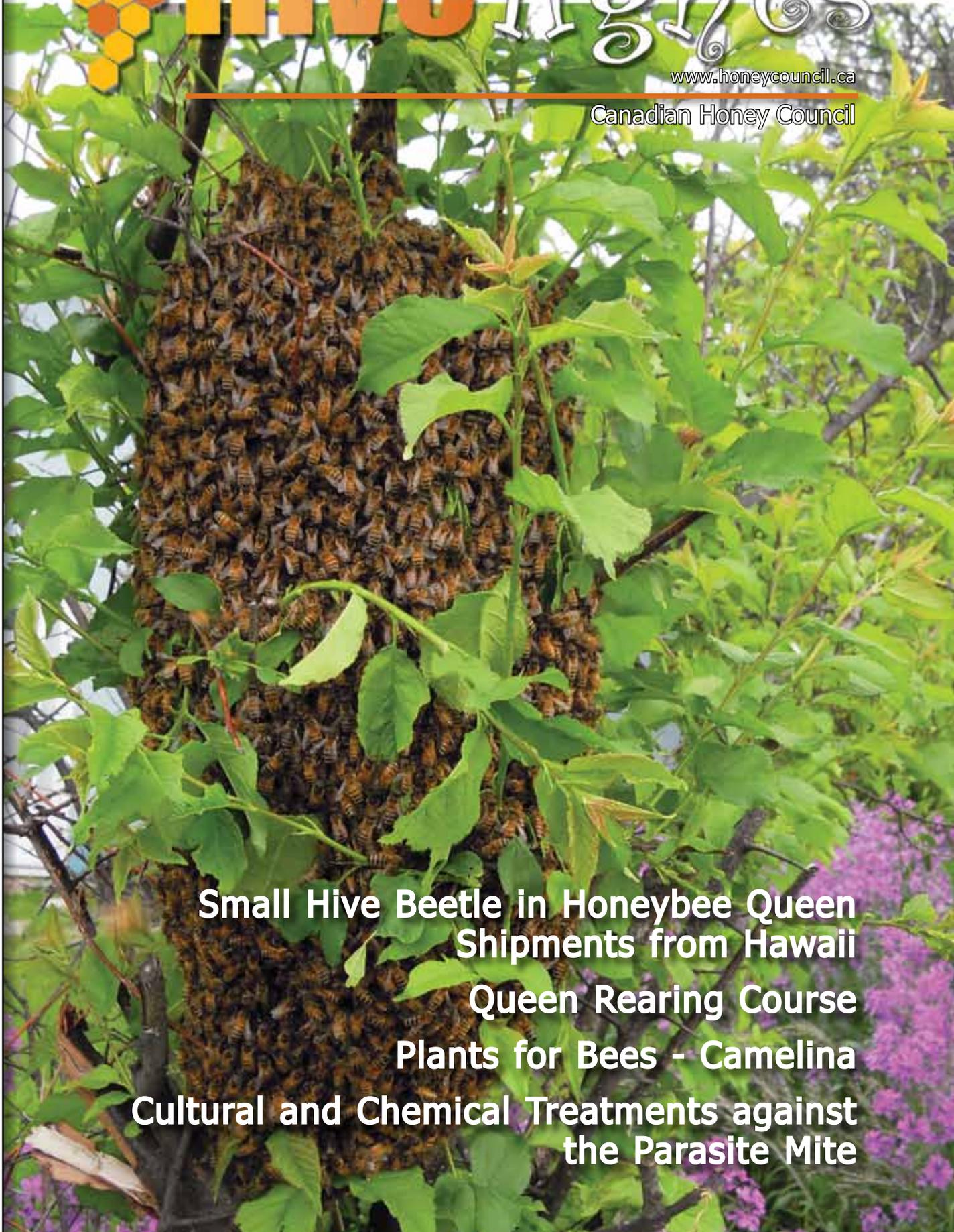




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Canadian Honey Council

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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.

Canadian Honey Council
#36 High Vale Crescent
Sherwood Park, AB T8A 5J7

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CANADIAN HONEY COUNCIL
#36 High Vale Crescent
Sherwood Park, AB T8A 5J7
chc-ccm@honeycouncil.ca
www.honeycouncil.ca
(877) 356 8935

HiveLights

August 2011 Vol 24 #3

Swarm of Honey Bees quietly and calmly resting on trunk of plum tree, Manitoba
Photo: Jim Campbell, MB



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Canadian Honey Council Report

Rod Scarlett, Executive Director, CHC

Six months into the job and I am now a little more comfortable in discussing bee and honey issues. Of course the small hive beetle issue remains front and centre for a number of beekeepers and bee enthusiast alike. Thus far, quarantine areas and inspections that have been put in place have proven to be successful in controlling small hive



provincial apiarists, will attempt to develop a long term strategy regarding small hive beetle and I encourage you to contact your provincial representative or myself and express your opinions.

The late spring that the prairies experienced certainly slowed the beekeeping industry. Cold weather and an abundance of snow delayed a number of operations and in some circumstances had a negative impact on hive numbers. Because of this, it has delayed the national hive loss statistics.



Dr. Stephen Pernal discussing surveillance and identification. Photo: Rod Scarlett

beetle but what of the long term? This fall, the Canadian Honey Council, in conjunction with CFIA and the

In late June I had the opportunity to attend the Beaverlodge Research

Farm 58th Annual Beekeepers' Field Day. This was my first opportunity to see firsthand the work being done in Beaverlodge by Dr. Stephen Pernal and his staff as well as get to meet some beekeepers from northern Alberta and British Columbia. While the weather didn't co-operate well over 100 people listened to presentations and demonstrations. Research on nosema ceranae, nosema apis, VSH quick test scoring, hygienic behaviour and IPM tools were all highlighted. The work being done in Beaverlodge certainly helps all Canadian beekeepers.



Dr. Medhat Nasr demonstrating how to use a testing kit.

Photo: Rod Scarlett

I want to thank Mann Lake Ltd for renewing their sponsorship of the CHC and finally I hope each of you has a safe and successful summer .

Small Hive Beetle in Honeybee Queen Shipments from Hawaii

Canadian Food Inspection Agency

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) has been informed by provincial apiculturists that an adult small hive beetle (SHB), as well as first and second star larvae, were found on the packing material of queens imported from Hawaii on April 7, 2011, with destinations in Manitoba and Alberta. This represents the first shipment from Hawaii to Manitoba and Alberta this year. The total number of queens shipped was 500 queens to Manitoba and 1000 queens to Alberta .

Once inspections were performed and the findings were confirmed, producers were instructed to move all

queens into new queen cages before introduction into colonies. Producers were also instructed to incinerate all original packing and shipping material. Inspections are continuing to ensure that no SHB larvae have been introduced to Canadian hives.

The CFIA shares importer information with each of the provincial apiculturists under a legal agreement (Memorandum of Understanding) held with each of the provinces. This allows the provincial apiculturists to follow-up on imported shipments of honeybees investigate potential disease risks (or in this case, risks associated with the introduction of pests).

Ongoing communication between the provincial apiculturists and importers is to continue throughout the import season.

The CFIA has also been in contact with officials at the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). The USDA has taken our concerns very seriously and they have investigated the situation in Hawaii . Our import conditions will be modified to help further mitigate the risk of introducing SHB into Canada . Exporters in the Hawaii are already making changes to their protocols to help ensure a safe supply of queens to Canada .

CFIA will continue to monitor the situation closely throughout the honeybee import season.

