



The Beeline

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Want to get the e-newsletter instead? Just email rlcrouse@qis.net and tell us your name and email address!

President’s Message

by Paul Dill

Happy New Year, fellow Maryland beekeepers! Many thanks to you for electing me to another year as President of the Maryland State Beekeepers Association, and many “Thank yous!” to the member beekeepers who have volunteered to serve our community as County Second Vice Presidents and Executive Board Members.

Time just flies, but some of our most important issues stay the same. As many of you have noticed, one of the things I have been thinking about most frequently over the past year is how we can encourage beekeepers to raise their own queens: something I hope we see even more of in 2011.

As many of us know, you can get unexpected problems and results when bringing queens from other regions. I also think you can use your queen rearing activities to accomplish more than one goal at a time! Myself, I don’t like freezing drone brood for mite control, even though it is one way to manage varroa without introducing chemicals that seem to be hurting the viability of our queens and drones. Because I am raising queens, I can take a frame of drone brood and put it in a nuc I am using to raise a new queen, and just let the drones hatch. The mites that are released have no place to reproduce, and their original hives don’t take on that mite load.

Coming into 2011, we are hearing more and more about widely used chemicals and their impact on the bees. Sometimes I wonder if the pesticides we hear the most about are as big a problem as chemicals that are used for other purposes. Last year, researchers at the Carl Hayden Bee Research Center in Tuscon AZ found five commonly used fungicides in bee bread. And no one yet knows how that affects the bees.

Finally, now is the time to think about what you want to do this Spring. Please consider raising a spare queen or getting ahead of swarm control by making a nuc for your self or to sell to a newbie. The best start we can give them is with local stock!

Our winter meeting is just around the corner. Bring a friend!

MSBA Participates in December 2010 Maryland Farm Bureau Convention

Recent events around Maryland have underscored the importance of beekeepers staying informed and contributing both information and some networking time to protect beekeeping here. Along these lines, MSBA Treasurer Bob Crouse and Marc Hoffman recently represented MSBA at the 2010 annual convention of the Maryland Farm Bureau (MFB). We are an affiliate member, which entitles us to attend and contribute to (but not vote) at board meetings, and to attend the annual convention, at which we are entitled to 2 voting delegates. MFB has chapters in every county, and its PAC supported 110 candidates in recent elections, 102 of whom won. Buddy Hance, the current Secretary of Agriculture, is a past MFB president.

The main benefit of attendance was that we were there and seen. It's important for the MSBA to be considered a part of the farming community, get to know the leaders, and for people to be comfortable with us so we're not just calling them when we need them. Another benefit was learning about MFB's primary concerns. Finally, we learned about their procedures so that we can propose policy recommendations for 2011.

We had a productive conversation with the Deputy Secretary of Agriculture about the ETO chamber, resulting in some concrete agreements on how to proceed. We were able to talk to the Secretary of Agriculture, the Dean of Agriculture at UMD, the head of Maryland Cooperative Extension, the presidents of many of the county farm bureaus, and the staff of MFB, making future cooperation easier. As a side note, one of the speakers, the head lobbyist of the American Farm Bureau Federation, took the Montgomery County beekeeping short course.

MFB works with the Maryland legislature's schedule, which enables their 2 lobbyists to speak for their membership and be effective in securing legislation. The MFB process involves soliciting suggestions from the county farm bureaus early in the year, and putting each suggestion to a vote at the annual convention. There is a section on beekeeping in their policy document, which urges full funding for research, permission to use chemicals for mite reduction, and advocates that all counties encourage beekeeping.

While MSBA participation in meetings such as this is important, there are MFB branches in every county, the organization's agenda is set by vote of these groups, and local farmer support for beekeeping make come in handy at a zoning hearing near you! Each county club is therefore strongly encouraged to attend meetings of your local farm bureau. Learn more at www.mdfarmbureau.com.

