

# Inland BeeMail

E. 8900 Maringo Drive  
Spokane, WA 99212

# INLAND BEEMAIL

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## Presidents' Corner

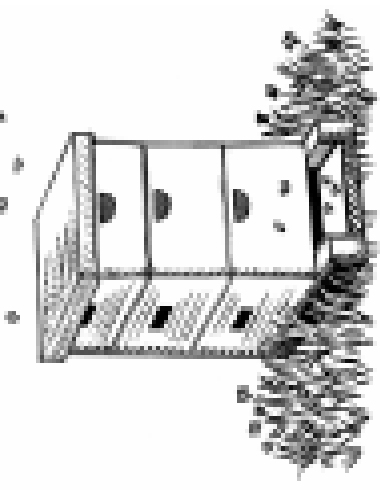
Another month has slipped by and it time for another bee meeting. Jim Miller had a change with the bee class and Jan Dormaier will be at the March meeting teaching the class so we are planning on changing our program to accommodate Jan's schedule. She does such a great job and everyone seems to learn a lot from her talks. She has to drive a ways to support us so we are very thankful for her time.

At the last meeting someone mention some hives were running low on honey and we should be on the lookout for problems. No truer words have been spoken. I lost two hives to starvation since then. A word to the wise. During the warm spell I check about 20 hives frame by frame and they all had fresh brood.

The nights aren't getting that cold so I think the bees are getting ideas. If you don't feel comfortable checking them at least lift the back of the hive a see what the weight looks like.

I want to welcome the new beekeeping class to our Inland Beemail. Each member of the class gets one years membership in the association and our hope is that you will continue to support the association next year.

We have lined up package bees to be delivered into Spokane on April 12, so that weekend will be a very busy one for the association. Installing the package properly is very important to getting a good start on beekeeping. Orders will be taken up till April 7



and then they will shutoff as the breeder needs to make plans for shaking there bees to meet our needs. If you have any old package containers please drop them off at my house or the bee shop so they can be returned to the breeder. By doing this we are able to keep our costs down for the packages and we don't have to charge deposits. If you are nervous about installing the package come and pick up your package in the afternoon and my brother or I will be installing packages at the shop and give lessons in how to do it. We will cover package installation at our April 11 meeting.

The state meeting is March 1 at 10 am at the cattlemen's Association in Ellensburg. Anyone is invited to attend. I will have some WSBA membership application at the meeting if you would like to join the state association.

All members are encouraged to attend the IEBA meetings on the 2nd Friday of each month!

*Come for the education, stay for the fun!*

- 6:30 p.m. Officers and Committees meet
- 7:00 p.m. Social time (with refreshments)
- 7:30 p.m. Business meeting
- 8:00 p.m. Program

**Spokane County Ag Extension Office Bldg.**  
222 N. Havana



## Hive Care Calendar for Feb. and Mar.



The *Inland Bee Mail* is a bi-monthly publication of the Inland Empire Beekeepers Association (IEBA). The goal of the newsletter is to inform and educate beekeepers and those interested in the art and science of beekeeping.

Submissions for publication, suggestions and comments may be sent to:

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## Hive Care Calendar

*For the month of February*

- Keep entrance free from dead bees.
- Lift hives to find any light ones. Give these emergency feed of dry sugar or sugar candy on the inner cover.
- After the middle of the month, on a warm sunny day, move the upper hive body to the bottom of the hive and place the empty bottom hive body on top of the hive. In the process, thoroughly clean the bottom board and replace the entrance reducer.
- Remove dead colonies from the bee yard.
- Check stored empty frames for moth infestations and treat as necessary.
- Continue repair and/or assembly of this season's equipment.
- Order packages and new queens for desired delivery date.
- Get new labels printed and consider introducing your buyers to a new container this year.

## Hive Care Calendar

*For the month of March*

- March will bring in some pollen and brood rearing will start. This is a critical time for feed as they will use up their stores much faster as the queen starts to lay.
- Start feeding with sugar water or corn syrup or use saved frames of honey at this time.
- If you are going to feed pollen supplement, begin it this month.
- If you are going to use Fumidil B for nosema control, do this also.
- Begin treatment as needed for mites and put in extender patties.
- Inspect colonies twice this month for stores, queenright, diseases and mites.
- Unite weak hives using the newspaper method.
- If the temp gets above 60 degrees, do a fast hive cleaning by scraping off propolis, burr comb, scrape out dead bees, check condition of brood frames and replace frames that have excessive drone cells or bad combs.

toward the end of March or early April, when the weather conditions begin to moderate, it is time for the first extensive colony manipulations. At this time the bottom boards should be scraped and examination of the brood is recommended.

