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February 2009
Vol 22 # 1

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Canadian Honey Council



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Canadian Honey Council

The Canadian Honey Council (CHC) is the national organization of the Canadian beekeeping industry and Hivelights is the industry's magazine. Our association is an "organization of organizations". One of the benefits of belonging to our member organizations is that all members receive a copy of Hivelights magazine. In order to receive Hivelights you must be a current member of your provincial association. International subscribers can receive our high quality magazine for a fee of \$50 Canadian per year.

Schools, libraries, non beekeepers, university or government personnel can receive Hivelights magazine through special membership as "Friends of Canadian Apiculture".

Please contact the CHC office for more information.

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HiveLights

January 2009 Vol 22 #1

Bee balm (*Monarda fistula*)
grows wild in many parts of Canada.

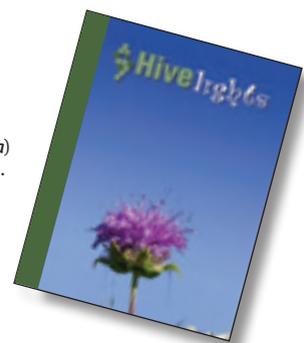


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Canadian Honey Council

Heather Clay, Chief Executive Officer, CHC

Annual Meeting

The CHC has undergone a major restructure of the organization since agreement was reached at the January 2008 AGM in Calgary. We have completed a year of transition and are now operating with a new board structure, a new membership policy, new bylaws and a new direction for the future. It has been a challenging year but the outcome was well worth the effort.

Members of the board of directors worked on the difficult issues of roles, purpose, membership and financing the new organization. It was a consultative process, often involving members of their provincial boards and representatives of industry. Throughout the process which started three years ago we enjoyed the steady guidance of Ed Nowek, past president of the CHC who recently retired from the position of Chair of the Board. He was presented with an engraved hive tool by Corey Bacon (incoming chair) in recognition of his work.

Sponsorship

Our new organization provides a role for sponsors

Ed Nowek receiving presentation from Corey Bacon for his service as Chair of the Board



to support the effort of the Canadian Honey Council. There are opportunities for sponsors to not only show support for the industry but also gain greater visibility with our industry. Our first sponsor was acknowledged at the December AGM in Niagara Falls. Elise Gagnon,

Odem International Inc. was presented with a plaque designed and made by a Canadian artist in recognition of the support of Odem for the work of the Canadian Honey Council.

Hive Health

Following the high losses of honey bee colonies in 2007, a meeting of stakeholders was held June 2007, to develop short term and long term strategies in the event of continued high losses. A 23 point plan arose from the meeting. Many of these, including the preparation of a pamphlet on control of varroa mites, tracheal mites, AFB and noseema using integrated pest management, have been implemented. One



Elise Gagnon receiving plaque from Ed Nowek Chair of Board and Heather Clay CEO CHC

of the action items was to develop a hive health information system for early warning of problems. Losses continued in 2008 and the government

finally agreed to offer funding for a hive health initiative. The approved project with funding from Agriculture Agri-Food Canada is for three months work to begin development of a framework and prototype for a hive health information system. The first step in the process was to survey stakeholders then to assemble key personnel to identify gaps, assess needs and develop the framework. A meeting of stakeholders was held in Winnipeg, 19-20 January, 2009 and the report of the hive health initiative will be posted on the CHC website.

Foreign Workers

Recruitment of labour is often a problem for beekeepers, especially in rural areas where workers are in short supply. An alternative that has become increasingly popular is to seek seasonal workers from overseas. There are many issues with off shore workers. It takes weeks to complete the process of recruiting employees, satisfying immigration requirements, organizing air travel and arranging housing. On top of problems with finding workers, beekeepers are forced to pay higher wages for unskilled workers than other commodities. One size does not fit all and the CHC is working with the federal Department of Human Resources and Skills Development to rectify the situation. Meetings are planned for February in Ottawa to address this issue.

Battery Boxes

There is a demand for access to honey bee queens that are shipped in quantity using battery boxes. The current CFIA regulation requires the use of three hole cages for queen bees originating in areas with small hive beetle. Three hole cages reduce the risk of small hive beetle that may hitch-hike with the numerous attendant bees in a battery box. An issues committee has been struck by the CHC to look into the situation. There may be a potential for a different design of battery box or a procedure that would allow for the removal of queens and destruction of attendant bees.

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Replacement Bees

High losses of honey bees have spurred the CHC Board of Directors to investigate the possibility of alternative sources of honey bees. A committee has been struck to determine what action can be taken, from improving the availability of Canadian queen bees to exploring opportunities for healthy package bees from the USA. Currently the CFIA only allows package bees from New Zealand and south western Australia. Queen bees are available from New Zealand, Australia, Hawaii, USA and Chile. The CFIA is doing a risk assessment for package bees from Chile.

CBISQT

The Canadian Honey Council has long recognized the need for a producer manual that meets the need for identifying the process for on farm food safety as well as traceability of product. We have worked together with other commodities through the Canadian Federation of Agriculture on the issues of food safety and the role of the producer. With funding assistance from Agriculture Agri-Food Canada our organization has developed a manual that provides standards for good production practices for honey production. The Canadian Bee Industry Safety Quality Traceability (C-BISQT) manual is HACCP (Hazards and Critical Control Points) based and designed to help identify and mitigate potential hazards on farm. In January 2009 the core committee (Heather Clay, Tim Townsend, Rhéal Lafrenière and Rudy Gelderblom) met with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency and provincial food safety experts to review the manual. This meeting generated a number of improvements that can be made to the manual. The C-BISQT committee is now hard at work responding to the review team comments and incorporating the changes to the C-BISQT manual for honey producers. We expect to have a response back to the CFIA by April 2009.



Technical Review Team meet in Banff Alberta to review the C-BISQT manual.

Left to Right: Betty Vladicka (AARD), Warren Smandych (CFIA), Gilles Lemieux (CFIA), Peter Worthylake (CFIA), Tim Townsend (CHC), Debbie Fishbein (CFIA), Paul vanWestendorp (BCMAL), Jan Schooley (OMAFRA), Rhéal Lafrenière (CHC) and Heather Clay (CHC).



Regional Reports

Maritimes

As the year 2008 comes to a close we may take time to reflect on what will be remembered as an extraordinary year for both the beekeeping community and the world.

From record setting losses of bee colonies to record losses on the stock market, and with our own politicians determined not to be outdone by the election of a new President south of the border we have had lots to discuss over coffee in the morning.

The Maritime Beekeepers Association met in November for their annual meeting. I would like to thank them for their continued support and for my appointment for another year as their delegate to CHC. Provincial organizations are continuing to look for new ways to meet the resource requirements of operating effective organizations. In light of the current global economic situation it has never been more important to have and maintain effective and vocal producer groups; as our challenges and voices are easy to overlook by governments and other stakeholders



Tom Trueman

when the likes of General Motors and Chrysler come looking for aid.

The general consensus from maritime beekeepers was that colonies looked good going into winter with mite loads low and at acceptable levels, while many beekeepers are using oxalic acid treatment

as part of the management plan with good results it is recognized that additional tools must be found for the battle against varroa.

The 2008 wild blueberry crop in the maritime region was at record levels due in no small part to the work honey bees pollinating the crop. The heavy crop has created downward pressure on the price paid to growers but overall demand for pollination colonies should remain strong through 2009 as growers strive to maximize yields on an ever increasing land base.

Finally I would like to wish everyone a happy and prosperous 2009

Ontario

Ontario held their Annual General Meeting on Wednesday, December 10th in combination with the Symposium that was held on the Thursday, Friday

and Saturday. A lot of work in November was in preparation for this event. Attendance was good at all three days. There was a wide variety of speakers presenting and many topics covered at these sessions. A summary has been prepared by Brent Halsall and is available on the CHC website.

Dominion and Grimm has entered into an agreement with OBA to produce our plastic skep. We will now be receiving revenue on sales from D&G for glass and other containers sold to OBA members. This will be a welcome revenue stream for our association.

