Beek(s) of the Month Dan and Sharon Clark, with Oliver. (see page 5)

Important dates:

--June 15: Summer Field Day near Ames. (see page 4)
--License plate labels (see page 13)
--State Fair August 8-18. Entry forms accepted starting May 1
--Annual Meeting in Des Moines November 8 and 9
President’s Message

Beekeepers,

Another month appears, and it’s my privilege to write my President’s message again and tell about some more interesting luck that came my way in the trucking industry. More on this later.

I welcome back our bees from far-away places. Hope everyone has full, ready-to-split hives as they are coming back. The losses this year are horrible. We must bounce back somehow, someway. Maybe this year we try our hand at raising our own queens and set up some overwintering nucs for 2020. This is worth looking into since nucs in the spring are very valuable. They are also easy to slide into hives and replace dead outs, especially over-wintered ones. Something different will result in a different outcome. If you do the same thing, most likely will get the same results. I challenge you all to do something different, learn a new method, go to the club nearest you, talk, compare notes, share ideas. This will benefit you and other beekeepers around you. Sorry if I sound like I did last month.

My trucking here in middle April has come to a standstill since truck has had an antifreeze failure and major issues that caused it to go to a dealership for repairs. Good news is it is under warranty. Bad news is that I’m going to have to go two weeks without income. It has allowed me to take in the North Iowa Bee Club meeting here in April. Great group and a nice club. I can’t say enough about the benefits of having a good club near you with members who will share their stories and their solutions to your problems. Find a club, join a club, or start a club!

I’ve challenged myself to go to work for a big beekeeper close to me. I decided here’s my chance to suck it up and dive in and go to work. I challenge all beekeepers to spend some time with one of these guys. Any beekeeper can learn so much by working with these guys and gals as well. Simple things like painting boxes—we all can throw paint on a box but how efficient are you? How long does it take you to paint 50 or so? You might be surprised how big beekeepers paint boxes. (Hint: they use the same roller you do, and the same 3-inch brush too). How about putting frames and boxes together? They put thousands of frames and lots of boxes together on a bench. There are jigs and methods you never thought of until you go and spend the time with them.

Now when it comes to handling bees, there’s a whole new way of beekeeping. Just setting up boxes is very interesting. I never gave it too much thought, but these guys spend time figuring out the arrangement of frames to best insure what they want. Making splits—they never look for the queen; they have ways of getting around that. I have had an interesting week and am looking forward to another few days. We all have much to learn from professional beekeepers. Many of us have met these full-time beeks at our Annual Meetings in November, and we learn a lot at those meetings!

I visited with my brother tonight, and when I told him all the exciting things I learned this week, he commented that I will not want to go trucking again. My back and feet say go back to trucking, but everything else says, no. I wish it was this easy. It’s fun for me to write about and challenge you all. This I feel is like a fishing trip to Canada—you see the pictures and hear the stories; but being there is believing and life-changing. (But you first must like fishing...) I guess the bottom line is when you get dealt a lemon, I praise God I learned how to make the best lemonade from the IHPA booth at the state fair years ago!

It’s my bed time. See you next month.

Sincerely, Roy Kraft, IHPA president
The IHPA Conference and Annual Meeting is our yearly opportunity to get together and discuss our favorite thing, BEES!! This meeting is open to anyone interested in beekeeping and honeybees. We have a variety of guest speakers to speak on their expertise in the beekeeping world.

This is a great opportunity for individuals thinking about keeping bees, new beekeepers and beekeepers a few years in, to meet other beekeepers from around the state, swap stories, ask questions and seek advice from those who have years of beekeeping under their belts. There will be no shortage of information and answers!!

This is why you go to a conference......... Vision, Inspiration and Connections!!

2019 Keynote Speakers: Mel D Disselkoen, Kirsten Traynor and The Minnesota Bee Squad

Honey Swap and Cooking Contest are BACK!! Many of you missed them last year and we were able to make arrangements to bring them back. The Mead, painted hive body and photography contests will be back as well. Maybe even a new one!!

Contest details will be in a later “Buzz”.

Room rates for IHPA members are $119 plus taxes. Reservations must be made by Thursday, October 17th, 2019 to get this discounted room rate. There are a couple Handicap-able rooms reserved for our event as well. Call (515) 287-2400 to make your reservations. Questions? Call or text 515-490-2011 or email kenoyerfarms@gmail.com IHPA VP Keri Kenoyer

Notes from our Veep:

Happy May, fellow Buzz readers! Spring has finally started to come around. Trees are starting to bud and the grass is turning green. Won’t be long before the dandelions start popping up!

Summer Field Day is fast approaching! Have you sent your registration yet? Deadline is June 1st. (see Page 4) Remember, space is limited. The agenda will be posted on the IHPA web page. I will need a few volunteers to help out with SFD, and will you please email me at kenoyerfarms@gmail.com if interested.

