually have a mesh bottom that is snugged down over the collar onto the shoulders with a variety of ties and strings. This keeps bees out, providing there are no gaps or holes. Veils that attach to the beesuit with a zipper are popular, mostly because they are convenient, easily maintained, and virtually beeproof. They are also more expensive.
Beesuits are light in color, usually, but many wear what's available - simply to keep their clothes clean. The white coverall suit is most popular, with a variety of pockets, cuffs and attachments. White is also the most difficult to keep clean. They are made from a variety of materials - cotton, cotton blends and synthetics - each with its own peculiar attributes. Suits should be 'roomy', to allow bending and stretching and lifting room, and for other clothes underneath. This also keeps the suit from stretching tautly over the skin underneath, leaving a vulnerable spot for stings.
Seasoned beekeepers seldom wear gloves because they feel they lose that 'delicate' touch. However, most beginners start with them. Most gloves have cloth gauntlets of some type to seal the sleeves of the beesuit. Glove materials range from full leather to plastic to split leather to rubber. Some are ventilated, others have no fingers. Gloves can mean the difference between staying with bees or not for a beginner, and wearing them can help build the confidence and experience necessary to continue. As one gains experience, the finger tips can be cut off, which still protects most of the hand, while ensuring a more sensitive manipulation.
Boots and pants-cuff clasps range from hightop rubber boots to baling twine. The goal is to keep bees on the ground from crawling up pants legs - an unnerving experience. Comfort and durability and safety and cost are all important. All equipment should fit the job. A hobbyist with a few colonies will use, and need, different equipment than a commercial pollinator.

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The association will provide Drinks, Condiments, Ham, Plates, Silverware and More

DECEMBER—Agenda

Potluck dinner — Election of officers

Inland Empire Beekeepers Association

JANUARY

Annual Class on Beekeeping

Every Friday Evening January 4th to March 7th,
at the WSU/Spokane County Extension Office
222 N Havana
6:00 to 8:00 pm
Instructor/Coordinator -Jim Miller

IEBA DUES Are "DUE" in January

Dues are $5.00 Individual / $10.00 Family

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Note : We will have a discussion about costs to receive the beemail via regular mail at the December meeting after election of officers.

Classified Ads

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IEBA Website
www.inlandbeemail.com

WSBA Website
www.wasba.org

Hive Care :

December

The Bees.
Snow is on the ground, and the bees have settled into their winter cluster. Until next month, there will likely be no brood present.

The Beekeeper.
The beeyard needs not much attention except for three critical areas:

(1) be sure to keep entrances clear of snow to allow bees to make cleansing flights on warm days.

(2) many beekeepers also use an upper entrance allowing for flight, but more importantly ventilation. Condensation building up and then dripping on the cluster is deadly.

(3) Check the weight of hives by tipping up a corner. If hives are light, you can still help them out with 2:1 sugar syrup. On a warm day, add an empty super and place a couple of inverted jars of syrup right on the top bars. Work quickly so that heat loss is minimal.

Now is also the time to sit back, read a good bee book, make some candles or equipment, and plan out your upcoming beekeeping year.

November

Linda Carney, Secretary

November 9, 2007

Turkey on the table
Pie on a plate
Let's have a meeting
We can *hardly* wait

And we get a movie
It's all about bees
They live in Canada
Everyone *down in front* please

President Jim Miller called our November Thanksgiving meeting to order. He informed those present that this would be a very quick meeting so we could enjoy the evening.

The secretary's minutes from the October meeting were accepted as printed in the Beemail.

Then Collette presented the Treasurer' report. She stated we currently have $10,735.85.

A motion to pay the outstanding bills was passed and accepted. This was the only order of business before President Miller adjourned our meeting.

Holiday Recipe

At our November Thanksgiving Potluck there was a yummy Leek & Potato Salad brought by Janice McAllister. She has graciously shared her "secret" recipe …..enjoy!!!

Leek & Potato Salad
Quantity of leeks and potatoes is determined by the number of people being served, but a good rule of thumb is 1 potato per person, and about 1/2 of a leek. More or less depending on personal preferences and the size of the vegetables.

Trim away tough outer leaves of the leeks. Cleaning the leeks requires great care to remove the sand between the leaves. Do so by gently separating the leaves and rinsing in plenty of water. Be sure and check all the way down to make sure there is none hiding down by the root. It may be necessary to split them in half the long way in order to thoroughly clean them. When washed, cut into 2" lengths.

Place leeks in a pot and barely cover with well-salted water. Boil gently until tender, 10 - 15 minutes. Drain in a colander and press out any extra water.

Peel and quarter the potatoes and boil them in salted water until tender. Drain well.

Dressing (Multiply amounts depending on how much dressing is needed.)

3 Tbsp extra virgin olive oil
Juice of 1/2 lemon
1 tsp sugar
salt & pepper to taste
1 tsp crushed dried mint

Whisk all the ingredients together. Carefully combine cooked leeks and potatoes and pour dressing over them. Stir gently until the dressing is well distributed and arrange vegetables on a serving platter. Garnish with chopped preserved lemon. Recipe follows.

Preserved Lemons
Thoroughly wash 4 or 5 lemons. Cut the lemons in quarters but /do not cut all the way through/ at the stem end so that the quarters remain attached. Place 1Tbsp salt in the middle of each lemon and place it in the bottom of a large glass jar. Repeat for the remaining lemons.
Squash the lemons down and cover jar with the lid. Place the jar in a cool, dark place for 3 - 4 days. A lot of juice will come out. Squash the lemons down again and cover completely with fresh lemon juice.
Weight them if necessary to keep them under the lemon juice. Leave in a cool, dark place for approximately 3 - 4 weeks.
To use, remove the pulp and rinse off the salt. Chop in desired manner. Will keep for about a year.

Inland Empire Beekeepers Association

INLAND BEEMAIL

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Next Meeting:
Christmas Pot Luck Dinner
Friday December 14th
6:30 Meeting

The Inland Empire Beekeepers Association (IEBA) meets the 2nd Friday of every month at the Spokane County Ag Extension office by the County Fairgrounds, at 222 N. Havana. The association is affiliated with the Washington State Beekeepers Association (WSBA). IEBA membership dues are $5.00 for an individual or $10.00 for the entire family. This includes your receiving the *Inland Beemail*, which is published by the association every month.

IEBA
Birthdays & Anniversaries

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Linda Carney -- 6th
Cindy Ostendorf -- 10th
Jerry Miller -- 11th
Michael Silva -- 26th
Dave Zack -- 27th
Zack Gross -- 28th
Beverly Bailey -- 30th

DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

Vern & Ealaine Staack -- 1st
Charles & Katherine Gross -- 4th

Beekeeping Calendar - Bob Arnold

December

Watch colonies to make certain that water, snow and ice are not a problem. Clear off when necessary.