With the Ontario honey crop down from previous years, there is more honey moving between beekeepers in Ontario. The price is around \$1.40 to \$1.50 a pound.

It started snowing in early November and caught a lot of us without our bees packed. Since then it has been unusually snowy. So much for that mild winter we were suppose to have.

The provincial government was not forth coming with



Dan Walker

financial aid for winter loss this year. The federal government also declined money to Ontario for disaster relief. The only help will be payment for financial loss of income under the Agri Stability program.

2009 looks to be a busy year and our board of directors and committees will be active in many beekeeper issues.

Wishing you and your family a prosperous 2009.

Manitoba

Manitoba held its 103rd AGM in Neepawa on November 19, 2008.

We had over 40 people attending, for a province having approximately 190 beekeepers with 50 hives or more it was a good turnout. We are looking into out sourcing our Advance Payment Program (APP) to a growers

association. The Corn Growers in Manitoba takes care of APP for many small groups in Manitoba. Our Treasurer Lois Simpson has been working diligently with the MBA for many years would like to retire

BeeMaid



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this summer 2009 and spend more time at the cabin with family and friends. The MBA is currently looking for a new treasurer. We are hoping to have our Fee/Levy approved by the Farm Products Marketing Council. Our new membership fees will be (fee \$200, \$0.40/col) up to a maximum of 1000 colonies. Manitoba doesn't have a formal commission like other prairie provinces.

Paul Gregory is the MBA's representative at Keystone Agriculture Producers (KAP). Paul reported that KAP represents about 7500 farm families. They have been working on the Employment Standards Code for Agricultural workers, the further reduction of Education School Tax on farmland, input costs, and the impending Workers Compensation program. Paul identified the Canadian Federation of Agriculture continues to actively lobby Federal Agriculture Minister Gerry Ritz.

Marg Smith, 2nd VP of the Red River Apiarist Association, reported on the group's activities for the past year. Smith noted adding "New Display Panels" and "Distributing Honey Cooking" elements to the recent MBA honey show in Winnipeg generated much public interest.

James (Bev) Clark of the Brandon Area Beekeepers Association (BABA) reported to the group. They meet the 3rd Tuesday of

every month together with commercial and hobby beekeepers to discuss issues and share information. At their last meeting they dealt with Workers Compensation and Apivar topics.

David Osterman, Extension Apiarist, presented the MAFRI Apiculture and Apiary Inspection report. Lab test results noted evidence of both Nosema Apis/Cerana, but the biggest concern still remains Varroa.

Ms. Gauthier, Provincial Minor Use Co-ordinator, Crops Branch, Carman, MB, spoke of her role in the registration process. She noted users/commodity groups may request minor use of specific know products, whereas typically Organizations/Chemical Companies make submissions for new products.

The following 4 members were elected to a 3 year Board Director term: Bill Lockhart, Jake Maendel, Chris Rempel, and Earl Dueck. We also had an election for a 2 year term after one of our director resigned. Ron Rudiak was elected for the 2 year term.

The 103rd Annual convention of the Manitoba Beekeepers' Association will be at Canad Inns-Fort Garry, Winnipeg on March 6-7, 2009. Some of our key speakers will include:

- ▶ Dr. Tanya Pankiw, Associate Professor Texas A & M University, Texas, USA

- ▶ Pierre Giovenazzo, Professor, Laval University, Quebec City, Quebec
- ▶ Melanie Kempers, Ontario Tech-Transfer Team, Ontario Beekeepers Association, Guelph, Ontario

It's the Place to Bee before starting a new season. Come out socialize with beekeepers and learn the latest information on research and extension activities.

Saskatchewan

Rolling the dice seems to fit well with this past honey crop in Saskatchewan. Final, conservative estimates are in the 185-lb/colony range for the 2008 SK honey crop. However, there are reports of lows of 150-lb/colony to highs of 350-lb/colony. The repopulation of winter losses was a partial factor in the lower overall average for the 2008 season. Bees in Saskatchewan headed into winter in decent condition. Beekeepers have been more diligent to ensure proper and timely testing and control for mite infestation to help ensure overwintering losses are kept to a minimum following two years of higher than average losses.

There have been many beekeepers in SK leading the way with the use of

formic and oxalic for the treatment of mites. Five of these individuals that have had success, based on provincial apiarist samples, spoke during the bear pit session of our SBA AGM and Convention in early December to share their success and failures with these products. Unfortunately, these products do not necessarily work the same in all locations/climates in regards to best treatment timing and thus efficacy of the products. We were fortunate to have these individuals educate us on their individual methods so that we can all maximize the efficacy of these products in our own operations. It was great to hear that all of these beekeepers have been having favourable results using the "soft chemicals".



Corey Bacon

Even with the retirement of numerous

Saskatchewan beekeepers over the past three years, colony numbers have remained stable in the province and with an increasing number of younger generation beekeepers emerging there is potential to see colony numbers begin on an upward trend. Honey prices have remained favourable in the \$1.50/lb range since late spring. There have been some spikes in both directions but going into December prices remain stable and expectations are for them to remain or slightly increase

into later winter.

The SBA "Saskatraz" research project is now five years running strong. Selected daughter stock will once be again available to all beekeepers spring through fall with all funds remaining within the project for continued research. The project is also looking at a feasibility study to set up a sister "Saskatraz" operation in Chile. The goal of course would be to allow the project to continue propagation, evaluation and selection of desired traits and stock (honey production and varroa mite tolerance) year round, increasing the rate at which results can be produced. Congratulations to the new CHC board members and executive. Thank you to the outgoing directors and especially to the outgoing President Ed Nowek for 5 years of dedication to the organization and industry. Wishing you health and prosperity in the new year.



Jerry Poelman

grateful for Apivar even though it wasn't available until mid September. The concern is that with late treatment the damage may

have all ready been done by some heavy varroa mite loads. There have also been a couple of stories that other products were used first but failed and when Apivar was used there were mite drops of up to 1500 in 24 hours. It is reassuring that there is good efficacy with this new product. We are also unsure about the impact of Nosema on our colonies.

Our provincial apiculturist, Medhat Nasr, has indicated that initial results from random testing suggest low levels this fall.

Hive health is our foremost concern in Alberta. We are actively pursuing the availability of healthy and affordable replacement stock.

There doesn't seem to be much inventory of honey left in the province. This year has seen better prices in the \$ 1.40 to \$ 1.65 range but with a below average crop and high losses this spring, beekeepers did not benefit as much as they had hoped. As usual though they are cautiously optimistic for the next season.

There are still some nervous beekeepers in Alberta with regards to hive health. Beekeepers are extremely

British Columbia

British Columbia enjoyed a long mild fall in 2008. This left bees and beekeepers with lots of time to prepare for winter.

However, when winter arrived in the latter half of November it was more severe than winters we have experienced in the recent past. By the middle of December temperatures in many parts of the province

were below -30C with lots of snow. Even Vancouver and Victoria have received snow and cold temperatures.

Honey sales remain strong but beekeepers are concerned

that sales will be affected by the current recession. Honey can be purchased in some large retail outlets for \$4.00 per kg. Honey that is produced and packed by B.C. beekeepers is still selling in the \$10 to \$14 range for a 1Kg container.



Ted Hancock

BeeMaid

Bee Maid Honey Limited (Bee Maid), the Alberta Honey Producers Cooperative Limited (AHPCL) and the Manitoba Cooperative Honey Producers Limited (MCHPL) announce the election results and reorganization of their Boards,



Lorne Peters

which took place at their recent Annual General Meetings. Directors of the two producer cooperatives form the board of Bee Maid Honey Ltd.

Mr. Bill Bygarski from Brandon, MB was re-elected Chair of the Board of Directors of Bee Maid and Vice-Chair of the MCHPL.

Mr. Elmer Zumwalt from Beaverlodge, AB was re-elected Vice-Chair of Bee Maid and Chair of the AHPCL.