2011 Directors

Canadian Honey Council

Conseil Canadien de Miel

Chair

Corey Bacon

Saskatchewan Beekeepers Association
B's Bee Ranch
Box 84
Kinistino SK S0J 1H0
ph. 306-864-3774 fax 306-864-3260
cell 306-864-7684
beeranch@sasktel.net

Vice Chair

Lee Townsend

Alberta Beekeepers
TPLR Honey Farms
443 St. Andrews Crescent
Stony Plain AB T7Z 1W8
ph 780-968-4624 fax 780-963-8257
cell 780-913-5345
Lee@tplrhoneyfarms.com

Treasurer

Jerry Poelman

Alberta Beekeepers
Poelman Apiaries
PO Box 1887
Fort MacLeod AB T0L 0Z0
ph 403-687-2244 cell 403-330-9914
jpoelman@xplornet.com

Secretary

Gerry McKee

BC Honey Producers Association
McKee's Bees
5430 Portland Street
Burnaby BC V5J 2R4
ph 604-436-1614
mcbes@shaw.ca

Director

Tim Greer

Ontario Beekeepers Association
Lilley Bee Apiaries
16 Redwood Avenue
St. Catharines, ON L2M 3B2
ph 905-934-5904 cell 905-932-3457
lilleybee@gmail.com

Hivelights Magazine Editorial and Advertising

Geoff Todd ph 403-475-3882 geoff@honeycouncil.ca

Director

Bryan Ash

Manitoba Beekeepers Association
Ash Apiaries
Box 297
Gilbert Plains, MB R0L 0X0
ph. 204-548-2036 fax 204-548-2122
flash@mts.net

Director

Gordon Marks

Bee Maid Honey
147 Shoreline Drive
Winnipeg MB R3P 2E9
ph 204-487-4535 cell 204-797-7300
gordon@beemaid.com

Director

Scott Plante

Federation des Apiculteurs du Québec
2369 chemin Lambert
St-Nicolas, PQ G7A 2N4
ph. 418-531-0786
scott.plante@videotron.ca

Director

Paul Vautour

Maritime Beekeepers Association
Acadien Apiaries Ltd.
488 Cape Breton Road
Saint-Philippe, NB E1H 1W2
ph 506-388-5127
paulination@rogers.com

CHC OFFICE

Executive Director

Rod Scarlett

#36 High Vale Crescent
Sherwood Park, AB T8A 5J7
ph 877-356-8935
cell 780-489-0231
chc-ccm@honeycouncil.ca
www.honeycouncil.ca

Letter to the Editor

I am writing to you on behalf of the CANPOLIN project with the University of Guelph and the APIS project with the University of British Columbia. We are currently conducting a study of pollination and pest management practices of Canadian beekeepers, their impacts on honeybee health and the economic viability of Canadian beekeeping operations. For this, we will be administering a survey among beekeepers across Canada this summer about their operations and practices. The main goal of the survey is to gain insight on Canadian beekeepers' pollination practices as these have heretofore been left out of previous surveys.

We would value your advice on how best to reach beekeepers in Canada and where to announce our survey and contact information. We seek participation from as many beekeepers as possible to have a nationally representative sample. We would like to distribute our on-line survey by e-mail invitation to interested participants and also to make the survey available in print, which we would send out either by fax or post upon telephone or print request. Attached, please find a draft of our survey for your consideration, in addition to a survey announcement that we have drafted.

Thank you very much for your time, I look forward to your response.

Kind Regards,
Amanda Lenhardt
APIS Project
The University of British Columbia
hbsurvey@uogulph.ca

Queen Rearing Course

A queen rearing workshop was held May 14-15 at Campbell's Gold in Aldergrove. The course was taught by Heather Higo. For more information contact Helen Lightfoot at www.helen.tomlightfoot.ca



Heather shows a two-way mating nuc.
Photo: Helen Lightfoot



Cutting Queen cells.
Photo: Helen Lightfoot



(Left) Students attending the course. Photo: Helen Lightfoot

Membership in CHC

National organizations with a vested interest in honey bees, in addition to the existing provincial beekeeper organizations, are eligible for membership in the Canadian Honey Council. Applications are subject to review by the CHC Membership Committee. Those associations that meet established criteria are then considered for approval by the Board of Directors. Application form available from CHC office.



Regional Reports

Maritimes

I have been out of the organizational loop for a while and have not yet established a good communication network with the other two provinces. I have not spoken to anyone in authority concerning this report. Therefore, the following is my personal opinion, but I trust those who put me in office as the Maritime Delegate would be in



Paul Vautour

accord. The three Maritime Provinces (New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island) that make up the Maritime Beekeepers Association have each suffered their own degree of individual hardships in the last several years and have had to cope with the ensuing stresses and strains within their own domains – with varying degrees of success. This has had the effect of diminishing the role of the MBA in helping resolve local issues. Each Summer we alternate in hosting a Maritime Bee Tour which will take place in Truro, N.S. on the weekend of July 22 and it's my hope to re-ignite a sense of interdependence and networking.

At the NS annual meeting, a proposal was put forward

by three members of CAPA (one from each Maritime Province) to embark on a pilot project that would eventually culminate in the appointment of a Maritime Apiarist that would oversee the establishment of an extension service which would encompass the entire region. Although most agreed that this is a worthwhile endeavor, for various reasons the proposal has not yet been acted upon.

In regards to beekeeping, the scant reports that have filtered through me seem to indicate that, despite an unusually wet spring, the bees seem to be doing OK and gains are being made. I haven't read any disastrous headlines from NS or PEI but a deadly accident occurred in northern NB when a trailer loaded with bees being towed by a pick-up was overtaken by a faster moving vehicle.

Québec

With all the wet, cold and windy weather we received this spring, I stand amazed at the tenacity of some hive to survive, while others just implode. Although conditions have



Scott Plante

improved significantly since then, hive losses seem to be heavier than normal this year.

As this is written, we are taking the hives off the blueberry fields and bringing some onto the cranberries. Let's hope there are no poisoning incidents this year.

In this ever increasing hive renting business, the FAQ has published a new pollination contract which is aimed at protecting the beekeeper. I hope this contract will have an impact on this industry in the coming years by properly covering all the aspects of renting beehives to fruit growers.

Concerning the hive beetle, Quebec has established a buffer zone in the southern part of the province along the American border and all hives found positive to the beetle have been destroyed and compensated.

The wholesale and retail honey markets remain strong and beekeepers are eagerly waiting the new honey crop.

Malgré le temps pluvieux, froid et venteux de ce printemps, je reste toujours surpris de constater la ténacité de certaines ruches à survivre alors que d'autres s'effondrent littéralement. Bien que les conditions climatiques se soient significativement améliorées, la saison apicole semble toujours avoir une semaine de retard comparativement aux années précédentes.

Finalement, nous pouvons retirer nos ruches des bleuetières pour en amener d'autres à la pollinisation des canneberges.

Étant donné une hausse importante de demande pour la pollinisation, la FAQ a publiée cette année un contrat de pollinisation visant à protéger l'apiculteur qui offre ce service.

En ce qui concerne le petit coléoptère de la ruche, Québec a établie une zone tampon dans la partie sud de la province le long de la frontière américaine, ainsi toutes ruches trouvées infestées par le petit coléoptère de la ruche ont été détruites immédiatement.

Pour ce qui est du miel vendu en gros ou bien au détail, la demande reste forte et nous attendons impatiemment la venue de la nouvelle récolte.

