

Red River Apiarists' Association

Bee Cause



Volume 2, Issue 6

September 2000



*Another Beekeeping Season
draws to a close...*

Meeting Location

River Heights Community Center

**1370 Grosvenor St.
(intersection of Oak & Grosvenor)**

Meeting Date

September 12th

7:30 PM in the upstairs meeting room

Guest speaker(s):

Some of our club experts

Topic(s):

Preparation of entries for the Honey Show.

Guests are always welcome and coffee will be served as usual, byob&b's :)

RRAA Website URL:

<http://www.granite.mb.ca/~rwayne/RRAA.html>

The *Bee Cause* newsletter is published by the *Red River Apiarists' Association* eight times per year (monthly excluding June, July, August and December).

Membership in the *Red River Apiarists' Association* is \$20.00 per year and includes a subscription to the *Bee Cause*.

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President's Message

Seems like such a long time ago when we had our last meeting and get-to-gether! It will be great to see each other once again. By now, I'm sure all of you have completed extracting, and filled all the customer containers. Honey crop looks good despite all the rain.

I've noticed several of my customers are increasing their consumption of honey, while others are decreasing. It seems as though the children are growing up and leaving home, thus the use of honey changes. In other families, there is more cooking being done with honey as the sweetener. More and more customers are becoming health conscious. This is all good news to a honey producer.

As we move along into September, the scenery around us is changing. Tree leaves are drying, and our bees are searching for more nectar and pollen, as our colonies prepare for over wintering. Just a reminder again, Fall treatment is critical to keep the upper edge on the health of our colonies. Hopefully you have already begun to treat.

Later this month, Ted Rebenchuk, chair of the 2000 Honey Show, will be looking for ideas on how to improve our show. If you can help, please give him a call. Ted Rebenchuk is well underway with plans for our Honey Show. We have a large space at St. Vital: about 16' x 25', so lots of room for displays. Ted is considering using honey supers or wooden crates to display the sales products. I trust each of you has set aside some good quality honey for the competition. Make sure the liquid honey is clear of granulations, bubbles, and foreign objects. Last year several entries were not up to par

with products to be displayed. One individual was quite upset that we had not placed all entries on display. I would rather err on the side of good quality than creating doubt in our customers mind about the looks of our honey.

See you at our September 12 meeting!!!

Jim Campbell

Editor's Note

I hope we all had a fun season this year, even though the weather was a pain in the you know where. On the bright side there was a lot less work in the honey house for me this year. Ah well there's always next year.

There are no minutes for the May meeting in this edition as I do believe the picnic was held in its place. If I'm mistaken on this I'm sure I will be corrected and will publish the missing item in a later issue if so.

I received a letter and rules and regulations for "The Royal Agricultural Winter Fair". I put them in the scanner and let the OCR software loose on them so please don't yell at me to loudly if there's a small error here or there as I didn't have time to go over them with a fine tooth comb, they're printed on pages 4 through 8. For those of you interested in participating in a BIG league honey show eh :)

In closing I would like to apologize to the person who phoned me with a for sale item for the newsletter that I've lost (another estate sale yet!). My telephone message keeping system is a close to chaos as one can get. Please, if you want to get an item into the newsletter email or snail mail me the particulars. These I manage to keep in order, somehow? :)

Later Ron

Dear Honey Producers:

The Royal Agricultural Winter Fair has been an unforgettable experience for millions and has brought country to the city each November since 1922.

The 1999 edition of the Royal recorded more than 12,000 entries for its varied livestock and agricultural competitions.

The first Royal of the 21st Century will, again have ten days of competitions. The Honey Products Committee welcomes all beekeepers to show their honey, honey products and beeswax.

Entry details and prize books are available by contacting the Entry Department at the Royal at 416-263-3400. If you would like more information on the competition, contact the Toronto District Beekeepers' Association or John Flys at johnflys@idirect.com. **Deadline for entries is September 30, 2000.**

This year, to mark the Millennium, the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair will present a Champion of Champions Award in the Honey and Beeswax Section. This one time award will be given to the top two exhibitors with the highest scores over a number of classes.

A Royal Ribbon is an indication of product excellence to the honey buying public. Any assistance you could give us in promoting the Honey and Honey Products competition to producers would be greatly appreciated. The Royal promotes excellence through world-class competitions!

