

# Red River Apiarists' Association

## *The Bee Cause*

55 Years



Volume 15, Issue 3

March, 2018

### Urban Beekeeping in the City of Winnipeg

In February 2016, the City of Winnipeg amended the Downtown Zoning By-law to allow properly managed apiaries in part of its downtown area. Colonies started appearing on downtown rooftops, most notably from Chris & Lindsay from Bee Project who have been advocating Urban beekeeping for years.

While the 2016 amendment was groundbreaking, Downtown rooftop apiaries are anything but convenient. Obtaining permission, arranging for roof access every visit with building staff, and the building owner having the proper insurance were all challenging. On top of that, the extra time and effort to haul equipment up to those locations did not bring any added appeal to the endeavor. Those who did capitalize on the opportunity were a dedicated and passionate group but admittedly a small one.

In October 2017, the City of Winnipeg amended its city-wide zoning to expand accessory beekeeping to all areas. With the potential to keep bees conveniently on your own property, public interest was greatly refreshed. The U of M Beekeeping for the Hobbyist course continued to rise in its popularity, and our own RRAA membership found itself increasing as well. This is excellent to see on both accounts because a firm grasp on the theory of beekeeping is essential for the success of the apiarist.

#### So how does one get started in Urban beekeeping?

Well, lets start out with a couple of "Nots"

#### ***Next meeting:***

**March 13th, 2018**

***Elmwood Legion***

***920 Nairn ave. Wpg, Mb***

***Novice Group meets  
at 7:00 pm***

***Main Meeting:  
starts at 7:30 pm***

#### **Speaker:**

**Veterinarian  
Jennifer Demare**

**"Why Bees Need  
Vets Too!"**

**Inside This Issue:**

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**-Do Not** rush out and purchase all the equipment that books, magazines & the internet told you that you need.

**-Do Not** rush out and place orders for bees from wherever you can find in a panic because you feel you may miss the boat for 2018

**Do Not** rush anything. You have some time and options, and taking that time to plan out your first season's goals is important.

**Step 1# Education:**

Beekeeping for the Hobbyist is an excellent primer and is recommended by The City of Winnipeg, and the RRAA . The course runs from January to March one evening a week at the University of Manitoba. Info is here: <http://umanitoba.ca/faculties/afs/dept/entomology/Beekeeping.html>

.....continued on page 3

## 2018 Execut

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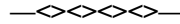
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## *President's Comments*



Wow! What an excellent turnout on our last meeting! True, the RRAA always gets a seasonal response from the U of M beekeeping course, but the number of new faces this year is an exciting turn of events.

It is also an opportunity. Every new beekeeper faces the challenges and frustrations of a sometimes unforgiving learning curve. The difference between successes and failure can be as simple as knowing who you can reach out to with your questions. Having an answer, or a solution, or a connection can prevent issues and get a novice back on the right track.

Providing lessons, lectures, and speakers is not all the RRAA can provide to the novice beekeeping community. More of a tangible impact can be had with mentoring. Putting forth your name to assist an individual or a small group makes a huge difference to those aspiring, or first/second year apiarists. This doesn't require you to dedicate a lot of time and resources. Simply being available for the odd phone call or email can really help the novice along. We were all there once, and paying it forward makes the beekeeping community stronger.

So I'm putting out the call for experienced beekeepers to step up and "adopt" one to three of our less experienced members to advise this season. Eventually, the ones you coach can become the ones who share their knowledge and experience, and so on, and so on. Email me at [honeyb@mymts](mailto:honeyb@mymts) or call 204-612-2337 to join us in our mentoring pilot program & let's make a difference!

Last meeting we enjoyed a presentation from Tom Nolan from NOD on Mite Away Quick Strips. This is the first time I recall as an RRAA member of having a product representative come visit us. Information on new products, especially ones for mite control is valuable, but it should be pointed out that we invited Tom solely to inform our members of available options on the market not to endorse, promote, or advertise any said product.

The same goes for apiaries or members that sell equipment or queens or Nucs. When we direct members to local breeders of bees, it is not the purpose to benefit that source but to ensure the member can choose from all available options. Factored into this are the options that will provide the greatest chance of success, and that tax the RRAA less in mentoring down the road, but not the financial benefit of any individual or supplier.

We are here to educate, not to peddle wares.

See you on the 13th of March!

- J.R.

We Are Under Construction!  
[www.beekeepingmanitoba.com](http://www.beekeepingmanitoba.com)

**Newsletter Editor: John R. Badiuk**

**Email: [honeyb@mymts.net](mailto:honeyb@mymts.net)**

Urban Beekeeping...continued from page 1

(...education)

— Did you miss the enrollment deadline? Make a point of when enrollment starts and sign up early for next year as it fills up fast. Consider delaying your start until next year, instead assisting an established beekeeper on a volunteer basis to get some practical experience.

