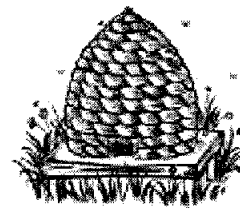


The Bee Cause



Volume 5, Issue 4

April 2008

Changes in MAFRI Apriculture

Points of Interest:

- Next general meeting is 7:30 Tuesday, April 8th at the River Heights Community Centre, 1370 Grosvenor Ave., Winnipeg. Sam Barlin of CFA, will be giving an update of the Honey Inspection Program and speak to lead contamination .

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By Rhéal Lafrenière

Recently, the CHC received a \$440,000 grant from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada under the Advancing Canadian Agriculture and Agri-Food (ACAAF) program to restructure the organization so that it could better serve the honey bee industry and become more self-sustainable (i.e. less hand-to-mouth programs). As part of the restructuring process and the need to better serve the honey bee industry, CHC is expected to take on a greater role in advising, negotiating and lobbying the federal government and other organizations on behalf of the honey bee industry, promoting 100% Canadian honey and other hive products at home and abroad, providing services to members (through their organizations) and to other industry stakeholders and educating the general public about the benefit of honey bees as pollinators. Although there is a commitment from the member organizations to

support the expanded role of CHC with higher membership fees, the industry finds itself in a transition period where the current level of funding available is insufficient to support a higher degree of activity and the funding cannot be leverage without a higher degree of activity.

CHC is currently trying to address the issue of increasing its program activities by adding two new positions to the organizations. The CEO will oversee all aspects of running the organization and will be the primary spokesperson for the Canadian Honey Bee Industry. The Project Coordinator will be responsible for the development and implementation of projects that have been identified as a priority for the industry. During this transition period, CHC has been able to support funding a

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Interim Policy for Lead

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) has initiated an interim policy to minimize lead contamination in honey through good agricultural and manufacturing practices. The program is based the principal of maintaining lead free honey or levels that are As Low As Reasonably Achievable (ALARA). The lead policy applies to all domestic and imported honey in Canada.

If lead is detected in honey at levels less than 0.20 ppm and the lot size is less than 10,000 kg, no product action will be required but the responsible party will be informed and asked to assess their premises, practices, equipment,

packaging material, etc. for potential sources of lead. An action plan for removal of identified sources will be required within 30 days of notification and a follow up inspection will be conducted to verify implementation of corrective action plan. The follow up inspection will generally be at the next scheduled inspection visit, but this may be negotiable.

If lead is detected in honey at levels greater than 0.20 ppm or the lot sizes that are greater than 10,000 kg, then the product action would be to detain the lot. The production and distribution information associated with

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Changes in MAFRA Apiculture

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full-time CEO and a part-time Office Manager, leaving the Project Coordinator position vacant.

In November 2007, CHC approached me to see if I would be interested in helping them with some of their existing projects and whether I would be interested in the possibility of a secondment to the Project Coordinator position. In December 2007, a letter to Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives (MAFRI) from CHC proposing the secondment was received but would only be considered with confirmation from the Manitoba beekeeping industry that this was in their best interest. In consultation with the Board of Directors of the Manitoba Beekeepers' Association (MBA), there appeared to be strong support for having more activity in the area of improving hive health and profitability in honey production that are national in scope.

In consultation with Allan Preston (Assistant Deputy Minister) and Rob Park, Crops Knowledge Centre – Industry Focus Manager and David Ostermann, Pollination Apiarist, it would appear that there is capacity with in MAFRI to cover some of the Provincial Apiarist's responsibility (temporarily) in order to support work on projects that provide a benefit to improving hive

health and the profitability of producing honey in Canada.

In lieu of being able to support a full secondment of the Provincial Apiarist to the CHC Project Coordinator position, it was decided that the work plan of the Provincial Apiarist include a specific amount of time to work on special apiculture projects for the Canadian honey bee industry. Time allocated to work on these projects can not exceed 75% in the first year. After the first year an evaluation of the cost benefit of providing this assistance to the CHC will determine the amount of time allocated in the second year.