Tony Jadczyk/Maine State Bee Inspector

### FDA SEIZES ADULTERATED HONEY

At the request of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), U.S. Marshals seized adulterated imported bulk and finished product honey from Hoyts Honey Farm, Inc. in Baytown, Texas.

U.S. Marshals seized 266 drums of honey (each containing 639 pounds of bulk honey) and five totes (each containing a net weight of 3,000 pounds) after FDA tested and confirmed the presence of an unapproved food additive, chloramphenicol. In accordance with the Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act, food products that contain chloramphenicol, an antibiotic, are adulterated and are not permitted to be sold in or imported into this country.

This seizure is the third enforcement action against similarly contaminated honey in six months. The first such seizure occurred in August 2002 in Louisiana. The second seizure occurred in January 2003 when U.S. Marshals served a warrant on T.W. Burlison and Son, Inc. in Waxahatchie, TX. The continued monitoring of food production and distribution at many levels has enabled FDA to detect this adulterated honey since the agency learned of the presence of chloramphenicol in imported honey. Chloramphenicol is a broad-spectrum antibiotic drug used to treat life-threatening infections in humans, usually when other alternatives are not available. The use of this antibiotic is limited because of its potentially life-threatening side effect, idiosyncratic aplastic anemia. For the very small number of the population susceptible to this side effect, exposure to chloramphenicol could be serious or life threatening. Because of the current uncertainty regarding the dose-response relationship between chloramphenicol ingestion and aplastic anemia, it is not possible to define a safe level for the presence of this antibiotic in food products.

The agency will continue to detain or seize any honey imports that contain chloramphenicol to ensure that this product is not released for human or animal consumption in the United States.

Note: Contamination of honey is a major concern to every beekeeper. That is why it is important for us to follow label instructions on every product we use.

Article found by **Dave Glasebrook**

Check out our website at [www.dreamwater.net/beekeeper/](http://www.dreamwater.net/beekeeper/) (webmaster Jim Weyen)

### How to do increases

By mid-April the beekeeper should have determined the final winter survival or mortality rate of the bee depending upon whether he/she is an optimist or a pessimist. After some soul searching, the individual may decide to make up for the winter loss or perhaps increase the number of colonies above the "usual". The key to making increases is not to overdo it. One should be able to produce additional colonies without significantly compromising honey yield. Also, one should ensure that the new hive is successful in population buildup and attaining stores for the winter.

### Package Bees

Perhaps the easiest way to make increases is to purchase package bees. It is best to order bees in February for a delivery date near May 1st. Only buy package bees from commercial operations that are certified "disease and mite free". Packages should be feed continuously a 1:1 (sugar/water) syrup until there is sufficient forage available (dandelion, fruit bloom). For rapid colony buildup and significant reduction of queen supercedure, give the package a frame or two of capped, emerging brood from one of your stronger colonies. The addition of emerging brood will prevent the normal decline of adult population that packages exhibit which often leads to supercedure. Be sure to place the additional brood next to the brood that the package has begun to rear in order to prevent "chilling".

### Nuclei (nucs)

A nuc is a miniature hive. It has a queen, all stages of brood and stores. Usually a nuc consists of three to five frames. Nucs are usually not intended to produce surplus in the year they are established. Rather, the goal for the first season is to fill two brood chambers with a sufficient population and food reserve to survive the winter. Make nucs early in the month of June from strong parent colonies. A four or five frame nuc is best in Maine. The brood and bees are usually removed from one parent hive although they may be taken from two.

Each nuc should consist of one or two frames of honey and pollen, one or two frames of mostly capped brood and older larva, a frame of young larvae and a frame of eggs. Usually, a queen is introduced, but often the nuc is allowed to rear it's own queen. Other beekeepers prefer to remove the queen from the parent colony and put her in the nuc. If this is the case, then the frame of eggs is unnecessary. Instead, substitute an empty frame for the frame of eggs. In several weeks the nuc should be full of bees. At this time transfer the nuc into a hive body with a reduced entrance. When the bees completely fill the hive body add either a second brood chamber or a shallow depending upon the anticipated flow in your area.

