

# The Bee Cause



Volume 8, Issue 3

March 2011

Next general meeting is 7:30  
Tuesday, 8 March 2011  
at the River Heights Commu-  
nity Centre, 1370 Grosvenor  
Ave., Winnipeg.

(in room next to main  
entrance)

**Topic: MBA Convention &  
queen rearing**

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## **EPA's response to USA beekeeping industry regarding the registration / regulation of the pesticide clothianidin February 18, 2011**

(transcribe by the editor)

You may recall from the last few issues of the Bee Cause an international concern has been aroused over neonicotinoids and more specifically the insecticide clothianidin. This US concern has been addressed in a letter to the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) last December by: the National Honey Bee Advisory Board; the American Beekeeping Federation; the American Honey producers Association; the Beyond Pesticides;

the Pesticides Action Network North America; and the Centre for Biological Diversity. The following is EPA's response following brings the understanding of the issue from the regulatory side.

Since EPA's office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention's Office of Pesticide Program is responsible for the regulation of pesticides in the United States, I (Steven P. Bradbury, Director of the Office of Pesticide Programs) appreciate the opportunity to provide a detailed response to your concerns. I want you to know that EPA continues to advance its regulatory and scientific approaches to ensure honey bees and other pollinators are protected, and if scientific information shows a particular pesticide is posing unreasonable risk to pollinators, we stand ready to take the necessary regulatory action.

Clothianidin was originally evaluated for registration through a North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) Joint Review with Canada and was identified as an alternative to organophosphate insecticides, a class of insecticides that is generally very highly acutely toxic to bees and, unlike clothianidin, also very highly acutely toxic to humans and wildlife. During the clothianidin registration process, hundreds of studies were reviewed and evaluated. When EPA

granted the initial registration for clothianidin seed treatment uses in 2003, the Agency determined that the uses met the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) risk/benefit standard for registration.

Your letter refers to the "imminent hazard" you believe to be posed by clothianidin and urges the Agency to issue a "stop use order" to address the situation. Let me clarify how a stop sale, use and removal order operates. The Agency is authorized to issue a stop sale, use, and remove order under section 13 of FIFRA in response to a violation of FIFRA or after a pesticide has been cancelled or suspended. 7 U.S.C. § 136k (a). Since clothianidin has not cancelled or suspended and there has not been a violation of FIFRA, it is unclear what basis the Agency would have for issuing such an order.

When an actual imminent hazard exists, the Agency may suspend the pesticide registration in accordance with provisions of section 6[c] of FIFRA. 7 U.S.C. § 136k (a). To do so, however, the Agency needs to determine that such an imminent hazard exists based on reliable scientific information. Although your letter references EPA's November 2, 2010 memorandum regarding the reclassification of a clothianidin field study, and "[t]ne science that the agency has, [sic] and the independent literature, " you provide no evidence, or data to (continued on pg 4)

**2011 Executive**

**President:** Charles Polcyn  
Ph 284-7064  
231 Buxton Road  
Winnipeg, MB R31 0H4  
Email: charles\_polcyn@mail.com.

**1st Vice President:** John Badiuk  
Ph .943-0166  
1413-411 Cumberland Ave  
Winnipeg, MB R3B 1T7  
Email:honeyb@mts.net

**2nd Vice President:** Brian Smith  
Ph 204-373-2527  
P0 Box 423  
Emerson, MB. R0A 0L0  
Email: smthbgs1@mts.net

**Secretary:** Ron Rudiak  
Ph 326-3763  
216 Loewen Blvd.  
Steinbach, MB R5G 0E5  
Email: manbeekr@mts.net

**Treasurer:** John Speer  
Ph 222-3007  
Box 16, Group 555, RR 5  
Winnipeg, MB R2C 2Z2  
Email: jursss@mts.net

**MBA Delegate:** Jim Campbell  
Ph 467-5246  
Box 234  
Stonewall, MB R0C 2Z0  
Email: jaycam@mts.net

**Reporter:** Ron Rudiak  
Ph 326-3763  
216 Loewen Blvd.  
Steinbach, MB R5G 0E5  
Email: manbeekr@mts.net

**Newsletter Editor:**  
**Ken Rowes**  
Ph 204-755-3427  
Cloverleaf Box 758  
RR1 Anola, MB R0E 0A0  
Email: Roweskd@mts.net

**Presidents Comments – March 2011**

The end of February is always full of anticipation for an early end of winter, and yet the forecasts are for a potentially wet spring with a good possibility of floods similar to 2009 and perhaps even to that of 1997. Any beekeeper with bees in potential high water zones should consider moving your hives to higher ground while the ground is still frozen. An early melt or rains in March could make hive movements a challenge. The province has still not settled bee loss claims from the 1997 floods, much less those that occurred in 2009. It is much better to not have to deal with losses due to unexpected water flooding.

