

THE BEE CAUSE



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Special points of interest:

- Next Meeting Date is January 13th , 7:30 pm @ River Heights Community center. 1370 Grosvener.St

PROGRAM: Annual general meeting of RRAA, elections, budget approval for 2004 & celebrating the 40th year end

63rd CANADIAN HONEY COUNCIL
 98th MANITOBA BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION
 CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF PROFESSIONAL APICULTURISTS CONVENTION
 HOTEL FORT GARRY - WINNIPEG
 JANUARY 26 - 30, 2004

David Dawson will be sharing with us his method of rearing good productive queens with other very good characteristics

IMPORTATION OF AMERICAN QUEENS!

US Queen importation

Canadian Industry develops recommendation for National Import Conditions for honeybee queens

October 22, 2003

BACKGROUND

The Canadian Honey Council (CHC) ad hoc Committee on the Importation of Honeybee Queens met in Kelowna, BC, on October 21/22, 2003 to develop industry recommendations to the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) regarding proposed permit conditions for importing honeybee queens from the continental USA and other importing countries.

This task was undertaken by the Committee with the understanding that Provinces have authority to impose and enforce provincial regulations in addition to a national, common-ground, protocol.

HONEYBEE IMPORTATION ISSUES ADDRESSED

Issues addressed are associated with the following health and environmental risks to the industry:

- diseases and pests
- Africanized honeybees

Committee working groups considered issues 1 and 2 above, using the following four criteria to select preferred options for addressing each issue in the protocol:

- meeting the increasing demand for queens in a timely fashion
- acknowledging the growing desire for national self-sufficiency through a Canadian breeding program
- focusing on practical/workable approaches that are efficient and effective but not labor-intensive or expensive
- respecting different regional/provincial needs

EMERGING ISSUE:

Traceability

On the second day of the meeting, the issue of traceability was discussed with representatives of CFIA and the Committee's recommendations appear with the proposed protocol which follows.

Preface

The Committee, recognizing the diversity between provinces regarding disease and parasite profiles, provincial quarantine zones, and policies recommends that a reliable measure of traceability be in place, such as:

- Provincial Apiarists will be informed of permits issued by CFIA through a federal/provincial Memorandum Of Understanding. The use of the information is strictly for disease surveillance and will meet the criterium, "for the public good," under the Privacy of Information Act.

OR

- Affected provinces will be informed directly by CFIA of permits granted

OR

- A provincial permit will be required prior to obtaining a CFIA permit.

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: hfaird@mb.sympatico.ca

2nd Vice President: Gilles Lantagne
Ph 165 Athalone Drive
Winnipeg, MB R3J 3L3
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, Box 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: ggoldrod@shaw.ca
(Interim)

Newsletter : Dan Lecocq
PH 255-1043
166 Desjardins Dr
Winnipeg, Manitoba
Email: dnleccocq@mts.net

PROPOSED IMPORT CONDITIONS

The honey bee, *Apis mellifera*, queens imported under CFIA permit will be eligible for entry into Canada provided that queens are accompanied by a health certificate issued by an official from the Department of Agriculture from the exporting state of the USA within 45 days prior to the importation conforming to sections 1.0 through 2.2 below.

1.0 The queens originate from an apiary that does not have any visible clinical evidence of American Foulbrood (AFB), European Foulbrood (EFB), Varroa mites or small hive beetles.

Five percent of the colonies or a minimum of 25 bee colonies (which ever is greater) should be randomly selected and examined from each of the queen production and mating apiaries from which queens will be exported. Inspection for AFB, EFB, Varroa mites and small hive beetles should occur within 45 days prior to exporting queens. Queens would be allowed for shipments if no clinical evidence of AFB, EFB, Varroa, and small hive beetles was found in the samples from the queen production and mating apiaries. Bee colonies will be examined as follows:

Visual examination of brood for symptoms of AFB or EFB is required.

Bee colonies used in queen production and mating apiaries should be free from visible clinical evidence of AFB or EFB. If AFB or EFB is found, queens would not be allowed for shipment from this apiary.

At least three brood frames per hive should be inspected.

Colonies should be assessed by alcohol washing of bee samples (200-300 bees/colony). The sample of bees should be placed in a basket, immersed in a solution of alcohol and the basket should be shaken for a period of at least two minutes. If varroa is not detected or is under 1% queen shipments will be allowed.

If varroa is found at levels above 1%, bee colonies in the queen rearing apiaries should be treated with a product that is registered in Canada. Treated colonies must be retested prior to collecting the queens and attendants to confirm that the level of varroa is below 1%.

