



The **BEE CAUSE**

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

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

October 2003

Free to Members

Volume 8: Issue 2

Important Dates:

Next Meeting Date is: **14 October 2003**

7:30 PM Upstairs Meeting Room

Program: Inspection Program and Mite Update: by Rhéal Lafrenière, Extension Apiarist.

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

It seems that when we begin to feel we can handle the issues with our bees, another thing pops up. There are several areas of our province where Apistan resistance is showing up. Thanks to Rhéal for keeping beekeepers informed of the "hot" spots.

Hopefully everyone has added Apistan or other strips to each Brood Box by now. During mid September, some I talked to had not done so. The cool weather slows evaporation and thus reduces the effectiveness of the treatment. In my discussions with some of you over the last month, it became clear that fall feeding and medication talks are still important. Some colonies are going into the cool season with little stores and small amounts of pollen. Could be a tough winter!

Charles Polcyn is hard at work planning the Honey Show. Some great guests will be helping judging the baking. This may attract customers to the display. Just a reminder, if it is not too late, RRAA is again providing glass jars for your entries, so make sure you get some early. Your executive will seek more volunteers at the October meeting. This may be a good time to get in-

(Continued on page 2)

RRAA Executive Members

President: Jim Campbell
Ph 467-5246
Box 234
Stonewall, MB R0C 2Z0
Email: jaycam@mb.sympatico.ca

1st Vice President: Heather Laird
Ph 475-2307
1003 Jessie Ave.
Winnipeg, MB R3M 1A1
Email: hlaird@mb.sympatico.ca

2nd Vice President: Gilles Lantagne
Ph 885-6047
1018 Cavalier
Winnipeg MB R2Y 1E1
Email: lantagne@mb.sympatico.ca

Secretary: Ron Rudiak
Ph 326-3763
Box 1448
Steinbach, MB R0A 2A0
Email: manbeekr@mb.sympatico.ca

Treasurer: Dennis Ross
Ph 878-2924
Group 40, B0x 20, RR2
Lorette, MB R0A 0Y0
Email: rosskr@mb.sympatico.ca

MBA Delegate: Jim Campbell
Ph 467-5246
Box 234
Stonewall, MB R0C 2Z0
Email: jaycam@mb.sympatico.ca

Reporter: Ron Rudiak
Ph 326-3763
Box 1448
Steinbach, MB R0A 2A0
Email: manbeekr@mb.sympatico.ca

Past President: Ron Boudreau
Ph 885-3344
795 Pepperloaf Crescent
Winnipeg, MB R3R 1G2
Email: goldrod@netcom.ca

Newsletter & Website: Doug Henry
Ph 757-4694
Group 321, Box 6, RR3
Selkirk, MB R1A 2A8
Tel: 757-4694
Fax: 833-2566
Email: dhenri@ieeee.org

(Continued from page 1)

volved and have a great time meeting and assisting the public. Last year at St. Vital we had over 3000 people stop to see the bees.

As we move along into early October, most flowers are gone, yet our bees are still searching for nectar and pollen, as our colonies cluster for over wintering. Seems hard to believe that with the mild temps in September clustering began already. Just a reminder again, air circulation is important for the hives, so make sure there is a top air vent for each colony when you do the winter wraps.

Our NOVEMBER meeting is typically a year-end wind-up social type event. Once again this year we plan to have a "GADGET" night. I invite you to bring along something for a "show and tell" session. This can be something that "works or not". Also, In November we will be forming a nominating committee for the 2004 elections. If you have a desire to help out with the organization for our 41st year, let me know, and we will work at a plan to get you more involved. Several of the executives will not be serving, so there are lots of spots available.

Jim Campbell
President RRAA

.....

Red River Apiarists Association

Minutes of the Executive Meeting - Sept. 23 2003

The executive meeting of the RRAA was held at Perkins Restaurant, 690 St. James St. with Heather Laird, Charles Polcyn, Rhéal Lafrenière, Dennis Ross, Doug Henry, Jim Campbell and Ron Rudiak present. Jim called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM.