Ontario

Many areas of Ontario had an abnormally cool and wet spring leading to a slow build up of overwintered colonies. Again the winter losses

throughout the province vary greatly. The provincial average should come in somewhere in the high 30 percent range.



Tim Greer

The ongoing surveillance and monitoring for Small Hive Beetle life stages has continued throughout the province with a focus on the higher risk border areas. To date there have been no findings outside the quarantine area around



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Essex county. The OBA Tech Transfer Program has been working since early spring in cooperation with beekeepers in that area testing various SHB control methods and focusing on the SHB ability to reproduce in those conditions.

The Ontario Beekeepers' Association held their summer meeting at Wye Marsh Wildlife Centre. The meeting was well attended and once again the Ontario queen producers held a queen auction to support the OBA Tech Transfer Program. Thanks to all who supported by purchasing and donating queens. Dr. Larry Connor came from Michigan to share on various topics throughout the program.

Ontario has recently completed a review of the Honey Regulations. The Ontario Ministry of Agriculture Food and Rural Affairs has been consulting with industry for some time on this project and the new regulations are available at http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/reg/english/elaws_regs_110119_e.htm

The Ontario Beekeepers' Association is very pleased to announce the successful application of our Tech Transfer Program to receive funding through the Canadian Agricultural Adaptation Council. The project details are included in the following press release:

June 29, 2011 07:55 ET

**Government of Canada
Investing in a Honey Bee
Breeding and Management
Program**

SARNIA, ONTARIO--

(Marketwire - June 29, 2011) - The Government of Canada is helping the beekeeping industry develop new strategies to respond to a decline in honey bee colony populations. Member of Parliament Patricia Davidson (Sarnia-Lambton) announced today on behalf of Agriculture Minister Gerry Ritz an investment of more than \$244,000 to the Ontario Beekeepers' Association.

"Ensuring a more profitable and sustainable future for the bee industry will benefit farmers, industry, and the ecosystem," MP Davidson said. "This project will help farmers and the entire industry increase profitability and find ways to improve breeding while developing good management practices."

The project aims to help beekeepers secure sustainable honey harvests and provide essential pollination services to the fruit and vegetable industry.

"The partnership formed between the AAC, and Ontario Beekeepers Association will ensure beekeepers are able to manage genetics, pests and nutrition according to their business objectives," said Les Eccles, OBA Tech Transfer Program Lead Specialist. "Providing management strategies specific to the beekeepers goals will give more sustainable and consistent results."

"The funding provided through AAC will greatly advance OBA's efforts to ensure the beekeeping industry has quality and consistent honey bee stocks," said Jim Rickard, AAC Chair. "Bees are the major pollinator of food crops and it is critical that beekeepers have access to the technology they need to maintain healthy

bee colonies."

Over the past four years, beekeepers in Ontario have been losing high numbers of honey bee colonies due to disease, pest resistance to treatment methods, and increased demand on honey bee colonies to provide pollination services.

Led by the universities of Guelph and Manitoba, the program will develop a breeding program that will result in honey bees that have the ability to resist pests and diseases. It will also screen new products for pest and disease control and develop best management practices relating to pollination colonies. Beekeepers in the province of Ontario have identified these issues as priorities for the industry.

Ultimately, the project will provide beekeepers with the ability to have better control of colony genetics and health in order to have consistent honey production and pollination services.

Funding for this project is being provided by the Canadian Agricultural Adaptation Program (CAAP). In Ontario, CAAP is delivered by the Agricultural Adaptation Council (AAC).

CAAP is a five-year (2009-2014), \$163-million national initiative that aims to help the Canadian agricultural sector adapt and remain competitive. Eligible CAAP projects could be in areas of traceability, environment, climate change, capacity development, pests and diseases, and more.

The Next Phase of Canada's Economic Action Plan, coupled with other Government

of Canada programs and initiatives such as CAAP, continues to help farmers by focusing on creating jobs and strengthening the economy. Investments in new and emerging market opportunities will help build an even stronger agriculture industry and Canadian economy for the future.

For more information on CAAP, please visit www.agr.gc.ca/caap. To learn more about AAC, www.adaptcouncil.org.

Manitoba

The early Canola crops are in full bloom, the temperature is around 25 Celsius, and the bees are finally able to begin the harvest. We hope that everyone's hives are finally moved to high ground.

Early this spring, beekeepers discovered higher than normal



Bryan Ash

winter bee losses. Although the provincial average is about 34%,

several producers in the Northwest area incurred 80-90% losses. Some felt using oxalic acid as fall treatment was beneficial, while others recognized continuous use of Apistan and/or Check Mite was questionable. Since weather may have affected survival, Manitoba Beekeepers' Association (MBA) contacted the Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives Minister for disaster considerations. The minister investigated options,

plus consulted with the Saskatchewan and the Federal Ministers for their input.

In mid year, unprecedented rain cells plagued parts of Manitoba, particularly the Southwest corner, where some hives needed to be floated to higher ground on sheets of Styrofoam. In Central areas, rainfall exceeding 5 inches created havoc for bee placement, while hail damaged emerging crops. MBA e-mailed producers, as Assiniboine River dike breaches could flood the area. The Province provided compensation for lost hives, plus transportation costs. A totally new move for the government dealing with excessive water damaging homes, family farms, and summer cottages around Lake Manitoba and elsewhere.

We face excess moisture problems for the second year in a row! Many fed bees for a much longer period in June, and now unseeded acres could impact honey production. In Central Manitoba, crops are finally blooming, yet with the high humidity, fungicide treatments are needed. On the other hand, seeding in the last week of June could mean canola crops blooming for a much longer period than usual.

MBA continues to work with the Sunflower Growers Association in jointly developing a communiqué about the benefit of choosing treatments and applications that considers the honeybees working on the crop.

The June Field Day was a great time to observe the Varroa Mite Treatment Evaluation Trials underway at University of Manitoba.

An important aspect of this project is that several provinces are working together to increase efficiency. Manitoba will evaluate Mite Away Quick Strips, Thymovar, Apiguard, and HopGuard.

In other areas, MBA appreciates Medivets' announcement that 65% Formic Acid will still be available, plus emergency use of Apivar continues for one more year. As well, producers appreciated MAFRI staff working with CFIA in inspecting Queen shipments from Hawaii to verify any incidences of SHB. It appears initial incidences have been resolved thus all later shipments were found clean.

Saskatchewan

Spring started off cold and very wet again in most parts of Saskatchewan. Perhaps this trend will be the norm? A significant amount of acres will go unseeded in some areas. However, if last year is the beginning of a new trend, these unseeded acres could be a bonus for the beekeepers with the volunteer canola that follows in June during a time when most areas normally have a dearth. Though wet, farmers in most areas were able to get their canola into the ground on schedule. Indications are that Saskatchewan has the potential for a good honey flow again this season in most regions.

Reports from Saskatchewan beekeepers are that in general the bees came out of spring well and look good going into the honey flow. There have been some reports of higher mite levels in some operations

this spring. Late summer treatments may be required in these operations.

The SBA TAT (technology adaptation team) has finally hired a lead going into the second season (Graham Parsons) along with two seasonal assistants. The TAT continues to work on long-term organic acid trials, including MAQS, mite wipes and oxalic acid. Short-term trials of several products for varroa mite control were also conducted this spring. Some of the short-term trials included MAQS in winter wraps, MAQS in early spring (cold weather treatment), 65% formic acid, 50% formic acid (including flash treatment), Thymovar and HopGaurd. These trials are just wrapping up and we look forward to the results later this summer from the TAT. The TAT also worked on some nosema sampling to determine background levels in the provinces bee operations. A survey was also offered to beekeepers and data will be analyzed to look for correlations. The PA's reported that nosema levels were found at extremely low levels in many samples but some samples had levels multiple times above the suggested threshold.

