



The **BEE CAUSE**

*The Official Publication of the Red River
Apiarists' Association*

<http://www.geocities.com/ve4tg/>

November 2002

Free to Members

Volume 6: Issue 2

Important Dates:

Next Meeting Date is:

12 November 2002

7:30 PM Upstairs Meeting Room

Program: Gadget Night -Several Bee-keepers will talk about some experiments and equipment they have worked with. Come for an evening of open discussion. We will also begin our nomination committee selection.

Meeting Location:

River Heights Community Centre
1370 Grosvenor St.

(Intersection of Oak & Grosvenor
Door Prizes will be offered, Guests are welcome and free coffee will be available.

The Bee Cause Newsletter is published by the **Red River Apiarists' Association** eight times per year 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**.

Web Site at: <http://www.geocities.com/ve4tg/>

President's Comments

The Honey crop has been a disaster for several of our members! Weather played a significant role in reducing the crop. First came the hot, dry June and early July, then came the rains later in the year. Again this year, the bees capped honey in excess of 20% humidity. This has not been good news for those not expecting this, until they noticed some honey beginning to ferment. As usual, our members continue to share their successes and experiences. Thanks to those discussing the past honey season. Lots of things to contend with. In another strange turn of events, as the bulk price of honey increases during the year, MBA has set a new price for Honey House sales at \$2.25 a pound.

At our November meeting, we plan to hear from several people about gadgets or things they have tried during the past while. Some things work, others are a disappointment. We learn most from the things that go wrong. This usually generates lots of discussion.

What a GREAT Honey Show at St. Vital Shopping Centre the weekend of 19 October! Hopefully you saw the promotion on "A" Channel done by Charles. This was certainly a good introduction to the weekend show. The interview

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was held at about 7:15 a.m. and again around 8:00 a.m., for those of us watching TV early in the morning.

My THANKS goes out to all the volunteers. The display is still quite impressive. A new trophy has been prepared by Bee Maid for the Champion Exhibitor. This years winner is Ron and Shirley Rudiak, from Steinbach. Congratulations to your winning entries in the show. The beeswax entry sure caught the eye of people looking at our display.

The colourful backdrop to the judging display certainly added to the attractiveness of our promotion. This was enhanced by the inclusion of the bright orange "Honey" signs developed last year.

Our Observation Hive continues to be a buzz with activity. Many young children were excited to hear the "Buzz" from the "Live Bees", as they placed their ear close to one of the air holes of the observation hive, or felt the heat they make! This is in part due to the helpfulness of our members providing positive "Honey" information to the public.

Now that this promotion is behind us, lets focus on our next "Celebration". During the November meeting, we will prepare for nominations for next year. During 2003 we will celebrate 40 years of our RRAA. Lets meet for a short "Year in Review", some coffee, and cake.

See you at our November 12th meeting!!!

Jim Campbell

Honey Show Buzzes with Activity

The Manitoba Honey Show, held recently at the St. Vital Shopping Centre, Winnipeg, has once again proven to be a great attraction for consumers. This is one of the major promotions of the year sponsored by our Manitoba Beekeepers Association, and planned and staffed by members of the Red River Apiarists Association.

St. Vital Shopping Centre was a "buzz" of activity from 18 October to 20 October 2002. The Honey competition attracted 19 entries, while the Baking competition on Saturday displayed 16 enticing food entries.

TV coverage for the show began early in the week! Thanks to Charles Polcyn for doing the media contacts and promotions. The use of radio staff, and the early morning promotional item on "A" Channel, "Big Breakfast" seemed to have been caught by several visitors to our display area. Several people wanted to meet Les Kletke, CFAM radio, as they heard him say he was coming to the show to join in the honey tasting session on Saturday. Several people including Les, our own Fred Jones, along with Lorraine Stevenson donned blindfolds and attempted to identify different honey flavours (from Buckwheat to Borage). This honey tasting demonstration continues to delight and entertain shoppers watching the activities.

The competition and industry display tables were configured slightly differently this year. In order to improve the visibility and guest movement, a zig-zag pattern was adopted. The judged honey with the MBA banner attached to the table, continues to be the focal point. The bright orange "Honey" sign was attached directly behind the competition display. This appears to have made it easier for customers to notice from afar. Dennis Ross and Jim Campbell arranged the colourful winner ribbons on the entries. The addition of the "wax" entries added the natural soft yellow colour in the dis-

play. Several people wanted to feel the wax to see if it was real.