— Familiarize yourself with the City of Winnipeg guidelines and ensure your ability to comply

<http://www.winnipeg.ca/ppd/planning/beekeeping/> and the Manitoba Bee Act:

<http://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ccsm/b015e.php>

— Join a Beekeeping club suited for beginners such as the RRAA, or the Brandon beekeepers association. Become active in it, as this is where you can connect with mentors, sources of used equipment, local Nucs and queens, and beekeepers willing to answer questions and help solve problems down the road.

— Read and study! A recommended reading list is on page 11 of this newsletter. Articles and YouTube videos abound, BUT keep in mind that information from any source is not gospel, and three beekeepers typically have five opinions on any given topic. Practices will vary depending on climate and geography. The goal here is to learn basic information, terminology, and how best to ask questions on various methods.

## **Step #2: Permissions**

— If you are keeping bees in Manitoba, you must register with the province. A link to the

<http://www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture/permits-and-licences/pubs/app-beekeeperregistration.pdf>

— Any new beekeeping operation in the City of Winnipeg must be approved. The application is initiated at the Zoning and Permits office. Applications must include written authorization from the landowner (per Status of Title), should include beekeeper's provincial registration number (if available) & must include a site plan detailing the proposed set up.

## **Here is a walkthrough as experienced by our secretary Monica Wiebe:**

1) Go to the Permits office at Unit 31 – 30 Fort Street, Winnipeg, MB, and complete a Development Permit Application (Map: [winnipeg.ca/ppd/Documents/Contact/Contact-Customer-Parking-Map.pdf](http://winnipeg.ca/ppd/Documents/Contact/Contact-Customer-Parking-Map.pdf))

2) Bring with you: A Status of Title from the Personal Property Registry which is located at 276 Portage Ave. (204) 945-3123. This costs about \$25.00.

I also provided my provincial beekeeper number from Manitoba Agriculture

3) The last step was to pay \$25.60 for my permit. It was mailed to me. You can have two colonies and a nucleus if you have 6000 sq. feet or less and four colonies and one nucleus if the zoning lot is greater than 6000 sq. ft.

## **Step#3: Acquisitions**

Now, procuring the necessary tools, equipment, and bees comes into play. The RRAA **strongly** suggests starting with Manitoba bred bees and queens. Sources for these and equipment can be found in this newsletters **classifieds on pg 7**, but also in the classifieds of **The MBA newsletter** :

<http://manitobabee.org/hive/category/classifieds/>

New Equipment Nucs and queens are sold at **Bee Supply, 625 Roseberry Street ph: 204-786-8977** and the community bulletin board there is a great tool for buyers and sellers in the community.

**Buyer Beware:** Used equipment comes with the risk of disease, and not all bee breeders are equal. Due diligence, research on reputation, and quality is YOUR responsibility. Ask a few experienced beekeepers for advice in this regard to help in your decisions. -J.R.

## USDA DELAYS RELEASE OF HONEY ADULTERATION REPORT:

Dilution of honey has been an acute problem as far back as the fourth century. Even though some of the biggest food fraud cases that federal prosecutors have successfully litigated relate to honey, the problems persist. The National Honey Board, whose members are appointed by the Agriculture secretary, asked an expert to look into the issue: Michael T. Roberts, the executive director of the Resnick Program for Food Law and Policy at UCLA.

The report, "Recommended Strategies to Address Economic Adulteration in Honey," has been anticipated ever since mentioned at the Honey Integrity Task Force meeting in Salt Lake City on May 19. The report was submitted on June 30th to the U.S. National Honey Board. *To date, it has not yet been published.* The USDA has essentially put off its publication.

Obtained copies of the report state that Roberts recommends that the industry embrace Nuclear Magnetic Resonance testing as the best way to detect adulteration. He also encouraged the U.S. to collaborate with China and the European Union on fighting problems. Even though the report is generally quite measured in its criticisms, Roberts said that he was told that the USDA wants to make modifications.