On April 5th, Doyle Kincy and I were given the opportunity to be on the We Are Iowa morning show on channel 23 to talk about our favorite subject- BEES!! We were only given a 7-minute segment but I think we could have talked about bees all day!


Can’t wait to see you at Summer Field Day!

Keri Kenoyer, IHPA Vice President.
2019 Iowa Honey Producers Association Summer Field Day

June 15th, 2019

Iowa State Horticulture Research Center

5519 170th St. Ames, Ia.

Registration: 8:00 am  Field Day: 8:30 am – 4:30 pm

This will be an information-packed day! Field Day Guest Speakers: Andy Joseph, Iowa’s State Apiarist, will perform an on-site hive inspection to show you what you should be looking for when you’re checking on your hives. Melissa Burdick from The Brenton Arboretum will give an informative presentation on “Trees for Bees”. Ginny Mitchel, who will be judging the State Fair entries this year, will talk about the ins and outs of what she is looking for in fair entries while judging. Additional presentations include Prairie Strips, queen marking demonstration using drones, a round table discussion with longtime beekeepers, plus a few other topics. Please mark your calendars and remember to bring your bee gear if you wish to watch the hive inspection. Registration will be limited to 120 people, so get your registration in early!

A delicious lunch will be provided except for the dessert. You are asked to bring one to share!

Bottled water, honey lemonade and coffee will be available throughout the day.

Cut here ————————————————————————————————————-Cut here ————————————————————————————————————-Cut here

Registration

NAME: __________________________________________________________________________

ADDRESS: __________________________________________________________________________

CITY: ____________________________ ZIP: __________ PHONE: (____) __________________________

CELL: (___) ______________ EMAIL: ______________________________________________________

Single (member): $35 before June 1st, 2019 ______ x $35 = ________

Single (non-member) $40 before June 1st, 2019 ______ x $40 = ________

Walk-in (member) $40 June 15th, 2019 ______ x $40 = ________

Walk-in (non-member) $45 June 15th, 2019 ______ x $45 = ________

Return this completed form together with your check payable to IHPA, by Saturday, June 1st, 2019.

Send registration to: Rhonda Heston, IHPA Treasurer 52735 187th Ave. Chariton, IA. 50049

Please refer questions to: Keri Kenoyer at kenoyerfarms@gmail.com Summer Field Day in the subject line, or call 515-490-2011.

Camper Alert--It has become a tradition for those who pull campers or who tent to find a campground near the Summer Field Day venue and enjoy the evenings together around fires. What stories! What learning!

If you like to get to know other beeks well, contact David Hayes at prairiecreekfrm@netins.net.
Editor/Landscaper Thoughts

I regard Dave Korver as a good friend, and when he submitted his article on roadside pollinator patches, I rejoiced. I take his thoughts one more step—I think in-town homeowners need to consider what they can do to promote pollinator health as well as large-scale rural farmers.

I work at a landscaping company, and our designers use a wide variety of plants that perform well in manicured beds surrounding lovely homes. Most will bloom, some for the whole summer. But...some of them don’t produce any nectar for pollinators. So my thought is to introduce many lovely plants that perform well in the landscape AND bloom well and produce nectar. Some might prefer the more predictable and "professional" look; but I challenge homeowners to consider what they can do to beautify AND promote bee health.

Recently I had contact with Claire Peckosh, owner of Claire’s Garden in Kirksville, MO (just south of the Iowa border). She offers many perennial plants that will do well in Iowa, although some are zone 5 plants. (Those of us in the north beware those). Her websites are informative and she ships a wide variety of perennials and herbs that bloom—multiple uses! Google her.

The Prairie Moon Nursery is another great place to locate natives and perennials that produce nectar and promote pollinator health.

Have you ever researched what the Xerces Society offers on their sites? Not only can you learn more about pollinators and how to protect them and promote them, but you can obtain seeds and plants that will flourish in your area.

Karen and I have planted our whole (urban) roadside in perennial plants, some of which are always in bloom all summer long and well into fall. As I write, the snowdrops are coming on as well as crocus, and it’s a cool spring for us. Way at the end, the asters and goldenrod are still providing nectar for flocks and flocks of bees, flies and butterflies. We also gave over our entire vegetable garden to flowers, and now are seeking to remove some of those that spread well and replace them with other herbs and nectar-producing plants. If the neighbors down the street all did the same, we’d soon be seeing healthier pollinators, and the plants themselves would be flourishing better.

Dave’s point (see page 15) about how the increase in nectar-producers helps the cropland to flourish is a good one; it can be transported to the urban areas too. Who is going to start that trend in your neighborhood that gets people to start removing some grasses and planting some borage? Or hyssop. Even basil sets up a lovely little bush, produces lots of leaves for flavoring your dishes, and comes in lovely greens and purples, some tall and some short. Stop before you buy those petunias (which don’t produce nectar) and decide to establish some flowering herbs.