UPCOMING LOCAL EVENTS

MSBA Winter Meeting:

February 19, 2011, 8:30 AM to 3:30 PM, Howard County Fairgrounds, West Friendship, MD

MSBA Spring Meeting:

June 18, 2011, 8:30 AM to 3:30 PM, University of Maryland/College Park Entomology Department Plant Sciences Building Auditorium

MSBA Fall Meeting:

November 12, 2011, 8:30 AM to 3:30 PM, Maryland Department of Agriculture, 50 Harry S Truman Parkway, Annapolis, MD

2011 Maryland Queen-Rearing Class presented by Dr. Larry J. Connor, 2 1/2 Days, May 20 - 22, 2011. Location: Churchville - Bel Air area, Harford County, MD. Tuition \$290. For reservations: Joe Lewis, 1102 Runnymede Ct, Bel Air, MD 21014. For more information email lewisjoseph@verizon.net

Delaware Beekeepers Association Annual Meeting, 8:30 AM to 3:30 PM March 19, 2011, 818 Kitts Hummock Road, Dover, DE 19901, more at www.delawarebeekeepers.com/events.html

West Virginia State Beekeepers Association, April 9, 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM, Mercer County 4 H Camp, Glenwood Park Rd near Princeton, WV. More at www.wvbeekeepers.org

Virginia State Beekeepers Association Meeting, June 17-18 Fredericksburg, VA. Visit virginiabeekeepers.org for more details.

Other Upcoming Events:

"Organic Beekeeping: A Day with Ross Conrad" by the Philadelphia Beekeepers Guild, Sunday February 6, 2011 from 10:00 AM to 3 PM at The William Penn Charter School, 3000 W. School House Lane, Philadelphia PA. Non-member cost \$25, reserve at <http://rossconradinphilly.eventbrite.com/>

Fourth Annual Meeting of the Organic Beekeepers Group, March 4 -6, 2011 in Oracle, Arizona. Registration \$175. For more information/to register: Dee Lusby, tel. 520-398-2474 (AZ number, evenings please).

EAS 2011 Short Course and Conference

July 25 - 29, 2011, Warwick, RI. More information at www.easternapiculture.org

MSBA WINTER MEETING WEATHER POLICY

In the event of a major winter storm, please listen to WBAL (AM 1090) or WTOP (FM 103.5) for announcements. If a Anow Emergency Plan is in effect for Howard County, the meeting is cancelled.

**Maryland State Beekeepers' Association
Winter Meeting
February 19, 2011
Howard County Fair Grounds, West Friendship, MD**

8:30 am	Refreshments, Coffee, Donuts, etc.	
9:30 am	Opening and Welcome	Paul Dill, President
9:45 am	Maryland Apiary Inspector's Report	Jerry Fischer, Maryland State Inspector
10:00 am	"Learning From and About Bee Learning"	Dr. Elizabeth Capaldi-Evans, Associate Professor of Biology & Animal Behavior Bucknell University
11:00 am	Howard County Beekeeping Zoning Regulation Update	Dr. Wayne Esaias, Howard County Beekeepers
11:30 am	<i>Bee Gear Auction and Lunch (On your own or Subway order when you arrive)</i>	
1:15 pm	International Connections Honey Bee Health Collaboration Center for Agriculture Defense: The Brazilian Beelab	Humberto Freire Boncristiani, Jr. International Researcher USDA/ARS Beltsville
2:00 pm	"What's the Buzz? Educating the Public about Bees and Beekeeping"	Dr. Elizabeth Capaldi-Evans, Associate Professor of Biology & Animal Behavior Bucknell University
3:30 pm	Panel: Senior Beekeepers Respond to Your Anonymously Submitted Questions	
4:00 pm	Adjourn	Paul Dill, President

Directions:

Via I-70: Get off I-70 at Exit 80 (Rt. 32 Exit); go south on MD Rt. 32 for 1/8 mile to first traffic light; turn right (west) onto Rt. 144; turn right at crest of hill onto Fair- grounds Road; turn into second entrance; meeting is in the Dining Hall, second building on left

Via Rt. 32: Stay on Rt. 32 to West Friendship; turn west (left, if coming from the south) onto Rt. 144, at the traf- fic light within sight of I-70; turn right at crest of hill onto Fairgrounds Road; turn into second entrance; meeting is in the Dining Hall, second build- ing on left

From Eastern Shore & Annapolis Area: From Rt. 50, just west of Annapolis, take I-97 North toward Balti- more; exit onto Rt. 32 toward Columbia; follow directions above, via Rt. 32

From NE MD: Proceed to Baltimore Beltway (I- 695); take I-70 west toward Frederick; follow directions above, via I-70 Lunch / Refreshments at the Winter Meeting:

Refreshments:

MSBA will provide Coffee and Donuts, Sodas and Water as refreshments during the winter meeting.