One of the issues dealt with in the DVD film “The Vanishing of the Bees” we viewed at our February RRAA meeting was the wide scale use of a form of a neo-nictinoid pesticide as a seed treatment for corn, canola, soy beans, sunflowers and other crops. There was a linkage made in the film to CCD or bee disappearance situations in various parts of the USA in the last several years.

There was a similar situation here in Southeastern Manitoba last September, where a yard location went from large bee populations to only a few bees in a weeks time. There were no indications of dead bees around the hives, nor any clues as to why the bee populations had severely declined. Recent interviews with the beekeeper indicated the nearby location of a hybrid corn field that was likely seeded with a variation of a pesticide called Gaucho as a seed treatment.

Is there a connection from the corn pollen gathered by the bees in late June and July and the die off/ disappearance of the bees in the second week of September. Or was the pollen gathered from a nearby canola field that blossomed in July. A fair crop of honey was collected from these hives in August from a summer workforce of some size. Certainly there were aspects in the film that suggested a delayed reaction from pollen that the bees had collected early in the summer. Those bees were developmentally delayed and later hatches of bees were unable to navigate back to their hive locations. Is this a first example of a real CCD situation here in Manitoba. More news on this situation should become available as more information is gathered.

We have conformation news from ‘The Forks’ in regard to the fall Honey Show. The dates are September 30<sup>th</sup> and October 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>, or the last weekend of September and a week before Thanksgiving. It is not too early to start thinking how you will participate in the 2011 Honey Show.

This years Day of the Honey Bee will be celebrated on May 29<sup>th</sup>, a Sunday at ‘The Forks’. It is a busy weekend at the Forks with a variety of events including Busker tryouts, so we don’t know all the details of how much space we will have available. We will appreciate several volunteers from RRAA being available for a few hours that day to help provide information to the public. You can let me know by telephone or email of your availability.

Things to look forward at our next RRAA meetings are: a) In March some of the highlights and re-cap of the MBA convention ; b) In April we will have a presentation on the important parts of Spring Management from the provincial Apiarists office. The May topic is still undecided at this time so if members have a topic wish, let one of the Executive know.

The world of Honey and Beekeeping continues to draw attention in a variety of ways. Right now we have a Health Canada advertisement promoting a very negative image of Honey as a potential source of botulism for children under the age of one year. The advertisement depicts a colorful plastic bottle of honey with a large red circle with a line across midway on the bottle which depicts a negative image of honey. Normally a large circle with a line through it depicts a danger zone or a no-entry area. This type of promotion is very misleading as it suggests that honey is a dangerous food.

Canadian Honey Council has responded to Health Canada to this misleading advertising and hopes that it will be pulled or considerably modified.

I would request all of the RRAA membership to write their own letters to Health Canada objecting to this misleading image of the safe food value of honey. They need to hear from us.

My own experiment of an indoor winter feeding program is continuing. The bees have drawn down all the sugar syrup or honey mixture or plain water that I have placed in the Boardman feeder jars. I will refill them in a weeks time and continue to observe the hives. There are still a lot of dead bees being removed from the hives, so the sanitation program is ongoing.

continued on pg 3)

**Minutes of the RRAA General Meeting  
River Heights Community Club – February 8, 2011**

**7:30 PM:** Charles Polcyn opened the February meeting with 24 members and guests in attendance. For this meeting we were located on the second floor overlooking the skating rink.

**Minutes of the January Annual General Meeting:**

No errors or omissions were noted. Moved by Gilles Lantagne and seconded by Chris Argiriou that the minutes be accepted as circulated in the February issue of the Bee Cause.