At the nursery, we sell lots of Karl Forster grasses, and they grace the homes all over town; but why not let asparagus do the same thing? And eat it in spring!

We gotta take responsibility on every level to help bees!
Ten Foods We’d Miss if it Weren’t for Honeybees

1. Apples. The nation's largest producer of apples is Washington State. In a typical year, 10 to 12 billion apples are harvested every year by hand, or put another way—about three out of five apples in the United States come from Washington. That's staggering—and without bees, the cross-pollination needed to produce apples just wouldn't happen on a scale large enough to produce today's crop.

2. Almonds. About 80 percent of the world's almond supply comes from California, which requires about half of the honeybee population in the United States for pollination each year. Valued at more than $3 billion, this crop is California's top agricultural export. This year's crop is the largest ever, at 1.9 billion pounds, most of which is destined for locales in Asia, Europe, and the Middle East. The almond crop is completely dependent on honeybees for pollination.

3. Blueberries. Besides being loaded with antioxidants, they're also delicious on top of pancakes, in muffins, and of course, in pie. The loss of the blueberry crop wouldn't just be felt at the kitchen table, however—the National Agricultural Statistics Service values the nation's blueberry crop, most of which comes from Maine, at more than $593 million, 90 percent of which is pollinated by honeybees.

4. Cherries. Honeybees are responsible for pollinating about 90 percent of the cherries in the United States, according to the National Agricultural Statistics Service, most of which come from Washington State. Sweet cherry trees require the pollinating activities of honeybees in order to produce enough fruit for a commercially viable crop.


6. Cucumbers. Cucumbers are a popular option for cooling down in the hot summer months. Their cool, fresh flavor and crunchy bite make them a popular addition to salads, sandwiches, and cocktails. Without honeybees, though, the majority of the country's $193 million cucumber crop would be nonexistent.

7. Onions. No onions? Well, you're pretty much out of luck. Onions are the base for myriad classic sauces, soups and stews when cooked. And when raw, are pretty much de facto in tacos, salsas, sandwiches, burgers, and salads. You'll still be shedding tears even when they're gone.

8. Grapefruit. Sweet-tart grapefruit, whether eaten with a spoon or cut into segments by the ambitious, is a breakfast staple for the health conscious. It's also delicious in salads and blended into smoothies and cocktails. Grapefruit is just one of many kinds of citrus almost entirely dependent on honeybees for pollination.

9. Oranges. It probably goes without saying that if you're going to bring up grapefruit, you have to bring up oranges. And the data actually do back this up; like grapefruit, oranges are 90 percent dependent on honeybees for production. That morning cup of orange juice would get a lot more expensive. Maybe we'll just import our way out of this one—except honey bee woes are worldwide.

10. Pumpkins. Halloween just wouldn't be the same without pumpkins; nor would Thanksgiving. This iconic American crop is heavily dependent on honeybees for production, and without them, there would be no pumpkin carving and no pumpkin pie.
NOW LIVE! The 2018-2019 Colony Loss and Management Survey!

March 31, 2019 • Spring means one thing: it's time to take the Bee Informed Partnership's annual Colony Loss and Management Survey! The information that you provide will be invaluable to our understanding of honey bee health around the country.

As background, the BIP's National Loss Survey was launched for the first time in 2006, and thanks to the many thousands of beekeepers who have participated since then, we have been able to document and better understand long-term honey bee colony loss trends. Check out the interactive state loss map as evidence! https://bip2.beeinformed.org/loss-map/

In 2010, BIP's National Management Survey was added to help us understand how management practices are potentially linked to colony survivorship. Thanks to your answers, we have been able to develop a dynamic management data tool. Feel free to play around with the interface. Want to know how colony losses compared between beekeepers that DID or DID NOT use a varroa treatment? Or what about the average age of comb in American hives? It's all in there!

Good morning America! It's easy! One click and you are in, ready to take the survey and to serve our nation's beekeeping industry: https://26.selectsurvey.net/beeinformed/TakeSurvey.aspx?SurveyID=LMS2019#

The information that you provide will be invaluable to our understanding of honey bee health around the country.

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Feel free to play around with the interface. Want to know how colony losses compared between beekeepers that DID or DID NOT use a varroa treatment? Or what about the average age of comb in American hives? It's all in there!

Membership Dues

Iowa Honey Producers’ Association membership year is January 1 through December 31. If you have not paid your dues for 2019, it is **TIME**. Please go to the IHPA website and print that form to pay your dues. (iowahoneyproducers.org). The March Buzz was the last one for members that have not paid their 2019 dues. All funds received by March 15, 2019 will receive the April Buzz. Please send to Rhonda Heston, 52735 187th Ave, Chariton IA 50049-8616. Please call Rhonda if you have any questions at 515-724-2124. Thanks.