In order to assure that the time spent working on national projects ultimately has a direct benefit to beekeepers in Manitoba, it is important that the projects are prioritized according to their impact on improving honey bee health and the profitability of producing honey in Canada. My work plan will consist of 25% provincial responsibilities and 75% prioritized projects. This plan will be shared with industry so that everybody knows what I am working on! I will be consulting the MBA and my fellow Provincial Apiarist across Canada during the prioritizing process so that the apiculture projects identified in my work plan sup-

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**RED RIVER APIARIST'S ASSOCIATION
2008 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL FORM**

Please complete and mail with your cheque, for \$25.00, payable to: Red River Apiarist's Association

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ PROV: _____ POSTAL CODE: _____

EMAIL: _____ PHONE: _____

NEW MEMBER [] RENEWAL [] STUDENT (free 1st year) []

Mail to: John Speer (Secretary RRAA)
Box 16, Group 555, RR 5
Winnipeg, MB R2C 2Z2

Bee Maid Supporting Bee Research

Press Release

Bee Maid Honey is proud to announce that they will be contributing financial assistance to the following research projects this coming year:

Dr. Stephen Pernal, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Beaverlodge Research Station, Beaverlodge, Alberta

A study on the integrated Management of Nosema & Detection of Antibiotic Residues. *Nosema ceranae* is an emergent world-wide pathogen, and it, in combination with *N. apis*, have been linked to wide scale depopulation of colonies in North America and Europe. This study will search for more effective chemotherapeutic controls for these parasites and generate a modern antibiotic residue dataset for fumagillin-based therapies.

Dr. Dave Shutler, Associate Professor, Acadia University Wolfville, Nova Scotia

A study of the immune response of Western honey bees to parasitism by *Nosema* and *Varroa* mites. Western honey bees (*Apis mellifera*) are exposed to a number of parasites. *Varroa destructor*, *Nosema apis*, and *N. ceranae* have particularly detrimental effects on colony productivity and survival. This study will compare honey bee immune responses to these three species of parasites as well as determine the effects of infection intensity and co-infection.

Anna Birmingham, MSc, R&D Specialist, Pherotech International Inc. Delta, BC

To develop and evaluate an inexpensive granular formulation of 2HHA (2-hydroxy hexanoic acid – a naturally occurring compound) that can be sprinkled on bottom boards to attract varroa and increase the effectiveness of mite boards.

Bee Maid considered project proposals in the area of apiculture or pollination research. Preference was given to the area of honey, and the production of pure quality honey in the Canadian beekeeping industry. Bee Maid Honey is the marketing organization owned by the Alberta Honey Producers Cooperative Ltd. and the Manitoba Cooperative Honey Producers Ltd. Both member owned Cooperatives have lead the beekeeping industry in their support for beekeeping research.

For further information, please contact:

Gordon Marks
Bee maid honey Ltd.
Phone: (204) 783-2240 Ext 235
E-Mail: gordonmarks@beemaid.com

Bylaw Committee Appointed

As Red River Apiarists' Association moves into its 45th year of operation, your Executive Committee determined it would be appropriate to update the "Constitution".

Most will likely have forgotten, that the last revision to the Constitution, was a re-typing on 11 October 1994. Since this was some time back, an update is timely! In addition, changes to the law over the past 10 or more years, reflects a need to refer to our document as "Bylaws" (or maybe "By Laws") rather than Constitution. That's an easy change to make!

To help in this process, a Committee of Jack Lee, Jim Campbell, and David Ostermann have been appointed. Should members wish to help out, or have suggested changes, please request a copy of the older document, or let us know. Call Jim at 467-5246 for copies, or with your suggestions.

New Zealander Beekeepers Contemplate More Regulation

Editor's Note: This is an interesting example of a product safety issue that can only be experienced by New Zealand beekeepers. Even at that, it is a rare event.

New Zealand Herald Editorial, 28 March 2008
<http://www.nzherald.co.nz/topic/story.cfm?>

Major honey producers (in New Zealand) may be tempted to push for tighter regulation of the industry following an outbreak of poisoning on the Coromandel. Much is at stake for them, with exported honey products alone worth \$56 million last year. They want to limit the damage caused by an episode in which at least 10 people have fallen foul of the potentially lethal tutin toxin in comb honey that is believed to have been produced by a small-scale Whangamata apiary. Stricter controls would be one way of reassuring people both here and overseas that the honey on the supermarket shelf is a good, safe product.

Backing for this regulatory, which if needed, is contained in a report prepared for the Food Safety Authority which warned just such an outbreak would be a consequence of an easing of rules in 2001. This introduced greater self-

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Red River Apiarists' Association Minutes of the General Meeting March 11, 2008

John Russell Badiuk welcomed everyone to the March RRAA meeting at the River Heights Community Centre, in Winnipeg, with 25 members present.

Minutes: Moved by Walter Wright and seconded by Dennis Ross to accept the February meeting minutes that was circulated with the Bee Cause. Motion was carried.

Financial Report: John Speer reported that the account balance is currently \$6144.17.

MBA Report: Jim reported on the new labour standards proclaimed by the Manitoba Govt. This will mean changes to the minimum wage, time off and vacations. Agriculture requires flexibility in hours of work and time off for farm workers. Keystone Agricultural Producers has been approached to take up this issue for Manitoba beekeepers.