See you at the Fair!

Doug McDonell
Assistant General Manager

HONEY AND MAPLE PRODUCTS

CHAIRMAN:
VICE-CHAIRMAN:

Bill Minnick
Don Giffin

WORKING COMMITTEE

Dave Chapeskie
John Flys
Keith Forsyth
Jean Giffin
Tom Hays
Jeff Hemming
Archie Jones
Paul Kelly
Peter Kennedy
Ken McGregor
Grant MacKinnon
Vincent Nevidon

Dick O'Brien
Faith Osmond
John Overton
Marion Pau(
Jack Robinson
Ross Steed
Lorne Thurston
Joseph Valas
John Van Alton
Pat Westlake
Douglas B. Wright

HONORARY MEMBERS

Karl Lauber

Ed Marsden

(Continued on page 5)

(Continued from page 4)

AFFILIATED MEMBERS

Chris Allen - Alberta Beekeepers Assoc.
Don Dixon - Manitoba Beekeepers Assoc.
Linda Donovan - Maritime Beekeepers Assoc.
Heather Clay - Canadian Honey Council
Blaine Hardie - BC Honey Producers Association
Wink Howland - Saskatchewan Beekeepers Assoc.
Douglas McRory - Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food & Rural Affairs
Joanne Moran - Nova Scotia Beekeepers Association
Larry Myott - Vermont, U.S.A.
Gaston M. Rioux - Prod. de Sucre d'Erable du Quebec
Dick Rogers - N. S. Dept. of Agr. and Marketing
Christine Talbot - Federation des Pproducteurs de Miel du Quebec
Theodore Weigers - PE Beekeepers Assoc.
- New Brunswick Maple Producers Cooperative

ENTRY CLOSING DATE: MUST BE RECEIVED BY RAWF BY SEPTEMBER 30

ENTRY FEES: \$2.50 per entry
EXHIBIT ARRIVAL: After Monday, October 23 and not later than 12 noon on
Monday, October 30, 2000
JUDGING: Tuesday, October 31 - 9:00 a.m.

RULES & REGULATIONS:

1. Exhibitors of honey and beeswax must be bona fide beekeepers and the exhibits shown by them must be pure honey from floral sources in their apiaries. Exhibitors of maple products must be bona fide producers and the exhibits shown by them must be the product of their operation.
2. Not more than one entry per Class will be accepted from an exhibitor.
3. Upon receipt of Entry Forms, exhibitors will be mailed Confirmations of Entry, a green exhibit tag, and stickers to be put on the bottom of the jars. This exhibit tag **MUST** be filled out and attached to the outside of the exhibitors shipping package. The stickers will have the section #, class #, and I.D. # for your entry. Please match Your entries with the stickers and label the jars accordingly.
4. No labels, other than those mentioned in Rule 3, will be permitted.
5. Exhibits in the Honey and Maple Products Competition must be shipped (charges prepaid) or delivered to the attention of the Honey & Maple Clerk, Royal Agricultural Winter Fair, The Coliseum, Exhibition Place, Toronto, Ontario, M6K 3C3. Exhibits Will not be accepted after 12 noon, Monday, October 30.
6. Honey and Maple Products will be judged in accordance with the scale of points indicated in each section, on Tuesday, October 31 commencing at 9:00 a.m. sharp. The decisions of the judges shall be final.

PLACING	PRIZE MONEY		EXHIBITS SHOWN (per class)	
	1-5	6-10	11 AND OVER	
1st	\$25.	\$30.	\$35.	
2nd	\$20.	\$25.	\$30.	
3rd	\$15.	\$20.	\$20.	
4th		\$15.	\$15.	
5th		\$10.	\$15.	
6th		\$10.	\$10.	
7th			\$10.	
8th			\$10.	

HONEY AND BEESWAX

The Royal Agricultural Winter Fair gratefully acknowledges the sponsorship of Mr. John Overton Schomberg, Ontario and the Canadian Honey Council towards the Honey Competition.

(Continued on page 6)

(Continued from page 5)

JUDGES: Grant McKinnon, Milton, Ontario
Vincent Nevidon, Branchton, Ontario
Joe Valas, Lindsay, Ontario

JUDGING: Tuesday, October 31 - 9:00 a.m.

