

# The Local Buzz

April 2022



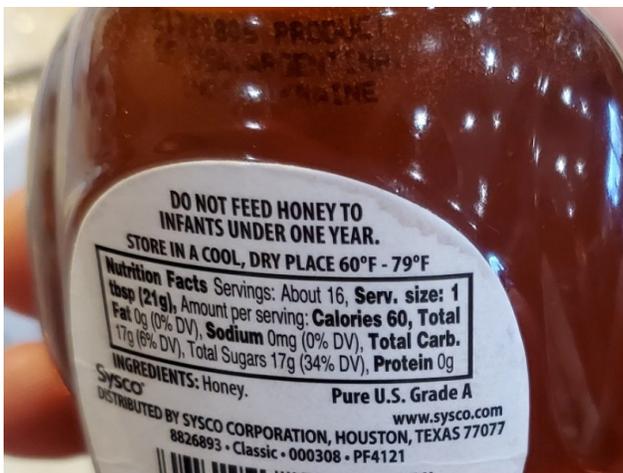
## President's Message From Spencer Wingfield

Something interesting has occurred this last week. I have gotten 2 phone calls from honey packers needing honey. One of them was from a fairly large but more western regional honey packer and the other was from a smaller beekeeper honey packer. I have not been in the commercial scale honey hustle now for a couple years, since I have not up and moved the majority of my colonies to MT in the summer months to make large amounts of honey (on a good year, none on a bad year). I got a belly full of this and decided that family and sanity were more important. In addition, it is a quite disgusting scene...you work extremely hard to make the honey crop (if mother nature allows) and at the end of the summer, you are at the mercy of a large corporate honey packer to buy your product. Many people ask why you have to sell to a honey packer, well, what am I going to do with 60 to 100, 55 gallon drums of honey. In order to be able to "pack" that amount of honey, you would need an entire operation and marketing, etc. dedicated to just those tasks. Which I have thought about doing, but this all gets me back to my original gripe on honey, which is that the money just is not there, when the competition on the shelf is selling a 1 pound plastic squeeze bear for \$4.99. And that plastic squeeze bear is likely not even honey, but imported rice syrup. AND, I did bring my entire crop back home with me, 2 years in a row actually. I marketed the honey locally, and hustled that honey out there, but I would not do it again. The expenses are too high and that income stream is one I've now just recently retired. I'm out of Montana honey. Good riddance.

So, what is happening that makes me perceive a squeeze on the domestic honey market? More importantly how might this be brought back home to Nevada County?

In recent times (April 2021), a couple groups of domestic honey producers put a lawsuit together and filed with the USITC. The lawsuit was aimed at 5 foreign countries that are "dumping" honey on our borders. (Our American honey packers are buying this imported "honey" at costs that are damaging to our domestic

beekeepers, costs that are under what we can produce the honey at domestically). They call it dumping but that is a misleading word, because these large honey packers are actually sourcing it and buying it at extremely low costs and having it imported. The product coming in has HUGE quality considerations as well, which is why I write "honey" in quotations. Who knows what it actually is, or where it actually comes from. But hey, it's on the shelf at Bargain Barn and it says Orange Blossom Honey, so IT MUST BE TRUE! Oh and it says US GRADE A. Believe me, all of this means nothing. Same with the words "TRUE SOURCE". These are all just ploys to get consumers to buy the product, but this is quickly discredited by doing some research on any smartphone.



Since the anti-dumping lawsuit against Argentina, Brazil, India, Ukraine and Vietnam, the imports of honey from these countries has slowed or stopped and seems to have increased the demand for domestic honey, which has caused the prices to go up. In a country where we consume 4 times the amount of honey we can produce, that would make sense. Buy up all of your good quality, domestic honey first, and then go out and source some good quality honey from outside our borders to fill the gap. And there is a huge gap. (as of 3/25/22 in a stand of solidarity the lawsuit against the Ukraine has been dropped).

The last time an anti-dumping lawsuit for honey occurred was in the early 2000's and it was filed against China. If a domestic honey packer wanted to buy honey from China, they would have to pay an additional tax that no longer made it economically viable. So, cunning as they are, China shipped their drums to other countries and the product was relabeled and trans-shipped to the US. It slowed down the importation of their garbage and caused a short-term spike in the prices for US domestic honey, but not a long-term solution. This might all play out in the same fashion for these other four countries, but I'm hopeful that it won't.