The anticipated date is August 1st to implement the new fee structure for membership in the MBA. Our Canadian Honey Council assessment will be paid by collecting 12cents/colony (up to 1000 colonies) on an estimated 80,000 Manitoba colonies. This funding is Manitoba's share of CHC's operating expenses.

For the Good of the Industry: Moved by Jim Campbell to put \$500 toward the Mennonite Heritage Village project to create display material for the "History of Beekeeping in Western Canada" exhibit. Seconded by Chris Argeriou and carried unanimously.

John outlined the colorful brochure that he has produced that will be used as hand outs to prospective beekeepers. John also circulated some posters offering a \$100 prize for the winning design for an RRAA logo. The contest is open to our members and students studying art.

RRAA/MBA Field Day: Our field day will again a combined endeavour of both associations. Field Day activities will include a tour of the "History of Beekeeping in Western Canada" display and a lunch. Field Day activities will be held at the Mennonite Heritage Village at the end of June.

Program: David Ostermann gave an interesting presentation on Spring Management and answered questions.

Loonie Draw: A variety of items were donated by our members for the loonie draw. Stan Grysiuk won the jar of pure honey from India, Kim Steiner won animated bee, Albert Anderson won the metal hanging thermometer, Stan Huzey

won the box of four wine glasses, Ron Rudiak won the jar of strawberry honey spread and Brian Smith received the honey dipper.

Ron Rudiak, Secretary RRAA

NZ Beekeepers Contemplate Regs

(Continued from page 3)

regulation in terms of the summer-autumn risk posed by bees feeding on honeydew containing poison from native tutu bushes. The HortResearch report predicted that poisoning would occur and media reports would follow, prompting a "loss of confidence in honey, [and] sales and price will crash".

That forecast was probably a little alarmist. So, too, would be any rush to impose stronger regulation because of an isolated incident. Putting matters in perspective, the authority's senior programme manager for animal products, Jim Sim, noted that "generally honey is a very safe product. Tuto poisoning is a rare event". He also observed that the only totally effective health safeguard would be blanket rules that would disadvantage all honey producers for the sins of a few.

This would entail a return to the very inflexibility that producers sought to discard seven years ago, even though by and large the new system has proved both workable and well directed. The highest standards are expected of exporters, who must sign declarations stating when hives were producing honey and register risk-management plans covering tutu. Similar conditions apply to domestic market suppliers. Hobby beekeepers, however, do not have to sign the declarations if they sell locally.

This approach relies on small-time apiarists being fully aware of the toxic honey risk. They must know of the vegetation for kilometres around their hives. The HortResearch report implied this was too great an expectation. But the current regime ensures that the potential for harm from any mistake by a hobby beekeeper, whether through oversight or ignorance, is strictly limited. The contaminated Coromandel honey, which caused vomiting and seizures among those who ate it, is thought to have been sold at just three Whangamata outlets.

A return to the more restrictive regulations would see a system involving permits and hive inspections. That would impose a burden on the Ministry of Agriculture and beekeepers. At the moment, whatever the qualms about the damage to honey's reputation, there seems little call for this. If there were, indeed, a crash in sales and price, that situation might change. But there is little to suggest this is about to happen. Most people seem able to differentiate between the small-scale supply of the toxic Coromandel comb honey and the product they buy.

If there was a rash of poisoning incidents, there might also be a case for reconsideration. This episode should, however, put all beekeepers on their guard. They all stand to lose from errant practice, even if some will pay a much heavier cost. This has ensured the success of the light-handed regulation, the Coromandel incident notwithstanding. It would be foolish to rush into change on the basis of that one case.

CLASSIFIEDS

For Sale: 5 frame nucs \$150.00, three or four frame nucs made upon request. will be available may 15th. please contact

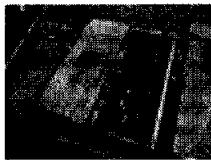
Dennis Ross - 878-2924

Wanted Looking for a solar wax melter.

Doug Henry 757-4694 dhenry@skyweb.ca

For Sale: Also Over wintered super nucs for sale next mid may. 3 frames of brood + 1 frame honey. Price is \$130.00 each.

Call **Pierre Faure**: 1 .204.248.2645



For Sale: 300 supered nucs for sale. Includes 10 frame laying queen. No less than 3 brood pollen feed. Inspected and treated. Wintered outside. Ready for May 15 to June 5. Some queens from Chile and marked available.

Contact **Rod Boudreau** 204-885-3344

For Sale: 60 frames Cowen extractor in mint condition.

Phone : 204.248.2645

Cell : 204.295.2856 Ask for **Pierre Faure**

For Sale: 50 hives for sale.

Call **Rudy Harsany** at (204) 866-2276

For Sale: Small number of 4 frame nucs with 2007 queens. Some 3/8 plywood inner cover with 7/8 * 7/8 pine rim. \$7.50 each.