**A Non Contact Thermometer:** Charles demonstrated his non-contact thermometer which was recently made available by Canadian Tire. This Black and Decker instrument happened to be on sale for around \$30.00, a considerable reduction in price from those sold several years ago. B & D markets this instrument as a “Thermal Leak Detector” sold for checking houses for insulation deficiencies. So far Charles has used it for reading the temperature of his indoor wintered colonies.

**Urban Beekeeping Discussion:** Although, in general, gardeners within the City of Winnipeg and many residents without gardens appreciate the value of pollinators and having them available, having an outdated bylaw on the books does not seem appropriate. Progressive cities are recognizing the value of pollinating insects and subsequently adopted bylaws to facilitate the keeping of bees in the urban environment. Our members would like to see the City and other Manitoba cities and towns update their outdated bylaws to make them “bee friendly”..

**Program:** Video presentation: “Vanishing of the Bees”

**Loonie Draw:** February prize winners were: Howard Alexander, Gilles Lantagne, Ron Rudiak, Nelson Szwaluk and Stan Huzey.

Ron Rudiak, recorder – RRAA  
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The RRAA participated in the 11th **Seedy Saturday** 19 Feb. at The Canadian Mennonite University promoting Manitoba Honey and the art of beekeeping.



**MBA Report March 2011**

By Jim Campbell, MBA rep

The Manitoba Beekeepers' Association (MBA) continues to work on several activities including the resolutions put forth by their members.

The issue regarding obtaining Temporary Foreign Worker help during our busy honey season is once again in full swing. Producers have completed their labour market opinion, which identifies the need for temporary help. As Citizenship and Immigration Canada is updating their regulations protecting temporary helpers, they are monitoring the requests closer than usual. MBA has been recommending business owners remember they are not only owners, they are also employees of the business. Thus Canadian resident employees, derive economic benefit by hiring short-term helpers.

MBA met with the Manitoba Agricultural Services Corporation (MASC) board on 24 February to review the request for Winter Mortality Insurance for Honey Bees. Our request is being addressed. MASC confirmed the program is being finalized over the next few weeks. Their plan is to introduce the Insurance Program at the end of June, with an application deadline of August 31. Although right in the busy season for producers, there may be quite a few already awaiting the program.

Uncertainty continues about what treatment for Varroa will be available this fall. A product from Eastern Canada called “Quick Strips” (a Formic product), recently was approved by EPA for sale in the USA. Meanwhile an application needs to be sent to the Pest Management Regulatory Agency here in Canada. Recent e-mails have been seeking support from provincial associations to back the Emergency Use Registration (EUR). Although MBA is on record for seeking alternative products, we are hesitant to endorse any product without assurances that appropriate data will be supplied in a timely manner. We are cautious, as Apivar is already available and known to work, and we have already been granted EUR for the past two years. Its EUR expires June 2011. Communication timing is critical to ensure a product is ready for fall treatments. MBA will be continuing action on this front.

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With food prices going up on a worldwide basis, it shouldn't be too long until honey prices also move upwards. The wholesale price still seems to hover around the \$1.50 to \$1.65 per pound mark with the 2011 futures price of honey perhaps being at \$1.75 or better. There is a shortage of quality honey worldwide, and there will be attempts to bring “suspect honey” into North America again.

Let us hope that the spring thaw weather comes slowly and gently, so that our over wintered hives are not in any danger from water or excessive temperature changes.

Yours in Beekeeping- Charles Polcyn RRAA President.

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(from pg 1)  
support an Agency finding of imminent hazard.

Through this letter the Agency is seeking to set the record straight and resolve any confusion about the meaning of the reclassification of the clothianidin field study from acceptable to supplemental. The 2003 registration of clothianidin was conditionally granted based, among other things, on the submission of a field test for pollinators. The registrant addressed this requirement with the field study (MRID 46907801 and 46907802) that you reference in your December 8, 2010 letter. This study has undergone several reviews since its submission and initial evaluation in 2007. The study was originally classified as an acceptable study (that is, a study that provides scientifically-sound information, but did not follow all protocols set forth in EPA test guideline).

A modification in the Agency's assessment of this study is reflective of EPA's improved understanding of honey bee biology and the recognition in the scientific community of the challenges associated with field pollinator study designs. While elaborate field studies can be designed, there may be confounding factors which limit, but do not entirely discredit, the utility of a study. It is clear that field pollinator studies cannot be viewed in the same context as laboratory studies where experimental conditions can be strictly controlled. Recognizing the complexity of conducting and interpreting field studies, EPA has made the best use of existing data. Although deficiencies were noted in this specific pollinator field study, including some cross contamination between treated and non-treated (control) plots, there was useful information that has been used to better understand hive survival following exposure to clothianidin.

