

The Bee Cause



Volume 8, Issue 5

May 2011

Next general meeting is 7:30
Tuesday, **10 May 2011**
at the **River Heights Commu-
nity Centre, 1370 Grosvenor
Ave., Winnipeg.**

* meeting in:
**(in 2nd floor
Lounge room)**

Topic: Janine Gibson -Farm
Mentorship program on Organic
Honey Production and Organic
Honey Certification
Patty Roshier - Canadian Wheat
Board on Farm weather stations

Inside this issue:

- **Urban Beekeeping in New York** Pg 1
- **RRAA Presidents report** Pg 2
- **RRAA minutes of March 8th meeting** Pg 3
- **MBA report**
- **Day of the Honey Bee May 29th 2011** Pg 4
- **Farmer to Farmer workshop**
- **The Classifieds Editor's Notes:** Pg 5
- **The 2011 Census of Agriculture and Beekeepers** Pg 7
- **City of Winnipeg Public Notice INSECTICIDE USE PROGRAM FOR 2011** Pg 8
- **RRAA Registration** Pg 9
- **MBA Field day**

The following article is in keeping with our information to know on Urban Beekeeping.

New York City Beekeepers Association's Best Management Practices for Safe Urban Beekeeping

DISCLAIMER

This document is and will always be a work in progress, intended for regular update and revision. It offers guidelines for responsible hobby beekeeping in New York City. It is not an instructional text; we strongly urge anyone interested in urban beekeeping to take the New York City Beekeepers Association ("NYCBA") course on urban beekeeping (go to www.nyc-bees.org for details on current course offerings). Likewise, this document is not intended to provide legal advice. It does not address practices related to selling honey or any other farm product; moving colonies, bees, or beekeeping equipment; or liability / insurance issues. Finally, this document represents the Best Practices advocated by the NY-

CBA, not New York City or its Department of Health.

INTRODUCTION

Beekeeping has become increasingly popular in New York City. Although generally docile, honeybees (*Apis mellifera*) can and may sting. Responsible management is therefore necessary to avoid creating problems for neighbours, particularly in an urban setting. This document is intended as a reference and standard for honeybee management in New York City. It may serve as a resource for information to reinforce community confidence in the safety of beekeeping activities; a standard reference for addressing complaints or conflicts about beekeeping activities in New York City; and a compendium of best management practices that NYCBA members are encouraged to follow.

HIVE NOTIFICATION & SELECTED REGULATION

Beekeepers must notify both New York City and New York State regarding hives kept in the five boroughs. Article 161 of the New York City Health Code, section 161.01(b) (12), requires that persons keeping honey bees "file a notice with the Department, on a form provided or approved by the Department, containing the beekeeper's name, address, telephone, e-mail and fax numbers, emergency contact information, and location of the hive, and they shall notify the Department within ten business days of any changes to such information." NYC hive-notification forms will be available soon. NYS hive location surveys are available at <http://www.agmkt.state.ny.us/PI/PI-134.pdf>.

Section 161.01(b) (12) also requires beekeepers in New York City to "adhere to appropriate beekeeping practices including maintaining bee colonies in moveable-frame hives that are kept in sound and usable condition; providing a constant and adequate water source; locating hives so that the movement of bees does not become an animal nuisance, as defined in § 161.02 of this Article; and shall be able to respond immediately to control bee swarms and to remediate nuisance conditions." Section 161.02 defines a beekeeping nuisance to "mean conditions that include, but not be limited to, aggressive or objectionable bee behaviours, hive placement or bee movement that interferes with pedestrian traffic or persons residing on or adjacent to the hive premises; and overcrowded, deceased or abandoned hives."

GENERAL BEST PRACTICES

Education

The first and most critical step in responsible beekeeping is education. All beekeepers should have a solid understanding of honeybee biology and basic beekeeping methods. We strongly suggest that new beekeepers take the NYCBA Basic Urban Beekeepers Course and read at least three different beekeeping guides. Here are some books that the NYCBA recommends:

- The Beekeeper's Handbook by Alphonse Avitabile & Diana Sammataro (2006)
 - Beekeeping for Dummies by Howland Blackiston (2009)
 - First Lessons in Beekeeping by Keith S. Delaplane (2007)
 - Natural Beekeeping: Organic Approaches to Modern Apiculture by Ross Conrad (2007)
 - The ABC & XYZ of Bee Culture: An Encyclopedia Pertaining to the Scientific and Practical Culture of Honey Bees
- (Urban Beekeeping continued on pg 4)