*"I'm very comfortable with my report. I was asked to call it like I saw it," said Roberts. "I have not yet seen the modifications and I don't have any sense as to a timeline." He added that he was "told that USDA legal is involved."*

Eric Silva, federal policy counsel for the American Honey Producers Association, also confirmed that AMS was reviewing it. *"We have not been told whether it will be revised. If revised, we are unclear what that process looks like as well," Silva said. A USDA spokesperson said in an email that AMS and the National Honey Board were providing "technical corrections" to the draft report. The USDA still has not released the report as of the printing of this article.*

Source: [www.politico.com/newsletters/morning-agriculture/2018/01/17/usda-delays-honeyadulteration-report-075286](http://www.politico.com/newsletters/morning-agriculture/2018/01/17/usda-delays-honeyadulteration-report-075286)

## Sourcing Local Queens: A breeders perspective.

By Waldemar Damert

Living with a long harsh winter environment & occasionally cold springs, it is difficult to raise early queens. Realistically queens are not available until the beginning / middle of June. A good amount of drones are needed in the colonies and to raise and feed quality drones an adequate pollen supply is required. The drone needs to be fully mature to properly mate, and that takes 40 days from the day the egg was laid.

**Queens are not a "shelf item".** If you need queens for your spring & summer splits or for re-queening, it is wise to place your order early for availability and planning purposes. If the breeder knows how many and when you need them, with a deposit in hand *he can time them more accurately to your target date.* Queens need the hive environment and should not be caged for a long time as risk of failure & decreased performance increases and the acceptance rate goes down. Long distance and time consuming shipping is equally as bad. If you order queens outside of your area pick them up and work them into your hives as soon as possible as delays will increase mortality.

**Hours make a difference, Days even more so.**

### Five Guiding Points in Selecting your Local Queen Breeder:

- 1) The breeder should be experienced in the breeding process.
- 2) The breeders operation should be disease free, a low mite count, clean equipment, and has been inspected by the provincial authorities.
- 3) The stock should be selected for hardiness in wintering, honey production, disease resistance & also gentleness.
- 4) The breeders selection should be ongoing and long standing for no less than five years in order to show consistency and success. At least 50 colonies are required to have viable stock to select from.
- 5) Good efforts should be put into finding new queen lines to avoid inbreeding. ( Co-operating with other breeders and beekeepers)

Any queen should be used as quickly as possible after being marked and caged, so making of splits should be timed with the queens caging. Good communication with the breeder is vital. The acceptance rate is higher, and the queens will be healthier and better attended by the nurse bees. Queens that are raised on order, with proper timing will provide a good buildup of local adopted stock in your yards.

**REMINDER! PLEASE COMPLETE AND TURN  
IN YOUR HONEY COMPETITION SURVEY  
( PG:12) AT OUR NEXT MEETING, MARCH 13**

VOLUME 15, ISSUE 3

THE BEE CAUSE

June queens with good strong splits will produce surplus honey if you have drawn comb to expand the split.

Work with your breeder and coordinate your planning to get every advantage of vitality into your colonies. -*W.D*

**RRAA Meeting Minutes for Feb 13th 2018** - Recorded by Monica Wiebe \*\*Abridged due to length by John Russell\*\*

The evening began at 7:00 pm with a Q & A session for new beekeepers. John Russell presiding.

The regular meeting started just after 7:30

John Russell opened the meeting by welcoming all the new attendees. He asked about receiving the newsletter and if there were any changes to the minutes. A Member corrected two grammatical errors in the newsletter. A call was made for the January minutes to be approved. Moved by Chris Argiriou, seconded by Waldemar Damert, Carried  
Financial report was unavailable. Members were encouraged to submit their 2018 annual dues.

Two speakers were lined up for the evening. Tom Nolan product rep: NOD Apiary Products

Waldemar Damert: Seasonal Rhythm of a Hive

First presenter: NOD Apiary Products

Tom is an Urban beekeeper in Toronto with 11 hives. He started off wanting to bee keep using natural treatments, but Varroa killed his hives. So, he started working for NOD Apiary Products Ltd., a company that now sells Formic acid Varroa mite treatment in 22 countries. They sell Mite Away Quick Strips, Bee Cozy winter wraps, and Formic Pro in US. Tom presented a detailed overview of his company and its products, including a visual slideshow detailing the lifecycle of the varroa mite and detailed specifics on how NOD products are to be applied.

Honey Show Committee Report: Spring and Fall at the Forks as education for the public. Fall Honey is contest time. The committee may change a few rules. Victor Dyck shared about the survey – to find out what might get people involved in the honey show. Return completed forms to committee, Armand St. Hilaire, Victor Dyck, Tim Kennedy and Guy Brisco. Rules on websites.