I believe that this all bodes well for our local honey scene as well as the national honey scene. If the amount of actual real and good quality honey becomes scarce (or true to what it really is), then this is how the laws of supply and demand should work. Demand is not going away, but actually increasing, and the supply is now squeezed, therefore price goes up. Much of my competition in the supermarket are not beekeepers but honey packers. Therefore they are at the mercy of beekeepers to sell them their honey. Those honey packers might see higher prices of honey demanded from beekeepers and will have no choice but increase their price.

In the photo above, if you look really close, you can see the countries of origin printed on the container just above the label. It includes the possibilities of: USA, Argentina, India and Ukraine. It is no mistake they are printed on the honey container against a dark background, and partially rubbed off.

## **April 4th Meeting – 7pm – Hybrid Meeting**

Meetings held at the Vets Hall and an "Apiary" experience on April 9th, at 1PM (weather permitting).

Our April Meeting(s) will be in two parts. The first Meeting, on April 4th, will be our third "Hybrid" style meeting, where members have the option of attending an in-person gathering at the Vets Hall or using Zoom as we have done previously. No matter where you are, you'll have access to it all. As in the past, the Zoom access info will be emailed to the membership prior to the meeting time, expected in the early afternoon of the 4th.

The second meeting in April, on the 9th, will start at 1pm, at 14744 Meadow Drive, Grass Valley, the home of Randy Oliver. This will be a "weather permitting" event, only cancelled in the event of significant rain. We will do our best to inform the membership should cancellation be necessary.

### **Programs:**

#### **April 4th:** Beginning Beekeeping Plus by Randy Oliver

The evening presentation will be a fundamental discussion on understanding honey bee colony biology over the course of a year, with management tips for each season. This presentation will be targeted mostly for beginner beekeepers and those wishing to understand how to best help their bees.

#### **April 9th:** An on-site Apiary Experience with Randy Oliver

This afternoon outdoor presentation, at the world headquarters of Golden West Bees, will be focused on handling techniques for bees and how to perform hive inspections, including taking a mite wash and splitting a colony. Included will be an opportunity for questions and answers, with an invitation to handle combs with guidance and tips from an experienced beekeeper. To repeat, this will be a "weather permitting" event. For more info and the address, please refer to the comments above. Note: Please bring your own protective gear.

### **BIO for Randy Oliver:**

Randy Oliver sees beekeeping through the eyes of a biologist, building a small commercial beekeeping enterprise in the foothills of Northern California. His sons now manage around 1500 colonies for migratory pollination, and produce queens, nucs, and honey, freeing Randy to engage full-time in beekeeper-funded research projects. Randy analyzes and digests the scientific research, and is in touch with beekeepers and researchers from all over the world, in order to not only broaden his own depth of knowledge, but to figure out best management practices for beekeepers everywhere, which he then happily shares through his various articles in bee magazines, his speaking engagements, and on his website: [www.ScientificBeekeeping.com](http://www.ScientificBeekeeping.com)