- October 14th Program: "Mite Update and the Provincial Inspection Program", Rhéal Lafrenière.
- November ^{18th} ~~11th~~ Program: "Gadget Night" Bring in that new gadget that you have made or bought for use in the bee yard or honey house.
- December - No meeting: The RRAA has 8 meetings throughout the year except for the months of June, July, August and December.
- Financial Report: Dennis Ross reported that we have very close to \$3000 on our bank account. The following bills were received for payment. MBA liability insurance for \$300.00 (our share), "Bee Cause" production and distribution for \$605.82. The Honey Co-Op has not yet billed us for the show honey jars. The committee agreed to pay the outstanding bills.
- Bee Cause publication: Dennis Ross and Doug Henry will update the membership list, removing any unpaid members from the "Bee Cause" mailing list. The complementary and honorary membership list will also be updated. Currently 87 copies of the BC go out.
- Honey Show: Charles Polcyn said that the dates for the honey show at St. Vital Shopping Centre are October 17, 18 and 19.
- Prize Ribbons: Dennis Ross stated that it will cost \$40.00 setup to make a new button for the ribbons, which has the words "Manitoba Beekeepers Association - 100th Anniversary". There are 6 baking classes and 9 honey classifications requiring

1st, 2nd, and 3rd prizes. Dennis will order the required number of ribbons and buttons for all classes.

- Honey Judges for this event are: Randy Lewicki (Honey Co-Op), Rhéal Lafrenière and Sam Barlin (CFIA). For the honey tasting Judy Story (Manitoba Agriculture), David Dawson, Golden West Radio and St. Vital Shopping Centre will participate.
- It was decided not to produce a handout with honey recipes, pictures and history of the MBA.
- Displays: Old and new beekeeping equipment. Bee maid may be able to supply a small extractor (new).
- Honey products display. Products, which are available for sale in stores.
- Observation hives and painted bee boxes. Rhéal Lafrenière
- Orange signs. Jim
- Bee Maid hand out recipe.
- Pumpkins for research dollars will be provided by Jim and Charles.
- Honey vendors will be Charles, Ron, Ray & Donna Hourd
- Breakfast Show. Charles
- Judging forms for baking. Ron Rudiak
- Honey judging will take place at the Co-Op on Wed. October 15.
- Charles said that the sign up sheet for honey show volunteers was quite full.

Nominating Committee: Jim Campbell and Dennis Ross from the executive were selected. One other member will be selected from the general membership.

Meeting adjourned at 7:00
Ron Rudiak, Secretary

Importation Protocol In the Works

The Canadian Honey Council called a meeting of Provincial Association chairs from across the country to develop a Queen Importation Protocol to permit Canadian access to Queen Bees from the USA. The meeting is set for October 21-22 in Kelowna, BC.

It appears that it may be possible to develop a permit system to allow Importation of Queens. Within this system a protocol is to be developed that can be brought back to each provincial group for approval. Canadian Food and Inspection Agency is looking for a streamlined system so it will be easy to monitor the imports without having to perform DNA testing on each queen. The meeting is called to discuss how protection can be assured while access to queens is economically possible.

The driving force behind this Importation issue is the high loss of bees during the past two years (mainly in Quebec), as well as increased demand for canola pollination (mainly in Alberta). Provinces that have been fairly self sufficient have been reluctant to move ahead on this item for fear that once the border is open for queens, there will be pressure for importation of packages. The border debate has been going on since 1986 thus emotions run high at any meeting. This issue has been heightened by newspaper stories of people being fined for smuggling bees across the border. Frustration results for those desiring due process when others are ignoring the law. Additional concern focuses on spread of the African Hybridized genes to Canada. To assist the CHC in reaching consensus, a consulting firm has been contracted to facilitate the workshops.

The Manitoba Beekeepers Association seems to be the only organization with sup-

porting survey results to reflect their members' views. Other groups across Canada have been reluctant to collect similar data. This reluctance has created strained relationships amongst beekeepers. MBA has recently agreed to send both the Chair and CHC representative to the meeting. Hopefully, this will demonstrate our desire to have a protocol developed so the needs of Manitoba can be accommodated.

The outcome of the meeting will be presented at the upcoming Annual Meeting of MBA on November 17, 2003, at Neepawa, Manitoba.

.....

Beekeepers Violate Pesticide Regulations

Bee colonies belonging to two Alberta beekeepers who winter bees in southern British Columbia were found to have Apistan strips present in January 2003. Leaving Apistan in the hive for longer than 42 days is a violation of the Pest Control Products Act. The PMRA recently issued a notice of violation and the beekeepers did not contest the finding.

The CHC advises beekeepers to be careful with the use of Apistan and use it strictly according to label instructions. Mites can become resistant to the chemical when they are exposed to low doses for a long period of time.