Merchandise

Spring has (hopefully) sprung! With that said, how are your Iowa Honey Producer Association “Save the Bees” T-shirts? Have they seen better days? If so, you don’t want to meet the “girls” in that old rag, do you? Don’t you think it is time to replace your shirts and make a good impression on the girls? How about a new chapeau? A new sun bonnet? A new hat? You know we have those great-looking hats that are just wanting to come to your house and cover your head while you are out in your apiary or at the Farmers’ Market. We still have long-sleeve T-shirts, sweat shirts and hoodies for those cool mornings in the apiary or at the Farmers’ Markets.

Speaking of Farmers’ Markets—how about having IHPA Cookbooks available for your customers? You know the cookbook has those great recipes that Emma Jakes is always writing about. For the 2019 Farmers’ Market season you can purchase the books for only $3 a book when you order a case of 30. These can then be sold for the price your market will bear. IHPA sells them for $5 at the State Fair. If you don’t think you can sell an entire case, you can purchase a cookbook for $4.

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The Buzz Newsletter Article Submissions

Please send submissions, classified ads, and photos to rrihpa@gmail.com
Or mail to The Buzz, c/o Ron Rynders, 890 13th Ave SE, Sioux Center, IA 51250 Cell 712-449-5010

**The deadline for submissions is the 10th of each month** to be included in the following month’s newsletter. The Buzz is a monthly newsletter published by the Iowa Honey Producers Association which is an affiliate of the Iowa State Horticultural Society.
Use it or lose it.

Recently our whole section of the state lost power. Many electric poles fell over due to ice, strong winds, and soft ground. At my house we lost power from Wednesday night to Friday night. One learns, during such an experience, that you don’t appreciate things until they are taken from you. My old knees were replaced, I lost hearing in my left ear, I get winded easier these days— all these things make me more appreciative of the things I DO have. Taking time to appreciate those grandkids more, thanking your spouse for things s/he does, observing nature and just watching the bees do their thing instead of “working” them, and in many other ways savoring the blessings that surround us— this is what each of us needs, and not just the older guys…. Editor

Emma’s Recipes:

I almost feel like I just started cooking last month's recipes and here it is time for May's article already! With spring here and Iowa weather being continually unpredictable, muffins are a great recipe to make and stick in your freezer for one of those busy days when you just don’t have time to cook. And, what better to go with rhubarb muffins than a tasty honey butter? Maybe these would be the thing to make for a simple, yummy Mother’s Day breakfast!

### Whipped Honey Butter: (pg. 170)
1 cup unsalted sweet butter, softened  
1 tablespoon plus 1 teaspoon milk

Beat butter in mixer until creamy. Add milk and beat on high until well blended. Slowly add honey and continue to beat until light and fluffy (about 5 minutes). Chill before serving.

Emma’s notes: The butter was very light and creamy. It did not taste as strongly of honey as I was expecting so if you like a sweet, but with less honey flavor, butter, this recipe would be great to try.

### Honey Rhubarb Muffins: (pg. 24)
2 ½ cups flour  
1 teaspoon baking soda  
½ cup honey  
1 egg  
¾ cup sour milk (or buttermilk)  
½ cup chopped nuts

**Topping:**
½ cup sugar  
1 teaspoon butter

Stir dry ingredients together and set aside. In a mixing bowl, stir oil, honey, sugar, egg, and vanilla until well blended. Add the dry ingredients and the milk to the mixture. Stir in rhubarb and nuts. Spoon batter into greased muffin tins. Sprinkle on topping and bake at 325 degrees for 35-40 minutes.

Emma’s notes: YUMMM! I must admit, I like rhubarb, but I rarely like rhubarb muffins. I usually find them too tart, too sweet, or they just taste funny. These muffins were not like that. I really liked them, and they were very moist. If you are in a hurry, you can also cook the muffins at 350 for 30 minutes and they will still turn out well. A tip for you all— if you do not have sour milk: put about 2 teaspoons of vinegar in the bottom of your measuring cup. Fill it to the ¾ cup mark and that will make good sour milk for this recipe. Another “keeper” recipe!

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**Time to start thinking State Fair!** (Wait. We just hung up the snow shovel…) Planning ahead is a virtue, you know. With beekeeping, we have to start thinking what sorts of classes we’re going to compete in, and what sorts of equipment we’ll need in order to win this summer. The fair happens from August 8 to 18. You can find the 2019 Competitive Event Premium Books and Entry Forms at iowastatefair.org/premiumbooks. Beginning July 14, apiary entries are accepted. The state fair phone number is 515-262-3111, extension 207. And in future issues, we’ll be prompting you to sign up for volunteer shifts to work the actual event and make this summer the BEST summer ever for the Honey Bee Booth. Thanks in advance for getting over there and making it all work well.
State Fair Bid Winners

I know as I write this, we are predicted to have snow this weekend (April 13th). It is hard to think that the Iowa State Fair is only 119 days away. I know it is hard to think about bidding on product for the Fair when the bees are struggling to get going this year. However, it is time to start thinking about this.