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Presidents Comments-- May 2011

The challenges of being beekeepers in Manitoba in late April and early May are always unpredictable. On *Thursday April 28th*, I am mixing up sugar syrup at +20 C. to fill the feed containers on all the hives, and watching them carry in loads of yellow pollen. On *Sunday May 1st*, three days later I am shoveling **15 cm.** of snow off the tops of all the hives, and not daring to have a look inside as I know they should/would be in a tight cluster at -6 C. The outside eggs chill down, die and are recycled by the bees. Life inside the hive is always a challenge for the bees, and I hope there are enough of them to keep some of the brood warm and themselves alive.

Over wintering results vary across the province from a low of 5 % loss to 90 % loss. The analysis of the wide range of mortality leads one to wonder what procedures took place last fall that made such significant differences. In my case, the losses were in the very strong hives that ran out of food in late February or mid-March. The small cluster hives I put away last November came out in April and are doing well. The amount of food consumed is related to the size of the colony and I wonder if the good flying weather of early November used up much of the stores in the large colonies of bees that were to be wintered indoors. What to do next fall is one of the questions that I need to try and answer over the summer.

Our program for the May meeting will have two speakers, one on the production and certification of Organic Honey, and the other will be on having Internet Connected On Site Weather Stations used by Canadian Wheat Board members on their farms, but also perhaps available on apiary sites of local beekeepers. The business meeting starts at 7:30 PM at the River Heights Community Club in the upstairs lounge. The program portions will start right after the coffee break, and there will be a closing Social Part with food for this last spring meeting organized by one of our members. Also besides the usual Sign In Form, there will be a chart for recording total number of hives put away in November and percentage winter losses of those bee hives.

The **Day of the Honey Bee** will be recognized at The Forks on Sunday, May 29th in the Central Court Area. **RRAA and MBA** are planning special displays of beekeeping equipment, frames of live bees, information charts, and appropriate signage. We need Volunteer beekeepers for a few hours to meet with visitors to the Forks and answer their questions about the simple but complex lives of the honey bee. Please contact Charles Polcyn at 284-7064 or Jim Campbell at 467-5246 to be a part of that days Volunteer Schedule. There will also be a few vendors selling locally produced honey, so it will be a busy day for all.

Also remember that there is a Beekeeper Field Day on June 22nd at the University of Manitoba Apiary home yard. This is on a Wednesday afternoon starting after the 1 PM catered \$10.00 lunch. Bring a lawn chair, a cap, and your questions for the University of Manitoba beekeeper staff. It is always an informative time, and it takes place here in Winnipeg so many of our RRAA members should be able to attend. Plus remember to put away at least 3 jars of your best honey for the end of Septembers Manitoba Honey Show. The dates are September 30th and October 1st and 2nd, 2011. Don't hesitate to participate again this year.

Mothers Day in May and Fathers Day in June are significant for all of us, so let us recall and remember those important people in our lives. Wishing all of you a good Beekeeping summer and that the water goes down soon.

Yours in Beekeeping---- Charles Polcyn RRAA President.

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**Minutes of the RRAA General Meeting
River Heights Community Club – April 12, 2011**

7:30 PM: Charles Polcyn opened the April meeting with 36 members and guests in attendance. Earlier that afternoon a group of RRAA members including Charles, Alex Remkes, Ken Rowes and Ron Rudiak had met with Taz Stewart, City of Winnipeg entomologist, for a discussion about the mosquito abatement program and also the city's present bylaw restricting beekeeping.

More large cities such as Vancouver have updated or will be updating their bylaws to allow beekeeping within their jurisdiction. In this regard, your association plans to meet with a representative of City Council to ask for changes that would remove the restriction on beekeeping within Winnipeg.

A card expressing our sympathy to the Walter Wright family was circulated for everyone to sign.

Minutes of the March General Meeting: No errors or omissions were noted. Moved by Margaret Smith and seconded by Ken Rowes to accept the minutes as they appeared in the April issue of the Bee Cause.

Next Meeting: Plans are to have a presentation on organic beekeeping and a second presentation outlining the Canadian Wheat Board's program for monitoring local weather conditions.

Treasurer's Report: John Speer reported that there are only twelve outstanding memberships at this time.