Honey Show News

There will be a Channel 8 A-Channel presentation by C. Polcyn on the Big Breakfast Show on Wednesday Oct. 15 between the hours of 7 & 9 A.M. that will promote the honey shows and talk about the types of Manitoba honey. Let your friends know of this event to help advertise this years honey show.

The following is a listing of the volunteers who signed up at the September RRAA meeting to talk to the public during the honey show at St Vital Centre:

Friday - Oct.17

9-10 A.M. Set Up Dennis & Linda Ross
10-12 Noon Fred Jones + ???
12- 2 P.M. Fred Jones + ???
2- 4 P.M. ?? ???? Anybody Free ?
4- 6 P.M. ?? ???? Anybody Free ?
6- 8 P.M. Ken Rowes + ? ?
8- 9 P.M. Ken Rowes

Saturday- Oct.18

9-11 A.M. Emil Rekrut + ??
11-12 Noon Emil Rekrut + ??
12- 2 P.M. ?? ??? Anybody Free ?
2-4 P.M. ?? ??? Anybody Free ?
3-6 P.M. Ken Fehler + ??

Sunday- Oct.19

12- 2 P.M. Dennis & Linda Ross + ??
2- 4 P.M. Judith Roe + ??
4-6 P.M. Ken Fehler + ??
5-6 P.M. Take Down Time ?? ???

If any of our members are able to volunteer for any of the open shifts indicated above, please let Charles Polcyn know at 284-7064 so that the booking is made and your name card can be prepared. One of the vendors in turn will be available to provide some relief time for any of the Volunteers during their shift. Thanks to all who can find time to help the Centennial Show go smoothly.

Charles Polcyn

Centennial Honey Show Plans

This year Manitoba Beekeepers Association Celebrates its Centennial with a honey show is at the St. Vital Centre mall on October 17, 18 & 19, 2003. The show opens with a display of the prizewinning honey entries on Friday morning, an ongoing beekeeping equipment and honey display throughout the weekend, a baking competition on Saturday and the show will close on Sunday afternoon at 5:00 P.M.

The honey baking competition is on Saturday morning, with entries to arrive before 9:30 A.M., as judging starts at about 9:40 A.M. The categories are Cookies, Cakes, and Others—with a typed recipe attached to each entry.

The Honey Show this year celebrates and recognizes the 100th year anniversary of the Manitoba Beekeepers Association as well as the 40th anniversary of the Red River Apiarists' Association. The theme of this years honey show will be focused on "Beekeeping- Today and Yesterday" with a static display of old and new beekeeping equipment as well as a shopping basket filled with samples of all the different places honey is used today.

There will be a live bee display with bees a humming, a 2 frame honey extractor for the public to spin out a bit of honey, beekeeping equipment to handle and bee veils and gloves to try on. There will also be beekeepers on hand to answer questions about bees or honey and the importance of beekeeping to our choices of food.

The honey show competition entries will also be on display, which will be in nine different categories ranging from White to Liquid Honey, the Sweetest Taste with seven other varieties of honey in between. Also there will be three vendors selling

(Continued from page 5)

seven different types of their own honey ranging from clover to dandelion, with raspberry, basswood, buckwheat, sunflower, and wildflower in between. There will also be jams and jellies made with honey, pure sections of honeycomb, beeswax candles, bee pollen, as well as skin care products made from beeswax, honey, propolis and royal jelly.

Tasting opportunities to try some of the best Manitoba honeys will be provided to the interested public. The Honey Show's purpose is to promote the high quality and purity of Manitoba Honey as well as to demonstrate that there are a great variety of Honey's produced here in Manitoba.

Two weeks later, over the Halloween weekend there is smaller scale honey show at Kildonan Place Mall with an exhibition of beekeeping equipment, a frame of buzzing bees, and two vendors providing honey for sale and to taste. The dates are Oct.31st, Nov. 1st & 2nd, 2003.

Come out to SEE, and TASTE some of Manitoba's finest honeys!

.....

PREPARING HONEY FOR SHOW

During the Honey Flow

1. Select combs at least 2/3 capped...the more the better. Select and save that perfect frame for an entry.
2. Uncap with an uncapping fork...watch the heat.
3. Do all your uncapping NOW...there is no substitute for early.
4. Store at room temperature in as large a

container as possible that has a gate at the bottom...WAIT till honey settles.