# Bee Bits

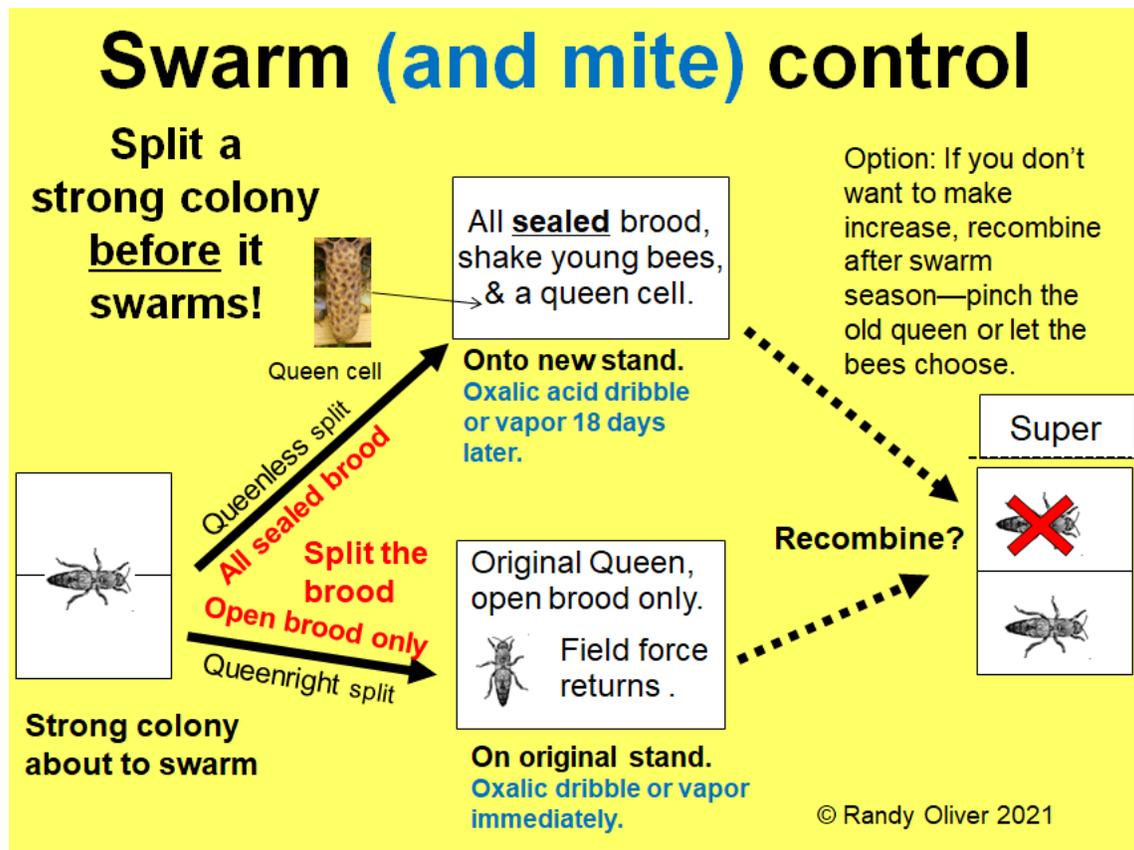
Submitted by Randy Oliver

Other than lack of rain, we're finally enjoying a relatively "normal" springtime in Nevada County, with cold days interspersed with springtime (or warmer) weather. Our bees are loving it! They are bringing in huge amounts of pollen and some nectar, and brooding up like crazy. Most types of fruit trees have had good pollination weather.

Now's the time to think about swarm prevention, mite control, and requeening. An escaped swarm, should it survive, will turn into a "mite factory" by the end of the season, hurting all of us. You can largely prevent swarming by pulling a nuc or two out of strong hives. We can generally provide queen cells on Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays – call Eric at 277.5004. If you live near any of our mating yards, we're happy to provide them for free, in order to get our mite-resistant genetics into the drone pool next year.

As far as varroa control, single-strip treatments with formic acid or Hopguard can be used, or if you're not adverse to synthetic miticides, Apivar strips will do the job. If you only have a few hives, you can use this method, which involves sorting the brood frames, and kill all three birds with one stone.

Happy beekeeping!  
Randy Oliver



# ***DUES R DUE!***

Submitted by Janet Brisson

## **Dues R Due!! Last call for dues**

NCBA Club Membership Janet Brisson, Treasurer

Please continue to be a valuable member of the Nevada County Beekeeper's Association. Your dues go towards our wonderful programs that include out of town beekeepers and scientist and our very own Randy Oliver who bring us the latest News of the Hive.

2022 Dues are \$25/yr. (print newsletter) or \$20/yr. (email newsletter).

Are you paid up? **Look at your email Subject Tab or your mailing label.** If you see the words “Dues R Due!” you are not current. If you paid and you see this, please contact me so I can fix it.

Please update your membership or join today.

You can pay mail dues to (make check out to NCBA)

NCBA C/o Janet Brisson

20693 Dog Bar Road Grass Valley, CA 95949

Or go our website at <http://nevadacountybeekeepers.org> and look under the Join NCBA. It is an extra \$1.25 to cover fees. You can pay through PayPal even though it says NEW MEMBER. I get notified and will figure it out.

Any questions, please feel free to call me at 530-913-2724 or email me at [rubes@countryrubes.com](mailto:rubes@countryrubes.com)

### February 2022 Treasurer's Report

Beginning Balance	\$5326.57
Deposits	<u>582.37</u>
Sub Total	5908.94
Debits	<u>440.97</u>
Total R/C 3/25/22	<u>\$5467.97</u>

### March 2022 Treasurer's Report

Beginning Balance	\$5467.97
Deposits	<u>364.28</u>
Sub Total	5832.25
Debits	<u>164.57</u>
Total <b>NOT R/C</b> 3/26/22	<u>\$5,667.68</u>

R/C is Reconciled. I am not able to reconcile the treasurers report before the end of the month because the bank statement has not been issued.