Honey prices are stagnant around the \$1.60 range. Inventories in the province seem to be low in spite of the continued expectation that the price is bound to climb. Considering the strength of our dollar versus the greenback (purchaser of 70+% of our exported honey), honey prices are at reasonable level.

Dr. Albert Robertson is completing the final year of the government funding for the Saskatraz Project.



Corey Bacon

He has recently established a website (saskatraz.com) to help disseminate the data from the project. I strongly believe our best option going forward to better face bee health challenges

(and continue increasing honey production) lies in breeding and genetics. It both amazes and disappoints me the lack of information sharing regarding breeding in Canada between different regions and at times within provinces. I believe the establishment of a national bee breeders association would be an asset to the entire Canadian industry to better share information, genetics and techniques best suited for the Canadian environment and management practices.

Congratulations to Wink Howland on the receipt of a Lifetime Member Award presented to him at the SBA field day in June. Wink's unremitting dedication and commitment to the industry is second to none and serves as an example to us all.

Wishing all a bountiful honey crop!

Alberta

Summer has rapidly appeared for beekeepers in Alberta, and overall the prospects of a productive season are better than they have been for a number of years. Southern Alberta has finally had some sunshine, and central/northern Alberta

was working with acceptable moisture levels until this recent weekend with central Alberta receiving 3"+ of rain in two days and northern Alberta dealing with severe flooding conditions. Northern Alberta is also dealing with grasshoppers once again, with some regions in the Peace already seeing fields of Alfalfa destroyed by them.

Overall the crops look(ed) good in the central and northern regions. There is Canola in full bloom and there is Canola that has



Lee Townsend

yet to cabbage, and for the first time in a long time there is clover that may wind up producing some honey if the heat comes back. I hope this wet weather leaves soon or this optimism will not last. I also understand that the southern regions are looking good, but are also delayed due to poor spring weather.

Overall our losses were higher than most beekeepers had hoped for again (official numbers aren't available but it will be between 20-30% it seems), but most beekeepers were able to rebuild their numbers this spring. The biggest issue once again was a combination of Varroa mite, Nosema Apis/Ceranae, and a hard winter. Everything from the trees to the crops to the bees have been behind this year, starting out at a month behind normal and currently sitting at between 1-2 weeks behind. Varroa levels were reduced this spring by treating, but

Nosema has proven to be more problematic for many beekeepers in Alberta. Within individual operations we are seeing some yards with minimal spore counts, and other yards with 2+ million spore counts. This is after spring treatments of Fumagilin via both feeding and drenching. Hopefully more work will be done on both Varroa and Nosema controls in order to give us the tools needed to deal with these issues.

A continuing issue for beekeepers in the Prairies has once again been Labour. There were many delays last fall regarding changes to the programs which delayed many employers from starting their hiring process. CHC worked diligently with Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) in creating methodologies regarding wages and creating job descriptions specific to our industry. This process is in the final stages right now and will hopefully be completed and ready for release to our industry by mid-August. I understand that Saskatchewan has been having serious issues all season with the hiring process for their workers that fall under the "Temporary Foreign Worker Program" (TFW), and this has been due to the outsourcing of LMO applications by the Saskatchewan HRSDC offices to B.C. and also by problems being created by the embassies in the countries these workers come from. If anyone is considering hiring foreign nationals to work on their farms, it is highly recommended that you take part in the "Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program" (SAWP). This program

is specifically designed for agricultural companies that want to hire foreign nationals, whereas the TFW is not specifically designed for agriculture and has different requirements due to "Citizenship and Immigration Canada" (CIC) rules and regulations. If you have any questions regarding this, please contact the CHC office regarding it. Many of the problems faced by employers are usually easily corrected (outside of the problems in Saskatchewan this year), and the CHC "Labour Committee" is there to help you with these problems.

Spring was nonexistent in the southern regions of Alberta, leaving some beekeepers struggling to make up their losses and fulfill their pollination contracts. In central and northern Alberta most beekeepers had good build up of colonies and were able to make up losses.



Jerry Poelman

The opportunity for a good honey crop across the province looks good since all regions of had recent rains and there seems to be lots of forage with all the commercial canola planted and good clover in some regions. Alberta did have some areas in the south where they had excessive rains and some farmers were unable to seed their crops. this is small compared to some of the other prairie provinces though.

Pollination of hybrid canola is strong and most of the available colonies are committed. The planting was delayed this spring by the heavy rains in the southern part of the province. Hives did start to move the last week of June, but the majority will be placed in the beginning of July. The canola will need a good weather to mature and have a good harvest with the delayed start.

The Alberta beekeepers had a canola pollination field day on July 13. The goal of this day was to show Alberta agriculture (government) and some of our funding agencies along with other related invitees, the partnerships that we have developed between beekeepers and the canola seed industry here. The pollination industry has helped to stabilize our beekeepers and our bees have helped these companies grow a business through the value added chain to the excess of 500 million dollars. The message brought forward is that they need healthy bees to pollinate their canola crops and we need to continue to work together with the canola industry, government and beekeepers to continue to maintain and grow this industry through continued research for colony health and good management practices to ensure strong healthy colonies for canola pollination.

British Columbia

Our cool, wet spring, again put pressure on our

blueberry pollinators to incur extra costs in feeding syrup and pollen to build up colonies to standards expected by fruit growers. Their extra efforts were rewarded as these colonies coming out of blueberries were loaded with honey. They were able to take greater advantage of the few sunny days in May. Conversely, queen mating in May and June on the West Coast was poor. The lower B.C. Interior, however, only lost one or two mating cycles so that Queen and Nuc production proceeded almost on schedule.



Gerry McKee

The B.C. Ministry of Agriculture held a Bee Spring Meeting on April 26, 2011, in Victoria, having contacted most bee organizations and provided an opportunity for free dial-in Teleconference for those in more remote areas of the province. There were 13 beekeepers in attendance and seven Ministry resource personnel, including our Provincial Apiarist. Our new Minister of Agriculture, Don McRae and Deputy Minister, Wes Shoemaker, also dropped into the meeting and confirmed their commitment to working with our industry.

The leading agenda item was the concern over winter survival as there were several situations of high losses even though there was sufficient food supplies within colonies. Mite and Nosema control practices were similar as in previous years. The Ministry has committed extensive support

through lab diagnostics and to help determine treatment protocols and best practices.

Concern over possible effect of systemic pesticides was cited.

The Ministry has begun to update B.C.'s Animal Disease Control Act and discussion on incorporation of the Bee Act into the new Animal Health Act will be undertaken with consideration on how to include special provisions specific to the bee sector. An open discussion with several commercial beekeepers ensued with a challenging statement that "honeybee diseases are self-regulating"!

Requirements for an Industry Development Council was outlined as there is legislation for the establishment of a self-levy system for market promotion, market development and research. Although support for a self-imposed levy maybe seen as a way to get "free loaders" contributing to an industry, the main objective is really to gain support for the industry's self-sufficiency and sustainability.

The Ministry is committed to work with our industry but we must take the initiative to lead.

The Ministry is seeking industry support and participation in an initiative that addresses potential issues related to traceability and food safety in honey production. They will take action to investigate the feasibility of a Providence Project which will help

identify the genetic markers within honey to affirm its origin for marketing and traceability. There was support for the suggestion that several practical projects in Manitoba involving funding from Growing Forward might be well received by B.C. beekeepers, particularly food grade equipment replacement and exchanging old undamaged brood frames.