MBA Report: Jim Campbell reported that a recent shipment of Hawaiian queens received in Winnipeg was found to have a live hive beetle in the shipping container while another shipment in Alberta was found to contain a number of live hive beetle larvae. David Ostermann noted that when hive beetle larvae hatch out they can be extremely tiny and difficult to see.

Twenty-five queens from the Winnipeg shipment were installed by one producer while the remaining four-hundred and seventy-five were going to go to another when the problem was discovered.

Dr. Amy Snow from the CFIA was notified of the situation. The queens that had not been installed were taken to the U of M lab where each queen was examined and each one was placed in a new cage. The old cages and attendants were destroyed and held for later examination.

New measures and procedures will have to be put in place to prevent any further problems.

The field day will take place on June 22 at the University of Manitoba bee yard. Dr. Robert Currie will be on hand with his students to discuss the screening of several new products.

Jim noted that the producers of the Mite Away Quick Strip have not applied to the PMRA for approval at this time.

(continued *)

MBA Report May 2011

Jim Campbell, MBA Secretary

The Manitoba Beekeepers' Association (MBA) is encouraging all honey producers to take part in the Canada Census on May 11.

On May 10, 2011, farm operators — including beekeepers — will be asked to update Canada's definitive national agricultural profile by completing the 2011 Census of Agriculture questionnaire. As often, honey producers are not clearly identified and thus could be missed for receiving the 2011 census, MBA suggests contacting Statistics Canada if you want to be counted. For more information on the 2011 Census of Agriculture visit the website at <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/ca-ra2011/index-eng.htm> or contact Erik Dorff by telephone at 613-951-2818 or by e-mail at erik.dorff@statcan.gc.ca

In the last issue of "BeeCause" (and "Manitoba Beekeeper") the City of Winnipeg provided notice of mosquito control plans for 2011, and steps beekeepers could take to protect themselves. If you have bees in, and up to 24 km away from Winnipeg, you are invited to register to protect your bees. For information, please call 311.

Manitoba Agricultural Services Corporation (MASC) introduced Winter Bee Mortality Insurance for 2011-2012. Watch for this program if you want to be covered. Once announced, details will be on www.manitobabee.org web. The deductibility is 30% loss, and thus the insurance will cover you for the "disaster" type situations. With some commercial producers reporting losses of 90% in some yards this spring, the new program may be quite timely.

MBA has updated the Wildlife Damage Compensation Values for 2011, and these are being forwarded to MASC. The updated list will include provision for multi-pac wraps, as they are becoming more common. Typically this wrap will cover about 10 colonies. For anyone suffering bear damage, please contact the nearest MASC office for Compensation information.

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(from *)

The MBA is considering an EUR (Emergency Use Registration) request to use Apivar this fall.

Program: David Ostermann A picture presentation on Effective Spring Management.

Loonie Draw: Prizes were awarded to: Doug Beckingham (Cuban hat), Marty McIlwain (water bottle), Ken Fehler (Bee Maid honey bear), Chris Argiriou (Cuban honey) and Duane Versluis (Music CD). Thanks to everyone who entered and to those who donated the prizes.

Ron Rudiak, recorder – RRAA

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(Urban Beekeeping from Pg 1)

- The Backyard Beekeeper: An Absolute Beginner's Guide by Kim Flottum (2010)
- Beekeeping: A Practical Guide by Richard E. Bonney (1993)
- The Hive and the Honey Bee by L.L. Langstroth (1853)
- Biology of the Honey Bee by Mark L. Winston (1991)
- Honey Plants of North America by John H. Lovell (1926)

Beekeepers should stay informed of recommended changes in beekeeping practices, including the treatment of parasites and illness, threats to honeybee health, and government regulations. One way to do so is to become a member of a beekeeping association that holds regular (preferably monthly) meetings, such as the NYCBA. Another way is to subscribe to a beekeeping magazine like Bee Culture.

Colony Temperament and Behaviour

A colony's temperament is determined by its queen's characteristics, its health, environmental factors (e.g., weather), and proximate activities. Every effort should be made to maintain a docile and non-defensive colony. Guidance on selecting queens, maintaining hive health, and mitigating environmental impact follows.

