



INLAND BEEEMAIL

Monthly newsletter of the Inland Empire Beekeepers Association

Volume 9, Issue 11 — December 2004 — www.inlandbeemail.com

Presidents
Corner:

Dear Inland Empire
Beekeeper Association
Members:

Come one, come all to the IEBA Christmas Potluck and gift exchange. The feast begins at 6:30 PM, 10 December 2004 at the extension office. Bring a salad, side dish or dessert, and a good appetite. IEBA volunteers will provide ham, turkey, drinks, rolls, and a large cake. Anyone wishing to participate in the gift exchange should bring a wrapped gift with a value between \$10.00 –\$15.00. If you are a queen bee, bring a gift for a queen bee, drones for drones.

Please RSVP by calling 238-6489 & leave a message or email president@bee-mail.org.

December is also the month that new association officers are elected. Roger Carney is our 'Nominating Officer' once again. Please



come and participate.

This is our last meeting of the year and in the spirit of the Christmas season lets try to have a short, positive, record setting business meeting. I would

suggest we stuff ourselves first, have a speedy meeting, then get to the gift exchange. After the gift exchange we can go for seconds on the desserts.

If you cannot attend then let me take this opportunity to wish you a Merry Christmas and a Honey of a New Year.

— Ted Swenson

Please come early for our
IEBA Christmas Potluck & Gift Exchange
 to be held at 6:30 pm Friday Dec. 10th.
 Bring a salad, side dish, or dessert and a good appetite
 IEBA volunteers are providing ham, turkey, drinks, rolls and cake
 Please RSVP by calling 238-6489 or email president@bee-mail.org

We look forward to seeing all of you there!

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Joy in Beekeeping

Laura Shulenbarger (Chair)
Linda Carney
Ted Swenson

IEBA Website

www.inlandbeemail.com

WSBA Website

www.wasba.org



December Agenda

—Ted Swenson

Reports:

- ◆ The Secretary's Report—Linda
- ◆ The Treasurer's Report—Ky
- ◆ Joy in Beekeeping Report—Laura
- ◆ Fair Reports
- ◆ *Inland Beemail* Report—Frank
- ◆ WSBA Conference Report—Jim
- ◆ WSBA Report—Jerry
- ◆ Four Corner Bee Reports

Old Business:

- ◆ IEBA Charter/Constitution Review and Update Plan - Proposal (Nothing to report)
- ◆ Reminder to Joy in Beekeeping Committee
- ◆ IEBA Cook Book Sales

New Business

- ◆
- ◆
- ◆

Nov. Minutes

—Linda Carney, Secretary

Not Available at Press Time.

Classifieds

Tate's Honey Farm has all of your extracting and packaging needs. Woodenware for all your winter projects. Shop hours are 8:30—2:00 every Saturday at E. 8900 Maringo, Millwood. Contact us at 509-924-6669 or online

www.tateshoneyfarm.com

Please return your empty package bee containers!

BEEBOXES BY LEE

Woodenware, standard or custom orders, IPM bottom boards, Hive top feeders, etc, select lumber. —Lee Birchold (208) 687-1300

Miller's Homestead Jim and Jenine Miller

Cheney, WA
1-509-299-9085
Providers of
-Natural honey
-Cut comb
-Creamed honey
-Custom Honey extraction
-Plastic containers

Now available: Plastic wide-mouth jars: 12 oz @ 55¢/ea, 24 oz @ 65¢/ea. Honey Supers, 10 frame and painted \$39.50 FOB 14606 Stangland Rd., Cheney. Look at our web site for prices on other containers for the honey flow.

www.millershomestead.com

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. The next few issues will help with some ideas.



Bee Shortage for Almond Pollination

By Christine Souza
Assistant Editor
California Farm Bureau

For more than 15 years, beekeepers and almond growers have faced problems with a mite known as the Varroa destructor, an external parasite of the honey bee whose population continues to increase until it kills the entire bee colony.

Beekeepers have been attacking this mite with two primary materials for the past several years and now say the mite has developed a resistance.