The First Week in September

1. Complete and submit an entry form if show has a closing date.
2. Obtain standard jars for your entries...buy extras.

Preparing Entries

1. Sterilize your jars and dry in the oven...no cloths - no lint.
2. Overfill your selected containers...2 to 5 mm from the top.
3. Allow to stand in the sun for 1 or 2 days...not too hot.

Before Submitting Entry

1. Remove lids and skim all foreign material and foam off tops while adjusting level of fill. Check with Popsicle stick and paper clip. No air bubbles should be visible in the jar rim.
2. Install clean or new lids...no scratches.
3. Honey level must be seen with the lid on.
4. Clean and polish outside (including rims of jars).
5. Store and transport level...always handle by lids.

Notes

1. It is not necessary to strain your honey...ever.
Do not overheat your honey...the judge can tell.

(Continued from page 6)

3. Select your best containers before you fill them.

4. Entries in each class must be made from the same honey batch.

Smaller quantities can be mixed together before putting into jars.

5. Do not put any identifying marks on your entry.

This guide was originally prepared for contestants entering honey at the Pacific National Exhibition in Vancouver (1998 show).

.....

**Red River Apiarists' Association
Minutes of the General Meeting Sep 9 2003**

Jim Campbell welcomed 21 members and guests to the September meeting.

Minutes: Acceptance motion for the minutes of the May meeting, circulated with the September Bee Cause, will take place at the October meeting.

Dates to Remember:

August 20 - 21 Ag. Display, St Vital Agricultural Fair
October 17 - 19 Manitoba Honey Show, St. Vital Centre

October 22 - Canadian Western Agribition, Regina
October 31 - November 2 Honey Display, Kildonan Place

November 7 - 16 Royal Ag. Winter Fair, Toronto
November 17 MBA Annual Meeting, Neepawa
Jan 26 - 30, 2004 Canadian Honey Council & MBA meetings, Winnipeg

Manitoba Beekeepers' Honey Show: A supply of jars was available for those wishing to display honey in the honey show. Charles Polcyn said that the 2003 Honey Show needs to reflect the celebration of 40 years of RRAA and the MBA's 100th anniversary:

- The Honey Show theme would likely be "Looking to the Future - A Look at the Past"
- Displays to feature old equipment and new

equipment

- Finding nectar, the bee dance, bee communications
- The need for pollinating insects in a hungry world

Direct your suggestions and ideas for the Honey Show display to Charles Polcyn (284-7064), Albert Anderson (338-7330) or Jim Campbell (467-5246). A sign-up sheet was circulated for Honey Show volunteers.

Program: Louie Gautron described the construction and use of a combination wooden queen excluder and winter cover. This beekeeping item was featured in an article in the November '88 "Gleanings in Bee Culture".

Ron Rudiak described the work he is doing with hydrogenated vegetable oil as a possible treatment for resistant Varroa mites. During the first two hours of treatment the mite fall reached an estimated 800 to 1000 mites. The next week saw another 10,000 mites (estimated) removed from the colony. Brood which was riddled with dead cells, likely killed by parasitic mite syndrome, was now looking much healthier with fewer dead cells visible.

Loonie Draw: The two "Kodak" photo albums, provided as prizes for the Loonie draw were won by Heather Laird and Ron Rudiak.

Ron Rudiak, secretary

ITEMS FOR SALE

Beekeeping operation for sale, consisting of 10 hives of bees, 10 frame Maxant extractor, bee blower, tanks, knife, pails, etc. Call Ted Rebenchuk at 204-642-1338, Gimli for details.

MANITOBA EXTENSION REPORT

Rhéal Lafrenière Extension Apiarist

Manitoba Agriculture & Food

This summer the Apiary Inspection and Disease Control Program inspected 5756 colonies, which represents 7.2% of the estimated total number of colonies in the province (Figure 1). During the inspection season (May - July), our inspectors found either scale or more recent signs of AFB infection (i.e. ropy brood) in 161 colonies. With the exception of the two heavily infested operations, which we are working with the beekeepers to clean up, the number of colonies with AFB within the inspected operations is still relatively low. But the number of operations with low levels of AFB continues to rise. Last year, 34 beekeeping operations were reported to have AFB. In 2003, we found disease in 54 beekeeping operations out of a total of 230 operations inspected (i.e. 23.5%) (Figure 2.).

The fact that we continue to find more operations with low levels of AFB indicates that although this disease does not appear to be out of control, it is still an important problem that requires close monitoring and effective control strategies. Removal of infected equipment and treating the surviving colony with antibiotic (i.e. oxytetracycline hydrochloride) is still the recommended AFB disease control strategy. For a complete description of antibiotic treatment used to control AFB, please consult the Manitoba Agriculture and Food "2003 Recommendations for Administering Antibiotics and Acaricides to Honey Bee Colonies".

