

The Nevada County Beekeepers Association



July 2006

President's Message

Hello fellow beekeepers,

The weather has been very conducive to the blackberry flow. Just as the blackberries started to bloom, the weather got cooler and seemed to have prolonged the flow. One of the colonies at my house put on 80 lbs. of honey in about 3 weeks! They filled a medium super that had drawn out comb and also a deep super with foundation only. I told Randy Oliver about it and he told me that I had under-supered....who'd a thunk? I haven't checked the colonies in Auburn or Grass Valley in about a week and a half. I'll check them this week, it should be interesting to see what they've produced.

From the looks of things, it seems as though star thistle is thriving this year. I noticed it popping in the Roseville area already. If you don't have it where you have your bees and you want star thistle honey, seek out a place that has it and get permission to put the bees there. Star thistle honey is some of the best there is.

Looking forward to seeing you at the BBQ on July 3rd. Until then, happy beekeeping,

Your President, Shane Mathias

Volunteer to Work at the Nevada County Fair Bee Booth

The Nevada County Fair is coming August 9-13—and the theme is 'Wild about Ewe!'. We will once again be hosting the buzzingly popular bee booth with observation hives, exhibits, and honey tasting. We need Nevada County Beekeepers Association members (you) to staff the booth. Teaching kids and adults about bees and beekeeping is always a fun time, and a great way to support the industry and get new people interested. Even if you don't think you have much experience yet, you'll be surprised at how much you know and how much fun it can be talking to others at the fair.

Four hour shifts are available starting from 10 AM to 2 PM, or 2 PM to 6 PM, or 6 PM to 10 PM, Wednesday thru Sunday. The NCBA provides one free entry ticket to each worker (you will have to pay for your own parking.) Karla Hanson is coordinating the sign-up this year. Times are on a first-come first serve basis, so please call her at 265-3756 or email at karlahanson@lanset.com as soon as possible to reserve your preferred time slot.

NCBA Picnic July 3rd

Join us for our potluck picnic social on Monday July 3 from 5 to 9 PM at the Memorial Park group picnic area in Grass Valley at the intersection of Race Street and Hiway 174. The NCBA will

provide: hot coals, ready at about 5:30 PM, non-alcoholic beverages, paper plates, napkins, cups and utensils. You provide: a main entree item to BBQ for yourself, and a side dish, salad, or dessert to share with the Association. You may also want to bring BBQ tools, lawn chairs, tablecloths, or games and entertainment etc. For questions or more details, please call Detlef Osburg at 268-2608 or detlef@gotsky.com See you there!

Bee Bits

By Randy Oliver

Our honeyflow is winding down, although some of you may be placed for a potential yellow star thistle crop. It's been a very strange Spring. Our lower elevation yards literally starved before blackberry bloom, when they normally have a nice nectar flow. Our higher yards drowned in nectar from late-blooming manzanita. It's been yet another season of surprises! The blackberry flow has generally been good, with strong colonies putting on 40-100 lbs. of honey.

The new pollen substitute, Feedbee, developed in Canada looks very promising. It took 12 years of trial and error research to develop, and is now available commercially. I've contacted the distributor, and hope to have more information on, and possibly a pallet of, this exciting new product soon. California beekeepers going to almond pollination may greatly benefit by late summer and fall feeding of a protein supplement.

That paradigm of factual reporting, The Weekly World News (recent headline: SAN FRANCISCO HIRES NUDE WOMEN TO PROTECT GOLDEN GATE BRIDGE [from Islamic terrorists]), published an article in 1995 about using honey and cinnamon to cure virtually every disease. The article has been cited widely on the Web--e.g., www.advancedhealthplan.com/honeyandcinnamon.html.

An interesting article in Hivelights (www.honeycouncil.ca/users/folder.asp) talks about the "embodied energy" in various sweeteners and energy sources in Sweden and Canada. Embodied energy is the total energy used in the processes of growing, manufacturing, and/or transporting a

product--in other words, the total energy cost. In Sweden, a pound of domestic honey on the store shelf took 7½ times less energy to produce than a pound of sugar. To quote the article: "It is not difficult to understand why other sweeteners take more energy to produce than honey. Cane, corn and beets are among the greediest cultivated plants on the planet, demanding more fertilizer, pesticides and irrigation than any other field crops. Growing these crops not only takes a lot of energy, but it can be hard on the land. U.S. corn production, for example, erodes soil about 18 times faster than it can be reformed and uses more pesticides and herbicides than any other US crop. Cane sugar has similar impacts. Australian cane farmers, for example, use 40% of the total the irrigation water in Queensland. The resultant runoff has contributed to an annual discharge of 7,000 tonnes of nitrogen and 11,000 tonnes of phosphorous into the fragile Great Barrier Reef lagoon ecosystem.