Marg Smith gave a report from the MBA: Marg reminded members of the workshops at the MBA / AGM. Details were provided on dates, times, and fees. Marg announced two other topics being explored by the MBA Executive: 1) Comparing notes with tech transfers across the country like provincial Apiarist. 2) Adulterated honey coming into Canada. Nuclear resonance technology is being created/used in BC to trace honey by pollen content back to source. This has been done successfully in Europe and has reduced contaminated honey coming onto the market. Marg reported that she and her husband have participated in the National Honeybee Research survey for several years now. The results of her sample analysis arrived from the national lab at the same time as Rheal's Provincial recommendations for treatment applications for 2018. Because she had found some traces of Nosema and Varroa mite and viruses in the report, she went to her copy of HoneyBee Diseases and Pests and highlighted all those mentioned. Afterwards, she read through all those parts very thoroughly, and consulted with Rheal about possible prevention and treatments. A copy of the book can be bought at Bee Outfitters and is well worth rereading each year, before the Spring work gets underway.

<> Break for Coffee <>

Second presenter: Seasonal Rhythm of a Hive – Waldemar Darmert - introduced by Tim Kennedy

40 years of history has let Waldemar to map out the development of bee development to match and maximize production at the time of peak nectar flow in his area. His presentation gave an overview of his opinions and methods on how manage bees to have a peak population at the right time. Abridged points covered were : If they peak too early they swarm. In Manitoba we have hybrid bees including Italian and Carniolian honey bee plus



others, and each variety has its own habits. You need to know yours. When to do initial spring checks, what the temperature of your colony indicates, queen laying and the relationship to the equinox (production plateaus), and other crucial dates in the beekeeping calendar. Spring feeding routines and dates, fall feeding routines and dates and other activities that affect population . More comprehensive notes on the presentations are available upon request.

## Editorial Notes

### **Article source and reference links:**

#### **Urban Beekeeping:**

<http://umanitoba.ca/faculties/afs/dept/entomology/> Beekeeping

<http://www.winnipeg.ca/ppd/planning/beekeeping/>

<http://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ccsm/b015e.php>

<http://www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture/permits-and-licences/pubs/app-beekeeperregistration.pdf>

**USDA Delayed Honey Report:**

[www.politico.com/newsletters/morningagriculture/2018/01/17/usda-delays-honeyadulteration-report-075286](http://www.politico.com/newsletters/morningagriculture/2018/01/17/usda-delays-honeyadulteration-report-075286)

#### **Unabridged Meeting Minutes:**

Email : [honeyb@mymts.net](mailto:honeyb@mymts.net) Please put Unabridged Meeting Minutes & Month in subject line. **EU Report Analysis / Neo-Nics**

[www.theguardian.com/environment/2018/feb/28/total-ban-on-bee-harming-pesticides-likely-after-major-new-eu-analysis](http://www.theguardian.com/environment/2018/feb/28/total-ban-on-bee-harming-pesticides-likely-after-major-new-eu-analysis)

The RRAA , the Bee Cause, for you and through you:

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 without the authors written & expressed consent. They are those of their originator and not of the Red River Apiarists' Association.

Deadline for any submission to this newsletter is the second Sunday preceding the membership meeting to allow for publishing and mailing delays. The legal obligation to allow membership to review last meetings' minutes for errors or omissions before next meeting. Regular membership meetings are normally scheduled 7:30 on the second Tuesday of every month at the Elmwood Legion 920 Nairn Avenue in Winnipeg excepts months 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.

### **National Bee Diagnostic Centre Public Notice!**

NBDC will not be receiving samples for processing between February 1 and March 31 as we adjust to shifts in capacity, accommodate the ongoing construction, and prepare for the opening of our new laboratory.

## **Photography Corner**

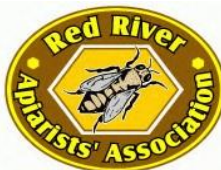
Candles for Hope is a profit giving company  
that supports:

**Mercy in Action in the Philippines**  
([www.mercyinaction.com/philippines-clinic](http://www.mercyinaction.com/philippines-clinic) )

&

**Crisis Pregnancy Centre in Winnipeg**  
([www.pregnancy.ca](http://www.pregnancy.ca))

**Candles for hope is soliciting the donation of  
raw beeswax or cappings . If you have any to  
spare to a good cause please contact: Phone**



#: 204-667-9932 or  
candlesforhope@live.com

For more program information:  
www.candlesforhope.ca

Willow Pollen

Photo  
Credit: Jim Campbell

R.R.A.A.

Classified

**Queen Rearing Workshop.**

For beekeepers that are interested in learning how to

raise their own Queen bees.

I am offering an advanced hands-on Queen rearing

workshop for

experienced beekeepers.

Weather permitting, the workshop will be held in the



For

month of May and June 2018

Inner covers @ \$ 12.00 each



Sale:

The

workshop will be held on two Saturdays at my home  
Contact: Ted Scheuneman 204-338-6066 (West St. Paul)

**For Sale:**

**Nucs!** 2018 queen, with one frame of feed.  
Either 3 Frame & 4 Frame of brood available.  
Manitoba Stock, great wintering/honey production Please call or email for further info and pricing.