Thanks to Rhéal, Don and Randy Lewicki from Bee Maid for examining the honey late Thursday night. Jars were transported to St. Vital, and placed on the shelving originally made by Murray Porter. The large Sunflowers and Bear from The Manitoba Beekeepers Association Display unit was configured adjacent to the judged honey. These items carry the MBA name as well as contribute to the eye appealing display.

Thanks to Henry Wiebe, Steve Rohatynsky, Fred Jones, Gilles Lantagne, Ken Fehl, Ted Scheuneman, Rheal Lafreniere, Dennis & Linda Ross, Jim Campbell, Ted Rebenchuk, Heather Laird, Judith Roe, Javad Niazi and Carol Anderson for providing informative "mini talks" to everyone passing our way. Thanks to Rob Currie for the use of the Observation Hive with the U of M bees. Both young, and not so young, were attracted to the live bees. Guests learned that the "Buzz" isn't as bad as it seems! This still proves to be a crowd pleaser. The youngsters were amazed by the "cool sounds" of the bees, as they are invited to "Hear the Buzz" and "Feel the Heat" at the hive. Charles Polcyn provided a bee suit, and a small extractor with frames. Another item for industry interaction! The industry display is a great way to communicate with the public. This year, Sunday seemed to be the day for questions from visitors to the display. We continued to discover a more educated visitor. Questions about uses of honey, floral sources, vitamins in honey, bee sting impact on arthritis, where propolis could be obtained, protein and mineral content of pollen, use of honey for wounds, and the quality of the hive products, were more prevalent again this year. In addition, several younger visitors were aware of a "queen" in the hive. Seems like more people are concerned for health, and more youth are aware of "nature". The level of interest certainly meant we had to

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be more knowledgeable of the technical elements of our industry than previously.

Our three vendors, Rudiaks, Polcyns, and Hourds were kept quite busy giving out honey related samples, and serving customers. A variety of products ranging from Dandelion honey, Cinnamon honey to chunks of bees wax and wax candles, were available for the many customers. Jim Campbell is recommending a raised platform or shelf for each sales table so products can be elevated for easier viewing by the customers. This should help improve our image, moving us away from the typical "craft table" presentation style. Jim notes that both Rudiaks and Hourds are already using natural unpainted wooden shelving or wooden crates to create more visibility to some of their products.

Lorraine Stevenson, Farmers Independent Weekly; and Ron Robinson, CBC Radio; joined Les Kletke from Golden West Radio, to do the Baking tasting under the guidance of Rhéal. Thanks for making this look so easy! However, the Muffin category proved to be the greatest challenge, thus several people were awarded first place ribbons.

During this show, we also raise some money to go to the Barry Fingler Memorial Research Fund. Pumpkins donated by Charles Polcyn and Jim Campbell help generate contributions toward research. Charles brought pie-type pumpkins, while Jim brought miniature decorative pumpkins and gourds. About \$20.00 is raised annually.

Although there may be things to do differently next year, I am thankful to the many who made this year's show such a great success. This truly has been a job of which we can be proud!

Jim Campbell, for MBA Promotions Committee.

Baking Competition Winners

Here is a list of the winners in the baking competition for 2002.

Cakes:

1. Alice Jones
2. Verna Polcyn
3. Lorna Miner.

Cookies:

1. Anne Plett
2. Margaret E. Kunz
3. Donna Hourd

Muffins:

1. Anne Plett; Margaret E. Kunz; Lorna Miner
2. Donna Hourd; Shirley Perron

Loaves:

1. Anne Plett
2. Margaret E. Kunz
3. Shirley Perron

Other:

1. Verna Polcyn
2. Linda Ross

Can/US Honey Show in Niagara Falls

MBA is prepared to help send entries to the Can/US meeting in Niagara Falls. The Honey Show is to be held Dec 2-6, 2002. Entry forms must be submitted by Nov 15, 2002, with a fee of \$2.00 per class. Similar to RAWF rules (3 jars, classes, etc). Let me know if you are interested in submitting entries, and perhaps we can send them together, or at least get shipping paid for by MBA.