I want to take a minute to talk about what will be needed if you are the winning bidder of product for the Iowa State Fair. The bid committee will need a label with a barcode on each product you bid on, if you have them. If you are bidding on creamed honey or flavored honey, you won’t need to have a separate barcode for each flavor, unless you just want to. If you don’t have barcodes for your product, please let the bid committee know at the time your bid is placed. This will allow us time to get barcodes ordered if we need to.

Have you ever thought about getting barcodes for your product? As your business continues to grow and you want to put your product in stores, more and more are wanting a barcode on your product. IHPA, in the past, has used www.BarCodesTalk.com to order our barcodes. This company has a great turn-around time. They can provide you the numbers immediately and if you want to order labels, you will have them within a few days. They are reasonably priced as well.

If you would like more information, please contact Rhonda at 515-724-2124.

I (heart) Iowa Honey bags:

Don’t you love the I (heart) Iowa Honey bags we use at the Fair? Of course you do. If you would like to purchase some for your Farmer’s Markets, you can. IHPA will be placing an order for more in the next few weeks. The cost is $0.25 per bag or $250 per case. There are 1,000 bags to the case. If you don’t need that many, a lesser amount can be purchased. Please let Rhonda Heston (515-724-2124) or Connie Bronnenberg (515-480-6076) know if you are interested in getting some bags that will make your product look FANTASTIC!

New Cash Registers coming to 2019 Iowa State Fair Honey Booth

When we received information this Spring about the Iowa State Fair, the Fair stated all food vendors will be required to use Clover Cash Register systems by 2020. The Clover Cash System offers better reporting and inventory control. This in turn helps the Iowa State Fair better track how vendors are doing and a better accounting of the fee they receive from each vendor. They are offering IHPA the opportunity to start using them this year. As this is something we will have to do by next year, the Board made the decision in March to start this year.

We will purchase one Clover Mini LTE, with scanner and cash drawer, at a cost of $693, plus a 3-year warranty at $95. During the State Fair, we will rent two additional Clover Mini LTEs, and an additional scanner, and purchase two cash drawers. The cost to rent the Clover Mini LTE is $46.95 each and one barcode scanner is $13.95. The purchase of the cash drawers is $25 each. The rental units will be delivered directly to us at the Fair. We won’t have to store them throughout the year. There will be support people on the Fairgrounds the first weekend of the Fair to help with questions/problems.

The Clover Mini LTE will sit on top of the cash drawer, which will take up significantly less room on the counter, allowing us more room for product. The cash drawer unit is 16.5” wide and 16.5” deep. The purchased unit will be received in early May and I will be trained by Field Day (I hope). We will continue to be able to take credit/debit cards at our events. As we will have access to year-round processing, we will be able to take cards all year for membership dues, early registration for Field Day (next year), the Annual Meeting, and for merchandise as I will be able to key the card number in manually instead of scanning the card. I am excited for the opportunity.

Watch for more information next month in the Buzz. Call Rhonda with any questions (515-724-2124).
Need Honey Containers?
EBERT HONEY CAN HELP!

ABOUT OUR CONTAINER BUSINESS
Ebert Honey offers competitive pricing on 20+ container styles, as well as simple online ordering and local pick up.

We are excited for our first season in the container business, carrying on the quality and customer service established by Draper’s Super Bee after many years as their customer. Our friends at Draper’s still offer honey and pollen.

ABOUT YOUR CONTAINER ORDER
Ebert Honey welcomes container orders of any size, and our new website makes ordering and shipping fast and easy!

Container orders are processed at our Mount Vernon, Iowa, location. Pick up is arranged ahead of time and is available at both our Mount Vernon and Lynnville locations.

CONTACT OUR TEAM TODAY

319.259.9377
andria@eberthoney.com
www.eberthoney.com
@eberthoney

1090 Highway 1 North
Mount Vernon, Iowa 52314
14808 South 102nd Ave. East
Lynnville, Iowa 50153
Our bee club recently had a booth at the Siouxland Garden show to promote beekeeping and help educate the public about honeybees. I talked to several people who really liked the idea of having pollinators in their gardens and would like to help the honeybees out. However, after talking with them for a while it became clear they really did not want to invest the time or the money it takes to become a beekeeper. I am sure other beekeepers have had the same experience frequently. I think that Mason Bees and Leaf Cutter Bees are an extremely good fit for people who want pollinators in their yard but don’t want to make the commitment to becoming a beekeeper.