Please call **Ted Scheuneman** 338-6066, West St Paul

For Sale: All of Operation: Wintering Bees and hives, Plastic Insulated Supers, 30 frame Maxant Extractor.

Please call **Javad Niazi** 885-0576

Wanted: 4 frame extractor

Please call **Ted Scheuneman** 338-6066, West St Paul

For Sale: Small number of 4 frame nucs with 2007 queens.

Please call **George Chwist** 338-5078

Ending Beekeeping Career: Selling all of operation except extractor. Prefer to sell to one person, all equipment for 5-10 colonies, including supers, uncapping supplies, etc.

Call **Emil Rekrut** 487-3146 in Winnipeg.

Changes in MAFRA Apiculture

(Continued from page 2)

port on going initiatives and minimize duplication with other projects being conducted in Canada.

I envision that my time will be initially setup so that I work 4 out of 5 days one week on projects and 3 out of 5 the next week and so on and so on. Internally, (David, Rob Park and I) will have to work out who is doing what part of my old job. David would likely be taking on full responsibility of running the inspection program and a good part of the honey bee extension. My other responsibilities would either have to be taken on by other staff or temporarily postponed till I return to the job full-time.

It is important to note that this initiative would never have been considered if it were not for David being able to pick up some of my most important provincial responsibilities! It is not going to be easy, but I truly believe that the outcome of getting some important projects completed that will benefit the beekeepers in the long run will be WORTH IT!

At this time, the plan is to review my existing work plan in April and develop the new work plan by May 1st 2008. We are also working on a communication strategy to inform the industry of what provincial responsibilities I will be retaining and who is covering the other responsibilities. Stay tuned!

RED RIVER APIARIST ASSOCIATION

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We are on the web!
www.geocities.com/ve4tg/

The *Bee Cause* is the official publication of the Red River Apiarist Association for distribution to its members and their colleagues in the beekeeping industry. It is published eight times a year on a monthly basis excepting December and the summer months of June, July, and August when membership meetings do not occur.

Articles can be best submitted in HTML or RTF formats as email attachments. Though they may be edited for spelling and basic grammar, no changes will be made to their contents, message and opinions. They are those of their originator and not of the Red River Apiarist Association.

Deadline for any submission to this newsletter is the second Saturday preceding the membership meeting to allow for publishing and mailing delays. Regular membership meetings are normally scheduled 7:30 PM on the second Tuesday of every month at the River Heights Community Centre located at 1370 Grosvenor Avenue in Winnipeg except the months as noted above.

The Red River Apiarist Association, formed in 1963, represents the beekeepers of the Red River Valley and environs in southern Manitoba. The association provides a forum for the promotion of sound beekeeping practices through education, networking opportunities, meetings, field days, workshops, presentations by local apicultural experts, as well as the dissemination of this monthly newsletter.

Your Club Constitution

- Jack Lee

The Club Constitution, as it was hand typed back in 1996, was scanned into a computer by Ron Rudiak last year which he passed around to the executive in an email. In a weak moment when I had some time, I took the constitution that Ron resurrected and fed it into a modern word processor with the idea that we should take a new look at it.

The constitution of an organization is the soul of the club. In it, the club states its mission and then goes about how it goes about accomplishing that. The various executive positions and their roles are defined. The rules of electing the executive are defined. The rules for running meetings are defined. The membership fees are set and there too it is stated when they are collected. The constitution is intended to give direction to those that lead the club and ensure the executive have standard job descriptions that are passed down from one year to the next.

A constitution thus ensures continuity and that the executive works for the club. That way no individual is able to impose his or her way of doing things unless the club wants it that way. For this reason, a constitution makes it difficult for any individual or group of individuals of "taking over" the club against the club's wishes.

For example, without a constitution, someone could wait for a small turnout to pass a motion to have the club meet at a different day or time and get it passed. However, because the meeting dates and frequency are in the constitution, there is a rigorous protocol that must be followed.

First, the changes to the constitution has to be mailed to the entire membership announcing the change and a general meeting where the change will be discussed and voted. The rules of majority are much more stringent than those of a general business. So if someone wanted to change the time or frequency of a meeting, he would have to convince a lot of members first.

And that is good. A constitution is not carved in stone. It can be easily changed if the club can be convinced the change is required and the change proposed is the kind they want. The constitution, after all, belongs to the club, and not to any individual or even the executive. It is the constitution that ensures that the values of the club are enduring, but can evolve appropriately as times and people change.

Give your executive time to apply the process. Realistically, it might not be completed until the end of this calendar year. However, since it will serve us for another 10 years, it is important to ensure that we do it right. That can best be done by taking an interest, listen with an open mind, engage in debate, and accept the outcome.