Jim Campbell, President

Coumaphos and Bees

There were some interesting research papers presented at the American Bee Research Conference, the results of which were published in the American Bee Journal in the December 2001 issue. Two of these articles refer to the impact that Checkmite (coumaphos) has on queen bees.

The first study by Fell, R. D. and K. Tignor, *Miticide Effects on the Reproductive Physiology of Queens and Drones*, examined the impact that Apistan, formic acid, and Checkmite would have on queen and drone viability. They tested whether miticides could effect sperm production or viability in drones and the number or viability of sperm in the spermatheca of queens.

The results indicated that the miticides, when used at the appropriate doses, had no impact on sperm viability or the amount of sperm that queens maintained. However, the other noticeable affect of miticide treatments occurred with the use of coumaphos. Acceptance of grafted queen cells in treated colonies was less than 5 per cent versus 95 per cent in control colonies. Coumaphos also reduced queen mating success and drone production in treated colonies. The results suggest that coumaphos should not be used in colonies involved in queen production.

The second report, *The Effects of Fluvalinate and Coumaphos on Queen Bees in Two Commercial Queen Rearing Operations*, was by Haarmann and Spivak. The researchers conducted research on the effects of fluvalinate and coumaphos on queen viability and health in field experiments conducted in commercial queen-rearing operations in both Texas

and California.

In this study, the developing queens treated with varying levels of coumaphos suffered a high mortality rate. In general, acceptance of coumaphos-exposed queen cells was very low.

It was difficult to successfully produce queens when coumaphos was present in the starter colonies for an extended period of time. Many attempts were made to rear queens using various amounts of coumaphos for varying time periods before queens could be successfully produced.

High mortality of larvae was noted in colonies that contained as little as one Checkmite strip of coumaphos for more than 24 hours. Several of the queens showed sub-lethal affects from the coumaphos including physical abnormalities and atypical behaviour. Queens exposed to coumaphos weighed significantly less and had lower ovary weight than the control group queens. The highest coumaphos concentrations were observed in the queen cells and wax of the high-dose groups. It is noteworthy too that reduced queen and ovary weights occurred at concentrations below the EPA tolerance level of 100 ppbn for bees wax.

Clearly both of these studies indicate that, although coumaphos may be affective for control of Apistanresistant Varroa mites, it has its own serious set of complications when it comes to queen production. One has to wonder what other kinds of impacts are happening to worker bee production and overall colony health with the use of Coumaphos.

These research results only help to enhance the need for a genetic solution for Varroa mite control in the near future.

Submitted by: Rhéal Lafrenière

2002 Honey Show Competition Winners
St. Vital Shopping Centre, Winnipeg, Manitoba
October 18-20, 2002

Liquid White Honey:

1. Charles Polcyn
2. Jim Campbell
3. Dennis Ross
4. Ron Rudiak

Creamed Honey:

1. Charles Polcyn
2. Ron Rudiak
3. Ray Hourd
- 4.

Buckwheat Honey:

1. Charles Polcyn
- 2.

Sunflower Honey:

1. Charles Polcyn
2. Dennis Ross

Sweet Taste:

1. Ron Rudiak
2. Ray Hourd
3. Charles Polcyn

Beeswax:

1. Ron Rudiak
2. David Dawson
3. Alex Remkes

Frame of Honey:

1. Ron Rudiak
- 2.

Chunk Honey:

1. Ron Rudiak

Comb Honey:

1. Charles Polcyn

Baking with Honey - Muffins:

1. Anne Plett, Margaret Kunz
1. Lorna Miner
2. Donna Hourd,
2. Shirley Perron

Baking with Honey - Cookies:

1. Anne Plett
2. Margaret Kunz
3. Donna Hourd
- 4.

Baking with Honey - Other:

1. Verna Polcyn
2. Linda Ross
- 3.

Baking with Honey - Cakes:

1. Alice Jones
2. Verna Polcyn
3. Lorna Miner

Items for Sale

Sears Craftsman 10" Table Saw with Stand, in good working order: \$125.00 or best offer. Call Ted Scheuneman at 338-6066.

Editor's Comments

Well another season has come and gone. I sincerely hope it has been a successful one for everyone. This will be the last newsletter before Christmas so happy Holidays to all.

Doug