There will be an opportunity to order a Subway sandwich on a cash-only basis for those who register before 10:00 AM for this meeting. Members/attendees are welcome to order upon registration or are advised to bring their own lunch or to make plans to dine at a local establishment.

MSBA Winter Meeting 2011 Speakers

The Maryland State Beekeepers are pleased to welcome

Dr. Elizabeth Capaldi-Evans of Bucknell University as our keynote speaker this month. Dr. Evans is Director of the University's highly acclaimed animal behavior program. An expert in invertebrate behavior, she has shown through her research that even though bees' brains are tiny, they can learn by doing, and can process and store complex information.



Dr. Evans has also undertaken research on native pollinators, and is one of the few scientific researchers who are equally adept in explaining her area of expertise to practitioners and the general public. In 2010, Rutgers University Press published her book, *Why Do Bees Buzz? Fascinating Answers to Questions About Bees*.

As we find ourselves more and more likely to reach out to our neighbors to protect our right to keep bees, Dr. Evans can offer us some strategies for making honeybees better understood and less feared.

Dr. Humberto Boncristiani is a visiting Research Molecular Biologist at the Beltsville Bee Lab, USDA/ARS, and he will share with us news from the world of collaborative international honeybee research, including a look at the brand new Brazilian Bee Lab, "Collaboration Center for Agriculture Defense." Dr. Boncristiani's research at Beltsville has included in depth analysis of honeybee pathogens such as *Varroa destructor*, Israeli acute paralysis virus, Deformed Wing Virus and their potential relationship to Colony Collapse Disorder.

Dr. Wayne Esaias of the Howard County Beekeepers will give us an update on the status of ongoing efforts to establish zoning protections for over half of the county's apiaries in the aftermath of another round of hearings.

We once again request that you bring old bee gear to donate for a **lunchtime auction**, which supports our meetings, member communications, and educational activities. Please contact Toni Burnham (see back cover) if you have a large item which you would like to discuss.

The day will end with a **new panel format**: before lunch, we'll request your anonymous questions, which will then be assigned to one of several senior beekeepers, after which the others will comment. This is an opportunity for beginners to be heard along with long timers, and to ensure that a variety of perspectives are shared.

We look forward to seeing you on February 19, 2011 at the Howard County Fairgrounds!

MDA Exploring Local Labelling Regulations

On December 17, 2010, the Maryland Department of Agriculture released proposed rules concerning the advertising of foods as "local," soliciting public comment through January 18th. You can learn more about this process by visiting www.mda.state.md.us and tabbing through the "hot topics" at right.

MDA has struggled to develop a definition for "local," and has instead opted to allow consumers to determine for themselves whether a given product meets that standard. Producers are asked to identify the state of origin of their product, if not the specific farm location. These regulations may prove problematic for beekeepers, since we have multiple apiaries and are likely in many cases to move hives for pollination across state lines.

Many of us have confronted this issue on both sides: we may sell products in farmers' markets where hive products from New Jersey or Ohio are sold as local, but many of us also sell honey from hives that might have travelled to California or Florida at some point during the year.

The MSBA has provided comment to MDA that includes these concerns, as well as requesting clarification concerning whether honey falls under the regulations as written and whether labeling in addition to what is already required by the FDA is actually necessary in the case of hive products.

MSBA has suggested that honey marketed by Maryland beekeepers who are registered with MDA and who maintain hives within the state should meet the local standard, that the additional cost of signage or labeling that might be caused by the new rules would be prohibitive for our 100% sideliner community, and would actually reduce the amount of truly local hive products available to the public.