### Divisions/Splits

There are two basic types of divisions, the single hive or the multiple hive division. A single hive division is just that. A parent hive is divided into two relatively equal units. Usually, the new colony is moved to another yard so that its population is not depleted due to bees returning to the parent hive. Successful divisions may be made within the apiary with a little more effort. Divide the parent colony as stated above, however, shake additional bees from two or three frames

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into the "split". Place the split (with grass loosely stuffed in the entrance) next to the parent hive, facing the opposite direction. After a few days check the hives for strength. If the "split" appears to have lost bees, then shake nurse bees from the parent colony into it. Usually this is sufficient to even out the two hives. In a couple of weeks the new colony may be returned around so that the entrance faces the desired direction.

Multiple hive divisions are made up from two or more parent colonies. A frame or two of bees, brood and honey can be taken from as many as ten hives **without** the bees fighting. When making this sort of increase it is **critical** that the parent hives first be inspected for any disease. The new division must be balanced. There should be eggs, young larvae, older larvae, capped and emerging brood as well as sufficient honey and pollen. It is advantageous to move the new hive to another yard, however, this type of split can be successful within the parent apiary. It doesn't hurt to shake additional bees into these colonies.

The beekeeper can successfully increase colony numbers by one or more of the methods described. The key to success is not to "push" the bees too hard. Only split strong colonies, don't attempt to make divisions too early in the season, and maintain a balance of brood stages and adult population in the new colony. Don't expect a surplus crop of honey the first year from newly established hives. If the new colony is slow to start due to weather, don't hesitate to supplement with pollen substitute and syrup. By August 20th, if the new colony will not have a sufficient population and honey stores to winter successfully, then unite it with another weak hive and try again next year.

**Credit the Washington Post: Recent news article.**

Date line 12.-25-2002

"Honey Sticks easier to transport than bear" Anyone who has ever lugged a honey bear to the office knows the perils of honey made portable. Rather than face that sticky mess again, we now stash clever honey sticks in our desk drawers. Made from clover honey, the sealed honey-filled straws are leak proof. All it takes is a snip from scissors and the honey pours forth.

A box of 20 will set you back \$3.75; choose from a variety of flavors. Stash Original Honey Sticks are available in original, chai, cinnamon, and lemon flavors (\$3.75 per box of 20 sticks.) we found ours at some Safeway and Target stores.

Also available by mail-order in 20 and 35 count (\$5.95 to \$7.95) boxes from Stash Tea (call 800-826-4218) or see [www.stashtea.com](http://www.stashtea.com). The larger count boxes are available in eight additional flavors, including orange, peach, ginzing, and echinacea.

**Article Provided by Jack Knox**

**Cut this out and add to your calendar for all IEBA events.**

<b>January 10, 2003</b>	IEBA Meeting Program-Organizational Meeting	<b>August 2003</b>	IEBA Summer Picnic
<b>February 14, 2003</b>	IEBA Meeting Program-Wintering Nucs and single board boxes	<b>August 20-24, 2003</b>	North Idaho State in Coeur D'Alene
<b>March 1, 2003</b>	WSBA Meeting in Ellensburg, 10:00 AM at the Cattlemen's Club	<b>September 4, 2003</b>	Meeting will be at the Fair Ground on Thursday night
<b>March 14, 2003</b>	IEBA Meeting Program-Jan Dormaier-Honey Bee Diseases	<b>September 5-14, 2003</b>	Spokane Interstate Fair
<b>April 11, 2003</b>	IEBA Meeting Program-Package Bee's and 2 Queen Hives	<b>October 10, 2003</b>	IEBA Meeting Program-
<b>May 9, 2003</b>	IEBA Meeting Program-	<b>November 6-8, 2003</b>	WSBA State Convention Joint Meeting with Oregon in Hood River
<b>June 7, 2003</b>	WSBA Meeting Program-Visit of WSU program and facilities	<b>November 14, 2003</b>	IEBA Meeting Program-Thanksgiving Potluck
<b>June 13, 2003</b>	IEBA Meeting Program-	<b>December 12, 2003</b>	IEBA Meeting Program-Catered Christmas dinner Election of Officers
<b>July 11, 2003</b>	IEBA Meeting Program-	<b>January 9, 2003</b>	IEBA Meeting Program-

## Spring Management of Wintered Hives

Over wintered bee colonies should be checked in early or mid-March for the presence and position of the honey stores. Colonies that have died during the winter should be checked for the cause of death (starvation, disease, moisture, etc.) and either closed or taken home for storage.