Mr. Neil Specht from Etonia, SK has been elected Executive Member of Bee Maid and Vice-Chair of the AHPCL.

Mr. Ron Bacon from Kinistino, SK has been elected Executive Member of Bee Maid and Chair of the MCHPL.

Mr. Rob Dickson from Grimshaw, AB and Mr. Tim Townsend from Wanham, AB were elected to the Board of Directors of the AHPCL, and joined director Mr. Barrie Termeer from Rollyview, AB.

Ms. Margaret E. Smith from St. Andrews, MB was elected to the Board of Directors of the MCHPL and joins Directors Mr. Christopher Warriner from Big River, SK and Mr. Lorne Peters from Kleefeld, MB.

Mr. Lorne Peters has also been appointed as the Bee Maid Director,

to serve on the Board of Canadian Honey Council.

Bee Maid Honey Ltd. is the marketing arm of the AHPCL and MCHPL. Honey produced by beekeepers of western Canada is processed and packed at the Spruce Grove, AB and Winnipeg, MB plants. Bee Maid Honey is North America's largest single source honey marketer, proudly packing 100% pure Canadian honey.

The Manitoba Cooperative Honey Producers Ltd. is celebrating our 70th year in business. During the Noon-Hour Luncheon at our 2008 Annual General Meeting, special recognition was given to recently retiring Bee Maid CEO Mr. Gordon Marks. In attendance included past members and directors of the organization, as well as current and former government and industry representatives. Also in attendance were Gordon's wife Laurette and daughters, Andrea and Celine. Those not able to attend sent special messages of well wishes for Gordon's retirement.

Gordon not only worked on behalf of Bee Maid but also served on various committees with Canadian Honey Council. He was also as a trusted industry resource person and worked for the entire Canadian honey bee industry. His dedication and positive influence will be missed; however we want to wish him all the best.



Thanks to Honey "Dreams Can Come True"

Geoff Todd, CHC, Calgary, AB

Nicole Hein, pictured here with her horse, is a 12 year old Saskatchewan girl who came up with a new concept of packaging honey. Her enterprising idea was spurred by her dream of owning her own horse. In order to buy a horse she needed a good idea for raising money. One day when she saw her mother Gayle, struggling with a squeezable honey container she wondered if honey could be put into more convenient tubes. Exploring this good idea she came up with the portability and convenience of honey in a tube. Now marketed as Tu-Bees Creamed honey Nicole has sold enough product to help her purchase her buddy, "Diesel", the horse.



from Dave Guran and family at Guran Honey Farm and package it in laminated plastic tubes for sale in Saskatchewan and on line. Gayle was recently at the Canadian Beekeeper's Convention in Niagara Falls looking for expansion into the eastern Canadian market. The family vision is to become a household name in Canada. They are interested in finding a honey producer who could pack and distribute in the eastern market.

Good things come in small packages. The 100% Canadian creamed honey is packed in 140g squeezable tubes and is marketed as "specially made for honey lovers on the go".

For more information contact Gayle Hein www.tu-bees.com.

Tu Bees is a family owned business located in Warman Saskatchewan. They purchase 100% Canadian honey



Getting the Scoop on the Chicago Honey Coop

Adony Melathopoulos, Agriculture Agri-Food Canada, Beaverlodge, AB

The Chicago Honey Coop is likely one of the largest and most successful urban beekeeping operations in North America. It operates 80 colonies from one apiary in the economically depressed neighbourhood of North Lawndale. The Coop currently has 37 members. I caught up with one of the Coop's founders, Michael Thompson, during a visit to Chicago in November, 2008. Michael has been keeping bees for over 40 years and is a prominent figure in the very vibrant urban agriculture movement in Chicago. The Coop is one of a number of success stories within that movement; it exists as an independent business that operates without

grants, while at the same time tackling pressing urban social issues such as food security, unemployment and agricultural education.

The Coop and its Operations

Adony: How did the Chicago Honey Coop come into existence?

Michael: In the winter of 2003 three beekeepers got together and decided to kick around the idea of a co-operative. We decided that we had some shared goals. There were three goals in fact. Firstly it was to create a business that could support itself. Number two was to produce a delicious healthy product that you could hold in your hand.

Finally, we wanted to do job training. It was surprising to me that we could arrive at shared goals and then realise them in less than a year. I think that has to do with the livestock that we deal with, I mean honey bees are so fast; once they get going there is no stopping them.

Adony: There have not been new honey-producing cooperatives in North America for over sixty years. Why did you decide on a cooperative structure?

Michael: Tim Brown, one of the three founders, was the first to say the words "Chicago Honey Coop". So we investigated what an agricultural cooperative would mean in Illinois. When I read the rules, which were written in the 1930s, they were incredibly accessible. The document was not long, it was clear and it seemed to fit what we were doing. After five years we are still living, we're still producing honey and it is delicious.

Adony: How has the structure operated in terms of financing your venture and getting broad participation in the organisation?

Michael: It has been both good and bad. Many people are attracted to the idea of a cooperative and for that reason we grew very fast. That was very helpful for

the first two years. Some of those members we never see. That's not good. The word cooperative is kind of a general term that can mean many things, so I think people are curious about it, which is a good thing. Recently people are especially interested in it because they see it as a fairer approach, and it is. I mean, people say to me "are you the owner", well no, I am not the owner. The members own it and I don't mind saying that.

Adony: Where does the Coop sell its goods? What products does it sell?

Michael: The Coop sells honey from its own hives at three farmers markets a week during the summer. We sell honey, sometimes pollen, several different kinds of beeswax candles and three body products that were developed by one of the beekeepers (Arnett); a moisturiser, a bath scrub and a lip balm.

Adony: How many people does the Coop employ?

Michael: We decided to have a job-training program when we first started. In our first year we had twenty trainees and it was really way too much. The second year we had ten and now it is closer to two or three a year because that is how it works best.

We employ two beekeepers full-time and we each get paid \$10 per hour. In the summer we hire two other beekeepers. We do everything together: we all go to market, we do all the beekeeping and we help with production.

Adony: I understand that the Coop apiary site has more than just bees. There are community gardens. There are events. Could you tell me about these?

Michael: One of the things we decided about the site where we are, which is a 95% African-American neighbourhood, is that we would be as open to the neighbours as possible. We would not only engage them, but we would also invite them to come. We

were very lucky because there is both a big parking lot for the bees, and a huge area of land that has reverted back to prairie.

As for events, they are never exactly planned. The greatest thing recently was that Slow Food Chicago approached us two years ago and they wanted to have an event there that would benefit the Coop. It has become an annual food event. It has turned out to be a perfect mix of people; neighbours came, people came from all over the city and suburbs.

We have also had what some people call agri-tourism. People constantly want to have tours of the site.

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Keeping Bees in the City

Adony: *Why keep bees in the city? How many colonies do you think Chicago could support?*

Michael: For me keeping bees in the city is a logistic issue: I live in the city so why not keep bees here? I don't want to travel miles and miles to get to them. I'd rather just take the subway. Plus the other reason is that in the city you don't have the agricultural pollution that might exist in rural areas. We have had several city honeys tested for heavy metals and they are fine.

The number of colonies that could be supported in the city seems unlimited. There is probably a limit, but I have never imagined it. One of the other reasons we keep bees in the city is the quantity and diversity of flora. The amount of nectar forage is unbelievable. Just one example is the linden trees. There are probably millions of those trees in Chicago planted as shade trees. They make delicious honey.

Adony: *If there are so many advantages to keeping bees in the city why then are there so few colonies in the city? Why are there 5 million colonies in rural areas and maybe fewer than 1000 colonies in North American cities?*

Michel: Most people don't understand that you can grow food in the city. They don't understand that the city is as natural a space as a rural area. In fact in some ways it's better here, in that there is more nectar forage. When I moved to Chicago I didn't understand that and I have been beekeeping since

I was a child. And here I was in my early twenties thinking, "oh, maybe it won't work". Well of course it worked very well, because of the density of trees and shrubs. There is now an urban farming movement right here in this city and it exists in many other cities.