Visual examination for small hive beetle is required. Colonies lids, bottom boards and frames should be inspected for the small hive beetle. Colonies from which queens are collected should show no clinical evidence of the small hive beetle.

2.0 The queens originate from an apiary free of genes of the sub-Saharan type of the Africanized honey bee, *Apis mellifera scutellata*.

2.1 Africanized honey bees have not, in the past one year, been detected within 100 miles of the apiaries of queens' origin.

Based on current maps and surveillance programs for Africanized bees, a certificate from an authority of the State Department of Agriculture must be included in the export documentation.

2.2 Mitochondrial Polymerase Chain Reaction-DNA (PCR-DNA) testing results do not show signs of *A. m. scutellata* in the progeny of the breeder queens.

Mitochondrial (PCR-DNA) testing is done on random samples of workers representing the progeny of the selected breeder queens used by the queen producers. The PCR-DNA testing should be conducted within 180 days prior to exporting queens in the spring. Workers collected, one each from each of the breeder queens, may be pooled and run as a single sample if appropriate for the technique. If the test indicates the presence of *A. m. scutellata*, whether from a single bee or from all pooled workers, that queen producer would not be given certification to export queens.

Local News

First of all ,I along with all the other members would like to thank the executive of 2003 for all the hard work that they have put in. **President: Jim Campbell, 1st Vice President : Heather Liard , 2nd Vice President: Gilles Lantagne, Secretary & Reporter : Ron Rudiak, Treasurer : Denis Ross , News Letter & Web site: Doug Henry Provincial Apiarist & Advisor : Rheal Lafreniere.** Thanks to the group for guiding us through the RRAA 40th anniversary year.



Presidents Comments

We begin the year 2004 with our Annual Meeting on the 13th. I'm looking forward to getting together again as we start the 41st year for RRAA. We still have an active group, with lots of ideas and questions to make the meetings interesting. Thanks to all those who helped during our Anniversary year, making it a Great Success, with our Wine & Cheese Celebration, Honey Show, Gadget Night, plus the invigorating meetings. Special thanks to Ron Rudiak for writing, and Doug Henry for publishing our meeting notes.

Our Annual Meeting will begin as usual with a few formalities, then we'll hear from the Nominating Committee, headed by Rhéal. Although by the time you read this article, it may be too late to add your name to the list, I would encourage you to think about helping out anyway. If you would like to be on the executive of our organization, give Rheal a call at 945-4825. Later for our meeting, our speaker, David Dawson, has a "cool" way of producing good queen stock that is sure to spark our interest.

It has been disappointing to hear rumours of coumaphos resistant varroa in California, which could devastate the queen supplies for Canada. We only have emergency registration here, and already there is resistance, with "no other product" on the horizon. Another disturbing development is the resistant American Foulbrood find in the Gilbert plains area of Manitoba. How did it develop here? Is this not an isolated area? What has happened? Did this come from Alberta? Questions like these are on everyone's mind as the border opening issue is being discussed.

Keep in mind that The Manitoba Beekeepers Association will be holding its Convention in conjunction with the Canadian Honey Council. The venue is The Fort Garry, where MBA held its first banquet meeting in 1936. Some great speakers are being lined up, so mark your calendar. For those attending the AGM, there was a lively debate on the issue of permitting imports of queens. The MBA agreed to proceed with the importation protocol. More will be presented during the January symposium.

Once again your executive will prepare various programs for your education and enjoyment, however as we demonstrated in the past, we will be responsive to the desires of the membership.

See you at our A.G.M.

Jim Campbell

JAN 2004

Research Symposium (tentative) Agenda

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HOTEL FORT GARRY - WINNIPEG**