When examining the colony, open the cover and peer down between the frames. The cluster should be about 1/2 down in the hive body with frames containing honey next to and above the cluster. If the bees are very close to the top of the hive and low on honey then the colony should be fed or it will starve later during the spring when the level of brood rearing increases.

Starvation may be prevented in several ways. First, frames of honey may be given to the colony from a disease free source. Place the frames of honey on both sides of the cluster or give the colony a super of honey directly above the cluster.

If frames of honey are unavailable, then the beekeeper must resort to feeding dry sugar or combs that have been filled with sugar syrup. Feed dry sugar by pouring 3-5/lbs over the inner cover or on a sheet of newspaper placed over the frames. When using newspaper, be sure to leave several inches of space so the bees can climb above the paper to consume the sugar.

Alternatives to feeding dry sugar include feeding sugar candy or a sugar slurry. The candy is made by using the following recipe: 15/lbs.sugar>3lbs of glucose or white corn syrup>1 quart of water>1/2 teaspoon cream tartar. Dissolve the sugar in water by stirring and boiling until the temp rises to 240 degrees F. Let the syrup cool to 200 degrees-182 degrees F. and beat the mixture until thick. Pour the candy into molds lined with wax paper. Optimally molds should be 8x10x3 inches. After the candy has set it may be fed to bees by placing it above the cluster elevated from the top bars by using sticks. A slurry is a very thick sugar mixture made by dissolving sugar in hot water until it is solid. The slurry is usually fed to the bees above the inner cover or in a "feed rim". The slurry may also be placed in a zip-lock plastic bag with several holes in one side faced down. The bag is then placed over the cluster.

When colonies are found to have a large cluster size and be extremely low on honey, division boards feeders or combs containing sugar syrup may be given to the colony. This is accomplished by spraying 2:1 (sugar: water) syrup into empty combs and placing these frames into the colony as if they were frames of honey.

Whenever syrup is fed to bees early in the spring be sure to feed the bees at dusk or screen the entrance of the hive for the day. If these precautions are not taken, the bees thinking there is a nectar flow, will fly out into the cold and perish. Hives that have adequate honey stores may be given protein supplements such as Beltsville Bee Diet® or soy flour in early to mid-March. Usually the soy flour is mixed with an equal amount of sugar and enough water is added so the diet mix has dough like consistency. The mixture is then formed into a patty about the size of a pancake and wrapped in waxed paper. The patty is then placed directly above the cluster on top of the frames.

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## "By the time you read this we will have completed four weeks of Bee Classes.

We have 64 people attending these classes every week. When working with this group it is like a large sponge looking for knowledge. And the Inland Empire has been right there with the bucket of knowledge. The first week Frank Merickel talking for one hour and 45 minutes on bugs, bees, and walking sticks. The second week Jim Johnson talked about hive bodies, frames and etc. After he was done with his presentation the class engulfed him wanting to know more. The third week was done by Jack Knox and flowers. We learned the difference between a veg. and a fruit. Do you know? Should have been there. The next time Jack states that he doesn't know anything, all we can say is Jack the cat is out of the bag, and we don't believe you. You did a wonderful job teaching the new and the not so old beekeepers a few things about flowers, nectar and pollen. As of this writing, Ance1, has not given his presentation of swarming, but like always he will exceed my expectations.

This year we have ten mentors from all around the area. I have been told the new beekeepers are calling asking questions, and are ready for the bees to arrive and start into the journey of beekeeping.

The Inland Empire has grown through the years because of its membership, their desires, and wanting to help other people. I don't know of anyplace that I could go and receive this much help and see the desire for beekeeping. My hat is off to you the members of the Inland Empire Beekeepers.

Article by Jim Miller

Dr. Sheppard at WSU has updated the web site and we have additional information on recent research.

Web address is the following-<http://apis.wsu.edu/apinotes.html>.

You don't want to miss out on the information that he is sharing. WSU has been working very hard to be a part of the beekeeping operations in Washington and is working on many things that are important to large and small beekeepers. The Cornell/WSU project on queens could have a lasting impact on beekeeping in the Northwest. It would be nice to have queen stock that is been raised for our climate and honey flows to take advantage of our situations.

### For Sale:

- Looking for board ends in pine or cedar contact Leo Berchtold at 208-687-1300. If you have any used equipment to sell send me a note.