"Beekeepers, by contrast, leave virtually no trace on farm ecosystems. Honey is either a byproduct of cultivated crops or comes from unmanaged wildflowers. Our main floral sources are alfalfa and clover, both of which naturally fix nitrogen into our soil and reduce our reliance on fossil-fuel-based fertilizers. Our only major input is the sugar we feed our colonies for winter. This input, however is typically offset by the amount of honey we make; in Canada's prairie honey belt we typically produce three to four times the calories of honey compared to calories of sugar needed for winter. The difference is even wider among some of my thriftier beekeeping neighbors.

"Honey also beats out other sweeteners when it comes to the energy associated with refining. Honey, in fact, has no refining step. We just spin the honey out of the frames and send it to be bottled. Honey extraction uses a miniscule amount of energy compared, for example, to the wet milling of corn for corn syrup. Wet milling is arguably the most energy intensive food-processing step in the world. Wet milling gobbles up 15% of the US food industry's total energy expenditure.

"Not only does honey take less energy to produce and process than refined sweeteners, but it also

travels the least distance to get to Canadian consumers. Travel is an important environmental issue because the energy costs of transporting food can rival that of costs of processing. These transportation costs are the primary reason for the five times higher embodied energy of honey imported into Sweden compared to domestic honey.

"Refined sugar takes an incredible journey to reach Canadians. Canada imports 90% of its sugar. Approximately 1 million tons of raw sugar comes into Canada, primarily from Australia and Cuba and is refined by one of four Canadian companies. Domestic sugar production is tiny by comparison and is easily missed when driving through the heartland of Canada's sugar beet industry in southern Alberta.

"Not only is honey Canada's most sustainable sweetener, but also it is arguably the most ethical. When Canadian's buy table sugar they not only buy an exported product, but also a sweetener produced by laborers toiling under the most terrible of working conditions.

"Political privilege and inequity are way of life in the cane sugar industry. The exploitation of cane workers is severe across most developing countries but has also plagued immigrant workers in US cane fields. Conditions that verge on slavery have been reported among Haitian refugees working in the cane fields of the neighboring Dominican Republic. The UN reports child labor is widely used in cane cultivation in Brazil, Central America, Africa and the Philippines. Cane cultivation in developing countries is largely manual, backbreaking and unsafe. Sugarcane workers labor in direct sunlight and use machetes and other sharp tools to harvest the crop, which results in high rates of injury to their arms, hands and legs.

"Canadians buying domestic honey, by contrast, support a beekeeper who owns their own business and who abides by numerous health and safety regulations. Canadian beekeepers enjoy a high standard of living compared to workers in developing countries. Furthermore, buying honey supports our ailing rural communities."

I think I'll make a copy of this article for our Bee Booth. Yet another reason to use honey, rather than

sugar.

Oven Fried Honey Chicken

Submitted by Karla Hanson

INGREDIENTS

1/4 cup honey
2 tablespoons balsamic or red wine vinegar
1 1/2 cups dried bread crumbs
1 tablespoon olive oil
6 (4-6oz.) fresh boneless, skinless chicken breasts, halves

Preheat oven to 375F.

In shallow bowl, whisk together honey and vinegar. Pour bread crumbs into separated bowl. Set bowls aside. Spread oil over foil-lined baking pan large enough to hold all chicken pieces in one layer. Roll chicken pieces in honey mixture, then in bread crumbs; place in pan. Bake for 30 minutes, or until cooked thoroughly

June Minutes

Pres Mathias opened with Q&A comments. Randy Oliver: We reserved Helling Library next six months for meetings; use of Vets bldg still undecided. July 22 deadline for Fair (9-13 August) honey entries. Fair entry book available at libraries. July 3 meeting at Grass Valley Memorial Park, Hwy 174 at Race St., 5-9 PM. Pot luck BBQ; bring meat and casserole, dessert, etc. MOTION Oliver: approve May Minutes as published in Buzz. Approved. Varroa items: Resistant queens being widely studied. When drone raising stops in summer, mites then take over; treatment should then be performed. "Hygenic" type bees attack mites which have reproduced in cells, sacrificing the pupa and leaving white eyed corpses. Jack Meeks, sec.