Points will be awarded as follows:

LIQUID HONEY Points

1. Flavour and aroma	10
2. Density (moisture content)	15
3. Uniform level of fill	5
4. Colour	5
5. Freedom from crystals	15
6. Freedom from foreign material	15
7. Freedom from air bubbles either in suspension or as froth	15
8. Uniformity of honey	5
9. Brightness	10
10. Appearance and uniformity of containers	5

TOTAL 100

GRANULATED HONEY Points

1. Appearance and uniformity of containers	5
2. Uniform level of fill	5
3. Colour	5
4. Firmness of set.....	15
5. Freedom from foreign material	15
6. Freedom from froth and frosting	15
7. Uniformity of entry, including texture	10
8. Flavour and aroma	10
9. Texture of granulation (smooth and fine)	20

TOTAL 100

COMB HONEY Points

1. Quality and uniformity of sections	5
2. Cleanliness of sections	20
3. Completeness of fill	20
4. Completeness of capping	10
5. Cleanliness and appearance of cappings	20
6. Quality and flavour	10
7. Uniformity of comb sections, including honey	15

TOTAL 100

CUT COMB HONEY Points

1. Cleanliness and appearance of individual containers	5
2. Uniformity and neatness of cut edges of comb	20
3. Completeness of fill of comb.....	20
4. Completeness of cappings	10
5. Cleanliness and appearance of capping.....	20
6. Quality and flavour	10

..(Continued on page 7)

(Continued from page 6)

7. Uniformity of combs 15

TOTAL 100

BEESWAX Points

1. Colour..... 30
2. Cleanliness (free from impurities)..... 35
3. Uniformity of appearance..... 20
4. Freedom from cracking and shrinkage..... 15

TOTAL 100

CHUNK HONEY Points

1. Appearance and uniformity of containers5
2. Uniform level of fill5
3. Uniformity of honey - both liquid and comb15
4. Freedom from crystals in both comb and liquid portions15
5. Freedom from foreign material..... 15
6. Freedom from air bubbles either in suspension or as froth10
7. Flavour and aroma10
8. Neatness of cut edges of comb honey pieces10
9. Completeness of fill and completeness of cappings of comb honey pieces 15

TOTAL 100

POINTS OF REFERENCE

Item 2, refers to even appearance of fit] in container. The air space should not be visible when the lid is in place and the jar is standing upright.

Flavour and aroma must be characteristic of honey within Class. Foreign flavours and aromas will be scored down.

Entries will be marked down 5 points for each 1 /10 of 1 % moisture content in excess of 17.8 % in liquid honey Classes. Honey moisture content (density) will be determined by the use of a refractometer.

Ties will be broken on colour with a differentiation in favour of lighter coloured honey in white honey Classes. If a tie still exists the decision will be given to the lowest moisture content. In the case of granulated honey, ties will be broken in favour of honey with the finer texture of granulation. In the case of beeswax, lighter colour will be favoured.

SECTION 812 - HONEY AND BEESWAX

RULES & REGULATIONS:

1. In Classes for liquid and granulated honey an exhibit shall consist of three (3) 500 gram (375 ml) jars. If an exhibit arrives at the RAWF with one of the three jars broken, the remaining 2 jars will be judged as an exhibit. An exhibit that consists of only 2 jars shipped will be disqualified from judging.
2. Entries to be received after Monday, October 23 and before 12 noon, Monday, October 30. Exhibit tags MUST be filled out and attached to the outside of the exhibitors shipping package.
3. Honey entries entered in the wrong colour Class will be disqualified. Honey colour will be determined using a honey classifier approved by Agriculture and AgriFood Canada. The judges are empowered to declare any product of inferior quality to be ineligible for prize money.
4. Liquid and granulated honey must be exhibited in 500 gram (375 ml) honey jars

(Continued on page 8)

Bringing Mites Home **(and a good way to check for them)** By Ron Rudiak

This past summer (that almost wasn't) brought us a lot of surprises and not much honey. The season began when we moved our bees out of the wintering building in early March. There was no snow left at that time and we decided to let the bees use the warmth and bare ground to their advantage. With no snow to reflect the sun's rays and disorient our bees, they took flight without becoming confused and lost. As everyone remembers, the weather didn't remain sunny and warm. Here, in south-eastern Manitoba, the sky clouded over towards the latter half of May and all of June. By mid-May we had split most of our colonies, and were able to keep them from swarming until late June when they were supposed to be busy in the fields gathering honey. With little else to do because of the constant rains, (by this time we had accumulated over 12 inches of rain in June alone), they produced swarm after swarm. We caught as many as we found, and a few that the neighbours reported. By the time the skies finally cleared the fields of canola had almost finished blooming, and minimized the early nectar flow.