Though the official comment period has closed, a public hearing has not yet been scheduled and beekeepers are encouraged to get in contact with MDA's Mark Powell, Chief of Marketing, 410-841-5775 or PowellMS@mda.state.md.us with any comments or concerns.

74th Annual MSBA Honey Show Report

By David Morris, Honey Show Chairman

The 74th MSBA Annual Honey Show was held at the Fall meeting, November 20, 2010, at the MDA Headquarters in Annapolis. Entries were accepted from 31 exhibitors entering 64 exhibits, representing 12 associations, with two exhibitors declaring no association affiliation. Entries were down a little this year and only \$793 was paid of the available \$1,530 in premiums. We had no entries in Mead, Person or Mailable Gift Baskets, Bar or Sheet Cookies, or Quick Sweet Yeast Bread. We also had only one exhibitor in the entire Youth Division, which has Hive Products, Crafts and Cooking. Keep this in mind for next year, more competition is needed next year.

The top show winners this year were:

- *The "John Lindner Best in Show" Award:* Steve McDaniel, Photo
- *Div I Hive Products:* Harry Dutcher, Dark Honey
- *Div II Bee Crafts:* Steve McDaniel, Photo
- *Div IV Honey Cooking:* Chris Hash, Quick Bread
(There is no Division Ribbon for the Div IV "Youth")

The "I. Barton Smith Best Club Showing" Award was a tie between the Susquehanna and Carroll County Beekeepers Associations. Congratulations to those club members for their successful club spirit!

The MSBA Board and the Honey Show Chairman and wishes to acknowledge those individuals who made the show possible. The Honey Show judges and volunteers gave their away from the presentation, including Dr. Wyatt Mangum, in order to continue this long tradition. Our thanks to exhibit entry volunteers, headed by Loyd Luna, included Doris Luna, Susan Langley and Amy Jameson.; to the judges for Hive Products & Crafts, Dean Burroughs, William McGiffin, Gerald Worrell and David Morris (Senior Judge), and to the judges for Honey Cooking, Susan Langley and Linda Thompson; and to our Judging Assistants, Nicole Ballenger and Mike Dewald. The Honey Show is possible only because of the time volunteered by these members.

One innovation was introduced this year. A spreadsheet was developed by David Morris to record each exhibitor and the judging scores for each exhibit. The spreadsheet totaled the amount of the premiums awarded to each exhibitor which was provided to the Treasurer. It also totaled the scores for the Best Club Showing Award. This saved having volunteers tally and record scores across several pages of forms and automatically updated after each new score sheet was recorded.

Thanks to all who participated and helped in the show!

74th Annual MSBA Honey Show First Prize winners

Division I: HIVE PRODUCTS

- *Class 1 Extracted Honey-1st Time Entry:* Alisa DeGeorge
- *Class 2 Extracted Honey-Water White thru Ext. Lt.:* Loyd Luna
- *Class 3 Extracted Honey-Lt. Amber thru Amber:* Joseph King
- *Class 4 Extracted Honey-Dark Amber:* Harry Dutcher
- *Class 5 Extracted Honey-Dark:* Darryl Walker
- *Class 7 Extracted Honey-Lt. Amb. thru Amber:* Steve McDaniel
- *Class 8 Extracted Honey-Dark Amber:* Steve McDaniel
- *Class 9 Extracted Honey-Dark:* Steve McDaniel
- *Class 10 Comb Honey-Square Section:* Steve McDaniel
- *Class 11 Comb Honey-Round Section:* Steve McDaniel
- *Class 12 Cut Comb Honey in clear plastic box:* Loyd Luna
- *Class 13 Chunk Honey in wide mouth 1 lb. jar:* Loyd Luna
- *Class 14 Finely Granulated Honey:* Jo Anne Smith
- *Class 15 One Shallow or Full Depth Frame Honey:* Harry Dutcher
- *Class 16 Beeswax Block 2lbs. minimum:* Janet Bardzik
- *Class 17 Dry Pollen Pellets in 1 lb. honey jar:* Gerrard Worrell

Division II: ARTS AND CRAFTS

- *Class 18 Four Molded Beeswax Candles:* Loyd Luna
- *Class 19 Four Dipped Beeswax Candles:* Steve McDaniel
- *Class 20 Four Rolled Candles:* Gerrard Worrell