- Custom honey sump with 3 Stnls steel screens \$650

- Summer Lids approx. 200 \$5 ea.
  - New Frames half assembled & half unassembled approx. 400 (unwaxed) \$2.10 ea.
  - (23) 2-way pallet board system \$14 ea.
  - (63) 4-way pallet board system \$28 ea.
- bee-yard near Beausejour MB.

Limited amount of places are available.  
Please pre-register if interested.  
A deposit will be required.

- 30 drone frames \$1 ea.

Contact: Justin at 204-381-9038  
jandjhoneyfarms@gmail.com

**Bees For Sale    Local Manitoba Stock,**

Taking early orders for 2018

4 Frame Nucs, Splits and Spring and Summer Queens.

**Support offered ( Via Phone and E-mail )  
to Customers who are New Beekeepers**

**Wooden supplies:**

Suppers, bottom-boards and inner covers on pre-order till March 15.

**Wax Foundation**

molded from clean capping wax.

Contact : Waldemar at text ph. 204-266-2276 or e-mail wdamert@yahoo.ca. (Beausejour Mb.)

**Classified Advertisements are FREE  
for RRAA members in good  
standing.**

**Fees: \$120.00 for the two days of classes.**

**Discounted fee for RRAA members \$110.**

**RRAA Members may be eligible for and  
additional \$10.00 bursary upon completion.**

**Drinks and lunches will be provided / bring your own  
lawn chair.**

**Contact: Waldemar Damert:  
Cell: 204-266-2276  
Email: wdamert@yahoo.ca**

**Non member rates as low as \$10.00 per issue**

This is a 2017 bred queen. Note the Yellow dot.

2018 Bred queens will be marked with a Red dot.

Know the age of the queens you are purchasing!

**Abby Road Distribution**

25 years of supplying the Beekeeping Industry. We carry a wide range of fasteners, tooling, shipping supplies and packaging materials suited for your industry: staples, nails, bulk screws, coil nails, strip nails, plastic & steel strapping stretch wrap & tapes service on most makes of stapling and nailing equipment

1075 Keewatin Street, Winnipeg, MB, R2X 2Z3

ph.: 204-694-6800

Email info@abbeyroaddistribution.com

**R.R.A.A. Classifieds**

....cont.

**Manitoba Beekeepers' Assoc. (MBA) Report  
by Margaret Smith**

**ASSEMBLED FRAMES**

**Selling 9 1/8 assembled frames for Honey production. All joints are glued and stapled. We are using permadent white plastic foundation. Comes wrapped in bundles of ten. 100 or less \$3 plus gst per frame. 200 and more \$2.80 plus gst per frame. Contact Mark Waldner. 204-771-0672.**



This is a notice to beekeepers who would like to be listed on the "Manitoba Bees for Sale" webpage, hosted on the MBA website: <http://manitobabee.org/hive/1977/20118-manitobabees-for-sale/>

Please email [Rheal.Lafreniere@gov.mb.ca](mailto:Rheal.Lafreniere@gov.mb.ca) with the following information:

Name > contact ph#(s)> Town> Nucs, Singles or Doubles> When they will be available> Price (optional)

For Example: ► Beekeeper X > 555-5555> Winnipeg> 4-frame Nucs > May 15

Please note that only beekeepers with no restrictions for selling bees will be posted on the list. Any beekeeper with a history of AFB within the last three inspection years or beekeepers with moving bees or equipment restrictions due to resistant American Foulbrood disease (rAFB) or small hive beetle (SHB) will not be added to this list. The MBA may also put some posting qualifiers.

**Nucs for Sale: 5**

**frame 4 frame and 3 frame.**

Can be purchased with last years marked queens.

5 frame \$180, 4 frame \$150 and 3 frame \$120, single hives may be available

Contact: Dennis Ross,

Ph: 204 878-2924 Email: [rosskr@mts.net](mailto:rosskr@mts.net)

**FOUR FRAME SPRING NUCS FOR SALE**

Those of you who took in the MBA convention are aware of the fact that the AGM took place in the middle of it.

Two new members were added to the executive, Ian Stepplar (Miami area) and Osse Podolsky (North of Dauphin). Their energy has been quite apparent in their willingness to get involved in many aspects of the work that MBA takes on. For the list of Board members and the members of each committee, refer to the following link :

<http://manitobabee.org/hive/2009-executive-and-directorsmanitoba-beekeepers-association/>

Don't be confused by the date within this link; the MBA website is being updated and the dates for things will be changed once that has taken place.