The recent auction of Babe's Honey operation in Victoria, indicates the end of an era. There was no shining knight to purchase this 60 year old venerable honey bee business – no one willing to invest in the future of this industry. Beekeeping, at present, does not seem to be an attractive investment.

What can the Bees teach us about Business, about Leadership, Efficiency and Growth according to Michael O'Malley's "The Wisdom of Bees? "

Better, yet, attend "BEE a SURVIVOR" the B.C. Honey Producer's Conference, October 20 – 23, 2011, at the Delta Vancouver Airport Hotel in a suburb of Vancouver. Following the AGM, two days of seminars and workshops, will be the most important fall event in our region as over 12 well qualified speakers offer the latest scientific information and practical advice available in North America. Among the scientists working on honeybees and willing to share their experiences at this Conference is UBC's Dr. Lenard Foster

whose APHIS team is working on the second phase of taking molecular markers and applying them for identification of selected traits as disease and pest resistance; Laval University's Pierre Giovenazzo, who clearly demonstrated that the Small Hive Beetle can easily survive the cold winters of Quebec. Pierre's queen breeding program verified that locally produced queens were larger, lasted longer and laid more eggs when produced during August. Beaverlodge's Dr. Steve Pernal, Oregon State's Dr. Dewey Caron, UC's Sue Cobey, SFU's Dr. Elizibeth Elle, Washington State's Tim Lawrence, Oregon State's Dr. Ramish Sagili, Janet Rubes of Country Rubes, CA, George Hansen, V.P. American Beekeepers and Bob Liptrot of Tugwell Creek Honey Farm and Meadery, B.C. will also be sharing information that will benefit beekeepers from folks with a couple of hives at home to operators with thousands of colonies in pollination services. Be sure to take advantage of the Early Bird Registration before September 15th for a chance to win an upgrade mini suite or two 2012 High Performance Queens. For more information, check out www.bcbeekeeper.com

CO-OP Honey Packer

Bee Maid is very pleased to announce that we are the first honey packer in Canada to be SQF (Safe Quality Food) approved. Both the Winnipeg and Spruce Grove plants were

recently notified that their SQF audits were successful. The SQF certification is now a requirement of more and more multinational food companies, many of whom are customers of Bee Maid.

Today's consumers are more educated about the food they provide their families and want to know that the food they are consuming is safe. The rigorous SQF certification is a globally recognized food safety and quality certification program and meets GFSI (Global Food Safety Initiative) requirements. The certification provides independent and external validation that a product process meets specific standards and enables us to assure our customers that our honey was produced, prepared and handled according to the highest possible standards.

Designed as a food safety program, SQF also covers product quality, a feature unique to this certification. Assuring consistent quality and meeting buyer specifications are important aspects of the buyer-supplier relationship. Congratulations to all the staff that made this achievement possible.

In early May our Bee Maid Spruce Grove facility was pleased to welcome a group of Japanese customers to tour our facility and to meet with a number of Bee Maid Member Beekeepers. The purpose of this tour was to exhibit to our Japanese customers the quality that goes into every pound of Bee Maid Honey from the beekeeper to the end customer. The Japanese market is becoming more



Gordon Marks

and more important for Canadian honey and Bee Maid is proud to be a major contributor to this growing market. During the visit the Bee Maid staff were pleased to make a presentation to our Japanese visitors with a contribution to the Red Cross Japanese Relief Fund totaling \$2525. The staff, through various fund raising initiatives, contributed \$1262.50 with matching funds being donated by Bee Maid in an effort to show our Japanese friends that Bee Maid cares and wishes the Japanese people our very best to overcome the terrible earthquake and after effects that their country recently experienced.

On May 31, 2011 we said

good bye to Jake Rempel who decided it was time to retire after 34 years with the Manitoba Cooperative Honey Producers in Winnipeg. Jake first started in the shipping department however shortly after starting moved into Bee Supply sales where he spent the remainder of his 34 years. Jake was a friend to all beekeepers and will be missed by all. Jake and his wife Rhoda have two daughters and one grandson. Jake is a lover of nature and is looking forward to his retirement as he and Rhoda will enjoy the opportunity of travelling and spending more time with family and friends. Thank you Jake for 34 great years and congratulations on your retirement.

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Press Release

Bee Maid Supports Bee Research in Canada

Western Canada's largest honey packer financially supports important bee related research.

Winnipeg, MB June 13, 2011 - Bee Maid Honey Limited believes it is important to support bee research and each year the company evaluates project proposals in the areas of apiculture or pollination research. Preference is given to the area of honey and the production of pure quality honey in the Canadian beekeeping industry.

Bee Maid Honey Limited is proud to announce that they will be contributing financial assistance to the following research projects:

Integrated Management on Nosema & Detection of Antibiotic Residues Dr. Stephen Pernal, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Beaverlodge Research Station, Beaverlodge, Alberta

Nosema ceranae is an emergent world-wide pathogen, and it, in combination with Nosema apis, have been linked to wide-scale losses of colonies in Europe and North America. The researchers propose to examine effective therapeutic management for these parasites and to generate a modern antibiotic residue dataset for fumagillin, the only registered antimicrobial compound for bees. Their objectives are to:

1. Develop optimal application methods and dosages for fumagillin against N. ceranae;
2. Document residues associated with different methods of

fumagillin application;

3. Screen alternative therapies for Nosema spp.; and
4. Examine the seasonal phenology of N. ceranae in Canada.

The data will benefit the Canadian beekeeping industry by providing optimal treatment options to control both microsporidian species causing nosema disease without contaminating honey with unwanted residues. It will also provide for the development of modern analytical techniques for the detection of fumagillin and its degradation products, which currently do not exist.

Furthermore, this research may lead to identifying other effective therapies so as to lessen dependency on fumagillin treatments. Overall, this project is required to improve the quality of Canadian honey bee health, and to safeguard against further large-scale colony losses.

Screening Alternative Novel Miticides

For Varroa Control In An Integrated Pest Management System
Dr. Medhat Nasr, Lynae Vandervalk and Dr. Lloyd Dosdall
Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development

Alberta has 260,000 bee colonies, which produce 40% of honey produced in Canada (Stats Canada 2010). The overall purpose of this project is to provide effective new methods to control varroa mites to keep honey bees healthy. The efficacy of several new miticides with different mode of action and new chemistry will be evaluated. Miticides will be screened for effectiveness against varroa mites and evaluated for safety on honey bees under laboratory conditions. Selected safe miticides that are effective against mites will go through further testing in field trials to evaluate efficacy under field honey production conditions and determine any residues in produced honey. Produced data and results from this study for proven effective and safe miticides will be utilized for supporting registration of miticides with the Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA). Thus, we will be able to provide more control options for use in integrated pest management.

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Plants for Bees

'Camelina' Gains Momentum as Alternative to Canola

Ancient crop is versatile and easy to grow

by Treena Hein

Although it is more common in Western Canada, Kevin Falk of AAFC-Saskatoon, believes camelina would adapt well to regions of Eastern Canada, including the Maritimes.

In an era of rising input and transportation costs, the search for wonder crops, both in Canada and around the world, is on. Camelina, is a versatile, drought resistant and low-input crop. Its oil offers excellent human health benefits and its meal has outstanding nutritional value. As if that is not enough, the oil can be easily converted into fuel.