Adony: *What are the challenges to securing tenure on apiary sites in the city?*

Michael: I am not sure I think tenure is necessary, unless you mean temporary tenure, because a city the size of Chicago offers so many sites. There are probably millions of rooftops, empty parking lots that nobody uses any more and railway right-of-ways. The challenges to securing these are specific to each site. The biggest challenge is the fear-factor from neighbours.

Adony: *What about municipalities? What role can they play to helping or hindering you to getting apiary sites?*

Michael: Again, it is specific to the city or village. In Chicago we are lucky we don't have any problems with this. There are no rules against having bee hives in the city, although there are rules around being a public nuisance. So if a neighbour decides to report you to the Department of Buildings then you can be cited and fined. Then you might need to move the colonies or somehow figure out what the problem is and try to solve it. I only confronted this issue once in my long urban beekeeping career and that was many years ago.

Adony: I understand that there are honey bee colonies on the roof of Chicago City Hall in the downtown loop. How do colonies fair in the middle of a very urban setting?

Michael: We have a theory now that beehives do better on rooftops. Some beekeepers believe that it has to do with the fact that it's drier and better ventilated, and this makes sense because the rooftop hives are doing very well. Nobody gets hurt. The honey is delicious. The rooftop colonies actually make more honey and may have better winter survival than colonies on the ground.

Adony: *How about the challenges of operating in an urban space? It must rarely be ideal.*

Michael: We have been very lucky to have kind help from friends. The first season we extracted honey in a kitchen on the third floor of an apartment building. So we had to take four thousand pounds of honey up the stairs and then back down again. That was not ideal. But luckily a very kind Coop member, offered us a space in a furniture warehouse. There is a loading dock and a freight elevator. I mean those logistics are a problem and are big things to solve. Right now it seems perfect, I have to say, but I also know it's not always going to be like this

Thinking Ahead / Forward Thinking

Adony: *You were recently invited to attend the Slow Food conference Terra Madre in*

Torino, Italy. How do you see the Coop's work in the fast-paced city being inline with those of Slow Food?

Michael: The thing about Terra Madre is that it is not about geography. It is about how one cares for the land where you are producing food. So it's not about whether it is in a city or a rural setting. For me it's about, people who are part of this movement of people who care about the earth and who care about production and local exchange. We are not the only ones doing it in a city. It has always happened. We will always grow food in cities, but it's not talked about that much. I was very happy to be in Torino because there was a real possibility of learning so much from the people who had come from all over the world to celebrate this honouring of the earth: Terra Madre.

Adony: *How do you think about rural beekeeping? How would you like rural beekeepers to think about what the Co-op is doing in the city?*

Michael: I was a bee inspector for the State of Illinois for both Cook and Lake Counties. I travelled around a lot then. The urban and the rural have so much to learn from one another. The resources that exist among beekeepers are vast and we like to share our knowledge. So when I think about rural beekeeping, I think about that, I think about what we can share; markets, equipment, transportation. I don't know that the relationship is symmetrical,

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Plants for Bees: Bee balm

Doug Clay, Research Scientist, Calgary, AB

Common Name: Bee Balm also known as Bergamot or mountain mint, Oswego tea, spotted horsemint.

Scientific Name: *Monarda* Spp. including *M. fistulosa* L., *M. didyma* L., *M. punctata* L.

Native Range:

Bee balm or *Monarda* spp. is an indigenous genus to North America made up of 16 species from the mint family (*Lamiaceae*). They are found from James Bay to the Gulf of Mexico. An Old World genus of mints often referred to as 'bee balm' or lemon balm is *Melissa* spp. — no relation to *Monarda* spp., however still very attractive to bees and other pollinators. Bee balm seeds are sold around the world for their showy flowers and herbal qualities.

The genus *Monarda* was named by Linnaeus in honour of Nicolàs Monardes a Spanish physician and botanist who wrote a 3 volume text describing native medicinal plants from the Americas in 1574.

Canadian Distribution:

M. didyma is found from Ontario to the Maritimes and south to Georgia. *M. fistulosa* can be found throughout the Prairies as well as most of the rest of southern Canada, except the Maritimes. *M. punctata* or horsemint is found in southern Ontario and Quebec but is widely distributed in the central and eastern USA.

Description:

Bee balm are erect, herbaceous plants from 0.2 to 1.2 m in height, with lanceolate opposite leaves on a square stem. The leaves are generally smooth and lightly serrated, often grey-green in colour. The leaves are a source of spicy fragrant oil, *M. didyma* (Oswego tea) has the highest concentration of these essential oils.

The plants are annual or perennial with flowers forming head-like clusters at the end of the stems with colours ranging from red to pink to lilac and sometimes white. Long tubules produce nectar that is harvested by bumblebees and other nectar gatherers. In some species or varieties (*M. didyma* 'Jacob Cline') the tubules are too long for the honey bee tongue to reach. In these cases the honey bees must wait for other insects to bore holes in the base of the tubule.

Ecology

Monarda spp. prefers full sun and moist soils, plants growing in partial shade have fewer flowers and tend to be spindly. They tolerate a wide variety of soils but prefer those rich in organic matter. The essential oils found in the plant make them resistant to many pests including rusts and many viruses, however they can succumb to mildew in areas of high humidity. Some gardeners use the bee balm as a 'companion' plant to protect the roots of more susceptible vegetables (eg. tomatoes) from pests.

In Canada, bee balm blooms from June to August. In the west, bergamont (*M. fistulosa*) is often found

on lee slopes of the Rockies where soil is thick and rich collect providing extra sp has recently been found in and Quebec. It is unknown recent migration or a recent be found on disturbed sites forest patches on sandy w



Spotted horsemint (*M. punctata*) nectar for honey bees.

Methods of Reproduction

Seeds can be collected by flower heads in paper bags to continue drying (ripened) stored for several years but their vigor.

Monarda spp. spreads naturally. Spreading can be enhanced by systems after several years to die out.



Mountain foothills and winter snows bring moisture. *M. punctata* is limited to a few areas of Ontario and Quebec. This is a relatively easy plant to find; they tend to grow in cleared areas — often in cleared and well drained soils.



Monarda punctata is a good source of

and Spread:

Placing the drying plants in a warm, dry place and allowing them to dry (about 2-3 weeks). The seeds can be stored for up to 5 years before they begin to lose

viability by rhizomes. Propagation is done by splitting large root pieces when the center begins

Honey/Pollen Potential:

Lovell states that the best bee balm for honey production is *M. punctata*, found in the central and southern USA and rarely in southern Ontario and Quebec. That may have been more a function of his familiarity rather than a comparative study. In the early 1900's bee balm seed was sold for plantings for thymol production and bees.

The two most widely distributed species in Canada (*M. fistulosa* and *M. didyma*) have a longer corolla that limits nectar harvest by honey bees to years with adequate rainfall. The corolla must be full with nectar for bees to access this source. Occasionally wasps or other insects will cut holes in the lower part of the corolla and this allows access for the bees.

The flowers bloom from 4 to 6 weeks (or longer in rainy seasons). Honey production values range from 10 to 40 kg per colony and the honey is light amber with a minty flavor.