Convention feedback was positive. 82 people took part in the full convention, plus invited guests and a further 50 in the workshop on Saturday afternoon. There were several interesting speakers and topics were far ranging. We would love to hear more from those of you who were present!

Several people took out membership, so that now we have 65 full memberships and 27 Associate memberships fully paid up. This represents 74,631 colonies of the 110,000 colonies in Manitoba. Work is being done to try to have the remaining colonies fully represented within the MBA.

Each of the resolutions passed at the AGM were gone through at our recent Executive meeting, to decide who was to take action on them. One or two were deferred to a later meeting, pending further work by committees.

I took the liberty of having our association's name added to that of the MBA and the Brandon Area Beekeepers' Association (BABA) in a letter sent to the Minister of Agriculture. This was to express our appreciation for Rheal Lafreniere, the Provincial Apiarist, David Ostermann, the Provincial Pollination Specialist, for all the work they do with our organizations, to keep our beekeeping industry knowledgeable, happy and healthy. Our name was also added to that of the MBA in a letter sent to the Dean and

Faculty of Agriculture and Food Sciences at the U of M, in

appreciation for the work in the area of research done by Dr. Rob Currie and his graduate students. They are the ones who really don't mind their hives dying, if they can glean better knowledge on what made them die and how best to help us keep our hives alive!

The combined MBA and RRAA Field Day /Picnic will be held at Ian Stepplar's farm June 9th, with June 16th as a rain date. Ian has been pulling things together for that day and will present a draft at the next MBA Executive meeting, April 5th. Who knows? There may just be a

Please Call Chris Argiriou

**204-296-4848**

smoker lighting contest!! Stay tuned for further information.

That's it for now. Happy Spring????!! Marg

## Total ban on bee-harming pesticides likely after major new EU analysis

The world's most widely used insecticides pose a serious danger to both honeybees and wild bees, according to a major new assessment from the European Union's scientific risk assessors.

The conclusion, based on analysis of more than 1,500 studies, makes it highly likely that the neonicotinoid pesticides will be banned from all fields across the EU when nations vote on the issue next month.

The report from the European Food Safety Authority (Efsa), published on Wednesday, found that the risk to bees varied depending on the crop and exposure route, but that "for all the outdoor uses, there was at least one aspect of the assessment indicating a high risk." Neonicotinoids, which are nerve agents, have been shown to cause a wide range of harm to bees, such as damaging memory and reducing queen numbers.

The Efsa assessment includes bumblebees and solitary bees for the first time. It also identified that high risk to bees comes not from neonicotinoid use on non-flowering crops such as wheat, but from wider contamination of the soil and water which leads to the pesticides appearing in wildflowers or succeeding crops. A recent study of honey samples revealed global contamination by neonicotinoids.

The assessment was welcomed by many scientists and environmentalists. "This is an important announcement that most uses of neonicotinoids are a risk to all bee species," said Prof Christopher Connolly, at the University of Dundee, UK. "The greatest risk to bees is from chronic exposure due to its persistence." Prof Dave Goulson, at the University of Sussex, said: "This report certainly strengthens the case for further restrictions on neonicotinoid use across Europe".

"However, a spokesman for Syngenta, a neonicotinoid manufacturer, said: "Efsa sadly continues to rely on a [bee risk guidance] document that is overly conservative, extremely impractical and would lead to a ban of most if not all insecticides, including organic products."

In March 2017, the Guardian revealed draft regulations from the European commission which would ban neonicotinoids from all fields across Europe, citing "high acute risks to bees". The chemicals could still be used in closed greenhouses.

Efsa's first assessment in January 2013 found "unacceptable" risks to bees from neonicotinoids and paved the way for the partial EU ban which was passed in April 2013. It banned the use of the three main neonicotinoids on flowering crops, principally oilseed rape, as they were seen as most attractive to bees.

There has been strong evidence that neonicotinoids harm individual bees for some years but this has strengthened in the last year recently to show damage to colonies of bees. Other research has also revealed that 75% of all flying insects have disappeared in Germany and probably much further afield, prompting warnings of "Ecological Armageddon".

In November, environment secretary Michael Gove overturned the UK's previous opposition to tougher restrictions on neonicotinoids. "The weight of evidence now shows the risks neonicotinoids pose to our environment, particularly to the bees and other pollinators which play such a key part in our £100bn food industry, is greater than previously understood," Gove told the Guardian. "I believe this justifies further restrictions on their use. We cannot afford to put our pollinator populations at risk."