The Agency bases pesticide risk classifications on the entire body of information submitted by the pesticide registrant and open scientific literature data. For clothianidin, the weight-of-evidence risk characterization was based on 34 studies and not on the findings of a single, specific field study. Therefore, the re-evaluation of the study in question does not change the Agency's conclusion that the registered uses of clothianidin meet the (FIFRA) risk/benefit standard for registration. Clothianidin generally poses less risk to agricultural workers and fish and wildlife when compared to the organophosphate insecticides alternatives. While the acute laboratory data show that clothianidin is toxic to honey bees, as are most insecticides, current labels for clothianidin products used as foliar treatments include bee hazard statements that prohibit applications when plants are flowering and bees are in the area. At this time, we are not aware of any data that reasonably demonstrates that bee colonies are subject to elevated losses due to chronic exposure to this pesticide. Based on EPA's thorough review of the scientific information, EPA does not intend at this time to initiate suspension or can-

cellation action against the registered uses of clothianidin.

We know that as science advances, EPA must vigilantly improve our scientific methods to ensure pollinators are protected. We are actively involved in on-going research that is addressing the potential role pesticides may play in the status of honey bees and native bees. EPA proposed a global workshop that was organized by the Society of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry (SETAC) on January 16-21, 2011. This scientific meeting was help to address advances in the study designs and improve risk assessment approaches for honey bees. We currently anticipate proposing a revised risk assessment process for pollinators to the FIFRA Scientific Advisory Panel in 2012 for independent external peer-review. It is our expectation that the open and public process to be used for developing these revised risk assessment methods will increase understanding and strengthen the scientific and regulatory processes for protecting honey bees and pollinators.

Given the concern about the neonicotinoid class of pesticides and protection of bees, the Agency has also accelerated scheduling the comprehensive re-evaluation of these pesticides in the registration review program. EPA's registration review docket for clothianidin will open this year. We are coordinating re-evaluation of the neonicotinoid insecticides with California's Department of Pesticide Regulation and Canada's Pest Management Regulatory Authority.

I hope this response clarifies the issues raised in your letter of December 10, 2010. Our office looks forward to working with all interested stakeholders to ensure protection of honey bees from pesticides.

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### **Urban Beekeeping in Winnipeg**

**There has been some interest in keeping bees within the city limits. Lori and others have asked the same question from time to time and I suspect it is a current topic at our meetings.**

I am curious about the status of the bylaws regarding beekeeping within city limits. From what I understand it is illegal to keep bees within Winnipeg. Are surrounding areas like Steinbach different? Also is anything currently being done to change the bylaws and allow beekeeping within city limits?

I am currently taking the beekeeping course at U of M and have been very interested for years in keeping bees on a very tiny scale as a hobby. It would be nice if I could keep them in my backyard otherwise I'm not too sure what my options will be. Any information is helpful. **Lori Croft**

**Here is the present by-laws:**

**CONSOLIDATION UPDATE: JUNE 25, 2003**  
**THE CITY OF WINNIPEG (continued on pg 6)**



Editor's Note by Ken Rowes



I spent 2 weeks in Arizona this February and thought you may find interest in a pollinator quad. The crops are irrigated not sprayed and the temp. was in the 20's C. The day I left 19 Feb. it rained with a little hail.

You may question: the pallet, the bottom boards, the cloth and what would be constitute a honey box. Let us share our thoughts at the meeting.

It seems to me to be a 2009 spring all over again, so wet that managing bees will be an extra concern. Fall apiaries would have benefited by high ground or ditching for run-off.

With temperatures so cold these days we hope for a long dawn out thaw so run off and wet bee yards are not so harmful.

It is the time for **renewals**, so if you want the newsletter this is your last chance - the April newsletter will go out to members only!