Considerate Hive Management

Beekeepers should take into account that weather conditions influence bee behaviour and plan to work bees when conditions are favourable. Beekeepers should make sure that neighbours are not working or relaxing outdoors when they open hives and should perform hive manipulations as quickly as possible with minimum disturbance to the bees. Extended hive manipulations, particularly when removing honey, should be carefully planned to accommodate neighbours' activities. Smoke should be used when working bees. Hive entrances should be smoked before mowing or trimming in the hive area. Clippings and exhaust should be directed away from hive entrances. Consider using a manipulation cloth (to cover the top of the open hive) in extreme heat or to otherwise minimize hive disruption.

Hive Placement

Correct placement of hives is a very important consideration for responsible beekeeping in urban and suburban settings—perhaps the most important consideration in New York City. Successfully moving an established beehive, especially from a roof in New York City, can be very challenging (and sometimes impossible). Renters are especially encouraged to seriously consider the long-term potential of their situations. Ensure that your hive is in a location that can be accessed regularly, safely, and easily. Hives should be placed in a quiet area and not directly against a neighbouring property unless a solid fence or dense plant barrier of six feet or higher forms the property boundary. Hives should be kept as far away as possible from roads, sidewalks, and rights of way. Flight paths into the hive (generally ten feet in front of the hive entrance) should remain within the owner's lot, although barriers (e.g., fencing and tall shrubs) can sometimes be used to redirect the bees' flight pattern. For flat-roof placement, ensure that the hive can be made level; ensure that the roof below can support the weight of a hive full of honey with cinder blocks on top (and you); and attempt to reduce the impact of high winds. The NYCBA is not aware of successful roof-top placement of hives in New York City above the sixth-floor level; please let us know if you have been able to keep hives with success on higher
Continued on pg 6)

Day of Honey Bee Celebration

The Forks Market, in Winnipeg, will be the location of a special celebration again honouring our favorite pollinating insect—the Honey Bee. This celebration follows a similar inaugural event held last year, where members of Red River Apiarists Association hosted the promotional event on behalf of the Manitoba Beekeepers' Association.

Saturday 29 May 2011 is being touted as “The Day of the Honey Bee” in several cities, municipalities, and provinces across Canada. The purpose of the celebration is to publicly recognize the importance of the Honey Bee in our ecosystem and our food supply, and also the importance of pollination and honey production to the many beekeepers throughout the province.

The Red River Apiarists' Association, is planning a “Pollination and the Foods We Eat” promotion to be held at The Forks Market, Winnipeg. The site for the display is slated to be the South West end of the third aisle. This is just opposite the Human Bean coffee shop, and adjacent to the Fish and Chip shop on the corner. To honour the “Day of the Honey Bee”, their importance to the agricultural community, contribution to the provincial economy, environmental friendly impact, plus their contribution to our food supply, and our need to protect them, several events are scheduled.

Once again, producers plan to capitalize on the increasing concern the public has for the disappearance of bees. This provides an excellent opportunity for visitors to “talk to a beekeeper” to express their concern and then hear of steps being taken across our continent to determine the causes. This often leads to a better understanding that producers are taking care of their bees, as we are keenly aware of their importance.

The special event will take place from 9:00 a.m. on Saturday until closing time at the Forks at 6:00 p.m.

Organizers are seeking volunteers to help out at the display and/or assist with media contacts. Should anyone be able to spend an hour of two talking to visitors and help distribute information, please contact organizers Charles Polcyn at 284-7064, charles_polcyn@mail.com or Jim Campbell at 467-5246, jaycam@mts.net

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Discovery in Manitoba of the small hive beetle and alive 1st and 2nd star larvae in imported queens from Hawaii March 2011.

The small hive beetle (SHB) and 1st and 2nd star larvae were found on queens arrived on April 7, 2011 to Manitoba and Alberta from Hawaii. This is the first shipment from Hawaii to Manitoba and Alberta this year. Total number of queens shipped was 500 queens to Manitoba and 1000 queens to Alberta.

Manitoba updates:

- 475 queens were sold to a beekeeper and 25 queens were sold to another beekeeper.
- One of the beekeepers in Manitoba made the discovery of one live adult of SHB in one of the shipping boxes containing queen cages.

(continued on pg 8)



Editor's Note by Ken Rows

You might expect these days our bees would be laden with pollen with pussy willows being out for 2 1/2 weeks but pollen is very sparse picking up this past week. They are taking down the bee pro, pollen patties and the syrup.