"This season, the infestation built up before anybody even could recognize it and it was too late for a lot of guys. Some of the beekeepers that I know are 50 percent to two-thirds wiped out," said Galt beekeeper Guy Rutter, a member of the California Farm Bureau Federation bee commodity advisory committee. "In our case, other than normal loss during the season, we are in OK shape. Until we get through the cold weather and into January we are not going to really know our losses for sure. It is going to wreak havoc with almond pollination as far as pricing and will even reflect into the other crops like cherries, plums, apples and the summer pollination crops."

The Varroa mite first appeared in 1987 when it was discovered in Florida and North Dakota. Five years later, the mite appeared basically everywhere in the country, said Eric Mussen of the Uni-

versity of California, Davis Department of Entomology, and member of the CFBBF bee advisory committee.

"They mite population really peaked in 1995 and 1996," Mussen said. "There were just so many of them that colonies would collapse and the bees still alive from these colonies would fly and try and get into another colony. They brought their mites along with them, so it was really bad."

Beekeepers use two primary materials to kill the Varroa mite: a synthetic pyrethroid called Apistan that has been a useful tool for the past 10 years, and an organophosphate known as CheckMite+ that has worked well for only the past three years. These materials come in the form of plastic strips that are placed inside the hives to treat the Varroa mite.



"We went through Apistan and now we are basically getting to the tail end of CheckMite+ where most people say, 'I put the strips in and nothing happened,'" Mussen said. "Now we have a really serious problem because there is no third magic bullet. Beekeepers have noticed now whether they use Apistan or CheckMite+ strips or not, the mite numbers are just growing higher and higher in the colonies."

If the colony contains just one mite family, when the honeybee emerges she is going to be lighter in weight and her nutritional level is not going to be quite as good. In addition, she will have a shorter life expectancy and she does not forage very well, but she is alive and functional to a certain extent. If there is more than one mite family in the colony, then the producer really has a problem, Mussen said.

How Almonds Grow

The Budding

In the fall, flower parts begin to develop on the edges of the growing bud. By mid-December, pollen grains are present. The tiny bud remains dormant until early January when it grows rapidly.

The Blossom

A good chill during November and December followed by a warmer January and February coaxes the first almond tree blossoms from their buds. Because the almond tree is not self-pollinating, at least two different varieties of trees are necessary for a productive orchard. Bees pollinate alternating rows of almonds varieties. From February onward, orchards should be frost-free,

have mild temperatures (55 to 60 degrees Fahrenheit) and minimal rain so blossoms can flourish and bees can do their job.

The Fruit

After the petals drop and the trees have leafed out, the first signs of the fuzzy gray-green "fruit" appear. The hull continues to harden and mature and in July it begins to split open. Between mid-August and late October, the split widens, exposing the shell, which allows the kernel (nut) to dry. The whole nut and stem finally separate and, shortly before harvest, the hull opens completely.

The Harvest

State of the art technology is used to ensure the highest quality almonds. California's growing and sanitary standards lead the world, both in the field and in the almond processing plant. To prepare for harvest,

orchard floors are swept and cleared. Mechanical tree "shakers" knock unshelled nuts to the ground, where they are allowed to dry before they are swept into rows and picked up by machine. Finally, they are transported to carts and towed to the huller.

The Packaging

At the processing plant, a random sample of almond shells are cracked open and the nuts inside are graded according to size and quality. Almonds are inspected to make sure they are whole, clean, well-dried and virtually free from decay, rancidity, insects, foreign matter, mold and any kind of breakage or blemish. Almonds are then processed and packed to specification in an assortment of sizes and shapes. Stored properly at 40 degrees Fahrenheit with low humidity, almonds have a shelf life of up to three years.

USDA Amends Honeybee Importation Regs

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USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service issued a

final rule amending the regulations for the importation of honeybees and honeybee semen and the regulations governing the importation of bees other than honeybees, certain beekeeping by-products and used beekeeping equipment.