Research Symposium - JANUARY 29 - 30, 2004

Thursday, January 29, 2004 - IPM in Beekeeping

- 9:00 a.m.** **Opening Remarks - MBA President,**
- 9:15 a.m.** **Integrated Management of AFB: Selection for Hygienic Behavior and Detection of Spores in Bees and Honey - Dr. Steve Pernal & Adony Melathopolous, AAFC Beaver lodge Research Station, AB**
- 10:00 a.m.** **Bee Breeding and Selection Methods - Sue Cobey, Ohio State University, USA**
- 10:30 a.m.** **COFFEE**
- 11:00 a.m.** **Breeding and Maintaining Parasitic Mite Resistant Bees. "Year 12 in the Ontario Beekeepers' Association Breeding Program" - Alison Skinner, OBA Tech-Transfer, ON**
- 11:30 a.m.** **Manitoba Queen Breeding Project - Dr. Rob Currie, University of Manitoba, MB**
- 12:00 noon** **LUNCH**
- 1:30 p.m.** **Beekeeping Best Management Practices: Assessment of Current Practices in Maritime Canada - Dick Rogers, Wildwood Labs, NS**
- 2:00 p.m.** **Mid Summer Treatments Against Varroa destructor Using Formic Acid and Oxalic Acid - Pierre Giovenazzo, Université Laval, P.Q.**
- 2:30 p.m.** **Environmental and Chemical Control of Varroa in Indoor Wintering Facilities - Robyn Underwood, University of Manitoba, MB**
- 3:00 p.m.** **COFFEE**
- 3:30 p.m.** **Relative Impact on Honey Bees of Sweet Corn Pest Management strategies - Janisse Bailey, University of Guelph, ON**
- 4:00 p.m.** **Expect the Unexpected - Choose IPM - Alison Skinner, OBA Tech-Transfer, ON**
- 4:30 p.m.** **Integrated Pest Management - "The Big Picture" - Medhat Nasr, Alberta Agriculture Food and Rural Development, AB**

Friday, January 30, 2004 - Trade & Market Issues

- 9:00 a.m. **Residue Hazards Associated With Tylosin and Lincomycin use in Honey bee Colonies -**
Dr. Steve Pernal, AAFC Beaver lodge Research Station, AB
- 10:00 a.m. **Enhancing the Food Safety of Honey Bee Hive Products Through the Use of Organic Beekeeping**
Practices and Effective Monitoring of Pests and Diseases - Alison Skinner, OBA Tech-Transfer, ON
- 10:30 a.m. **COFFEE**
- 11:00 a.m. **Honey Market - "Today" - Gordon Marks, Bee Maid Honey, MB**
- 11:30 a.m. **Free Trade - "Pros and Cons" - Alan Carson and Rhéal Lafrenière, Manitoba Agriculture Food Rural**
Initiatives, MB
- 12:00 noon **LUNCH**
- 1:30 p.m. **Bioterrorism Act - Dr. Terry Smyrl, Manitoba Agriculture Food Rural Initiatives, MB**
- 2:00 p.m. **Evaluating the Effects of Fall and Spring Pollen Supplements on Honey Bee Colonies and Individ-**
ual Worker Bees - Heather Mattila, University of Guelph, ON
- 2:30 p.m. **West Nile Virus in Manitoba - Fran Schellenberg, Manitoba Health, MB**
- 3:00 p.m. **Mating Behavior and Innovation in Instrumental Insemination - Sue Cobey, Ohio State University,**
USA
- 3:30 p.m. **ADJOURNMENT**

Monday January 26th**CHC Directors' Business Meeting (8:30am - 5:00pm)****Tuesday January 27th****CHC Directors' Business Meeting (8:30am - 5:00pm)****CAPA Business Meeting (8:30am - 5:00pm)****Registration (6:30pm - 9:00pm)****Trade Show -setup****Prov./Fed./Committee Reports**

(7:00pm - 9:30pm)

Wednesday**January 28th Registration (8:30am - 5:00pm)****Trade Show****CAPA Business Meeting (8:30am - 12:00pm)****CHC General Business Meeting (9:00am - 5:00pm)****Trade Show****Reception - MBA Centennial Celebration**

(7:00pm - 10:00pm)

Thursday January 29th Registration (8:30am - 5:00pm)**Trade Show****Research Symposium - IPM in Beekeeping (9:00am-5:00pm) Fundraiser Banquet - Roast/Awards Ceremony & Auction**

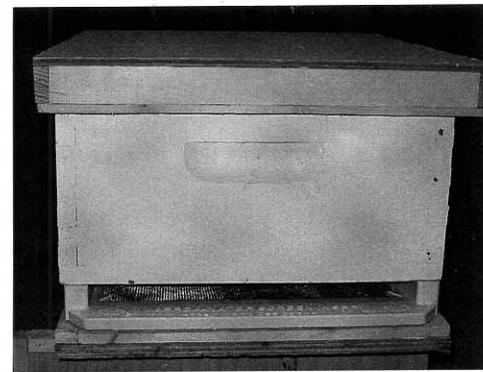
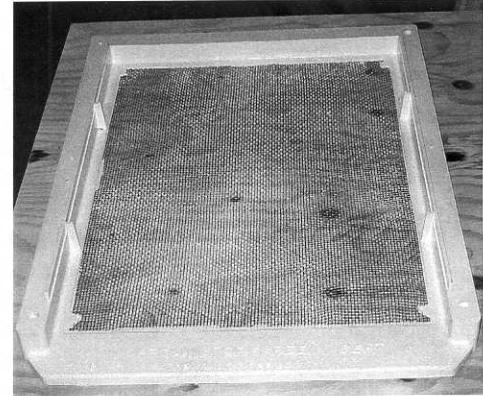
(6:30pm - 10:00pm)