With its high levels of omega-3 fatty acid, camelina is coveted in food, feed and nutraceutical markets, as well as for its potential in the industrial sector.

Interest in camelina as a potential oilseed crop for northern regions began to pick up in Canada after trials were conducted in the late 1950s. Recently, camelina has received renewed interest in Europe, North America and Australia, mostly due to its nutritional value.

Falk and his colleagues also have shown that camelina does well in both short and long growing seasons and adapts well to different areas, from PEI to the Prairies. However, he points out that the climate in the Maritimes can cause downy mildew. "The good news is that we are working on it.

Falk says "We have chosen some lines and we're making crosses this coming winter to start a breeding program." He adds, "From an agronomic standpoint, the one issue we do have and are working on is the small seededness. Camelina has a thousand kernel weight of only 1.2 to 1.5 grams.

This means it is only about half as large as canola."

Camelina characteristics

According to Falk and Gugel's studies since 2004, camelina's fatty acid composition is largely unsaturated (greater than 90 percent), with significant amounts (30 to 40 percent) of linolenic acid, an important omega-3 fatty acid.

Camelina's profile also makes it a natural as an animal ration to produce products such as omega eggs. Furthermore, Falk says the seed meal is about 28 to 33 percent protein with a favourable balance of amino acids, making it a potentially valuable feed for poultry, swine and ruminants and fish. As an added bonus for both human and animal consumption, camelina oil contains significant amounts of vitamin E, which helps prevent rancidity.

Camelina also has good potential as a biofuel, industrial oil and lubricant. No bleaching or deodorizing of the oil is needed. "There are also other interesting bioproducts we are looking at," says Falk, though he says those products must remain confidential at this time.

In terms of growing conditions, camelina is much more drought tolerant than canola and

uses about half the fertilizer. Chalmers says grasshoppers, moths, worms, even deer ignore it.

In 2008, Terramax provided seed for MAFRI to grow demonstration plots featuring 28 varieties. Chalmers says "We are monitoring how they grow and also assessing how camelina interacts with crops such as canola and flax. Camelina apparently has a growth-regulating substance from bacteria on its leaves that washes off in the rain and promotes growth of other crops."

Drawing on his experience with camelina since 2006, Chalmers observes "The earlier you seed it, the better it grows. Dormant seeding in the fall works better than spring seeding." Camelina ripens at the end of June and can be harvested until the end of July, which spreads out farm workload. Chalmers also notes, "It



Camelina flower about to bloom.
Photo permission John Venema



Honey Bee on Camelina. Photo permission John Venema

holds its pods better than canola, so you can let it stand. It swathes like wheat, so an old-style farmer can grow it. There's no need for new and expensive equipment."

In terms of disease and pests, Chalmers says, "I haven't seen an insect yet. Wildlife don't seem to go near it. I have noted some root rot *Pythium* sp. and found some *Fusarium* wilt. It doesn't like wet feet."

Since 2006, Campbell has had several farmers growing a select variety of camelina on a few thousand acres. "Most of these people believe it's going to be an economically viable crop and want the growing experience," he says. "We are not, however, encouraging widespread planting until there's processing in place."

We certainly could ship to existent oil crushing plants, but they're busy crushing canola, 24 hours a day, seven days a week."

Camelina Canada in Lethbridge, Alta., however, has been shipping camelina

for biodiesel processing in Washington State for also since 2006. President Ryan Mercer says he received \$7 per 50 pound bushel in 2007. Since approval for animal consumption is yet to come, the meal has been returned to Canada to be spread on fields.

Mercer plans to have about 50,000 acres with 28 varieties of camelina contracted for 2009. "Dan Kusalik, my full-time agronomist, introduced

me to the crop and he is out helping our growers all over Alberta and Saskatchewan," says Mercer. "The long-term plans are for a million acres. We are narrowing it down for which varieties grow best in different areas." Mercer says camelina is allelopathic to weeds, preventing them from growing as well. He generally seeds five pounds per acre.

With such impressive characteristics, it would seem nothing can stop camelina from having a bright future in Canada. "The multitude of potential uses for the crop, combined with its favourable agronomics," state Falk and Gugel, "suggests that cultivation of *C. sativa* may have a place in western Canadian agriculture especially now that growers are being encouraged to diversify their cropping strategies."

"It's got a very good carbon footprint compared to canola," concludes Campbell. "With some action from the government, this could be a major crop, especially on marginal land."

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Camelina in full bloom. Photo permission John Venema

“Cultural and Chemical Treatments to Synergize Honey Bee Resistance Mechanisms against the Parasite Mite”

CBRF Report by R.W. Currie, S. Desai, R. Bahreini and J. Deonarine

This multi-year project has focused on three major objectives in the past year. First, we have been working towards understanding the impact of honey bee viruses on honey bee colonies and developing methods to control them (Ph.D. student Suresh Desai); second, we have been studying the effects of manipulating ventilation during wintering in different genetic sources of bees on the mortality rates of bees and mites to determine if this can be used to enhance the kill of mites during wintering (Rasoul Bahreini); and third, we have been screening a number of compounds in direct contact and fumigation assays to assess their potential as methods to control the varroa mite.

We now have the capacity to detect and quantify seven of the most economically important honey bee viruses and are completing analysis of their interactions with varroa and combined effects on the survival rates of single inseminated queens, multiple-inseminated queens and open mated queens. The results showed that black queen cell virus and deformed wing virus were the most common viruses present in our initial surveys, however, Israeli acute paralysis virus (IAPV) was also present in a high proportion of colonies. The latter virus has been associated (in combination with other factors) to colony losses in the U.S. (CCD) however, it did not seem to cause significant losses in colonies under our conditions. Work is underway to determine the effects of different levels and combinations of viruses on honey bee winter survival.

Using new molecular methods called RNA interference (RNAi), it is now possible to create a form of double stranded RNA that can be designed to attack and destroy specific viruses. RNAi has recently been utilized in a

number of species including human beings, plants, animals and insects (*Drosophila*) and recently in bees to suppress viruses. RNAi reduces virus replication by causing degradation of the target mRNA and thus can reduce their impact on hosts. For example, successful silencing of Israeli Acute Paralysis Virus (IAPV) in honey bees by feeding specific dsRNA to bees dramatically improved bee-to-brood ratio and honey yield (Maori et al., 2009 *Insect Mol. Biol.* 18:55-60).

We have been successful in producing several forms of double stranded RNA against deformed wing virus and are testing them on larvae and adults in the lab. Deformed wing virus can cause considerable bee mortality even in “normal-winged” bees and has been associated with high winter loss in Europe (Miranda J.R and Genersch, E, 2009 *J. Invertbre. Pathol.* 103:S48-S61). Thus, a method to control this virus could be an important tool in helping us prevent

winter loss of colonies.