## CLASSIFIED

**1. Wanted:** S.S Bottling Tanks Single wall or double wall with water jacket, good condition or repairable. Also needed—Belt Barrel Heater for drums: **call Brian Rich 204 739-5481**

**2. For Sale:** - Clearance of a variety of Beekeeping Equipment, Brood Boxes, Queen Excluders, Bottom Boards, Lids, Empty Shells, Bare Frames, etc. Reasonable Prices on all items. Call Charles Polcyn at 284-7064 or email at: charles\_polcyn@ymail.com

**4. For Sale:** 1-Wood Burning Stove ideal for workshop—used one season \$350.00; 2- 10 kg plastic containers and lids \$2.65 each; 3 Plastic drum 200 L with tap \$100.00. Ph Ted Scheuneman 338-6066, West St Paul

**5. For Sale:** - Strong 4 frame nucs, with laying queens. Will accommodate 3 or 5 frame nucs. Available approximately May 15 weather permitting. Ph Chris Argiriou 296-4848 (cell) or 885-4588 (home)

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

Articles can be best submitted in word documents 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 Apiarists' 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.

*We are on the web!*  
[www.beekeepingmanitoba.com](http://www.beekeepingmanitoba.com)

**7. Wanted:** Candle moulds, tapered and pillar various sizes. Contact: **Lance Waldner Phone or Text 712-6783, lancewld@gmail.com**

**8. For Sale:** 10 hives for sale. single brood boxes with lid, bottomboard. inner cover and feed 378 5351 Dahlen Barkman 378 2778 Wes Barkman

**9. For Sale:** Made 2009 well established Strong –Healthy 4-frame nucs with queens bred from my own gentle hardy local stock. No foulbrood, chalkbrood, nosema, tracheal mites, varroa count very very low in my apiary. Also new inner covers made of 3/8" plywood with outer rim 7/8" x 7/8" pine \$7.50. Ph Ted Scheuneman 338-6066, West St Paul

**10. For Sale:** Model 500-30 Frame Maxant Honey Extractor In excellent shape used very little. \$1,500 OBO please call Russ Roznik, Oakbank, home 204 444 3002 or cell 471-0199

**CATCH THE BUZZ™**

From The Chicago Tribune

The business agent for several honey importers has been arrested on federal charges lodged in Chicago, alleging she conspired to illegally import Chinese honey, prosecutors said today.

Shu Bei "Kathy" Yuan, a Chinese national, was arrested Tuesday in Los Angeles and appeared in federal court in Los Angeles late Wednesday, prosecutors said in a news release.

Prosecutors allege that Yuan claimed the honey came from South Korea, Thailand and Taiwan rather than China to avoid paying higher import taxes.

Yuan's indictment on charges of evading about \$500,000 in import taxes on about \$200,000 worth of honey is part of a **larger probe into German-based Alfred L. Wolff, Inc.,** and related companies that **began to result in indictments in 2009.** A federal grand jury indicted 10 Wolff executives and five companies in an \$80 million honey-import fraud scheme. So far, 20 people and companies have been charged in honey-related investigations, according to the release.

Yuan worked for Blue Action Enterprise, Inc., a California honey importer, and related companies, including the now-defunct 7 Tiger Enterprises, Inc., and Honey World Enterprises, Inc.

She worked with a man named **Hung Ta "Michael" Fan,** who owned the three companies, to bring the honey into the United States between March 2005 and June 2006. Fan pleaded guilty last year to conspiring to import Chinese honey illegally to skirt about \$5 million in import duties. He was sentenced to 30 months in prison.

Yuan is alleged to have falsely declared that six shipments of Chinese honey came from South Korea, Taiwan and Thailand. Honey from those countries was not subject to "anti-dumping" duties at the time of the scheme, prosecutors said.

"The stability of our domestic honey industry is potentially threatened when importers illegally dump low-cost Chinese honey into the U.S. marketplace," Gary Hartwig, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement special-agent-in-charge in Chicago, said in the release.

If convicted, Yuan could face up to 20 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine for the most serious charge against her

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(from pg 4)

**EXOTIC ANIMAL BY-LAW  
NO. 3389/83**

**A By-law of THE CITY OF WINNIPEG respecting the keeping or harbouring of certain animals.**

**WHEREAS** The City of Winnipeg has the authority to pass by-laws respecting the keeping or harbouring of animals or birds:

amended 8162/2002

**NOW THEREFORE THE CITY OF WINNIPEG,** in Council assembled, enacts as follows:

1. Except as may be specifically permitted under The Wildlife Act or the regulations under that Act, no person, firm or corporation shall keep or harbour any of the following animals within The City of Winnipeg:

amended 6595/95

- (1) All venomous reptiles;

(2) The following species of snakes and lizards, and all their known races:

(3) All members of the order Crocodilia;

(4) All non-human Primates;

(5) All members of order Carnivora excepting domestic dogs (Canis familiaris), domestic cats (Felis catus) and ferrets.