### **Cut Comb Honey and Comb Honey**

The 1970's saw a renaissance of producing section (comb) honey. The eminent Russian beekeeper, Peter Prokopovitch, was the first to produce this kind of honey over 160 years ago. Section (comb) honey was popular and shipped regularly in railroad car lots in the early 1900's -- acknowledged leaders in the field at that time were Dr. C. C. Miller and G. F. Demuth. The Killion family in Illinois is one of the few remaining contemporary producers of this specialized product. Most recently, introduction of the plastic circular section has promoted renewed interest in comb honey.

Section (comb) honey is the purest product available from the bees. It's virtually untouched by human hands or man-made equipment. The honey remains in the comb until removed by the consumer. In this era of over-processed foods, it's one of the most "organic" treats available to consumers and demands a premium price.

Two types of section (comb) honey can be found -- circular and square. The square sections are usually made from the finest basswood, whereas the circular ones are constructed of plastic. The virtues of each type are well known -- as well as their limitations. It's generally agreed that circular plastic sections are easier to produce because the bees fill them more uniformly than the traditional square ones.

A lot of information exists on preparing wooden and plastic sections for the colony. Like with so many things in the art of beekeeping, however, recommended procedures to manage a colony for comb honey production are obscure or incomplete. Glancing at several different methods leads one to the "sneaking suspicion" that the bees will produce section (comb) honey no matter what system is used -- if the conditions are right.

Therefore, it's important to understand certain principles and to work out the details of management, which will adhere to these. MAXIM: Strong colonies and vigorous honey flows are needed to produce section (comb) honey.

Although beekeepers can't control conditions to maximize honey flows, they can influence dramatically the strength of their colonies. It can't be emphasized too much -- hives should "boil over" with bees! In order to achieve this, some people use the two-queen system; others a single queen. Some run double-brood chambers; others insist that only singles are needed. Some dequeen colonies and give cells or young queens to prevent swarming; others stick with a queen-right system and try to prevent swarming by other means. Most beekeepers reduce double- and triple-brood chambers to singles and doubles, respectively. It's generally agreed that the bees must be crowded in order to "make" them go up into sections. They apparently don't like to work in sections and must be forced to do so.

Crowding, however, produces two management problems -- swarming and pollen storage in the sections. Both are undesirable, and so a balance must somehow be achieved in determining how much room to give a colony, which is used for section (comb) honey. This is only acquired through experience.

Timing is extremely important in section (comb) honey production. Bees of field age are a must. That means the queen must be stimulated to lay a maximum number of eggs four to six weeks before the flow. Since the sections are worked from the rear toward the front, supers should be reversed every few days to promote uniform filling.

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Top supering is recommended by many, but some bottom super. Two supers are added by most at the beginning of the flow; additional ones are put on, as each preceding super is one-half to two-thirds full. It's better to err on the side of adding too many at the start of the flow and too few during the latter half. Any error means incomplete sections -- a waste of bee and beekeeper time! Filled and capped sections must not be left on the colony after they are finished. They can become travel-trained and, therefore, unmarketable in a short period.

Finally, there is the matter of storing completed sections. Even in strong colonies wax moth eggs are always present. There is no fumigant now labeled which can be used for comb honey. The best alternative is freezing the sections to kill wax moth eggs. To reduce condensation, sections should be sealed in airtight plastic bags while being frozen and during thawing.

In summary, successful section (comb) honey is based on certain principles: 1. Strong colonies "boiling over" with field bees 2. Vigorous honey flows 3. Proper timing A. Stimulating the colony to maximum egg-laying 4 to 6 weeks before the honey flow B. Adding supers as earlier ones are 1/2 to 2/3 filled C. Removing filled supers as soon as they're completed 4. Giving enough room to reduce swarming and pollen storage yet forcing the bees into the sections 5. Proper handling of completed sections to prevent wax moth damage.

Sections (comb) honey production is considered to be one of the highest forms of the beekeeping art -- certainly in the same league with rearing quality queens. It, therefore, requires more work and attention to detail than other management techniques. The end product, though, is well worth the extra effort. The best advice is to start small and increase production as you gain experience.

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### **Announcements**

**-Mark your calendars for the 2003 Washington State Beekeepers Association meeting. It will be held at Hood River, Oregon on November 6-8, 2003.**

**-I want to thank everyone who has forwarded me information for the Inland Bee-mail. We did really good. Lets do even better next month.**

**-Rae Bateman a longtime member of our association passed away last month. She was our Secretary for many years. She is fondly remembered by all who knew her.**