The environment department's chief scientist, Prof Ian Boyd, warned in September that the assumption by regulators around the world that it is safe to use pesticides at industrial scales across landscapes is false. This followed other highly critical reports on pesticides, including research showing most farmers could slash their pesticide use without losses and a UN report that denounced the "myth" that pesticides are necessary to feed the world.

Full Article:

[www.theguardian.com/environment/2018/feb/28/total-ban-on-bee-harming-pesticides-likely-after-major-new-eu-analysis](http://www.theguardian.com/environment/2018/feb/28/total-ban-on-bee-harming-pesticides-likely-after-major-new-eu-analysis)

### ***MBA and RRAA Field Day /Picnic***

The combined MBA and RRAA Field Day /Picnic will be held at Ian Stepllar's farm June 9th, with June 16th as a rain date.

Confirmation, Details & Directions to be announced.

## **Options on Spring and Early Summer Management**

- By David Dawson

**Beekeeping across the prairies developed on the back of cheap packages imported from the southern US states, but over time methods to overwinter bees in our cold winters were developed. In 1987 the border was closed due to tracheal mites in the USA and packages suddenly became much more expensive as they had to be brought in from New Zealand or Australia, so overwintering became the preferred norm.**

**Under the old package bee method of beekeeping, colonies rarely built-up to swarming strength before the main flow, so management was relatively easy. Nowadays over-wintered bees can be very strong: they can peak and swarm long before the main flow unless steps are taken to slow them down.**

**Over many years with package bees it was known that a colony must have five combs of brood by mid May – ie six weeks before the main flow – to make a reasonable honey crop. Some of the spring management methods used these days to ensure the bees don't peak too early, yet are strong enough are:**

**1. In early to mid April one or two comb nucs + shaken bees are made up and given an imported mated queen. These very early nucs are as much to make-up for winter losses as to knock back strong colonies, though these days many people who overwinter inside make and overwinter five-comb nucs as their spring replacements.**

**In late April 3-comb nucs + shaken bees are considered necessary. All these nucs usually build up sufficiently to get a respectable amount of honey.**

**2. Very strong colonies are 'split' into two or more equal parts in April, giving the queen-less part a mated queen.**

**3. One technique used by some beekeepers is to take one or two combs of brood (with all the bees shaken back) from three colonies and made up to 10 frames with empty comb and honey. This bee-less unit is then placed on top of a fourth very strong colony above an excluder. In 24 hours the brood will be covered with plenty of young bees and can be moved to a new site at least three miles away and given a mated queen. The beauty of this method is that four colonies can be knocked back without ever having to search for a queen.**

**4. Equalization. In the middle of May or perhaps a bit later, make a rough estimate of the number of combs of brood in each hive and then work out an average. Starting with a strong hive, combs of brood with adhering bees are removed into a separate box to bring the remaining combs of brood down to the average, but not less than five. Then working through the rest of the yard, one colony at a time, combs of brood are either taken away or added to bring all colonies to the same strength. Any surplus combs at the end can be taken at least three miles away and given a new queen. With this technique, if one hive needs supering, they will all likely need supering.**

**Of course nothing is perfect and swarming is sure to occur occasionally – and some years are worse than others. Finally, bear in mind that these methods were developed many years ago, since when farm crops have changed and climate change has made the weather less predictable.**

-D.D.



## Honey Bee Health Coalition Unveils First Ever Set of Tools, Resources to Help Soybean Growers Support Pollinators, Reduce Pesticide Exposure.

The Honey Bee Health Coalition unveiled today a series of tools and resources on best management practices for soybean growers — the first of its kind for soybeans — to support honey bee health and to help protect pollinators in and around soybean fields. An expert team of extension agents, agronomists, entomologists, beekeepers, soybean growers, and crop consultants developed the best management practices. They include strategies to identify potential impacts of soybean agricultural practices on bees at each stage of soybean production and suggest strategies to mitigate these impacts.

The Honey Bee Health Coalition brings together beekeepers, growers, researchers, government agencies, agribusinesses, conservation groups, manufacturers and brands, and other key partners to improve the health of honey bees and other pollinators. Its mission is to collaboratively implement solutions that will help to achieve a healthy population of honey bees while also supporting healthy populations of native and managed pollinators in the context of productive agricultural systems and thriving ecosystems. The Coalition is focusing on accelerating the collective impact of efforts to improve honey bee health in four key areas: forage and nutrition, hive management, crop pest management, and communications, outreach, and education. More on these tools, and the Honey Bee Health Coalition can be found here:

<https://honeybeehealthcoalition.org/soybmps/>



### YOU ARE NEEDED!!

***What makes a great association great? Involvement, and contribution! If everyone does one small task, gives up one HOUR a month to help the RRAA, then we all benefit!***

**WAYS TO CONTRIBUTE:** *Mentoring a novice beekeeper, join a RRAA committee, bring a toonie draw prize, submit an article or a book review for the newsletter, bring cookies for our coffee break, share experiences and advice with new beekeepers, help at the Honey Show, or Day of The Honeybee, network with novices to source Manitoba bred bees, and equipment, Teach a class!*

***TOGETHER WE ARE BETER!!***

### Red River Apiarists' Association—Winnipeg, Manitoba

#### 2018 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

I hereby apply for membership in the Red River Apiarists' Association.