(6) **horses, cattle, hogs, goats, sheep, poultry or bees except where specifically permitted by the applicable zoning by-law, and subject to section 2 of this By-law.**

added 3678/84

2. Section 1 - shall not apply to the following:

(1) Any travelling show such as a circus or other like show.

(2) The Assiniboine Park Zoo.

(3) The Manitoba Museum.

amended 116/2003

(4) The University of Manitoba.

(5) The University of Winnipeg.

(6) The Health Sciences Centre.

(7) Any school to which The Public School Act applies.

3. Subsections (2), (3) or (4) of section 1 shall not apply to any person, firm or corporation who at the time of this By-law coming into force and effect is keeping or harbouring any of the animals set forth in said subsections.

By-law No. 3389/83 3

4. The Chief Operating Officer of the Animal Services Agency Division and his/her delegates may conduct inspections and take steps to administer and enforce this by-law or remedy a contravention of this by-law in accordance with The City of Winnipeg Charter and, for those purposes, have the powers of a "designated employee" under The City of Winnipeg Charter.

amended 8162/2002

5. repealed 8162/2002

6. (1) Subject to subsection (2), this By-law shall come into force and effect on the date of passing hereof.

(2) Subsections (1) and (5) of Section 1 shall not apply to any person, firm or corporation who at the time of this By-law coming into force and effect is keeping or harbouring any of the animals set forth in said subsections until 30 days have elapsed from the coming into force and effect of this By-law.

7. This by-law shall be known as the "Exotic Animal By-law".  
added 8162/2002

**DONE AND PASSED** in Council assembled, this 17<sup>th</sup> day of February, 1983.

See sections 180-181 and sections 183-188 of The City of Winnipeg Charter for information about some of the key powers given to designated employees.

*I ran 14 colonies from 1972—1978 south of the south perimeter on Hwy. 59 and I had no problems. Neither did our president Allan King with his some 25 + hives in the Fort White area 1963-until he moved to B.C. in the late 70's. (editor)*

From Steinbach, here is Ron Rudiak's take of it.

Hello Everyone:

For Winnipeg there's no one size fits all (continued on pg 7)



(From pg 6)

answer for having bees on residential lots. Most beekeepers that have colonies in the city only have one or two. That seems to work OK when yards are large and have a lot of shrubbery, trees and high fences around to keep hives out of sight and bee flight well over everybody's heads. Unfortunately antiquated laws exist in most towns & cities although Vancouver (and a few other large cities) are progressive enough to encourage the keeping of bees within city limits. Sunnybrook bee farm used to be in Hanover Municipality when we established it some 37 years ago but the city of Steinbach has now surrounded our six acres (which is still zoned agricultural) and we use it as our home yard. We have also built four agricultural buildings on it (machine shed, wood shop, honey house and lately another forty foot all steel building for equipment and barrel storage There is no house on this land. All the best, Ron Rudiak

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## Give 'em a Chance

By Ted Scheuneman (updated February 2011)

After a long winter, beekeepers are anxious to see how their bees survived. Sometimes we find the boxes loaded with bees. Other times we find very few bees, and this begs the question "What is to be done next?"



Honey Bee colonies can be manipulated in the springtime, after they have had at least three (3) days of good flying weather, or cleansing flight days. There are always some colonies that are really strong, with 8 full frames of bees, and there are some that may have bees on only 1 or 2 frames, yet appear healthy with a live queen. Without some kind of support, weak colonies will not be able to take advantage of the summer honey flow.

When weak colonies are boosted with a frame or 2 of brood and bees from a strong colony, chances are, some of the new bees will fly back to their original colony. At this time, brood on the transferred frames could get chilled and

die. To prevent absconding, the colony could be moved to another bee yard however, often beekeepers underestimate the number of bees required to keep brood warm on cold April or early May nights. This could lead to weakening of the original strong colony, and prove disastrous to the boosted colony.