Changes include:

- Allowing honeybees from Australia and honeybees and honeybee germ plasm from New Zealand to be imported into the continental United States under certain conditions.
- Imposing certain conditions on the importation into the United States of bees and related articles from Canada
- Prohibiting both the interstate movement and importation of honeybees into Hawaii.
- Consolidating all regulations concerning all bees in the superfamily Apoidea.

APHIS said the changes are intended to make the regulations more consistent with international standards, update them to reflect current research and terminology and simplify them and make them more useful. The regulations come under the Honeybee Act, through which the Secretary of Agriculture is authorized to prohibit or restrict the importation of honeybees and honeybee semen to prevent the introduction into the United States of diseases and parasites harmful to honeybees and of undesirable species such as the African honeybee.

This final rule will allow the continued importation of honeybees

into the United States from Canada, but such imports will now be subject to the same conditions as will apply to imports from Australia and New Zealand. Export certificates for both honeybees and honeybee germ plasm must include certifications of origin.

APHIS said one reason it views such certification as necessary for Canadian imports is concern about the smuggling of bees through Canada into the United States.

These same concerns apply to bee pollen and used beekeeping equipment from Canada. APHIS said If suitable techniques for sterilizing bee pollen and used beekeeping equipment are developed and are validated by means of efficacy studies and proper documentation, the regulations could be amended to accommodate imports of bee pollen and used beekeeping equipment from Canada.

Click here to access the Federal Register notice regarding this final rule, or enter the following URL in your browser:

<http://a257.g.akamaitech.net/7/257/2422/06jun20041800/edocket.access.gpo.gov/2004/04-23416.htm>

The contact person on this issue at APHIS is Dr. Wayne Wehling (301-734-8757).



Bee Masters 2005 short course

Monday–Friday, February 28 – March 4, 2005

Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, BC, Canada

Conference Overview

The Bee Masters' 2005 Short Course is set for February 28–March 4, 2005, at Simon Fraser University's main campus in Burnaby. This week-long, intensive course combines illustrated lectures, laboratory periods, social events and an optional final examination on Friday, March 4. Participation is limited to 50.

This is an advanced level course, and participants are expected to have kept bees and have some knowledge about bees and beekeeping. Topics include: spring, summer and fall management, wintering, queen rearing, swarming, bee behaviour, hive products, adult bee diseases, exotic mites, nucleus production, bee brood diseases, pollination, and much more. Invited guest lecturers will also bring their specialized knowledge and interests.

Examination

The optional written examination will be on Friday, March 4. Participants who complete the exam successfully will receive a Bee Masters' Certificate at a later date.

<http://www.sfu.ca/beemasters2005/overview.htm>

Quick Candle Making

Candle Making Supplies:

- Sheets of beeswax (approximately 16 x 8 inches)
- Wick
- Hair dryer
- Cookie cutters

How to Make Rolled Candles:

1. If the beeswax you are working with is rolled, gently unroll it. If it's stiff, or cracks while unrolling, soften it by warming it with the hair dryer set on low.

2. Lay a piece of wick along one of the short edges of the beeswax sheet and roll it up. And voila! You have yourself a nice straight thick candle.

How to Make Tapered or Striped Candles:

1. Lay a piece of wick along a short edge and firmly fold the wax over it. Now squeeze it together. The wax is slightly sticky, so this is easier than it sounds. Begin rolling the candle, making sure that it is tightly rolled and as even as you can make it.

2. When you have finished rolling all the wax, run the hair dryer over it to mold the edges together just a bit, and soften the bottom so that you can give it a nice flat smooth surface.

3. Because you cut your beeswax sheet in half, you will end up with a pair of matched candles. And if you want you can lay different

Candlemaking tips for kids and teens.

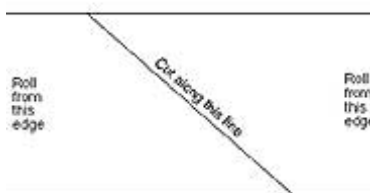
Making Tapered Candles

colored beeswax sheets, one on top of the other, before you start rolling. This will give you a funky layered, striped candle set.