Membership includes one years subscription to the newsletter "The Bee Cause" (8 issues)

RRAA membership fee (cheque payable to RRAA or Red River Apiarists' Association.@ \$25.00/year

Optional Beekeeper Liability Insurance (details on RRAA web site, Links, Insurance@65.00 +\$5.20 = \$70.20

Total payment Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Tel. # \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Prov. \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

New Member : [    ]      Renewal : [    ]      Student U of M Beekeeping course : [    ] (free 1st year)

Newsletter is distributed via email in a PDF format.

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**

## **Recommended Reading List For New and Aspiring Beekeepers**

### The Classics

**A Book Of Honey - Eva Crane**

**The Archaeology of Beekeeping -Eva Crane**

**The ABC's & XYZ's of Beekeeping - A.I. Root**

**The Hive & The Honey Bee –Dandant & Sons**

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**The Beekeepers Bible - Jones/Sweeny-Lynch**

**Home Grown Honey Bees –Alethea Morrison**

**First lessons in Beekeeping –Keith Delaplane**

**The Back Yard Beekeeper– Kim Flottum**

**The Practical Beekeeper –Michael Bush**

**Honeybee Democracy- Thomas D. Seeley**

**Beekeeping for Dummies –H. Blackiston**

**Nature's Little Wonders: Bees - C. Savage**

**Robbing the Bees –Holley Bishop**

**Honeybee: Lessons from an Accidental  
Beekeeper - C. Marina Marchese**

# Survey

## **Subject: Participation in the annual R.R.A.A. Fall Bee and Honey Show competition**

Every year the R.R.A.A. organizes and presents the popular Fall Honey Show, which is scheduled for the last weekend of September. This event includes a contest where club members may submit honey bee related products that fall into specific categories. Examples of products that are entered might include various kinds and colours of honey, refined bees wax, and subjects like beekeeping photographs, food prepared with honey, and honey submitted by novice “bee-ginner” beekeepers. The entries are judged, with the awarded winning entries put on display for public viewing at the Honey Show. In order to make continuing improvements to the honey contest, please take time to respond to this survey and include any remarks that may help to improve our honey contest and encourage participation.      Additional remarks can be left below.      Thank you for your input!

- 1) Have you heard of the R.R.A.A. honey contest before today? Y / N / n/a
- 2) Have you participated in a previous R.R.A.A. honey contest? Y / N / n/a
- 3) Are you able to find the R.R.A.A. honey contest rules? Y / N / n/a
- 4) Was it easy to find them on the internet? Y / N / n/a
- 5) Could you get the rules from someone? Y / N / n/a
- 6) Did you get the rules from a R.R.A.A. club meeting or newsletter? Y / N / n/a
- 7) Can you find R.R.A.A. club members who will give you advice for the honey contest?  
Y / N / n/a
- 8) Is September a good month for you to prepare and enter the R.R.A.A. honey contest?  
Y / N / n/a
- 9) Are there too many contest options to consider when deciding what to enter? Y / N / n/a
- 10) Are the contest rules clear enough to understand and follow? Y / N / n/a

**Additional Remarks:**

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If you have entered an R.R.A.A. honey contest in previous years, or are new to our club, please feel free to express your views and suggest areas where improvements can be made. Details about the honey contest are included on the RRAA website and have been printed in the September 2017 edition of the RRAA newsletter. Your questions can be answered in person at our monthly meetings by speaking with Armand St. Hilaire or other experienced club members. These meetings include a thirty minute question/answer slot for beginners, from 7:00 pm -7:30pm. If you would like to participate in any aspect of a Spring Bee Show or Fall Bee and Honey Show, you may contact the organizing committee by email at [asthil@mymts.net](mailto:asthil@mymts.net).

Red River Apiarists Association (RRAA)..... [www.BeekeepingManitoba.com](http://www.BeekeepingManitoba.com)  
Contact RRAA President: John Russell, Ph: 204-612-2337 Email: [honeyb@mymts.net](mailto:honeyb@mymts.net)