Thought to ask what you think! In January-February I checked the weight of indoor colonies and if light felt the need to provide feed. Several years now I had to feed indoor colonies early so as not to up the moisture environment I put on crystal honey such as a kilo of harden creamed honey. This I thought would even encourage the utilization of any moisture present in early spring, as appose to adding syrup that would fill bee intestines. Like any athlete once you up the carbohydrates there is an energy boost and activity increases. My thinking: Bees are confined and moist feed will have a negative impact and I feel less so with crystal honey as what would be in the comb.

Interestingly this year I had a weak colony with high defecation (nosema) survive which I put on a strong colony. I am amazed at how much it built up in just the first brood cycle. Ted's give'm a chance works.

The buzz for this May is again establishing good strong colonies, producing new queens and acknowledging the Honey Bee May 29th. Do your part: visit the Winnipeg Forks for the Bee Day, put a bee sign in your car window.

Note MBA Honey Show will be Sept 30th—Oct 2.

Note that **2011 is a white year for making queens.**

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- a 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

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 2010 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

11. Wanted: A honey sump or clarifier. Contact **Jonathan Hofer** (204) 981-6562

12. To Swap: 75 ft X 3 ft #8 bottom board screen for a nuc.: Contact Janice Lupinetti 895-9667

10. For Sale: 60 drawn honey supers; 30 brood boxes; 30 shallow supers and 1 18 frame extractor in excellent condition: contact **David Gulakow 878-3464** Lorette.

(Urban Beekeeping from pg 4)

floors. Beekeepers are encouraged to post signs to alert neighbours and passers by to the presence of their hives; generally it is best to place such signs so that they are only in view when the public would otherwise be able to view the hives themselves.

Hive Densities in an Urban Setting

Beekeepers are advised to closely observe their apiary locations to determine the carrying capacity of the area—both the immediate area and roughly three miles in all directions—and to limit the number of hives accordingly. Signs of over-saturation in an area include slow colony growth, poor honey production, and excessively defensive behaviour.

Provision of Water

Article 161 of the New York City Health Code, section 161.01 (b)(12), requires that beekeepers provide “a constant and adequate water source.” Bees use large amounts of water to control temperature and humidity within the hive. They prefer a sunny place with surface moisture—such as gravel / a sponge set in a dog water bowl or the edge of a birdbath—where they will not drown. The water should be kept fresh and clean so as not to become a breeding ground for mosquitoes. Beekeepers should establish such water sources near the apiary to encourage bees to forage for moisture near the hive. In hot weather, honeybees use large amounts of water to control temperature and humidity within the hive. It is particularly important in an urban environment like New York City to provide a source of fresh and consistent water for the honeybees, to prevent them from seeking water from sources such as air conditioners or other such locations where the honeybee would be perceived as a nuisance.

Swarming

Swarming is natural honeybee behaviour, but it should be prevented or minimized (especially in urban settings). Two primary causes of swarming are congestion and poor ventilation in the hive. To avoid these conditions, beekeepers should consider:

- Appropriately timed addition of supers for brood rearing and honey storage
- Use of screened bottom board
- Brood chamber manipulation and/or colony division
- Replacement of old or failing queens

These and other swarm management practices are explained in detail in most good beekeeping textbooks.

When a swarm occurs, efforts should be made to collect the swarm. Swarms captured from areas of interstate transportation or heavily populated areas or other locations where the origin of the bees may be questionable should be monitored frequently for abnormal defensiveness. Recommendations for dealing with a defensive colony are covered in the final (Africanized Honeybee) section of this document.

Queens

Queens should only be obtained from the most reliable sources. Please check with the NYCBA for suggestions on obtaining queens. Local sources, where available, are preferred to reduce the chances of introducing Africanized honeybees and to ensure that the queen is well suited to the climate. Beekeepers

should ensure that their queens are young and vigorous layers. A queen of less than two years old is recommended. Nevertheless, each beekeeper must evaluate their queens on a regular basis for performance and hive gentleness. Desirable characteristics for a queen include:

- gentle disposition
- brood viability
- low swarming instinct
- colony build up
- disease and pest resistance
- pollen hoarding

Only queens of European origin should be used. The NYCBA recommends that Italian or Minnesota Hygienic queens be used in New York City, although other European races of *Apis mellifera* include Buckfast, Carniolan, Caucasian, Cordovan, Russian, and Starline. Any colony exhibiting unusually defensive behaviour or an excessive swarming tendency should be requeened as soon as possible.