Friday January 30th**Registration (8:30am - 1:00pm)****Trade Show****Research Symposium - Trade & Marketing (9:00am-5:00pm)**

The Varroa– Nator

Varroa-nator Screen Insert: a new IPM tool for the battle against the Varroa mite.

The premise of the Varroa-nator screen insert is to allow for the physical separation of fallen mites and bees entering and exiting the hive. The insert is designed to be placed on top of a traditional bottom board which has been reversed 180 degrees so that the old front opening is facing the back of the hive. The screen insert provides a new landing area and front opening for the bees to come and go. Instead of walking along the old solid surface bottom board, the bees walk along a screen floor and then up into the frames. Mites that are groomed off or fall off during chemical treatment pass through the screen onto the solid surface bottom board below. During chemical treatments, mites which fall are capable of surviving for hours to days, and may return to infest a bee if close contact occurs. The physical separation of mites and bees provided by the screen insert ensures that mites falling through are not given an opportunity to reattach themselves



to passing bees. Mites that fall through the screen are poor climbers and usually die within days of dropping off the bees.

Monitoring hives for the presence of mites is becoming an increasingly important task for beekeepers to perform. Because of the opening under the screen at the rear of the insert, the Varroa-nator promotes such monitoring with greater ease than in the past. A sticky sub-board can be easily placed under the screen at the back of the insert while at the same time not disturbing entry and exit of the bees. This sticky sub-board can be removed at any time during the season and examined for presence or absence of mites without taking apart the hive.

The Varroa-nator screen insert is manufactured by Dimo's Tool & Die Ltd. in Winnipeg using an injection moulding process. The resulting part is made of impact resistant white plastic that will stand up to any environmental conditions it may encounter. The 8x8 squares per inch galvanized screen is moulded directly into the frame of the insert and for beekeepers using formic acid treatments, stainless steel screen will also be available in 2004. The screen insert can be screwed down to the existing bottom board using any of the six holes (counter sunk) that are moulded into the upper surface of the frame. Upward protruding stabilizer fins are also present to help give side to side and front to back stability of the brood chamber and remaining hive components.

The Varroa-nator insert is currently being sold by the Manitoba Honey Co-operative in Winnipeg and across western Canada. The 8x8 galvanized screen insert will retail for about \$12.95 and the stainless steel one for \$17.00. If you have any questions or comments regarding the insert please feel free to contact Jake or Mike at the Honey co-op or Jason Diehl at Dimo's Tool & Die Ltd.

RRAA Sponsors CHC/MBA Reception

A Celebration Reception will be held on Wednesday night January 28, 2004 at the historic Fort Garry Hotel, Winnipeg, for all beekeepers.

As part of the 100 Year Celebrations of the Manitoba Beekeepers Association, a time of remembering and recognizing the past will be part of the CHC/MBA Symposium. Wednesday night will highlight the founding of MBA in 1903, with their initiation and formation of several organizations including the Manitoba Cooperative Honey Producers Limited in 1938, the Central Sales Agency (later Canadian Honey Council) in 1939, and our group, the Red River Apiarists Association, in 1963. Come see the multi tiered "Beehive" cake that symbolizes our history.

Red River is proud to be one of the many groups sponsoring the reception evening, which starts at 7:00 p. m. All beekeepers are invited to this "Free" Evening event!!

YOUR QUESTIONS ? (Q & A)

Do you have any questions that you thought could be of interest to the our members. I will take some questions and find the answer . (via the internet, our Provincial Apiarist (Rheal LaFreniere) or a beekeeper with the answer!

Then in the next issue I will publish the answers!

Just email me @ dnlecocq@mts.net or give me a call 204-255-1043.

CLASSIFIEDS (Free for members , items wanted or for sale!)

Drug fear prompts call for honey tests

Supermarkets could unknowingly be selling honey that contains potentially harmful antibiotics banned in food.