We assessed the effects of feeding the dsRNA constructs that were created in our laboratory (against deformed wing virus) to larval and adult worker bees to see if the material would reduce the level of virus and enhance survival of bees. First, DsRNA was fed to larvae that were infected with DWV and the potential lethal and sub lethal effects on developing worker bees was assessed. In DWV-infected larvae fed our dsRNA, survival (45% survived) was greater than the survival of larvae fed a control substance (an unrelated dsRNA (GFP) that would not have any effect on DWV) where only 31% survived. Survival was also greater than in virus infected larvae that were not treated with any form of dsRNA. We also tested to see if the treatment was harmful to bees. The results showed the dsRNA alone did not negatively affect larval survival. DWV-“free” larvae fed our dsRNA construct had similar survival to that of untreated controls (see Figure 1). Wing deformity was also reduced by the dsRNA treatment relative to the various controls. Our experiment also demonstrated for the first time that

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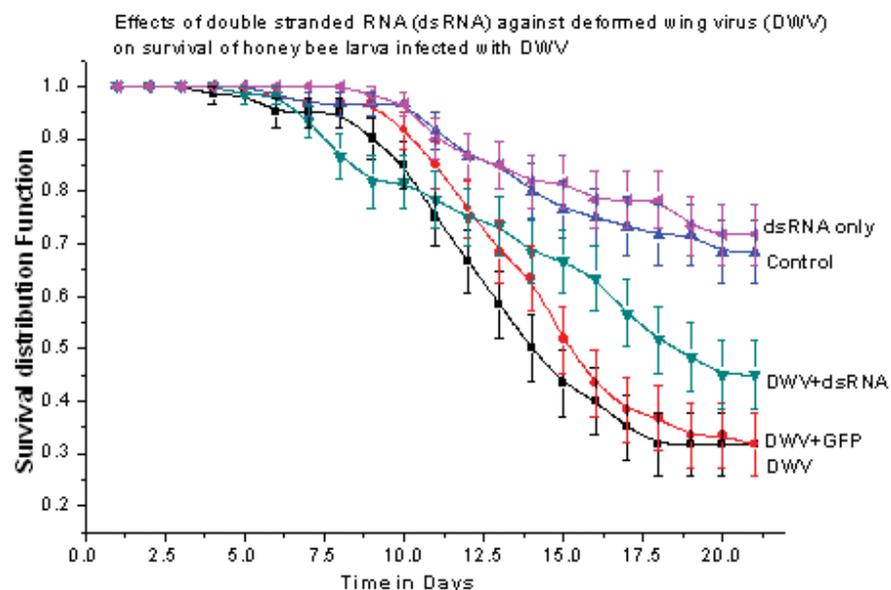


Figure 1. Effects of feeding double stranded RNA against deformed wing virus on bees without virus (dsRNA only and Control) and bees with deformed wing virus. Double stranded RNA improve larval survival when virus was present and did not affect survival when virus was absent (Desai and Currie, unpublished).

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feeding DWV orally in the absence of mites causes wing deformity in in-vitro reared larvae. The results suggest that application of dsRNA into the honeybee colonies should have beneficial effects by reducing the level of virus and contributing to higher colony survival in situations where viruses are a problem (eg. Higher levels of mites inducing high virus levels). If proven effective on a colony scale, this technique could be used to block DWV and improve winter survival of honeybee colonies.

Studies on the manipulation of ventilation have been carried out on full sized colonies enclosed within a special Plexiglas chamber that allows airflow into the chamber to be tightly controlled (Figure 2). The chamber also is equipped with infrared monitoring camera that allows bee ventilation to be observed under total darkness. Colonies were maintained at 5 degrees Celsius for a period of about 1 month during winter and the experiment was repeated in an environmental chamber in summer. Airflow was reduced slowly over a number of days from 20 standard cubic feet per hour (SCFH) to about 0.5 SCFH which is the point where increased levels of fanning by bees were observed. Decreases in the ventilation rate were associated with increased CO2 levels in the cluster up until the point where fanning was initiated. The bees responded in a similar way to reductions in ventilation under both winter and “simulated winter” conditions but the level of CO2 in the cluster was lower in summer. Increased mite mortality appeared to be associated with increased cluster CO2 and we are now carrying out experiments to determine if ventilation levels can be optimized to increase varroa mortality without having an effect on worker survival.

There are a number of compounds that are known to increase the mortality of varroa, however many do not achieve high levels of efficacy when applied to colonies. Many of these products might displace mites on the bee’s body without killing them and

thus could potentially be more effective in bees that are selected for enhanced grooming behaviour. We are currently screening a number of compounds in laboratory assays (new formulations of essential oils, new formulations of neem, folicel and other products) to assess their efficacy against varroa when applied as either contact formulations or fumigants. Using a modification of a method first published by Melathopolus and others in Mark Winston’s lab). We have worked out concentration*time mortality relationships for each of these compounds and determined dose*time responses required to get moderate to good control of varroa without causing significant bee mortality. Compounds that would make the most effective acaricides for use in bee colonies would show good separation between mite and bee mortality (Figure 3). Examples of some of the best separation between bee and mite mortality are shown below. It should be noted that none of these compounds are currently registered and should not be used in hives. Some of the compounds (e.g. parazene) may create problems with hive residues but could have potential applications in fumigation of bees not on comb.

The next step of this research that is ongoing in the lab is to select compounds from this group that have moderate and good control and screen them in assays with high and low grooming bees to determine if product efficacy can be enhanced by using stocks of bees selected for grooming.

Communication of Results.

My students and I have communicated our research results through the following presentations, posters, abstracts and articles in the past year.

Desai, S. and R. Currie. 2010.



Figure 2. Experimental setup to manipulate ventilation (simulating conditions in indoor-wintering but on the individual hive level so conditions can be carefully controlled) to control varroa mites (Bahreini and Currie).

Impact and management of honey bee viruses. Ontario Beekeepers Association/ CBRF symposium, Markham Ontario. Nov 25,-28.

Deonarine, J., Desai, S. and Currie 2010. Survey of the effects of multiple pathogens on winter survival of honeybees under different management systems. Manitoba Beekeepers Association Annual Meeting. March. Brandon, Manitoba. (Presented by J. Deonarine)

Desai, S. and Currie 2010. Use of gene silencing to control viruses. Manitoba Beekeepers Association Annual Meeting. March. Brandon, Manitoba. (Presented by J. R. Currie)

Bahreini, R. and Currie 2010. Effects of manipulating ventilation in wintering buildings on survival of varroa. Manitoba Beekeepers Association Annual Meeting. March. Brandon, Manitoba. (Presented by Rob Currie)

Deonarine, J. And Currie, R.W. 2010.

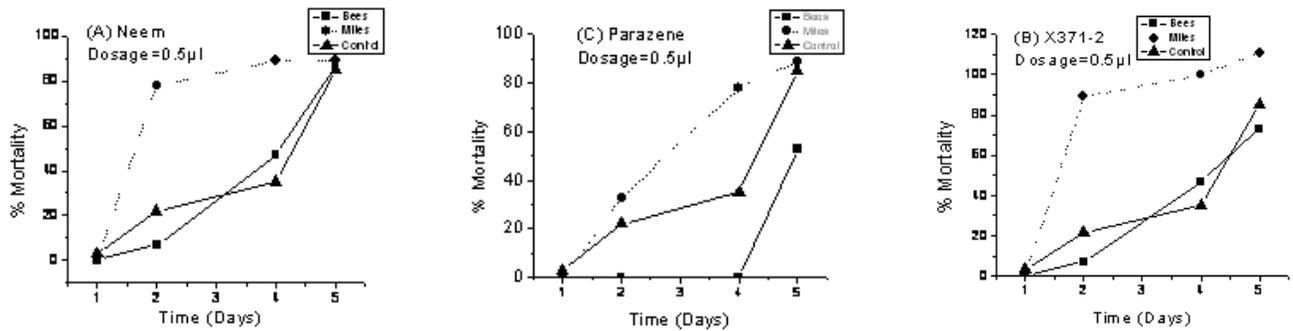


Figure 3. Results of three screening bioassays to assess the dose-time combination required to kill varroa mites without affecting bee survival (Deonaraine and Currie, unpublished)

Preliminary Testing on 5 Possible miticides Manitoba Beekeepers Association Annual Meeting. March. Brandon, Manitoba. (Presented by J. Deonaraine)

Desai, S., Eu, Y-J Currie, R.W. 2009. Inhibition of deformed wing virus (DWW) replication in honey bees by RNA interference. Entomological Society of Canada and Manitoba Joint Annual Meeting. Proceedings of the Entomological Society of Manitoba. 65: in press

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Currie, Rob. Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences. Faculty Seminar Feb11 Colony collapse disorder (CCD): Mysterious disease or death by a thousand cuts? Invited presentation.