Reference:

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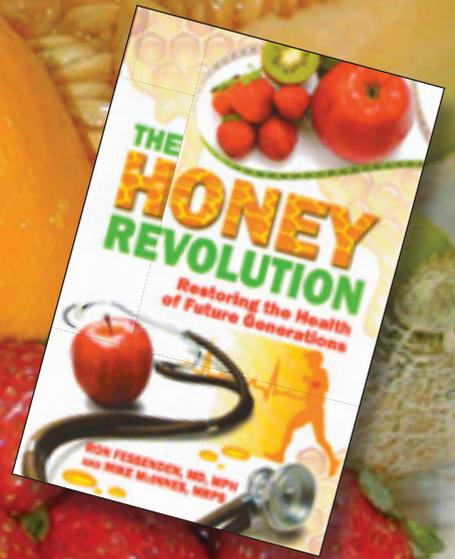
Interesting Possibilities:

Several plants that produce essential oil crops are native to Canada (e.g. *Monarda* and *Mentha*). As these are minor acreage crops they are rarely used by beekeepers. Bee balm, once grown for herbal remedies, is a source of thymol, one of the essential oils showing promise for varroa treatments. *M. fistulosa*, *M. didyma*, and *M. punctata* are on many lists of new and innovative crops for herbal, aromatic, and oil products being recommended around the world. *M. punctata*, a proven nectar producer, once thought not to grow in Canada, could be tried in suitable southern zones. The Agriculture Agri-Food Canada Research Station at Morden, Manitoba, has produced several new varieties of bee balm for the flower industry. It may be possible to breed or hybridize a variety with shorter corolla to allow better access by honey bees. With additional uses for honey and herbal products, *Monarda* could offer an opportunity for consideration by small scale farmers.



Honey for Diabetes? Yes!

Ron Fessenden, MD, MPH. Mike McInnes, MRPS



There have been countless times in the past couple of years during some occasion in which I have been speaking about the health benefits of honey when someone soundly objects, “Oh, I can’t eat honey. I have diabetes. My doctor has told me to avoid all sweets.” Such, unfortunately, is the state of knowledge about honey among the general public and among most health professionals. The conventional wisdom is that honey and diabetes don’t go together.

Rather than arming patients with facts to refute the apparent ignorance of their health care professional — a tactic bound to fail — a better strategy is suggested. Diabetic patients should simply ask their doctor if fruits are permitted in their diets. Since the question is a bit rhetorical, they can have confidence in knowing that honey is permitted. A tablespoon of honey consists of nearly the same carbohydrate content as a cupful of quartered raw apple. The diabetic patient can also be assured that consuming honey will produce a significantly lower blood sugar response

than an equivalent amount of sugar or other glucose rich starches.

When consumed regularly over several weeks or months, honey will lower blood sugar and HbA1c levels. Glycosylated (or glycated) hemoglobin, or HbA1c as it is commonly known, is a marker used by physicians to identify the average plasma glucose (blood sugar) concentration over prolonged periods of time. The measurement will be proportional to the average blood glucose concentration during a period of time typically considered to be one to three months prior to the measurement. Research studies using humans have shown that honey consumption will result in lower

blood sugar levels by as much 60 to 100 mg/dl at 60 and 90 minutes following ingestion of a comparable amount of sucrose. Therefore it is not surprising that the HbA1c levels will be lower by as much as 2 to 4%. This dietary change alone would mandate tremendous differences in the treatment recommendation guidelines followed by most physicians.

It would no doubt result in much less medicine being prescribed. In fact, the more advanced one’s glucose intolerance, or in other words the worse their diabetic condition, the greater the positive impact on blood sugar levels from ingesting honey. Logic would dictate that the addition of honey to the diet, along with the elimination of most sugar and HFCS should be the first recommended treatment of choice for Type 2 Diabetes.

It may surprise most Americans to learn that in many countries around the world that is, in fact, the case. How can this be so and what

Dr. David Baer, from the USDA Human Nutrition Research Center stated at the First International Symposium on Honey and Human Health in January 2008, “Experimental evidence suggests that consumption of honey compared to other sweeteners may improve blood sugar control and insulin sensitivity.” Honey is indeed the sweetener of choice for diabetics.

makes honey so tolerable for those with conditions marked by glucose intolerance? The answer is really quite simple. The balance of sugars and the presence of multiple co-factors in honey serve to make this natural food quite different than table sugar, HFCS or other artificial sweeteners. Honey is an intelligent food, an informed food, a miraculous natural substance!

The physiologic mechanisms responsible for this unique response of the body to honey versus other sugars, HFCS or other starches are not completely understood. We do know that honey is directly converted to liver glycogen and does not raise blood sugar levels as does sucrose or HFCS even though it contains the same simple sugars. This fact alone is indication enough to recommend honey for diabetics.

How much honey is enough? Generally, three to five tablespoons of honey a day is sufficient. A good regimen to follow is to consume a tablespoon or two of honey in the morning with fruit or yogurt (diabetics should avoid "low-fat" yogurt as it contains HFCS) or cereal. Another tablespoon should be consumed at bedtime to insure restorative sleep. In between, another one or two tablespoons can be ingested with fruit snacks, in baked goods, or as used in cooking. In addition, honey is an excellent fuel when eaten twenty to thirty minutes prior to exercise.

Honey contains about 60 Calories per tablespoon. Generally, the percentage of ones total caloric requirements provided from simple sugars should not exceed 10%. Thus, the 180 to 300 calories a day provided from honey is sufficient, unless excessive energy demands allow for additional consumption.

Excerpted with permission from *The Honey Revolution - Restoring the Health of Future Generations*, Ron Fessenden, MD, MPH and Mike McInnes, MRPS, WorldClassEmpire, LLC 2008. Purchase The Honey Revolution book or the Hibernation Diet online from www.thehoneyrevolution.com.



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- Alexandra from Lunenburg, Ontario
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- Bethany from Tatamagouche, Nova Scotia
- Mazlynne from Rocanville, Saskatchewan
- Markus from Lamont, Alberta

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Very well done and thanks to all of the other Kids who entered.



Pierre

(the Canadian Honey Council's Mascot)

Canada avoids funny honey from China

by Ron Friesen

Reprinted from Manitoba Co-operator, 19 January 2009

An international wave of fraudulently disguising, repackaging and reselling honey imported from China appears to be bypassing Canada. Canada's federal honey regulations and monitoring programs are keeping illegal, adulterated and contaminated honey out of the country, according to the Canadian Food Inspection Agency. "At this point in time, I've got no evidence to suggest we're seeing that," said Tom Hauschild, national manager for CFIA's dairy, egg and honey programs. "We've got a lot of confidence in our monitoring programs."

The Canadian honey industry also says there's no sign that so-called "laundering" of Chinese honey occurs here. "The short answer is no," said Guy Chartier, CEO of Bee Maid Honey Ltd. in Winnipeg. Recent media reports suggest illegally "transshipping" Chinese honey - importing it, rebranding it and selling it to a third party - is common in the United States and some other countries. The apparent purpose is to avoid health inspections, import fees and special tariffs erected to prevent dumping of cheap foreign honey.

A recent story in the Seattle Post Intelligencer described elaborate schemes to smuggle Chinese honey into the U.S., falsify country of origin and re-route the product to buyers at home and abroad. After following the honey trail for five months, the paper found that large shipments of laundered Chinese honey are often imported from 13 countries (not Canada) and falsely relabelled as coming from those places. In one case, drums of Chinese honey were labelled "Polish Light Amber Honey."

Because the U.S. is a net importer of honey (Canada is a net exporter), honey scams are seen as financially worthwhile. "There're more crooks than ever and it has become a really nasty business out there," Elise

Gagnon, CEO of Odem International Inc., a large Quebec-based honey trading house, was recently quoted as saying.

Cases of honey fraud are reported in other countries, too. Last year in Australia, two companies were fined for importing and relabelling containers of Chinese honey as Australian. Last month, India passed legislation to prevent its ports from becoming laundering points for Chinese honey.

Besides smuggling, another concern is that honey originating from China is sometimes adulterated with other sugars and even contaminated with antibiotics. In 2002, CFIA found traces of chloramphenicol, an antibiotic linked to a rare but serious human side effect called aplastic anemia, in Chinese honey shipments during its on-going monitoring program. Hauschild said CFIA immediately issued a huge recall and began testing every single shipment of Chinese honey for veterinary drugs, heavy metals and other chemical residues. The practice continues to this day. CFIA also tests both imported and domestic honey for other sugars to ensure against adulteration, Hauschild said.

The Canada Agricultural Products Act contains rules to regulate the import, export and interprovincial trade of honey. Federal regulations also include honey standards which make it easier for inspectors reject shipments failing to meet the criteria.