- *Class 21 Artistic Beeswax:* Steve McDaniel
- *Class 22 Label for Honey Container:* Steve McDaniel
- *Class 23 President's Prize:* Loyd Luna
- *Class 24 Photography:* Steve McDaniel
- *Class 25 Equipment or Gadget:* Alice Parks

Division III: YOUTH DIVISION

- *Class 33 Honey Cookery (As in Div. IV):* Daniel Smith

Division IV: HONEY COOKERY

- *Class 34 Cake:* Susan Langley
- *Class 35 Cookies-12 drop, refrigerator, rolled, or filled:* Rose Miller
- *Class 37 Pie:* Ted Moran
- *Class 38 Candy-12 pieces:* Rose Miller
- *Class 39 Yeast Bread-Non Sweet:* Mary Landon
- *Class 41 Quick Bread-Sweet:* Chris Hash
- *Class 42 Quick Bread-Other:* Rose Miller
- *Class 43 Jellies, Jams, Preserves or Conserves:* Darryl Walker
- *Class 44 Condiments, Salad Dressings, Barbecue Sauces:* Darryl Walker
- *Class 45 Any other entry, honey cookery:* Darryl Walker

It's Membership Renewal Time Again

By Robert Crouse, Treasurer

It's that time of the year again when your Dues are due. You can renew with the form here, or by visiting our Web Site at www.msbeea.org/main/Membership.html, click on "application form." Please fill out the form if any changes in your information need to be made or if there is any doubt that the information we have is current. Be sure to show in the appropriate boxes where you want your money assigned. We no longer accept more than the current year's dues of \$10 per annual member. Dues will be collected thru the end of February.

Remember that any funds sent in to MSBA are tax deductible. That means that if you assign some money to MSBA for the Apiary Enhancement Fund it is also tax

deductable. Just show the donation on the form so it is not necessary for separate checks or postage.

Please **do not** send us checks made out to Apiary Enhancement Fund, or send MSBA checks to the Maryland Department of Agriculture. Nor should you send us MDA registration forms with your dues!

Most of our newsletters go out via email now, saving a lot in paper and postage. If you have a problem receiving your newsletter please contact me, not the editor, to make sure that your address is correct. If I receive an email from you I can be sure your information is recorded correctly, and will then advise the editor.

Robert Crouse, rlcrouse@qis.net, tel. 410-638-0105

Honey Cocktails and Mocktails for Valentine's Day

Whether a "mocktail" without alcohol or a drink that packs a punch, most romantic honey drinks start a lot like their more common cousins: with a sweet syrup. Many up and coming chefs are experimenting with the richer flavors of honey rather than the usual sugar mix! Honey resists being mixed into cold drinks, of course. It's therefore best to thin it beforehand. To do this, pour equal amounts of honey and hot water into a glass container and stir, resulting in a mild honey syrup. For a more concentrated honey flavor, you can double or even triple the proportion of honey to water. The syrup will keep its flavor in the refrigerator for up to three weeks.

Honey Cinn-Tini

Ingredients:

- 2 oz. strong chilled orange pekoe tea
- 1 1/2 oz. lemon juice
- 1/2 oz. liquid honey

1. Blend ingredients in a cocktail shaker.
2. Strain into a Cinnamon-sugar rimmed martini glass.
3. Garnish with lemon and lime zest twists.

Alcoholic version: substitute lemon vodka for lemon juice OR Pimms for the orange pekoe tea.

Bee's Knees

Ingredients:

- 1 1/2 oz. ginger ale or Fresca
- 1 tsp. honey
- 1 tsp. fresh lemon juice
- Ice
- Lemon twist for garnish

Combine all ingredients in a shaker. Shake, strain into a chilled glass and garnish.

Alcoholic version: substitute gin for ginger ale.

"Not" Toddy with Honey

Ingredients:

- 7 oz. hot tea
- 1 Tbsp. honey
- 1 tsp. lemon juice
- Grated cinnamon
- Ground cloves
- Grated nutmeg
- Lemon wedge for garnish

In an Irish coffee glass pour the honey, lemon and spices. Top with hot, brewed tea. Stir. Garnish with a lemon wedge.

