

Montgomery County Beekeepers Association

Minutes for Monthly Meeting

August 19, 2024

Apprentice Beekeeper Meeting – began at 6:15 pm

Led by Doug Stanley with 14 in attendance

Q & A Beekeeper Questions

- Discussion of summer honey harvest
 - Recommendation to take out a frame from each honey super to provide bees a bit more room to create thick honey frames
 - Use of bread knife is effective for cutting tops off of comb
 - Use strainer to remove wax particles and bee parts
 - Can process cappings
 - Allow bees to take excess honey and then melt remaining wax
 - Squeeze cappings to save excess honey, then strain
 - Use wax spinner
 - Don't filter honey - sieves are fine, filters are not, as they remove the beneficial pollen
 - Darkness of honey affected by what type pollen bees harvest
 - After extraction, can place machine outside for bees to clean
 - Winding Creek Apiary has extractors for club members to borrow
 - Tricks for separating bees from honey frames
 - A few squirts of Honey Bandit, Honey Robber, or similar product
 - Shake bees from frames
 - Place frames in lidded cooler or tote
 - Take away from bee yard and blow excess bees away using electric leaf blower
- Testing water content of honey - want less than 19%, although 17-18% is the ideal
- Problems with hive beetles
 - Feces cause honey to ferment and "slimes" the frames
 - Bees corral the beetles
 - Beetles typically only severely damage weak hives
 - To fight them, can use beetle traps, diatomaceous earth, swiffer sheets, peppermint oil candies
 - IPM (integrated pest management) - using varied, different methods to achieve success.
- Problems with wax moths
 - Larvae tunnels through wax
 - Can make wax moth trap - recipe on MoCo Bee website under Resources
- Make sure to leave resources for bees to winter
 - Typically leave double-deeps for bees to use
 - Harvest from supers

Apprentice Meeting adjourned at 6:59 pm

Monthly meeting – began at 7:05 pm

Led by President Matt Thomas

- Recorded in attendance were 37 members and guests

Announcements

- Be wary of hive beetles, as many beekeepers are having issues with them
- MoCo Bees provides an 18-month youth program for ages 12-17, in which accepted youths are provided equipment, bees, tools, and mentorship. Signups are in December, and more information is available on the MoCo Bees website.
- Always looking for people to do monthly meeting presentations
- Nanette Davis shared that powdered sugar is used for mite testing, not mite treatment
- Nanette Davis displayed a CO2 canister (available at Winding Creek Apiary) that can be used to inject into sample of bees for Varroa Mite testing.
 - Faster and doesn't hurt the bees, like standard alcohol wash does

Youth Program Update

- Connor Smith

Meeting Speaker - Dr. Bob Rogers, DVM: Fat Bees, Skinny Bees

- Worker bees are born hungry
 - They gorge on honey and bee bread for first five days before they go to work
- Why do we need to feed bees?
 - Starvation is #2 cause of hive loss
 - Signs are bees sticking out of cells
 - Dead bees inside bottom of hive
 - If not enough pollen, nurse bees will cannibalize eggs and brood
 - Winter bees don't freeze, they starve
- Goals
 - Strong hives
 - Wax, honey, brood production
 - Colony health
- Building wax requires five times as much nectar as does honey
- Importance of feeding in early Spring - feed before the flow, not during
 - Stimulate brood production
 - Roller-coaster weather
 - Encourage wax production
 - Only one source of pollen
- Importance of feeding in Summer and Fall
 - Dearth - bees are active
 - Need to build up winter bees
 - Conserve honey stores
- Vitellogenin in fat bodies

- Stores proteins bee's fat bodies
 - Promotes longevity of winter bees - 3 months vs. 6 weeks
 - Enables feeding of brood & queen protein in jelly
- Varroa mites feed on vitellogenin
 - Infected pupae will not develop properly
- In Montgomery County, brood production occurs all year
 - Need resources all year
- When to Feed?
 - Nucs
 - Requeening
 - Splits
 - After swarms
 - Drought
 - After robbing
- Increase when spring temps are above 50F
- Stop feeding during flow (roughly early May) and when supers are on
 - Beware of honey-bound frames
 - Smaller brood patterns
 - Lots of nectar and honey, but no space for brood
 - When ¼ of frames are pollen and bee bread
- Start again when honey is harvested and during dearth
- Trickle Feeding
 - Dearth & winter = July 4 thru February
 - Want to feed roughly twice a week
- Leave 40 pounds of honey per hive
 - Mild winter requires more honey left in hive since bees will be foraging more
 - Maintain 20 lbs through the end of winter
 - Leave more for spring splits
- How to Feed Bees
 - Don't drown bees
 - Don't breed hive beetles on pollen patties
 - Don't attract robbers including varmints
- Favorite In-hive Feeders
 - Frame division feeder
 - Top jar feeders (better when temps > 40F)
 - Gallon ziplocs
 - Rack for pollen patties with a spacer
- Favorite Outside Feeders
 - Top cover feeder
 - Miller feeder
 - Bucket feeder
 - Bucket with a raft
- Angry Bees
 - Agitation from robbing attempts?

- Sugar bricks are handy to have during uncertain weather
 - Bees won't consume sugar water during low temps
 - Don't store in garage, as they will melt
 - Can purchase or make your own
- Bee Nutrition
 - Build a pollinator garden
 - Pollen replacement, substitute, or pollen patties
 - Best indicator of adequate pollen supplies is drone production
 - Must freeze pollen patties
 - Randy Oliver - Scientificbeekeeping.com
 - Global pollen patties performed best
 - Need natural pollen
 - Pollen substitute (soy flour) causes dysbiosis
 - Impaired development
 - Decreased immunity
- Fatty Acids - need to be in proportional ratios
 - Omega 3
 - Important for detoxification
 - Important for production of royal jelly
- Sugar Syrup - does the ratio matter?
 - Randy Oliver says "No"
 - Syrup is stored for brood
 - Nectar is stored for honey
 - Don't use powdered sugar or brown sugar
 - Use 7 tsp clorox in 5 gal bucket of 1:1 syrup to prevent fermentation
 - Fondant can be used as an emergency
- Other Options
 - Fondant in not better but can be used as an emergency treatment
 - Lemon grass
 - Vitamins
 - Vitamin A & K, increases brood production
 - Vitamin C
 - Vitamin sources are obtained from pollen
 - Mineral - don't use
 - High levels are dangerous for bees
 - Probiotics - Super DFM, strong microbials
 - Useful after Varroa treatments
 - Helps to reduce Nosema during Winter & Spring
 - Don't use probiotics for chickens

Monthly Meeting adjourned at 8:35 pm

(Submitted by Keri Warren)