Statistics Canada reported that one million kg of honey from China entered this country in 2007. It's not known how much, if any, of that product was rejected.

Chartier said Canadian importers tend to avoid Chinese honey because of negative past experiences with it.

"Why isn't there more honey coming in from China? It's probably because most people don't want to touch it," he said. "A lot of people got burned and that's why they've been staying away from Chinese (honey)." Chartier said Bee Maid, a co-operative owned by Manitoba and Alberta producers, sells only 100 per cent Canadian honey.

Although Canada so far appears free of Chinese honey laundering, fears about a repeat of last year's contaminated baby milk and pet food scandals make it important for officials to continue on their guard, said Chartier. "Are we concerned? Sure, we're always concerned about these things because we don't want the honey name to be tarnished."

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New Year message

Asger Søggaard Jørgensen

President, International Federation of Beekeepers' Associations

Beekeepers around the world have met major problems in the last few years with massive losses of colonies and fluctuating honey markets. For many beekeepers, times have been tough. Many have asked themselves whether beekeeping is still a profitable enterprise.

The causes for colony losses have not yet been found, but we have established close co-operation among scientists and beekeepers to find solutions. Probably the problems are complex, since there may be more than one reason for these losses. In some instances the losses of colonies are caused by a combination of multiple determinants.

Scientists and beekeepers have compiled a list of possible factors to be investigated. The "Coloss" (Colony Losses) network, with the participation of Scientists and Beekeepers from 35 countries, is investigating the problems from many different points of view. At the next Apimondia Congress in Montpellier, France, scheduled to take place on 15 - 20 September 2009, we will all be able to hear about the latest findings as well as discuss with the scientists working on these problems. To solve this predicament with colony losses we need to work closely together among Scientists and Beekeepers to find solutions and we must be willing to look at all possibilities with open minds.

The world honey markets are experiencing difficult times. Low production of honey in major production areas of the world, combined with the global economic crisis, makes the future prospects unclear. The major honey traders and their organisations will meet at the Congress in Montpellier, giving us all a possibility to learn about the future prospects for apiculture worldwide. We are aware of the importance of apiculture for biodiversity and food production: the Congress will also be a possibility to share this knowledge with a larger audience.

I am pleased to announce that the preparation of the Congress is well underway. We have many sections of the programme ready and we are receiving more inputs through the papers submitted. I warmly invite you to visit the Congress website www.apimondia2009.com where you will find information about the scientific programme, submission of abstracts, the large ApiExpo with a variety of items and specific products to meet all beekeepers' needs. There will also be honey judging, contests and an attractive rich social programme. Beekeepers, scientists, honey traders, equipment producers, innovators and friends will meet in Montpellier: in one word, the Congress is for all involved in apiculture worldwide.

Montpellier is really worthwhile visiting. It is an old city in the South of France with high quality beekeeping and bee products in the region. You will find excellent food and wine and valuable tourist opportunities. For Apimondia and the local organiser, the Union Nationale de l'Apiculture Française, the preparations of the congress in Montpellier have the highest priority on our common agenda.

Nevertheless, Apimondia has other activities. We organise conferences and seminars on more specific topics in the years between the Congresses. In this respect, Apimondia has been very active in 2008. The following international events were organised by Apimondia in co-operation with other organisations:

- ▶ 2nd Apimondia International Forum "Apimedita and Apiquality", Rome, Italy;
- ▶ 1st Apimondia Honeydew Symposium, Burgas, Bulgaria;
- ▶ 2nd OIE-Apimondia Symposium "Diagnosis and Control of Bee Diseases", Freiburg, Germany;
- ▶ Apimondia Symposium on Good Management Practice (GMP) and Good Beekeeping Practice (GBP), Bucharest, Romania;
- ▶ 2nd International Apimondia Symposium "Selection, Queen Breeding and Instrumental Insemination", Nuevo Vallarta, Mexico;
- ▶ 10th International ICPBR Symposium "Hazards of Pesticides to Bees", Bucharest, Romania;
- ▶ 1st International Beekeeping and Pine Honey Congress, Mugla, Turkey.

The members of the Executive Council of Apimondia have also participated in many other events throughout the world distributing and collecting information.

During the last few years the activities of Apimondia have considerably increased. This is due to constant inputs from the Executive Council members, the General Secretariat in Rome and the Apimondia Foundation FIITEA in Romania. Apimondia benefits also from the active collaboration of the members of the International Honey Commission (Apimondia's scientific advisor on bee product quality), as well as co-operators from many Beekeepers' Organisations, Universities and scientists from the world over.

Of course, we also rely on the tremendous support we receive from our members, without whose support we could not achieve what we do. May I take this opportunity to thank all of you for your continuous contributions in making beekeeping a wonderful way of living.

May I wish you all a Prosperous New Year.

Looking forward to meeting you all in Montpellier,

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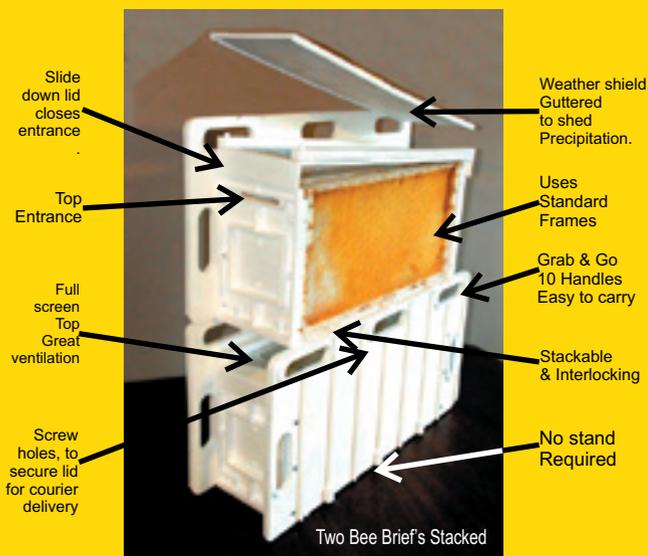
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Tips for honey exporting to & importing from Russia

Alexandre Faramazian, Alexandre Beekeeping Consulting, Montreal, QC.

Structure of the industry in Russia

Beekeeping has always been a traditional occupation in Russia, while honey itself is the favorite natural product of Russians. Russia is the biggest country in the world and it has large areas covered with forests, meadows and steppes. The country has true potential for beekeeping development.

Since the times of Catherine the Great (1762-1796), beekeepers have been free of taxation. During the Soviet era there was a department of Beekeeping at the state level in the Ministry of Agriculture. Soon after the fall of Soviet regime, the department was abolished and the government ceased its engagement in beekeeping, as well as providing financial support.

The Russian Agricultural Academy includes a Beekeeping Institute which is mainly engaged in selection work and development of state standards for beekeeping production.

There is not any clear and well-established system for beehive registration in Russia. As a consequence, there are no exact and reliable statistics on the number of bee colonies. However the national agricultural census recorded a total of 5.5 million bee colonies in 2006.

Beekeeping in Russia has always been aimed mainly at honey production. Thus, bee pollination of crops has never been a priority for Russian agriculture development. The only exception has been made for bee pollination in greenhouses, where bees have been widely used for this single purpose. As a consequence, Russian beekeepers have never been paid for crop pollination by agricultural companies. Moreover, they often have not been particularly welcome on the

fields and some agricultural companies have even charged a fee for setting an apiary on their fields.

There is no commercial beekeeping industry in Russia. A few beekeepers have 1000 colonies. About a hundred beekeepers have 200 – 300 colonies. The majority of beekeepers have less than 100 colonies. The average productivity of a single bee colony is 16.5-18 kg and the annual production of honey in Russia ranges from 80 to 100 thousand tons. For the last 10 years honey has been imported from other countries, mainly Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Moldavia. The annual importation has been 1 - 5 thousand tons.

The food processing industry consumes insignificant quantities of honey in Russia. Honey is mainly sold to consumers either packed in glass or plastic jars, or by weight in the customers own container. All the honey produced is consumed within the country.