In terms of monitoring for antibiotic-resistant AFB (rAFB), similar to last year, we conducted antibiotic resistance tests on the positive AFB samples that have come

through our lab. We are still waiting for the final results, but preliminary results indicate that there is mounting evidence that there is a substantial amount of variation in the degree of growth prevention in the samples of disease that we have tested. We have sent off samples of disease to the USDA Bee Research Lab in Beltsville Maryland to verify our results and will report on the findings when we get the results back.

In order to help beekeepers monitor their colonies for Honey Bee Tracheal Mites (HBTM), nosema, and Varroa mite samples of adult bees were collected from colonies during the spring inspection and brought back to the lab for analysis. As part of our inspection service, all inspected beekeeping operations got one free sample. If the beekeeper wanted the inspector to separate the samples according to beehives, beeyards, or any other reason, they would get the first sample for free and would be charged \$5 for any additional samples. The following figures indicate the breakdown of the various mites and nosema infestation levels.

In 2002, we detected very few samples that had greater than a 5% infestation level (i.e. more than 5% of the bees had one or more trachea that contained HBTM), which is slightly higher than last year (Figure 3). In terms of Nosema levels, the results were similar to last year in that that majority of the samples tested had very few Nosema spores (i.e. less than 5 spores per test) and would therefore not warrant any treatment (Figure 4).

The results from the Varroa analysis indicate that only 19% of the samples were determined to be above Economic Thresholds (i.e. ET = 1%) and would therefore warrant treatment this spring (Figure 5). In the cases where we had information on the mite control practices of the inspected op-

(Continued from page 8)

erations, when you consider the distribution of Varroa mite levels in relation to whether the colonies have been treated with either formic acid or Apistan in the last year most of the samples above ET were taken from operations that had not done any treatment (Figure 6). In some cases even though control measures had taken, mite levels were still above ET. For example, of the samples that had been treated with Formic acid last fall 17% still had mite levels greater than 5%. When we consulted the beekeepers, in most cases they indicated that they suspected that the treatment had not worked because of unfavourable weather condition during the treatment period. This supports the theory that Varroa control using formic acid is highly variable and requires specific conditions in order to work properly, use with caution!

In most of the cases where Varroa levels were still high despite the colonies being treated with Apistan, we were able to confirm this fall that the reason the mite levels were still high was because the mites were no longer susceptible to fluvalinate (i.e. Apistan) and therefore considered resistant.

To date, 12 beekeeping operations have tested positive for the presence of fluvalinate-resistant Varroa mites. The following Municipalities have been declared high risk for the presence of fluvalinate-resistant Varroa mites:

Stanley, Pembina, Thompson, Rhineland, Montcalm, Franklin, Stuartburn, North Norfolk, Bifrost, Brokenhead, Hanover, Ste. Anne, Tache, Ritchot, MacDonald, Morris, Springfield, White-mouth, Whitewater, Cameron, Winchester, Brenda, Arthur, Wallace, Morton, and Sifton.

Beekeepers are encouraged to monitor Varroa mite levels in their honey bee colonies before and after using Apistan to ensure that the product remains effective. For a short description of how to estimate percent Varroa infestation levels on adult honey bees, please refer to the Winter 2001 issue of the "Manitoba Beekeeper" or feel free to contact me. Beekeepers who suspect their colonies of having fluvalinate-resistant Varroa mites are encouraged to contact the Provincial Apiculture Office to coordinate resistance testing.

Manitoba Agriculture and Food are also asking that beekeepers operating in or near the fluvalinate-resistant designated area not sell or move bees outside the area. We are also asking all beekeepers that currently do not operate colonies in the municipalities adjacent to the Canada/USA border to continue to stay away from these areas.

It is important that Manitoba beekeepers comply with the conditions of registration of CheckMite+™ because failure to do so may jeopardise the possibility of extending the registration of the product beyond the registration deadline, which is December 31, 2003.

Editors Comments

I was unable to include the graphs that accompany the Manitoba Extension Report submitted by Rhéal Lafrenière due to lack of space. There are 5 graphs each taking a page which would require exceeding the 10 page limit. If you would like to see the graphs send me an email and I will forward them to you.

Doug

NO
GRAPHS