Robbing Behaviour

When nectar is scarce, honeybees may rob from other hives. When they do, they tend to appear more defensive. Under such conditions, beekeepers should work hives for only short periods of time and only if really necessary. Exposing honey can encourage robbing. (For this reason, the NYCBA does not recommend the use of hive-front Boardman feeders except for watering in the summer months.) All honey and syrup spills should be cleaned up immediately. Areas used for honey extraction should be bee proofed to prevent robbing situations.

Disease Control

There are a number of honeybee diseases and pests for beekeepers to be concerned with. It is critical that beekeepers be educated to recognize and respond to disease. Some diseases, like American Foulbrood, are extremely contagious. Beekeepers should be extremely cautious about mixing hive equipment and purchasing used equipment for this reason. It is incumbent on beekeepers to manage all disease and pests, including parasitic mites, to ensure colony health and honey quality. Beekeepers should also report outbreaks of bee disease and pests in accordance with Article 15 of the NYS Agriculture and Markets Law, available at <http://www.agmkt.state.ny.us/TheDepartment.html>.

Record keeping

Good record keeping should be a priority for all beekeepers. A written record of colony manipulation and observation should be maintained for each hive. Your colony management log should include a catalogue of the equipment used, a record of inspections and findings therein, and a history of actions (e.g., adding / removing honey supers), and any relevant observations regarding the hive.

AFRICANIZED HONEYBEE

The Africanized honeybee (“AHB”) was introduced to Brazil in 1957 and accidentally escaped from confinement colonies. While maintaining its genetic identity, this race of bee expanded its range in South and Central America and arrived in the United States around 1990. Since that time, AHB have colonized Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, California, Nevada and Utah, Oklahoma, Louisiana, Arkansas, Alabama, and Florida. Due to defensive behaviours and difficulties managing AHB using European honeybee beekeeping methods, the AHB population has disrupted agriculture, beekeeping, tourism, recreation, and public life in general as it has spread. It is not yet known whether ABH will be able to establish in cooler climates. That said, northern states rely on southern states, particularly Georgia and Florida, as a source of package colonies and queens, and (Urban Beekeeping continued on pg 7)

The 2011 Census of Agriculture and Beekeepers

by Erik Dorff, *Census of Agriculture*

Bees have long been known for the sweet honey that they produce, but as they struggle against parasites and other challenges that have been decimating their numbers, people have started to pay attention to the important role the insects play in crop pollination.

On May 10, 2011, farm operators — including beekeepers — will be asked to update Canada's definitive national agricultural profile by completing the 2011 Census of Agriculture questionnaire.

For those in the beekeeping sector — whether for honey or for pollination — completing their census forms is now more important than ever before because of increasing competitive challenges, environmental stresses and pest infestations.

The Census of Agriculture will provide farmers, their organizations, and everyone interested in the future of Canadian farming with solid information to quantify the agricultural situation and help make informed decisions.

Though the direct questions about bees are only a small portion of the census questionnaire, the critical role beekeepers play in providing pollination services for a number of agricultural commodities makes their participation particularly important.

Over half a million colonies of honeybees were reported on the 2006 Census of Agriculture. Although all provinces reported honeybees, more than seven out of every 10 colonies (71.5%) were located in the Prairie provinces and most were found in Alberta, the province with the largest acreage of forage seed in Canada.

The 2006 Census featured an improved and enlarged section on beekeeping that captured information on both honey bees and other bees used exclusively for pollination — principally leaf-cutter bees. For 2011 this added depth continues to be reflected in the questionnaire.

Bees used exclusively for pollination are found almost entirely in the three Prairie Provinces, with 96.8% of the 399,968 gallons of other pollinating bees reported. Saskatchewan has over half (55.6%) of the leaf-cutter bees in Canada.

The beekeeping sector faces a number of pressing issues. Mite infestations in honeybee populations and the difficulties they cause are of particular concern. The mites are one factor believed to be contributing to elevated overwintering losses on Canadian commercial beekeeping operations.

Information with which to make informed decisions is an

important tool for producers, their agencies and the government in trying to stay competitive in an increasingly uncertain world. The ability to understand where we are now — and indeed where we have come from — allows better informed approaches to face tomorrow's challenges. Participation by producers in the 2011 Census of Agriculture will also allow them to give a local as well as national voice to their present situation, informing Canadians of the crucial role the diverse agricultural sector plays in shaping our national picture.