Paramount Citrus Demands 'No-Fly' Zone

Earlier this year, giant San Joaquin Valley farming company Paramount Citrus sent letters to local beekeepers demanding that they move their bees a minimum of two miles from certain citrus orchards. Clementine mandarins farmed by Paramount may produce seeds when pollinated, and the fruit is more valuable when seedless. The letter was sent to numerous beekeepers, many of whom complied. Those that refused were threatened with legal action. Understandably this demand to prevent bees from trespassing into a 'no fly zone' around citrus orchards has resulted in much negative press for Paramount Citrus. It may be a violation of right-to-farm laws, it is certainly a violation of logic, and sets a potentially disastrous precedent for beekeepers in a number of ways. It's especially ironic since Paramount also farms almonds and depends upon the services of 7,500 hives each spring. For more information, Google 'paramount citrus bees', or read <http://blogs.venturacountystar.com/vcs/farming/>

Beowulf and Beo Ceorl

Our esteemed librarian, Tynowyn Slattery, volunteers these items. She found in the Rectitudines Singularum Personarum, which is a compendium of rural customs in Anglo-Saxon England dating from 1000 AD, a description of duties and benefits of various occupations or stations, including that of beo ceorl (beekeeper). The beo ceorl belongs to the lowest rank of free men, listed along with the swineherd.

The name Beowulf, the hero of The Beowulf poem which survives in a single manuscript copy that was made in ca AD 1000, means bear, and it is constructed in the following way. The Beo-element is the Saxon word for bee, and his name means literally a bee-wolf. The bear has a dog-like face and was seen by those who wisely kept their distance to apparently be eating bees when it raided their hives for honey. So they simply called the bear a bee-wolf.

Varroapop

Last month Randy Oliver mentioned a computer program that allows a beekeeper to model the varroa population of their hives depending upon how it's

managed. The program, 'Varroapop' (pop as in population) was written by researchers at the Carl Hayden Bee Research Center. Although the bugs are still being worked out of the program, and it apparently doesn't handle all possible management techniques, it may be interesting to take a look at it, see

<http://gears.tucson.ars.ag.gov/soft/vpop/vpop.html>

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Fair Entries Due July 22

Fair entries for the Nevada County Fair are due on July 22. Not only can you enter various colors of honey, there are also categories for: comb, cut comb with honey, granulated honey, novelty jars, gift basket, frame of honey, and beeswax. (Surely you have one of these to enter?) A first prize ribbon nets \$3, second \$2, and third \$1.

Entering is now easier than ever. Paper applications delivered or mailed to the fairgrounds are 50 cents per category, but still exhibits entered online are FREE! Catalog and entry forms are available at:

<http://www.nevadacountyfair.com/HTMLS/aafair.html>

This is one of few California County fairs that still has honey and beekeeping exhibits, no doubt at least partly because of the strength and interest of this local Association. Help keep it up by entering something into the fair.

Honey Lavender Ice Cream

2 cups whole milk
¼ cup dried lavender
1/3 cup honey
5 large egg yolks
¼ cup sugar
1 cup heavy cream

In a medium saucepan, combine milk, lavender, and honey. Bring to a gentle boil, cover, and remove from heat. Let steep for 5 minutes. Strain mixture, reserving milk and discarding lavender. Combine egg yolks and sugar in the bowl. Beat with an electric mixer on medium-high speed until very thick and pale yellow, 3 to 5 minutes. Meanwhile, return milk to a medium saucepan, and bring to a simmer over medium-low heat. Add half the milk to egg-yolk mixture, and whisk until blended. Stir mixture into the remaining milk, and cook over low heat, stirring constantly, until mixture is thick enough to coat the back of a wooden spoon. Remove from heat, and immediately stir in cream. Strain mixture into a medium mixing bowl set in an ice-water bath, and let stand until chilled, stirring from time to time. Freeze in an ice-cream maker according to manufacturer's instructions. Store in an airtight plastic container up to 2 weeks. Makes about one quart.

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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.

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.

The newsletter is published monthly as a service to the membership. Articles, recipes, commentary, and news items are welcomed and encouraged. Submission by email is encouraged. Please submit to Leslie Gault at lesliegault@yahoo.com. The deadline for the August 2006 edition is July 21st. A limited amount of advertising space (business card size 3" by 2") is accepted and need not be bee-related. Rates are \$1 per issue or \$7 per year for NCBA members and \$16 per year for non-members. All revenue from advertising goes to the Association treasury and helps offset the cost of producing and distributing this newsletter.

To receive the *Local Buzz* via email: please email your request to lesliegault@yahoo.com

Nevada County Beekeepers Association



c/o Gary Wood
10396 Mountain Lion Lane
Grass Valley, CA 95949
First Class Mail

July 2006

July Meeting

Our July 3rd meeting will be a potluck picnic at Memorial Park in Grass Valley from 5-9 PM. Bring your own barbecue-able main dish, and a side dish, salad, or dessert to share. See inside for more details.

Nevada County Beekeepers Association

2006 Officers

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