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Swarm Collections

Jim Campbell, Manitoba Beekeeper

Catching or retrieving a swarm of bees could prove timely for helping a family searching for someone to ease their fears.

The phone rings, and a voice asks, "Are you a beekeeper?" Many thoughts go through your head. Is this a honey customer? Do I recognize the voice? How much honey do I have packed? After entering the conversation with, "Yes, I'm a beekeeper. How can I help you" the reason for the call becomes clear. "I have a swarm of bees" comes the timid response.



Empty Bee Hive equipment is ready for the beekeeper to begin the swarm removal process.

Now comes the "fun" of them describing and qualifying their situation over the phone. Some factors can be dealt with easily, such as where is the swarm, how far off the ground is it, and is it close to youngsters playing. Other questions are more difficult, such as how big is the swarm, are bees entering a hole or crack in the building, and when did they arrive?

Determining what and how much equipment is needed for the job must be done carefully, especially if the swarm is several miles away. Swarms can vary in size from something that can be placed into a four-litre bucket to ones filling two supers. As well, swarms can be high up on a building, or even deep down in a chimney. A swarm, having built comb

under the soffit of a two-story building, needs a different approach than one just landing on a small tree branch near the ground.



Transferring gentle and calm swarm bees by the handful to an awaiting empty super.

Since a primary issue within our industry deals with Hive Health, there may be an added cost to retrieve a swarm. Has this come from a healthy hive? Or is the swarm the result of Congestion, or Adverse Weather? Colonies plagued by Varroa will need to be treated, or worse yet, if they are infected with foul brood, further precautions are required. These are issues that didn't used to be a major concern. For example, one swarm I retrieved was polluted with varroa, thus treatment began immediately, and the new hive was set up in a quarantine zone.

An additional management strategy should be to monitor the population build up to minimize swarms. A



Bees, dumped on paper in front of an empty super, will quickly march toward the orientation scent from fanning bees, guiding them into their new home.

neighbour, with about 1000 colonies, claims to be swarm free! His strategy is to keep ahead of population explosions, by adding supers before the bees feel congested. Although this requires more equipment, he's always ready for the honey flow from a full colony of bees.

Gathering a swarm, no matter where they land, can be an excellent teaching moment, as you ease the emotional stress. This is a great time to explain why the bees have moved in, what has happened, why the queen is hiding, and why we don't need to be afraid of the loud buzzing noise, and why bees are important to everyone. Since most swarms are fairly docile, this can be an opportunity to show people bees up close too. And when leaving, do thank them for having someone come and "Save the Bees"!

Educational Conference

Allen Garr, BCHPA 2011 AGM Media liaison

This fall the B.C. Honey Producers association is mounting an educational conference that is easily the most important event in our region to help beekeepers understand and deal with the problems we are all facing. The conference, along with our business meeting, will take place in a suburb of Vancouver from October 20 to 23. And we need your help.

While the difficulties we face are significant, our two days of workshops on October 22 and October 23 titled "Bee a survivor" offers the latest science and practice available on the continent.

This conference is designed to attract and help beekeepers from the Pacific North West as well as Western Canada by presenting research often carried out in their backyards.

Among the academics that are working in the field and willing to share their experiences with us are UBC's Dr. Leonard Foster, Oregon State's Dr. Dewey Caron, University of California at Davis's Sue Cobey, and Dr. Steve Pernal with the Canadian agricultural research station at Beaverlodge.

We are certain this conference will be of benefit to all beekeepers from hobbyists with a couple of hives at home to folks running thousands of colonies in pollination operations.

And you can help by spreading the word to your members by posting a note on your website and by directing people to our website at www.bcbeekeepers.com. Thanks for your support and we hope to see you there.

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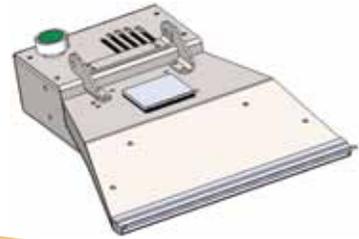


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At R. J. S. Manufacturing, together with the University of Western Ontario and a commercial Beekeeper from Alberta we are developing an sublimation of Oxalic acid for treating Varoa Mites.

The fight against Varoa have been going on for many years now. Every year it gets harder and harder to control this pest as well as other related diseases brought upon by this pests; such the introduction of viruses trough incisions created by the mites.

My name is Rodrigo Mendez, I am a commercial beekeeper in Spirit River, Alberta, I have been battling this pests for many years, lately with the resistance from the mites to the easy to use strips, I have been forced to double up on treatments.

In the past I tried strips plus formic in the fall and formic again in the spring and it worked well, but the problem was finding the right weather window for the applications in the spring and the fall.

Last year I decided to try oxalic acid because of it's wide range of temperatures in what it will work from 5 to 25 c.

I quickly run into the application problem and start working on an applicator that would be easy to use quick and effective.

After drawing an initial prototype we got into the building phase where we found many options and variables. This led us to the University of Western Ontario and we were able to persuade them that this project was worthwile because of the impact it could have in the bee industry and throughout the food industry through benefits to pollinators and the crops bees pollinate.

RJS Manufacturing will be in charge of production, retailing parts and support for this applicator.

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Thursday January 26 will be separate CHC and CAPA meetings during the day with a combined group meeting in the evening.

Friday-Saturday, January 27 & 28 will be Beekeepers' Symposium, with a Banquet planned for the evening of Friday January 27th. Mark your calendars for the upcoming events.



Please see registration form enclosed with this issue. For additional information go to Manitoba Beekeepers Association. Website: www.manitobabee.org

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- Official recognition in CHC publications

The Canadian Honey Council, as the national voice of the Canadian honey bee industry, has served the industry for more than 60 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.

The purpose of the Program is to expand participation to those who wish to demonstrate their support for Hive Health, Education and Integrated Pest Management.

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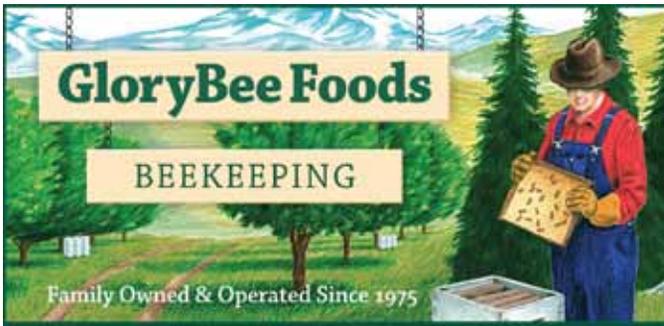


Above, picture taken February 14, 2008 (TX)



Below, picture taken March 18, 2008 (TX)

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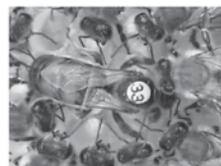
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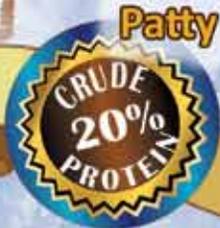
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