The Census of Agriculture, the backbone of Canada's agricultural statistics program, identifies trends and reflects issues, opportunities and challenges within the agricultural community. Questions cover topics such as land use, crops, livestock, agricultural labour, machinery and equipment, farm finances and land management practices. The depth of coverage allows the census to be the definitive source of information on the agricultural sector, giving voice to farmers' situations.

On May 10, 2011, add your voice to those of Canada's beekeepers by counting yourself in on the Census of Agriculture. Fill out your questionnaire on paper and mail it back in the prepaid envelope or take advantage of the internet application which automatically adds totals and skips you through the parts of the questionnaire that you indicate don't apply to your operation.

For more information on the 2011 Census of Agriculture visit the website at <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/ca-ra2011/index-eng.htm> or contact Erik Dorff by telephone at 613-951-2818 or by e-mail at erik.dorff@statcan.gc.ca

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(Urban Beekeeping from pg 6)

commercial beekeepers routinely transport colonies to over-winter in southern states.

Management to Avoid AHB Introduction and Establishment

The queen management techniques laid out in the General Best Practices section of this manual are relevant to the discussion of AHB avoidance practices. The techniques are intended for maintenance of European stock and include:

- Bi-annual requeening with certified European stock purchased from reliable sources (local when possible)
- Requeening only with marked queens
- Maintaining requeening records and purchase documentation
- Monitoring the behaviour of the bees and replacing the queen immediately if the hive becomes difficult to manage

Any beekeeper who witnesses unusually defensive behaviour should take the following steps:

1. Contact the NYCBA
2. Requeen immediately with certified European stock
3. Contact the State Bee Inspector
4. Monitor requeened hive for continued defensiveness

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**City of Winnipeg – Public Works Department
Insect Control Branch**

**PUBLIC NOTICE
INSECTICIDE USE PROGRAM FOR 2011**

The City of Winnipeg's Insect Control Branch is involved in the control of nuisance and disease carrying mosquitoes in the City of Winnipeg and up to 24 km beyond.

Some of the control methodologies that are employed will involve the use of control products including Chlorpyrifos®, Diflubenzuron®, Methoprene®, Permethrin®, Pyrocyde®, and Malathion®. However, to protect bees from potential toxic effects of these control products, a 300 metre pesticide free radius will be provided around all registered honeybee and leaf-cutter bee colonies. Beekeepers are encouraged to participate in this program by advising the Insect Control Branch of bee locations.

The only allowable exception to this spray policy will involve the use of *Bacillus thuringiensis* var. *israelensis* (Bti), which is considered non-toxic to bees.

For further information, please **call 311 or write to the Insect Control Branch, 3 Grey St., Winnipeg, MB, R2L 1V2**. An appointment can be arranged with Insect Control staff to properly map beehive locations, ensuring appropriate buffer zones around your colonies.

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(Hive beetle from pg 4)

- The SHB was brought to the Provincial Apiculturist (PA) office where it was identified as the SHB. However, the beetle was dead by the time it was transported to the PA's office.
- Dr. Amy Snow (CFIA) was notified of the discovery this Morning (April 8th).
- Inspections of queen cages for both beekeepers resulted in finding 12 SHB larvae (1st and 2nd instars) in the boxes and on some of the queen cages.
- The queen cages were stored in containers with a Vaseline barrier on the sides of the container and covered with window screening till further notification/action.
- Twenty-two queen cages have been introduced to hives prior to inspection.

Alberta updates:

- 1000 queens were imported to Alberta.
- 100 queens were sold to 2 BC beekeepers 950 were sold to 7 Alberta beekeepers who keep bees in AB and BC.
- After Rheal reported finding SHB and larvae in queens imported from Hawaii, all beekeepers who bought queens were contacted to inform them of this developing situation.
- Beekeepers inspected cages and boxes. One beekeeper in Alberta reported finding emerged SHB lar-

vae in between the wax paper and candy. Another beekeeper reported newly emerged larvae in the box.

- Beekeepers were advised to remove queens from shipping cages and use new ones before introduction to bee colonies. All shipping materials should be incinerated.
- One beekeeper already placed queen cages in a queen bank colony as soon as he got the queens. Queen bank will be inspected and the status of SHB will be followed up.