Overseas testing has found honey from Argentina was contaminated by nitrofurans - veterinary drugs used to inhibit bacterial growth - but the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS) has not tested for nitrofurans in large quantities of honey being shipped here.

Inquiries by *The Sun-Herald* revealed Food Standards Australia New Zealand, which is responsible for food safety and public risk, asked the quarantine service last Friday to begin random tests on imported honey shipments as soon as possible.

There will be no tests on honey already on supermarket shelves, unless done by state governments.

But the Australian Honey Bee Industry Council, which met last week, wants to test the shelf honey.

Australian packers have been buying honey from Argentina and China because of a domestic shortage caused by the drought and bushfires.

Nitrofurans are banned for use in food-producing animals in most countries - including Australia since 1992 - because of a possible risk of cancer in people who eat it over long periods. Six weeks ago, the Argentine Government found batches of contaminated honey and banned all exports until shipments were tested and permits issued to declare they were nitrofurans-free.

Chinese honey was banned worldwide in August because of contamination by chloramphenicol, another antibiotic drug that can lead to a life-threatening anaemia.

Capilano, the biggest Australian packer, has imported 5000 tonnes of Argentinian honey this year. The honey is blended with Australian product and sold locally.

Capilano chief executive Roger Masters said in a statement on nitrofurans to other honey producers that he wasn't "inclined to headline an issue like this, which has the capacity to affect the consumers' perception about honey in general".

He said Capilano had imported honey from Argentina because of a shortfall that would have led to honey being replaced on supermarket shelves by jam or other spreads.

"Or perhaps the supermarkets would simply replace it with another lot of imported honey by an overseas packer. That would be a fine result."

Controls had been implemented in Argentina by Capilano's joint-venture partner and in Australia over the residue in the Argentine honey, he said. But nitrofurans had also been identified in Australian honey, he added.

FSANZ head of food monitoring and evaluation, Steve Crossley, said: "We believe that the risk to public health and safety is low, but nevertheless, because nitrofurans are prohibited in food-producing animals, we have advised AQIS to start testing."

But AQIS spokesman David Finlayson said: "FSANZ is the policy maker who decides what tests should be done and what shouldn't be done and we put that into effect. At this stage, we don't test for nitrofurans in honey.

"Our role is really an operational one at the border," he said.

Steering away from tradition

Phil Veldhuis grew up in a beekeeping family and often heard these words repeated by his Grandfather, "You don't have any more hives than you have on May 1st". In those days, hives that were established later than early May were not considered productive enough to be profitable. Every beekeeper who has ever wintered bees has discovered some dead hives in the spring, some winters produce more dead hives than others. Every beekeeper knows that too many dead hives = too many empty boxes = a dilemma.

With the early availability of imported queens we are tempted to split early, often around the beginning of May. Dividing a colony too early when they are approaching their rapid increase in population growth is not efficient. At this time of the year, while many of the older bees are dying off rapidly, the colony must still have as many active bees as possible to cover the brood area. By removing some of these bees for splitting, brood production is hampered or halted and often during the cold nights of spring it's not unusual for some of the exposed brood to perish as the bees cluster to stay alive.

Putting the brakes on splitting

When we examine our hives in the spring we sometimes find a queenless hive or notice a colony with a poor queen in it. Beekeepers who have attempted to requeen one of these hives, early in the spring, often regret it later. Hives with old, wintered bees do not readily accept new queens and the result of introducing a new queen is a queenless hive, a dead \$24.00 queen and the thoughts that the time and money could have been better spent somewhere else. The best way to deal with queenless or substandard colonies is to unite them with strong, queenright colonies and use the time and energy you save to manage all your remaining hives. You will need your wintered hives to produce large populations of young bees.

Leave the colonies alone that will be OK on their own. If they have 6 to 8 frames of brood these are your "A" colonies. These large colonies may require a second brood box at this time. Your smaller "B" colonies will benefit from receiving a frame or two of brood and bees which you can easily obtain from one of the supersized "A" colonies.

Making a logical split

Move the two brood chamber colonies to a new location several miles away to prevent drifting. For each colony which will be split, take along an extra lid and bottom board. The colonies are divided without regard to which half contains the queen. They remain side by side for three days at which time the hives are examined for eggs. The divide containing the queen will have eggs and very young uncapped brood. By making divides later in the season it then becomes practical to use locally produced queens. Even those splits made in the middle of June can be expected to yield 150 lbs of surplus honey.