Mason Bees and Leaf Cutter Bees do not make honey, but they are perfect for pollinating a yard or garden and don’t take as much time or effort as keeping honeybees. They tend to stay within 300 feet of their nest site. Mason Bees are active early in the year when apple trees and other fruit trees are blooming. Leaf Cutter Bees are active early summer through fall. Both types of bee lay their eggs in hollow stems of dead plants and soft rotted wood. You can build a nest site by drilling 5/16-inch holes in a block of wood or putting nesting straws in a container. You can also buy many different styles of nesting houses. Please be responsible and always line holes in wood with nesting straws or rolled up parchment paper and always give the bees new clean nesting materials each year. This prevents the buildup and spread of diseases. For Mason Bees (early spring) you also need to give them access to mud close to the nest site. Leaf Cutter Bees will find leaves to use on their own and then line their nesting tubes with them.

The female bee collects pollen and deposits it in the nesting tube. When she has packed in enough pollen, she tops it off with some nectar and lays an egg on the pile. Then she seals the compartment with mud (or leaves). Then she starts the process over in the next compartment. She continues until the tube is filled to the end. You can tell when the tube is full by the mud (or leaf) cap on the outside end.

**Lifecycle of a Mason Bee**

--Goes from an egg to a larva in early spring  
--Becomes a cocoon by June  
--Becomes a pupa by July  
--Dormant adult from September to next April  
--You can move them into an unheated garage in October. You can also put them in your refrigerator crisper drawer with a damp paper towel or small sponge you add a few drops of water to occasionally.  
--Put them outside before the apple trees bloom so they can hatch and start the cycle over.

The lifecycle of the Leaf Cutter Bee is similar, but some Leaf Cutters will hatch this year, and some will hatch next year.

Nesting houses that face the morning sun and have afternoon shade will attract more bees. Most gardeners I know who have put up a nesting house say that the bees were already in their area and started using the nest the first or second year. If you want to be sure you have bees the first year, you can buy dormant bees online. Most nesting house designs have some version of a release chamber for bees you purchased or last year’s bees that you overwintered. This sets it up so each year the bees have an area to nest in new, clean straws, and they don’t have to nest in last years materials again.

There is a free PDF available from SARE that is a really great source of information on Mason Bees, Leaf Cutter Bees and Bumble bees. If you only read one thing on alternative pollinators this should be it. There is more information in it than you will find anywhere else. You can download it from:  

http://www.sare.org/Learning-Center/Books/Managing-Alternative-Pollinators

I have plans on how to build your own nest site using PVC pipe on my website at  http://www.loneoakhoney.com/info-and-faq/ You can buy the nesting straws, houses, bees and many other related items, at Crown Bees --http://crownbees.com.

John Anderson – LoneOakHoney.com
AN UPDATE TO THE LICENSE PLATE IHPA DECALS

Since my last report in April’s Buzz, the IHPA Directors have decided to sell the Decals to all of Iowa’s recognized Bee Clubs at a reduced rate. A club can buy a minimum of 10 Decals at $5 each and they can turn around and sell them for any amount they want to. IHPA are selling them to individuals for $10 for the first decal and $5 for an additional one. So, it would be $15 for two. Bee Clubs can do the same if they want. They would be able to keep any additional profit from their sales.

These Decals are made to withstand being outside in the sunlight. So, you can place them not only on a Decal License Plate but also in the window of your vehicle or on your refrigerator, for example. The Decal raises the awareness of the importance of Honey Bees and IHPA. It will also raise some dollars for our Clubs and Associations.

Ask your local Club or Association to jump on board with this and contact Rhonda Heston, IHPA Treasurer for a bunch of Decals to resell. I know that the Central Iowa Beekeepers Association is going to be placing an order with Rhonda.

Jamie Beyer, President CIBA

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The Historical Buzz Post  By Tina Meyer IHPA Historian

1921 Iowa Ranked 5th

In 1921 the bees in Iowa had a value of approximately $2,250,000. The equipment for raising the annual bee crop was estimated at $1,750,000, making a total of approximately $4,000,000 invested in the bee industry in this state according to the report of F.B Paddock, the state apiarist in 1921.

Parts of his report read:

Iowa ranked 5th among the states in the number of bee colonies owned. On an area basis, Iowa contained as many colonies of bees as any state in the union at that time.

He also stated that in 1921 wax was considered a by-product of beekeeping. Each colony would provide 1 -3 pounds annually and the wax sold for 35 cents per pound. Iowa beekeepers could produce more than $1,000,000 in sales just from wax.

Source- The Domestic Beekeeper 1921

Clover Honey Iowa 1892
Notes from the Beeyard, by Phil Ebert

The bee business is a series of ups and downs---sometimes, just a whole lot of downs. Just when I thought things were going well—the trucks were all fixed—I got a call from Koehnens (Mar 22). They were cutting my package order by 2/3. That equates to 1000 packages. I got that sinking feeling in the pit of my stomach. I had those packages sold. I had to lay off customers with an aggregate of 400 packages to other providers. That was painful to say the least, but we have to find some way to take care of people. We found a few 3# packages from another provider but we are still short. In order to provide my remaining customers with bees, I have no other option but to get my entire allotment from Koehnens in 2# packages. This has led to some cancellations. I understand why. They are smaller and need extra time to develop. In addition to my other problems, my bookkeeping is now messed up. I am going to have to go back and change most of the tickets since quantities and/or the type of queen is going to be different on most of them.