CFIA notification:

- Dr. Amy Snow (CFIA) was notified of the discovery of the SHB in Manitoba on April 8th morning and in Alberta on April 11th.
- Provincial Apiculturists (PAs) and CAPA Import Committee Chair were notified by CFIA on April 8th afternoon.
- On April 11, 2011, queens quarantined in Manitoba were transferred to new cages for use after consultation with CFIA and CAPA import committee chair.
- CFIA reported the incident to APHIS. CFIA will develop recommendations with stakeholders to deliver to APHIS to mitigate this problem. APHIS is taking this situation very seriously and following up on their end to ensure that Canada's import requirements are being met.
- Investigation on this matter showed there was a breach on handling shipping materials to Canada. These materials were exposed to SHBs and they laid eggs in the shipping boxes/cages.
- On April 11, 2011 2 pm (EST) a conference call was held by CFIA and Provincial Apiculturists to study this situation and develop action plans for future shipments.

Action plan:

After a careful study to this situation, PA's and CFIA decided to take the following action:

1. Officially inform APHIS about this breach of inspection and handling materials for shipping queens to Canada.
2. Inspection of queen exporters from Hawaii to insure that they understand the conditions for shipping queens to Canada and reduce the risks for shipping SHB and larval stages to Canada.
3. Amending current conditions to be explicit and include the following "All materials for shipping must be prepared and stored in the small hive beetle free inspected location (s) on the apiary premises until use. If any shipping materials (including but not limited to shipping boxes and queen cages) are prepared in advance of the shipment date, they must be stored for a minimum of 72 hours prior to shipment to Canada in a freezer at 0F (-18°C) located in the inspected location(s)."
This change will need to be approved by USDA APHIS and incorporated into the import permits and export certificates. This can take some time, as we need to account for documents that are already in use.
4. CFIA will provide a list of queen importers to PAs. Each PA will get his/her list and contact queen importers. A random sample of imported queens must be inspected from each shipment to ensure that queens are free from SHBs before shipping to end users.
5. Develop a written management plan to be handed to queen buyers describing inspection and handling imported queens to further reduce risks of introducing the SHB to bee colonies in their operations.

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**Beekeepers Field Day and Summer Picnic
Wednesday June 22, 2011, U of M Apiary
site, Winnipeg**

Date: On Wednesday 22 June 2011, Manitoba Beekeepers' Association together with the Red River Apiarists' Association invites all interested beekeepers to come out for an afternoon of food, information, and fun.

Lunch Time/Cost: Catered Picnic Lunch being served at 1:00 p.m.. Food Cost \$10.00 each. Bring a Lawn Chair, and perhaps a sun cap too! Events to begin after lunch.

Location: Meet at University of Manitoba Apiary site, at the South-East corner of the campus, near the end of Freedman Drive. To get to the site, drive to the campus, then onto University Crescent, going South. Near the end of the Crescent, turn "Left" onto Freedman, then travel East. The apiary is on the right side of Freedman, in a chain link fenced area just before the Plant Science Research buildings.



Events: Visit one of the longest operating Apiary sites in Manitoba. Learn about the recent Varroa Control Product Screening Trials, and possibly take in an Integrated Pest Management Workshop. (Workshop details not yet finalized)

Q&A Session: Discussion on current beekeeping activities and events, including updates on varroa treatment options and non-food grade equipment replacement program.

Please arrange your own transportation to and from the tour site.

For more information, call Jim Campbell at (204) 467-5246, or Rhéal Larfenière at (204) 945-4825.

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Farmer to Farmer workshop

Wednesday, May 4. It will be from 1-4 in Classroom D in the Ag Extension Centre in Brandon. The topic for the workshop will be "The 3 R's of Stress Management – Recognition, Resilience & Resources" and it is worth 3 MTC Credits

Skills Development

Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives
1129 Queens Avenue
Brandon MB R7A 1L9
204-726-6381 phone

31 March 2011

Formic acid 65% has been approved by PMRA as it meets the interim measure provisions under DIR2010-03, Reassessment of Note to the Canadian Association of Pest Control Officials C94-05 Proposed Scheduling of 65% Formic Acid the detection and control of Honey Bee Mites. Sale and use of 65 % Formic Acid according to the PMRA approved label is permitted in Canada. This remains in effect until the full review of sub. No. 2011-0943 by the PMRA is completed.

Please note that a change has been made to the label and that the new label supersedes the version of March 15 2011.

Marion Law Chief Registrar
Pest Management Regulatory Agency
Health Canada

**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.**