Producing the queens

Phil Veldhuis still keeps, for reference, a copy of the queen rearing handout included with the Bee Cause several years ago. The procedures may be refined to suit your own preferences and situation. The needed tools can be obtained from a bee supply such as the Manitoba Co-Operative Honey Producers in Winnipeg. Some of the items needed will be queen cell cups (plastic or wax is acceptable), a grafting tool and racks for holding grafted cells. There have been many excellent magazine articles written and books which are available on the subject of queen rearing. Every beekeepers' library should have some of this written material available.

How do I make this work in Manitoba?

Logistically if we were expecting someone to raise 30,000 queens they would have to operate their business in a warmer climate than we have in Manitoba. However, on average we want to raise about 15 to 20 percent of our colony count as new queens. Mating nucs, although they have several advantages in commercial queen production operations, are not really practical for Manitoba conditions. More useful are the 10 frame boxes which are divided into 2 compartments so that they contain two five-frame nucs. The two small colonies remain warmer and the frames are easily integrated into the regular boxes. These five-frame colonies with locally raised queens and a queen excluder can be supered and are excellent honey producers and when successfully wintered over make good, productive colonies for the following year. 100 of these divided boxes will supply the beekeeper with 200 nucs. The key for success is to winter these five frame colonies indoors.

When queen cells are raised in mating nucs before introduction into a five-frame nuc it adds an extra brood cycle for production. Phil's stock, which winters well, has been used continuously since 1921 and can be traced back to Phil's Grandmother.

Phil's stock is gentle and won't chase you into the bush. In looking for gentle bees, he carefully removes the lid and waves his hand over the colony, if even one bee jumps out that colony is not used for breeding. He looks for bees which are not runny when gently smoked. Also important is neatness, a clean bottom board, very little burr comb and a good brood pattern. Feed consumption is important too, do they need a pail of feed when they are first placed outdoors? Phil notes that thriftiness may be connected to gentleness. In the wintering building his colonies of quiet bees are not found crawling on the front of the hive. The final test is whether you would enjoy working this colony. If the answer is "yes" then breed from it.

In the spring, if there is no queen in a colony, frames of young brood are added to make a great starter colony for raising grafted queen cells. Queenless starter colonies can attract a newly mated queen. It is not possible to produce queens after one of these newly mated queens moves into the starter colony. When a breeder colony is selected, it is taken home during the day to leave the field bees behind. When the returning field bees discover that their old home is not there they soon drift into other nearby colonies and make those colonies their new home. Because starter colonies are queenless, it is necessary to continually add frames of newly hatched larvae which will ensure a continuous population of young bees.

Cell builders need a lot of liquid feed for raising queen cells. Phil provides cell builders with about four gallons of thick syrup in a top feeder or feeder pail. As the bees fill up the combs with stored syrup they are removed and replaced with more empty combs for the bees to fill. In Manitoba, pollen is not as important for cell building as the attitude of the cell builder colony. If the bees are not provided with syrup queen cells will not build out properly.

Queens heading up finisher colonies have their wings clipped to discourage swarming. Following grafting, on day ten, the frames containing finished queen cells are removed and remaining combs re-arranged within the hive to take away some of the swarming instinct.

Starting up.

To begin grafting Phil recommends using two starter colonies and two finishers to ensure that you will end up with queen cells. If the system is working properly, one can expect no less than 90% acceptance of the grafted queen cells. However, under some circumstances the bees might not co-operate and if this is the case, try again. Don't blame yourself too soon if you don't get the results that you expect. Don't forget that 100 cells per day can be a lot of work. Stagger your grafting dates and build some redundancy into your operation.

Decide what you want in your bees and select from your own stock. Resist the impulse to split too early and for splitting use the logical split method. There is an economy of scale at work here, a large hive will produce more bees than two smaller ones. If you leave a hive (split) behind, take the queen-right colony to the new location. For introducing queens the JzBz cages work well but any cage is OK. Too, use a good queen candy recipe. The candy should be soft but not runny when it reaches the internal temperature of the bee hive. For fall feeding, 71 % sucrose is used just as it was delivered from the tanker truck seems to work very well.

**RED RIVER APIARIST'S ASSOCIATION
2003 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL FORM**

Please complete and mail with your cheque, for \$20.00, payable to: The Red River Apiarists' Association

Mail to: **Red River Apiarists' Association**
Dennis Ross, Treasurer,
Group 40, Box 20, RR2
Lorette, MB
R0A 0Y0

NAME: _____

PHONE No. _____

MAILING ADDRESS: _____

POSTAL CODE: _____

EMAIL: _____

NEW MEMBER [] RENEWAL []

THANK YOU