The weather in California has been bad. In the Northern part of the state, almond bloom was a month late. I had been in contact with Koehnens. I knew things were going to be late, but nothing was said about an impending disaster. Rain has continued out there so queen mating will be the next issue. The bees we have remaining in California are in a very wet spot. I am not sure when we will be able to get them. Adam considered going out in mid-March to feed them but decided against it. He should have gone. Hindsight is always 20/20. Initially, they held up well. We lost about 15% of what we sent out. I hope we don’t have a bunch of them starve to death.

Charles Lindor wrote a series of articles in the “Bee Journal” about the virtues of Big Ag and how it was not harmful. He presented a logical case. What he does not address is the serious topsoil loss and the fact we are eating chemicals. The USDA tested my wax this year. It contained 12 difference pesticides. Glyphosate (Roundup) has been found in honey and other foods. We live in a toxic environment. For my own peace of mind, I have been having our honey tested and also the honey we buy. So far, it has been clean.

The bees that stayed in Iowa have been running about 40% dead. I am sure, by the time it is all said and done, the loss will be 50%. I don’t know how big a part the bad fall played in this. There was little flying time and brood rearing stopped early. The colonies that are alive look really good. This leads me to believe the failure of the mite treatments was the biggest problem. I have talked to a few people that have had good survival. Most of them used oxalic vapor. The vapor is most effective when there is little or no brood. I think you have to use something else first that will work when there is brood. We are going to stick with the dribble in the near term. I don’t want employees messing with the vapor. It that vapor is inhaled, it leads to permanent lung damage.

We used to have a closed system. Our bees stayed put. Our death loss was 25-30%. We could make that up with splits and still have some bees to sell. We kept a few packages just to test the product. The last two years have been hard on us. The death loss sky rocketed. Last year we kept 200 packages plus we brought in the lease bees from California. Our hive beetle population took a leap. I suspect it will take another leap this year since we are bringing back two loads. Every system change has consequences.

The latest squirrel casualty is one of the pickups. We are now parking everything with the hood up until I can get the squirrel population reduced. Randy Bronnenberg sent me some “Squirrel Stopper.” I didn’t know there was such a thing. It is in a spray bottle. We will see how it works.

I hope everyone has a good spring!
News from Clubs and Districts

District Update, by Chris Jackson IHPA District 1 Director

Hello fellow beekeepers. I have around 60 colonies of honey bees that I run in southeast Iowa and west central Illinois. Have you ever had a hive that did not make it through winter and wonder what to do with the hive now? Well there are several things to do. First, I like disassemble the hive and clean up the hive, removing the dead bees. I will clean off the bottom board and scrape off with my hive tool as much build-up that has accumulated. Then I like to pull out the frames and scrape the boxes down. I also clean the propolis off of the frames. To deal with the frames with the dead bees stuck in the cells, I like to tap the top of the frame against something. This will knock most of the bees out of the cells. I don’t worry about getting them all out. Then I will reassemble the hive. If you have a package of bees that you have ordered, the hive will be ready for them when they arrive. The new honeybees will accept a hive easier that had bees in it before. The new bees will then clean up the rest of the dead bees and start repairing the damaged cells. Another thing is if you are into collecting swarms of bees in swarm traps, these frames make great attraction for swarms.

News from District 6, Director Dave Korver

Beekeepers are always looking for more bee pasture—blooming trees, flowers and weeds. Unfortunately, many landowners are not looking for the same thing—they want that neatly-mowed look and that green grass look. Many prefer the grasses that can be mowed a couple times and baled for feed for animals. The naked truth is that if you were a pollinator, looking for pollen and nectar, the area we live in would be a wasteland. Bees and other pollinators look in desperation for nectar-producing flowers and find very little. And mind you, the landowners possibly are unaware of this problem; it’s our job to educate them.

Doing a little math, I learned that Iowa has around 56,273 square miles of farmland in the state. If each square mile has ditches measuring 16 feet by 5,280 per mile, that’s 168,960 square feet per mile. So that means that there’s 675,840 square feet around one section. Multiply that times those 56,273 square miles in Iowa, and we have a LOT of roadsides in Iowa! My calculator just got hot, but you get the picture.

Just think what would happen if we took even a small part of that land mass and turned it into fruitful nectar-producing forage for pollinators. One often overlooked fact is that if the pollinators were more successful, the crops would also flourish better. Sounds like more production and more crops. So if that’s the case, then why not encourage pollinators? It need not sound like the beeks are polishing the apple and hoping for greater production from their hives; it should sound like a win-win that all of us could benefit from (bees aren’t the only pollinators, by any means!)