## **Swarm Hotline**

The NCBA Swarm Hotline List is in the process of being updated for 2022. We need to add to our list of people we can contact. If you want to be on the list as someone who can be called upon to retrieve a bee swarm then please send the below information via email to Lynn Williams at [iamlynn@hughes.net](mailto:iamlynn@hughes.net) or call 530-675-2924. Even if you were on the list for last year, please confirm your participation for 2022. Note that many calls come from the Yuba City/Marysville area so help is needed in this area. We can also use help from people who can do bee removals (such as from walls, etc.)

NAME | PHONE | CITY OF RESIDENCE | ANY AREA LIMITATION | CAN ALSO DO REMOVALS?

**CLASSIFIEDS**

**Honey Extraction House**

A to Z Supply has a honey extraction house available for rent. Equipment is provided and the room is heated and there's lots of hot water for cleanup.

For more information: 530.273.6608

**A to Z Supply** 

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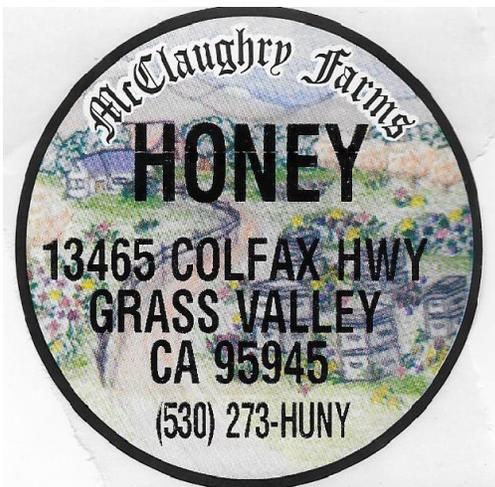
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call or text Brion. (530) 559-1422

The Nevada County Beekeepers Association is dedicated to apiculture education and promotion of the art and science of beekeeping among beekeepers, agriculturists, and the general public. This is a "not for profit" organization. Donations are welcomed.

Meetings are held the first Monday of each month at 7 PM at the Grass Valley Veteran's Memorial Building at 255 South Auburn Street in Grass Valley. All visitors are welcome. Use the back entrance.

The newsletter is published monthly as a service to the membership. Articles, recipes, commentary, and news items are welcomed and encouraged. Contributions should be received by the 20th of the Month to be included into the next issue. Submit to [garyg@newpress.com](mailto:garyg@newpress.com)

Advertising space (3" by 2") in this newsletter is usually available and need not be bee-related. Advertising rates are \$7 per year for NCBA members and \$16 per year for non-members.

Please email Janet Brisson at [rubes@countryrubes.com](mailto:rubes@countryrubes.com)

**Nevada County Beekeepers Association**  
[www.nevadacountybeekeepers.org](http://www.nevadacountybeekeepers.org)



c/o Janet Brisson  
20693 Dog Bar Road  
Grass Valley, CA 95949  
First Class Mail

April 4<sup>th</sup> Meeting

Beginning Beekeeping Plus  
with Randy Oliver

## **Nevada County Beekeepers Association**

### **Officers**

President – Spencer Wingfield	300-3217
<a href="mailto:spencerwwingfield@gmail.com">spencerwwingfield@gmail.com</a>	
Vice President – Mark Machado	
<a href="mailto:markmconsult@gmail.com">markmconsult@gmail.com</a>	
Secretary – Leslie Gault	
<a href="mailto:lesliegault@yahoo.com">lesliegault@yahoo.com</a>	
Treasurer – Janet Brisson	913-2724
<a href="mailto:rubes@countryrubes.com">rubes@countryrubes.com</a>	

### **Board Members**

Leslie Gault	902-8540
Randy Oliver	277-4450
Karla Hanson	265-3756
Deborah Morawski	675-2924
Brion Dunbar	559-1422

### **Committee Chairs**

Fair Booth Coordinator – Rob Slay	263-5618
Swarm Hotline	
Karla Hanson 265-3756	
Lynn Williams 675-2924	
Librarian – Tynowyn Slattery	265-6318
<a href="mailto:swoolman@saber.net">swoolman@saber.net</a>	
Membership – Janet Brisson	913-2724
<a href="mailto:rubes@countryrubes.com">rubes@countryrubes.com</a>	
Newsletter Editor – Gary Gustafson	478-1216
<a href="mailto:garyg@newpress.com">garyg@newpress.com</a>	
Social Media	
Jess Ferrer	

All area codes are 530 unless noted otherwise.