Although tempting, combining weak colonies merely means having a larger weak colony, plus one queen will likely be lost. Weak plus weak still equals weak. Better to aim at creating a strong colony.

A method I have successfully used is merely placing a weak, but otherwise healthy colony, on top of a strong colony of 8-10 frames of bees and brood. The key here is to save both queens by placing a queen excluder between the two boxes.

Most of the time, a weak colony has surplus food. It is best to leave 4 frames of food and pollen, with two on each side of the box. The remaining frames are removed and replaced with empty brood frames. The top box with bees and brood nest is to go directly above the bottom box brood nest. If using an inner cover, close off the top entrance, or turn over the cover, in order to conserve energy in the top box.

Prior to placing the weak colony on top, spray the bees with warm 1:1 sugar syrup, containing 4-5 drops of anise per 1 litre of mixture. About 100cc is sprayed equally into the top and bottom box.

Uniting the two boxes should be done late in the day, preferable about 1 hour before dark. Bees are most tolerant in the evening and night, and they have all night to greet and lick each other. The next morning, it is business as usual, with no biting and pushing at the entrance. Acceptance and support of the upper box with the weak colony is astonishing, plus you still have both queens!

In 7-10 days, check your newly created hive. If a half box full of bees, or more, can be seen, everything is OK! Should you find only a few bees in the top box, likely the queen was not strong or healthy enough, and she has been killed. This happens in about 5% of cases. If this is the case, remove the queen excluder to permit the bottom queen to expand the brood nest into the top box. By about the middle of May, this hive should have 2 boxes full of bees and brood, and can be split at that time, if desired.

Where everything went as planned, check at 4 weeks from the day the 2 boxes were united. Both upper and lower boxes should be full of bees and about 6 frames of brood. At this time you need to decide whether to leave the bees for another 6-10 days (i.e. if weather is cool), or whether the top box should be removed and taken to another bee yard about 5 km away to avoid bees back drifting.

Should the boxes not be filled with bees, reverse the inner cover to create a top entrance. This permits drones to leave the colony to fly; otherwise the queen excluder traps them inside.

If the boxes are left together for too long, (continued on pg 9)

**The 105th Manitoba Beekeepers' Association Convention will be held in the completely remodel Viscount Gort Hotel 1670 Portage Avenue Winnipeg Manitoba, March 4 – 5, 2011.**

**Advance Registration deadline is February 18, 2011.** Registration Form attached

Make room reservations directly with the Viscount Gort Hotel at 1-800-665-1122 (toll free) or 775-0451. For group discount, indicate you are with the "Manitoba Beekeepers Association". A block of rooms have been reserved until Feb 20, 2011. Room rates: Guest room rates are \$105 plus taxes, (single or double rooms).

**Guest Speakers:**

**Randy Oliver**, beekeeper, pollinator and researcher from Grass Valley, California. Randy is returning for his second visit to the Manitoba Beekeepers Association. He wowed the audience in Brandon last year with his energetic and practical presentations. This year Randy's topics will be "Bee Nutrition" and "Varroa Management Strategies and Techniques".

**Dr. Steve Pernal**, Research Scientist, Agriculture, Agri-Food Canada, Beaverlodge Research Station, Alberta. Steve will provide an update on some of the research activities that he and his lab have been working on such as the control of Nosema ceranae and new tools for bee breeding.

**Pierre Giovenazzo**, Ph.D. candidate and teacher at the Université Laval in Québec City. Pierre will be presenting information from some of his main research topics, such as integrated pest management against Varroa, bee stock evaluation and selection and the biology of the Small Hive Beetle in southern Québec.

