

Montgomery County Beekeepers Association

Minutes for Monthly Meeting

08/18/2025

Apprentice meeting started: 6:20pm

Led by Matt Thomas

How to do a mite check

There are many different ways to do mite checks; alcohol wash, sugar wash, etc., the alcohol wash kills the bees, but it's the most effective.

Put about 2/3 cup of bees in a container of alcohol and shake them vigorously until you start seeing mites fall into the bottom of the wash container.

If you do not treat for mites, it's fatal for your bees. Your bees can abscond, get diseases, and become a mite bomb. A mite bomb is when a hive becomes so overwhelmed by mites it dies, and another colony comes to rob the hive, getting the mites from the dead hives.

There are many different mite treatments, some good for cold weather, some good for hot weather, some good for honey supers, some not suitable for honey supers.

Leaving mite treatments for shorter or longer than the recommended amount of time can create a resistance to the chemical, so it's important to follow the directions and rotate your treatments.

You should pull your honey supers off before the fall blooms, since honey off of fall flowers is not preferred due to the aroma and taste.

Bee bearding is when many bees of a hive gather on the front of the hive in the evening, which is how they cool off. Some bee breeds do beard more than others, but if you do not have ventilation for your hives consider adding some.

Splits

If you have a double deep hive, you can approach splits like this:

Put a queen excluder between the two double deeps and come back in a few days. The box that does not have eggs in it is queenless. Separate the boxes and put a queen (if using queens) in the box without eggs.

You're either raising bees or making honey. This means if you split, that year you won't be getting as much honey that year. Putting an already mated queen in your splits can help make a bit more honey, but it is not a cure all.

Small hive beetles

There are many traps that are sold, such as in hive oil traps, screened bottom boards, etc. it also helps to keep the grass around your hive short, keep your hives above ground, and having a paved or gravel ground under your hives.

Some people also put peppermints in their hive, since small hive beetles do not like peppermint. You just have to make sure the peppermints are made out of pure peppermint oil.

Africanized bees

You have to be very careful working with Africanized bees (bees that are genetically very aggressive). They attack in a quarter mile radius of their hive, and they don't go away very soon. It's also dangerous to work them as they will attack people around you.

Most bees you buy are not Africanized, it's usually only feral bees, which is why you should be careful doing removals.

Bees tend to like dirty water, because typically there's more things for them to land on and also there are more minerals. They also love pool water, because they like the chlorine.

Apprentice meeting adjourned at 6:58pm

Main Meeting

Meeting started at 7:02pm

Pledge of Allegiance

Youth presentation by Austin Meyers

Youth presentation by Isaiah Cheng-Guadajaro

Main presenter: Monica Siwiak – Honey Show Judge

Honey show & products of the hive presentation by Monica Siwiak

Monica's presentation will cover the categories and how to succeed in them in the honey show.

There are three different kinds of honey shows: Welch, American, and Italian. They all have different rules and guidelines.

The Texas shows are a combination of all 3 different types of shows.

Now is a good time to start preparing your honey for the TBA honey show in November. You can register on Texasbeekeepersassociation.org.

Perfecting your honey has many different components. Cleanliness, specific jars that your honey show will specify, you want your honey jars to look uniform. To clean your jars, some people like to wash their jars then use a baby bottle steamer to avoid water spots. Some people just use dishwashers.

It's very beneficial to let your honey jars sit for a while, since it allows all the impurities to rise to the top of the honey so you can remove it.

If you have prepared your honey show jars a long time before the show, you can freeze it to prevent crystallization.

Some people use everclear to polish their jars, and also use silk rags to avoid fibers.

There are two categories for comb honey: chunk honey, which is where there is a rectangular comb in a jar of honey, and cut comb honey which is just a chunk of honey comb. They also look for white capping, not wetappings on the combs. You also don't want empty cells.

Some people use pantyhose to filter wax, and painters bags. A good way to clean excess honey from wax is to put your wax in a pan and put it in your bee yard. The bees will clean the honey off the wax, you just come back at night to get it back.

This year, the honey shows are adding a hot honey category.

Presentation adjourned at 7:57pm

Meeting ended at 8:00pm