How to Make Flat Candles:

1. Begin by unrolling a sheet of beeswax. Choose a cool shaped cookie cutter (like fish, stars or flowers) and cut out an even number of shapes from your sheet of wax. 12 to 16 pieces should be good.

2. Divide your pile of shapes in half. One at a time, put one piece on top of another and squish them together. Just make sure that they are firmly stuck together.



3. When you have squished half of your shapes together, lay your wick on top of the shapes and continue to squish the rest of the wax pieces onto your candle, trapping the wick between the two thick layers of wax pieces.

4. Occasionally heat it with the hair dryer, this will help the wax stick together.

5. When you're done, trim the wick and set your candle upright. Don't be shy about making your candles. Mix the colors of wax you use and try lots of different cookie cutter shapes. These make great gifts for friends and even better additions to your own bedroom!

Record Keeping

Looking for a simple way to track your beehives and yard activities?

MyBeeHives.com was created to help beekeepers keep track of their beehives by generating a convenient logbook of all their beekeeping activity. It's simple form entry allows you to see all your hives at a glance and to quickly update your records after a trip to your apiary.

MyBeeHives.Com was favorably reviewed by Malcolm T. Sandford in the March 2004 issue of *Bee Culture*.

An inspired name?

NASA's twin 2003 Mars Exploration Rovers are equipped with the Rock Abrasion Tool (RAT) designed, developed, and operated by Honeybee Robotics. These drills have been used to explore regions in the Gusev Crater and the Meridiani Planum on Mars.

Honeybee is also developing technologies for missions to Mars such as the Mini-Corer sampling device, a 10-meter drilling system, and an Inchworm Deep-Drilling System that will perform as a subterranean rover supporting a suite of scientific instruments.



Go to
www.nhb.org
for more information



**Inland Empire
Beekeepers
Association**

**Next Meeting:
Friday Dec 10th
6:30 pm
Christmas Dinner
And Gift Exchange**

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.

INLAND BEEMAIL

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Looking Back!

—by Frank Seiler, Editor

It has been an extremely busy beekeeping season for our family and we are delighted with the way the season has turned out. I thought it appropriate to end the year by highlighting some of my own observations, and my hopes for the coming year.

Growing Pains:

Some that have worked with me know that my operation expanded rapidly this year, from 6 to over forty colonies. Last winter we put together a lot of equipment in anticipation of the growth, but we were still caught plenty short. I discovered that one can never have enough empty supers and frames... Guess what is on our project list this winter!

Standardization:

Because we expanded rapidly without enough equipment on hand, we have a real mix and match of equipment on some

of the hives. It is hard to work with. I wholeheartedly recommend using one standard size for all your beekeeping needs. Find out what suits you best, and stick with that one setup!

Early Bees?

I received packages at three different times last year. To my (happy) surprise, the late ones performed as well if not better than the ones that came about six weeks earlier. I also used two different suppliers and was delighted with the queens from one of them. Of the 10 that I received from this apiary, all 10 are still alive and well (The early packages did not fare near as well). My plan for next season: Order EARLIER for a LATER delivery. As a side note, my son Ramón installed his package on May 19th and extracted 4.5 gallons from the colony, in spite of having to draw out all new foundation.

Make Friends!

Don't be a loner. Expand your horizons by asking to work with other beekeepers in their yards. I have learned much by just observing other beekeepers at work and

in working schools and bee booths with them This is practical experience that no textbook can teach you. No matter how long you have kept bees, you need mentors.

Swarms...

Thankfully not many of my own, but there were plenty to go and retrieve this season. Again, there are a number of things that I wish I had built last winter to make swarm catching easier. Watch for some gadgets in the *Beemail* soon!

Time is a valuable commodity!

Time is impossible to get back once spent. As the year draws to a close, I again tally up the time that producing the *Beemail* does take. To make the best use of my time, I am resigning as editor at year end, so that I can focus more on family, research, writing, and my duties at the State Association. I want to thank everyone who submitted articles and helped out in getting this publication out the door each month. Whoever is selected for the editor's task, please be assured of my continued support of the *Beemail* and association programs.