Our bee yards located in clover and alfalfa country fared considerably better because these plants bloom later. However the rains were not finished and the nectar producing plants didn't flourish as well as years previous. When the ground becomes saturated and remains that way for an extended period, fungus attacks the root system, the stems and leaves, causing stress on the plants.

Half of our hives were equipped with screened bottoms and metal trays to catch any mites as they fall. We checked these hives periodically and found no increase in the mite population that might alarm us. Once you have mites you will always have mites, with little chance that their population can be reduced to zero. In fact there are enough mites throughout the countryside to assure us of a constant supply, should we ever run out. This was demonstrated to me in my own outfit just a couple of weeks ago when I removed all of the honey boxes from two small yards made up of splits from this spring. These had no screened bottoms, because I didn't have the time to make them and no mite checks had been done during the summer at these two locations. By the time I had the truck loaded with full supers and securely tied onto the flat-deck, it was late afternoon. Robbing was evident by the cloud of bees entering and leaving the full honey supers. The easiest way I know to get rid of the robbers is to point the truck toward home and move down the road a few hundred yards at a time, stopping for a few minutes, then moving again. After three or four stops the robbers were back in their hives and I was on the way home. I stopped on the way home to top up the gas tanks and decided to have a snack. In about 45 minutes I had finished eating and felt a lot cooler and somewhat rested, ready for the trip home. My load of honey was again besieged by robber bees, clusters of robbers were on every box and the air was filled with bees flying in all directions. Evidently there was a bee yard near where the truck was parked. Again I repeated the process of moving the truck, stopping and moving again to get rid of the hitch hikers.

By the time I arrived at our extracting building to unload the truck our bees in the home yard had gone to bed for the night. It was pleasant to unload without a barrage of robber bees

(Continued on page 10)

(Continued from page 9)

and quickly I had the boxes of honey moved into the hot room. The following morning I noticed that a few of the robbers, which had travelled with me, accumulated on the windows in the extracting room. Usually I open the window and brush them out, but this time I happened to notice a mite on the back of one of the bees. I looked at some of the others and noted that they also had mites on their abdomen, not a good sign. I checked each individual bee and found that nearly all of them had at least one mite and many of them had two. These bees were placed into a jar instead of releasing them directly outdoors to carry mites into our hives.

As the extracting progressed, I encountered several patches of emerging brood (we did not use excluders). These bees were also checked and only two of the drones had any mites. One drone bee had a single mite and another had two. During the course of the day, about 200 newly emerged bees were checked and drone brood lifted, with no further mites being discovered.

I have tried this method on other hives and found that it does not take very long to pick up and examine 100 bees. Bees are lifted from the comb by grasping the wings between thumb and index finger. The bee is held inverted so that its abdomen is visible from underneath. Any varroa mites will be seen as a dark spot just behind the back legs because they crawl between the segments of the abdomen to feed. As soon as a bee is checked it is placed into a peanut butter jar with a cork fitted into a hole drilled in the centre of the cover. This method is easy to learn and can quickly provide needed information on the status of your hives throughout the beekeeping season.

To verify our results the two small yards were checked with Apistan strips and sticky boards. A few mites were evident in the 24 hour test but the count was low enough that no immediate treatment is necessary. The robber bees that I encountered had an infestation rate of about 1 mite per bee judging by the ones examined in the honey house.

For Sale: Estate sale, 1 four frame extractor, 1 two frame extractor, 2 smokers, numerous boxes with frames, feeders & other misc. articles. Best offer(s)

Contact: Anne Iweczyk (204) 669 1502 anytime EXCEPT between the hours of 4 to 6 pm