The most popular monofloral varieties of honey are linden honey, buckwheat honey, and sweet clover honey. Sunflower is the most common and inexpensive variety of honey. Linden honey is collected mainly in wild forests of Bashkiria and the Far East. The taste and aroma of linden honey is highly prized and depends considerably on the location of the crop. In Russia consumers appreciate monofloral linden honey. The latter is widely and very successfully used for blending by honey packers in order to improve the taste qualities of polyfloral honey blends. Buckwheat and sweet-clover honey are mainly collected in the European part of the country. Besides food stores and supermarket chains, honey is also sold at special beekeeping products stores, which are very popular in Russia.

Exports from Russia

Exports make up no more than 0.5% of the quantity produced. According to a statistics report by the Russian Customs Committee, there were only 495.56 tons of honey exported from Russia in 2007, including 45 tons exported to the United States of America. Amazingly, according to a similar report by US Customs Service, there were 4,155.8 tons of honey imported from Russia in 2007. However, a joint American and Russian investigation, in which the author of this article was personally involved, found that for the last few years a number of unscrupulous businessmen have been importing bulk quantities of Chinese honey to the USA fraudulently re-labeled as Russian.

Russian honey is very attractive because of its good taste and there are many people who would like to buy it. However, when seeking Russian honey for export there are some issues to consider. There is not an efficient system for delivering apicultural services or monitoring apiaries in Russia. In most cases beekeepers prefer to treat bee diseases themselves using veterinary medicines, including antibiotics which they can freely buy at a nearby drugstore. They refer to instructions for use by the manufacturer and a guide to bee diseases issued by the Institute of Beekeeping of Russia. Except for Apistan®, all other bee-related medications used in Russia are domestic products.

The Russian veterinary services are willing to provide veterinary certificates that correspond to the form required by the country of the exporter. If necessary, they will write that there are no antibiotics in honey, despite the fact that they do not perform any kind of analysis on the given lot of honey. Quality control is complicated by the fact that none of the Russian honey processing enterprises has the appropriate equipment for the preparation of a large homogenized lot of honey. As

a consequence, this creates more difficulties as to sampling and getting reliable average analysis rate for a given bulk lot of honey, that actually consists of a number of smaller lots.

There are no legitimate methods for testing antibiotic content and there are no laboratories to carry out an appropriate analysis in Russia. To avoid difficulties it is better to check the quality of honey using a certified testing facility outside of the country.

The problem related to antibiotics is the most hazardous while working with Russian honey. All the other indicators, such as HMF, diastase, and humidity, are regulated according to fairly strict standards, and, as a rule, are met by the producers. For example, according to Russian standards, the maximum content of HMF must not be more than 25mg/kg.

Imports to Russia

In 2007 and 2008, Russia had a poor honey crop, which resulted in a significant price increase. Within two years the wholesale prices of raw polyfloral honey increased by 2.5 times in Moscow, from \$1.66 to \$4.08 USD. The resultant price increase has made the Russian market attractive for European Union suppliers of packed honey. Currently, a wide assortment of honeys from Austria, France, and Germany is offered together with domestic ones. The “Darbo” company’s honey is most widely distributed. Domestic honey packers started to bring honey from China, which has always been neglected because of its poor quality.

The procedure of importing honey into Russia is complicated by a large amount of required licensing documentation. The process is excessive, meticulous and involves different agencies including Customs, Border Veterinary Control Agency, Department of Tax and Revenues Agency and the Ministry of Agriculture. The importer must first

register the contract with Tax and Revenue Department. This honey purchase contract must be bilingual: in the language of the exporting country and in Russian. No payment may be made abroad until the importer completes the registration. There is a representative of the Department in every Russian bank.

An import licence is required by the Ministry of Agriculture and the application for this licence requires many accompanying documents that must be correctly filled in. There are inconsistencies between departments that can cause problems. For instance, in customs documents and in all Russian honey-related standards, honey is identified as “natural honey”. However in veterinary documents it is identified as “bee honey”. Importers are obliged to make a request to the Ministry of Agriculture for a letter explaining that “natural honey” and “bee honey” are two different names for the same product.

An enterprise intending to import honey should make a request to the Ministry of Agriculture concerning all the eventual general livestock imports restrictions that might be currently in force on the products originated from a given exporting country. For example, heat treatment is required for honey of Chinese origin, though the exact type of treatment is not mentioned. Therefore, in order to prevent any misunderstanding, the Chinese party presents a document that honey has been pasteurized.

The supporting documents must include confirmation that the honey does not contain antibiotics. Although the type of antibiotics is not detailed, the documentation must conform to certain established requirements. In the absence of facilities to perform tests, Russian authorities cannot verify claims made and to date not a single advanced level analysis has been done to detect antibiotics in honey.

There are other requirements that cannot be validated. For example, the

veterinary certificate must mention that honey was not treated with ionizing or ultraviolet rays. There is also a requirement stating that the microbiological indicators of honey must correspond to the veterinary and sanitary norms and regulations operating in Russia. This in spite of the fact there is no document in Russia that specifies the microbiological indicators in honey and nobody ever identifies them.

Within a 35 day period the Ministry must either grant or refuse import licensing based upon examination of the supporting documentation. In case of refusal, the importer has the right to submit the request again with new documentation. The whole procedure must be repeated within the same term.

Even after obtaining the import license for honey, it is necessary to make sure that the documentation satisfies all the formal requirements in order to get the honey through Border Veterinary Control at Customs. Faulty or incomplete documentation will effectively strand a lot of honey at a Customs warehouse until the importer submits all the documents required by officials, possibly for months. A daily penalty is charged for storage of product.

In order to avoid delays and confusion, it is better to work with companies that are experienced in honey import. Russia has quite a few companies having experience in imports of raw honey in bulk for further processing and blending.

Prepayment of honey sold to Russia is strongly recommended, no matter how secure and trustworthy the company that is buying honey seems to be. This is more due more to the unpredictability of Russian authorities, which quite often change the rules of the game on behalf of the government, than the possibilities of fraud by an importer.

but I know that when I am around rural beekeepers I can't ask them enough questions about their work, and they ask me about my work too. The great thing is that we can communicate easily with one another. It is important to be supportive of each other.

A good example was a beekeeping panel recently held at Garfield Park Conservatory in Chicago. Seventy some people showed up to learn about the challenges facing modern beekeeping, and the panel was split evenly across the board, with two rural beekeepers and two urban. That was a very exciting conversation. I didn't even sense the division, but I knew it. It was a natural thing and that is the beauty of what is going on right now. People are exchanging information and their knowledge, things that matter to them. Right now is a very special time for us beekeepers.

Adony: Where does the Coop see itself in five years from now?

Michael: We're always trying to think ahead. We want to be able to raise our own bees, produce Illinois queens and maybe sell nucleus hives. It has also been suggested that we become a distributor of beekeeping equipment. I don't know where the coop will be in five years, but wherever it is, we will continue to learn and maintain a flexible plan.

For more information - Chicagohoneycoop.com

Fred Rathje Award

Heather Clay CEO Canadian Honey Council

The Canadian Honey Council presents the Fred Rathje award each year to a person who has made a significant, positive contribution for the betterment of the bee industry of Canada. This year the award was presented to Roger Congdon, Past President (1987-1993) of the Canadian Honey Council. Roger runs a family operated business, Sun Parlor Honey in Cottam, Ontario and has been active in the Ontario Beekeepers Association as well as the Canadian Honey Council for many years.

Roger was actively involved as president of the CHC when tracheal mites and varroa mites were first detected in Canada in the late 1980's. The border to the USA was closed to the importation of honey bees during his presidency and this divisive issue threatened to undermine the organization. In the early 1990's, moves were made to find off shore supplies of quality honey bee stock and Hawaii was considered a good potential. By 1993 it was clear that this could be a suitable option if the national association would agree. After much heated discussion, the CHC Board of Directors voted on the importation of honey bee queens from Hawaii. The vote was a tie. As president, Roger was compelled to use his vote to break the tie. He took the high road and did not vote according to his province's position but in the national interest of the industry. Honey bee queens from Hawaii have been an excellent source of replacement queens and we are long overdue in acknowledging Roger's difficult decision and positive contribution in so many ways to the betterment of the honey bee industry.