**Les Eccles**, Lead Tech Transfer Program specialist, Ontario Beekeepers Association. Les is returning to Ontario after spending two years in Mexico. Les will be speaking on his experience working with beekeepers and development organizations to transfer beekeeping technology into the field, and certify beekeeping operations for honey exportation to European markets

For a full Conference agenda, please visit the MBA website: [www.manitobabee.org](http://www.manitobabee.org)

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***From "Honey Bee's" Kitchen***

**Chicken With Honey**

**Servings:** 6

**Ingredients:**

6 boneless skinless chicken breasts  
2 tablespoons oil  
2 onions, chopped  
1 cup slivered almonds ground or crushed  
2 teaspoons low-fat margarine  
Salt & pepper  
1 clove of garlic, chopped  
1/2 teaspoon black pepper  
1 1/2 cups low-fat chicken broth  
1 lemon, juice  
1 teaspoon fresh basil  
1/2 cup of "**Honey Bee's**" honey  
2 tablespoons cornstarch

**How To Do:**

- 1 In pan, heat butter and oil.
- 2 Brown chicken in this mixture.
- 3 Season with salt & pepper if desired, remove.
- 4 In remaining fat, cook onion and garlic until clear.
- 5 Add ground or crushed almonds, basil, pepper, and honey and cook, stirring, until mixture is well blended.
- 6 Combine broth and cornstarch and add to pan; cook, stirring, over high heat until sauce thickens.
- 7 Remove from heat, stir in lemon juice.
- 8 Place chicken in a casserole dish, spooning sauce over.
- 9 Bake, covered, at 350 degrees for 1 hour, or until chicken is tender.

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Sometimes, "Just a little bit of curiosity can spark your interest." Remember that "Just a little MORE (curiosity) can uncover all sorts of things that are truly amazing and valuable,"

Remember that "The world has a way of calling your attention to certain things, yet these are only the things the world wants you to see. It's up to you to direct your focus upon those things you wish to see." Like peaking into a bee's life!

--- Ralph Marston



(from pg 7)

the bees may become overcrowded, with the risk that both boxes of bees may swarm. Remember, bees are being produced at about 4000 per day at this time in your hive. To put this in perspective, about 4000 bees is about one 2-pound package of bees, every second day in your two-story hive.

The next step is **mandatory!** As soon as the boxes are separated, a second box **MUST** be added to each. Otherwise, you will crowd the bees, and they will swarm! As stated before, move the new two-story hive to another location.

This method has proven to be a win-win situation, as it doesn't cost any money (i.e. for a new queen), you make use of the equipment you already have, and it takes very little time and effort. The best part is, colonies you save reward you with a normal honey crop!

What I've discovered, in my many years as a keeper of bees, is that we as beekeepers are likely making mistakes that brought about the weak colony situation. Although often it is hard to admit, beekeepers must acknowledge the fact that bees never do something wrong, or make a mistake. That's why I say, "Give 'em a chance"!

(Note: Addendum to Because Vol 6 Iss 4 2010 article: Give 'Em A Chance)



If you have an exceptionally super strong colony, for example, bees wall-to-wall, top to bottom, (i.e. 10 full frames of bees), you can put **TWO** weak colonies on top of them, in a two compartment standard super. But make sure that the partition in the top box goes all the way down to the queen excluder, and is on top, bee tight too, in order to keep all three queens apart. Then you will have, in the usual space of time, two strong nucs on top, which can be sold, or re-hived into a standard box and develop into fully productive standard colonies.

If everything is right and is done right you gain.

However, if the bottom colony is not exceptionally strong, you will end up in the usual space of time with only three nuc-sized hives or, in the worst case, only two nucs. Should evening temperatures get too cool while you are doing this procedure, the bees will concentrate, or cluster, to keep as much brood as possible warm in the upper super with two compartments. If there are not enough bees to keep all the brood warm that has been established at that time, they will abandon the brood in the lower box and it will die off. If this happens, come re-hiving time, sometimes you will find only a few bees and the queen running aimlessly on top of the dead brood in the bottom box. In this case, you have not gained much, or perhaps nothing at all.

That is also why I say, experiment, observe, and learn from any setbacks, but most of all "Don't Give Up".

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**Red River Apiarists' Association  
Winnipeg, Manitoba  
2011 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

I apply for membership in the Red River Apiarists' Association. Membership includes one-year subscription to the newsletter "The Bee Cause" (8 issues)- \$25.00.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Tel. \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ Prov. \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature \_\_\_\_\_

New Member [ ] Renewal [ ] Student [ ] [free 1st year]

Other. Please specify. \_\_\_\_\_

This completed form may be brought to the meeting or mailed with your cheque to :

**John Speer, RRAA Treasurer  
Box 16, Group 555. Winnipeg, Manitoba R2C 2Z2.**

Make cheques payable to Red River Apiarists' Association.  
Please do not send cash in the mail.