With lots of hard work from people, farmers and clubs just think what could happen. The bees could get all kinds of different pollens to help all the pollinators in Iowa make it through winter. All our bees In northwest Iowa have to work on is corn and beans. And corn doesn’t need the pollinators, so our bees are working on the beans. If you only had one food source, you’d get sick of eating just one food source. Our bees need a variety of healthy pollen/nectar to stay healthy and fight against other enemies of theirs.

I have gone online and looked at Linn County secondary road department. The roadsides in Linn County are nearly all filled with flowering pollen and nectar-producing plants. They are doing a great job.

Other counties need to model Linn County. Hats off to a county with a larger vision. There is much more to raising crops than just traditional farming; our crops need the pollinators to maintain health just as much as the pollinators need a wide variety of food sources to stay healthy. Since one of three bites of food we take in depends on pollinators who are doing their important work, it’s important for us to realize that providing forage for our pollinators is an important part of our job as good stewards.

Here’s hoping for a warm, drying spring with no wind so that all our bees can make a comeback.

Dave Korver, District 6 Director
I will have a few jumbo nucs ($165) and hives ($300) for sale this Spring. These hives use jumbo frames and aren’t interchangeable with standard Langstroth equipment. A hive will come complete and ready to start producing honey as soon as the nectar flow starts. If you buy a hive from me and it doesn’t make it through winter, I’ll replace the bees free of charge. Restrictions apply. I also have jumbo equipment. Contact Brian Chancellor @ 740-525-2407 windychancefarm@yahoo.com with any questions. Located in Sully.

---Buckwheat honey for sale: Produced and harvested from an organic field in northern Iowa $8.00 lb by the container or $4.00 lb by the 40 lb pail + dept. P & P Honey and Bee Supply, Inc 641-444-4767

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Matt Leonard here of Leonard Apiaries in Dubuque. I am downsizing my beekeeping operation this year due to losses and becoming busy with my construction business. I will not be able to operate my beekeeping at full volume this year. I have the following beekeeping equipment for sale:
- approximately couple hundred+ 8-frame deep boxes with nice drawn comb, willing to sell drawn comb separate if no need for the boxes.
- approximately hundred+ 2-gallon feeder pails with lids.
- couple dozen new 2-gallon pails with lids.
- twenty or so 4-way bottom board pallets.
- lids, feeder lids.
- a number of new, never used, double nuc boxes for expanding your apiary and queen mating.
- entrance reducers, if needed.

All of the equipment has been hand-crafted by me for commercial purpose and most of the equipment is a few years old and is in nice operable condition. I would also be happy to apply a fresh coat of paint if desired. I can also provide and or modify existing four-way bottoms to single bottom boards, and rim the lids which are not already, if desired. I would advertise that the primary value of the items for sale would be in the drawn comb, and for those wishing to utilize an 8-frame all deep set-up which is efficient and works really nice for me. I would also be happy to spend some time customizing any of the equipment, if desired, and sharing any information which could be of help to anyone interested in purchasing equipment and pursuing a production-oriented beekeeping operation. I am also willing to work with and sell to beekeepers wishing to keep only a hive or two.

Prices would depend upon the volume of equipment desired.

My number is 608-553-4019 Thanks, Matt Leonard

Black Locust or False Acacia Honey Tree
Commonly sold in Europe as Acacia honey and in the United States as Locust or American Acacia, this honey is obtained from the False Acacia or Black Locust tree (*Robinia pseudoacacia*) and seldom from Acacia species at all. Also, it shouldn’t be confused with the Honey Locust (*Gleditsia triacanthos*), which, in spite of its name, does not produce honey at all.

The honey is extremely light colored, lemonish white or yellow-green, and if relatively free of other floral sources, it can be very transparent, like liquid glass. The aroma is floral, fruity, delicate, very persistent. The flavor is very sweet, slightly acidic with hints of vanilla and no avertaste. The flowery notes are noticed best in the finish.

It has a lower acid content. It’s delicious combined with cheeses, especially pecorino and gorgonzola cheese. Because of its light taste, it is good for children and ideal on fresh cheeses (ricotta), yogurt, fruit and ice cream. The honey remains liquid and does not crystallize easily due to its high fructose content.

The black locust tree or false acacia, is native to eastern North America and widely planted in Europe. The tree grows from 30 to 70 feet and blossoms in May to June. During this time it can easily be found by following the highly aromatic, wonderfully sweet smell of the ample drooping clusters of white blossoms. Bees are drawn to the calyxes filled with nectar, returning throughout the day for ten days or so during the blossoming time. Nectar flow is dependent upon the weather and may not be consistent from year to year.

While different species, Acacia, Black Locust and Honey Locust all belong to the same family Fabaceae or Leguminosae (beans/legumes). Also, in spite of its name, the Honey Locust tree (*Gleditsia triacanthos*) is not a honey producing plant. The name comes from the sweet tasting pulp of the pod-shaped fruit of the tree once used as food by American Indians.
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