Classifieds

Help Wanted

April to mid October. Basic beekeeping knowledge an asset, wages negotiable with experience; willing to train on the job. Accommodations available. Phone Dennis Keays at 306-873-4273, or email at keays01@sasktel.net

15 Beekeepers Wanted: Nipawin (SK) Full time beekeeping help, April to October.

Beekeeping experience would be preferred. Wages start at \$12.00 per hour. Contact Mark Knox, knoxapiaries@sasktel.net, 306-862-5657, Box 179 Nipawin, Sask. S0E 1E0.

Porcupine Plain(SK). Full time beekeeping help wanted for active beekeeping season.

Experienced beekeeper wanted for April to October. Wages based on experience \$12-15 per hour.

Contact Brad Lechler 306-278-2198, Porcupine Plain SK.

Seasonal Beekeepers: Rocanville (SK)

March - Oct. Experience Preferred. Wage \$12.75/hr based on experience

Contact: B.Strong Apiaries Ltd. email bdstrong@sasktel.net fax: (306) 645-4591

6 Seasonal Workers: Langenburg (SK)

Full time beekeeper required

Beekeeping experience an asset. Apr 15 till Oct 31, \$12.75 per hour. Glory bee Honey, phone 306-743-5469 or email DennisGlennie@sasktel.net for more information

3 Seasonal Beekeepers: Kinistino (SK) - March-December, mid July-December

Three Seasonal Beekeepers for work in a commercial bee and honey production operation from March through to December. Experience and knowledge in hive health and manipulation, bee (nuc & queen) production, honey production, maintenance and colony preparation is desirable. Wages range from \$8.50/hr - \$12.75 with bonuses, based on experience. Contact Corey Bacon beeranch@sasktel.net or Fax 306-864-3260

Seasonal Beekeepers: Nipawin (SK)

Experienced Beekeepers wanted for seasonal position in Nipawin area of Saskatchewan. Pay based on experience, housing and transportation. Contact Yves Garez ph: 306-862-5979 fax 306-862-5974 or email y.garez@sasktel.net

Shellbrook (SK). Need 12 willing beekeeping workers for Apr.-Nov. 2009 and 2010.

Pay starts at \$12.75 with bonuses based on performance. Training is on the job. Accommodations provided on rental basis.

Contact Murray: 306-747-3299 email: hanniganhoney@sasktel.net

Zenon Park (SK). Seasonal Beekeeper Wanted for April to November in Saskatchewan Honey Operation. Wages base on Experience. Contact Gerry Moyer phone 306-767-2757 or Fax Resume 306-767-2626 or Marcel mpm@sasktel.net

Two Seasonal and Four Summer Workers - Kinistino (SK)

Help wanted (7-8 months from April to November).

Two seasonal and four summer workers (2-3 months from July to Sept) are required in Northeastern Saskatchewan for two commercial honey operations.

Experience and knowledge of bee colonies and honey production would be required.

A valid drivers license is necessary and English speaking skills would be an asset but must be physical fit. Available to work evenings, weekends and some holidays is a must.

The hours range from 36-60 hours per week and rate of pay between \$8.50 to \$12.75 depending on experience.

Bacon Apiaries FAX resume with cover letter to 306-864-2451

Baconian Bee Farm FAX resume with cover letter to 306-864-3680

Seasonal Beekeepers & Unskilled labourers: Roblin (MB)

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Email Isabel at isy@wendell.ca
2315 Positions available at Wendell Honey in 2009

Also: 6 Unskilled labourers for the honey house and the bee yards (assistant apiarist) from April 20 to mid October 2009. Work is physically demanding. No experienced required. \$10.00 per hour.

Phone Tim or Isabel at 204 564 2315 email isy@wendell.ca or fax 204 564 2568

or fax resume to 204 564 2568 or mail Wendell Honey, Box 1439, Roblin, MB. R0L 1P0

4 Beekeepers: Shellbrook (SK)

Wanted 4 beekeepers for May to October 2009. Wages depending on experience. Contact Jason Rinas, Email: jasonrinas@hotmail.com or Phone: 306-747-2654

Mission (BC). 6 experienced beekeepers wanted from March-November. Preference will be given to candidates with queen rearing experience. Must be able to

operate truck and fork lift. Wages based on experience. Golden Ears Apiaries BC. Contact Jean Marc LeDorze, jmcshipley@shaw.ca or phone 604-820-6924.

Arborfield (SK). Two beekeepers and two beekeeper assistants needed for north eastern Saskatchewan. Wages based on experience. Accommodation available. Contact Brent McKee Box 329 Arborfield SK S0E 0A0 or email honey.bee@sasktel.net or phone 306-769-8830.

Vanderhoof (BC). Skilled Beekeeper wanted for April thru October 2009. Must have documented apiculture training and experience w/ noted work ethic. Resume and current references. Ability to manage bee stings. Class 5 with manual shifting skill. Motivated to communicate well. Fitness for heavy lifting. Experience managing pollen traps. Duties include hive inspection and management for over 300 colonies, lead extraction crews, Ready to train and assist in Queen rearing. Successful applicant will be a manager in training with incentives offered for following season rehire. Start at 10\$/hr, housing options explored. Basic English essential. J. Aebischer, Box 595, Vanderhoof BC, V0J 3A0 or email: sweet02@telus.net

Honeyland (BC). 3 experienced beekeepers wanted for February - November. Preference will be given to candidates with queen rearing and royal jelly production experience. Monthly salary range \$2300 - \$2800, depending on experience. Send resumes to manager@honeylandcanada.com, Honeyland Canada Fax 604-460-8887

Surrey (BC). Two experience beekeepers for February- October, 2009. Paying \$12 per hour and providing room and laundry facilities. Basic knowledge of honey bee colony management and honey extraction an asset. Ability to communicate in English essential. Contact John Gibeau gibeau@honeybeecentre.com.

Brandon (MB). One full time beekeeper position, 7 month term, April to November 2009. Salary \$12.50/hr + depending on experience. Contact Will Clark 204-728-4325 or willmarthoney@gmail.com

Aylesford (NS). Five Seasonal Beekeepers for work in a commercial bee pollination and honey production operation, from March through to December. Experience and knowledge in hive health and manipulation, bee (nuc & queen) production, honey production, maintenance and colony preparation is desirable. Wages range from \$8.10/hr - \$12.00 based on experience. contact jack.hamilton@ns.sympatico.ca or Fax: 902-847-9887

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The Canadian Honey Council, as the national voice of the Canadian honey bee industry, has served the industry for more than 50 years. During this long history the Council has been supported by generous donations from many individuals and organizations. To strengthen its relationships with current sponsors and encourage new sponsors, the Canadian Honey Council has created a Sponsorship Program to offer individuals and organizations opportunities to support the national organization and receive specified benefits and recognition in return.

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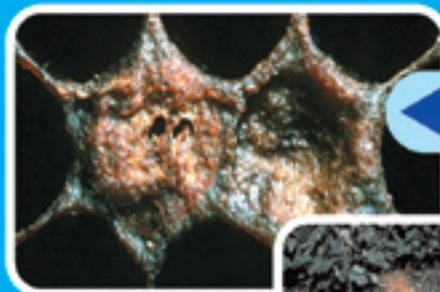
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AFB



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European Foulbrood (EFB) is a bacterial brood disease caused by several agents the main being the bacterium *Melissococcus pluton*. It occurs most

frequently in the spring or early summer during brood rearing and is thought to be caused by stress in the colony and lack of pollen. Symptoms can be variable which makes EFB difficult to identify with certainty; frequently disappearing once there is a nectar flow. But EFB can seriously affect brood development and needs to be identified in a colony as soon as possible.

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