Alcoholic version: Omit spices, put honey in bottom of glass, pour in 1 ounce of bourbon, add hot tea, garnish.



*And some fresh flowers for the table.
(New Yorker, January 17, 2011)*

Maryland State Beekeepers Association Member Application

Name : _____

Returning members – please only detail any *changes* in your contact information.

Email : _____ (home / work)

Address : _____

City : _____ State : _____ ZIP : _____ County : _____

Phone : _____ (home / cell / work)

Description	Unit Cost	Number	Sub-Total
Annual Membership	\$10		
Or, Lifetime Membership	\$200		
Donations			
To MDA's Apiary Inspection Fund**			
To MSBA, general donation			
To MSBA, for George Imirie Education Fund			
To MSBA, donation for Vehicle Plates (MVA fee is +\$25)	\$15		
Grand Total:			

** will be passed on to MDA

Questionnaire

- I am a **new Annual Member**
- I am interested in serving on the MSBA Executive **Board** or a committee
- I am interested in judging or assisting at the MSBA Annual **Honey Show**
- I am interested in giving a **presentation** at a future MSBA event
- I am interested in providing an **article** for the 'Beeline'

Suggestions / Feedback

Do you have any suggestions for the MSBA – topics for future meetings; things you would like to see MSBA doing; improvements to the website etc?

Please make all checks payable to '**MSBA**'

Mail checks and forms to :

Bob Crouse, Treasurer
1606 Dogwood Lane,
Bel Air MD 21015

phone: (410) 638-0105
email : rlcrouse@qis.net

MSBA Use Only

Check Date.....:

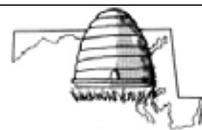
Check Num.....:

Check Amt.....:

Details updated.:

Member ID.....:

Clip and save your new membership card which becomes activated when you pay your MSBA dues. Check our website, www.msbeea.org, for any changes, updates and program details.



MSBA
Dedicated to beekeeping
in Maryland since 1908

This card certifies that the following is a member
of the Maryland State Beekeepers Association

Name: _____

Year : 2011

MSBA OFFICERS & DIRECTORS:

President: Paul Dill (302) 249-1866
 1ST Vice President: Toni Burnham (202) 255-4318
 Secretary: Cheryl Evry (301) 292-5231
 Treasurer: Robert Crouse (410) 638-0105
 MD EAS Director: Janet Bardzik (410) 467-4249
 "Beeline" Editor: Open

Directors:

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 Linda Thompson (301) 352-3663
 Beth Passavant (410) 444-9644

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 David Smith (410) 556-6222

COUNTY VICE PRESIDENTS:

Allegheny: Ben Cooper, (814) 324-4550
 Anne Arundel: Oliver Snyder (410) 437-5489
 Baltimore: Jerry Fischer (410) 841-5920
 Baltimore City: Janet Bardzik (410) 467-4249
 Calvert: Jerry Worrell (410) 257-3267
 Caroline: Paul Dill (302) 249-1866
 Carroll: Jody King (410) 875-2332
 Cecil: Jeff Powell (410) 392-5985
 Charles: Position open
 Dorchester: Oliver Collins (410) 943-3448
 Frederick: Adam Finkelstein (301) 662-4844
 Garrett: Jerome 'Hop' Cassidy (310) 334-8631
 Harford: Mike DeWald (410) 746-8086
 Howard: Wayne Esaias (301) 854-3180
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 Queen Anne's: John Moyer (410) 923-0190
 Somerset: George Dreyer (410) 623-2221
 St Mary's: Harry Dalton (301) 475-8224
 Talbot: Elizabeth Baer (410) 310-7315
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 Worcester: Wes Townsend (410) 641-1030
 Washington D.C. Toni Burnham (202) 255-4318
 Fairfax, VA Pat Haskell (703) 560-3484

LOCAL BEEKEEPING ASSOCIATIONS:

ALLEGANY MOUNTAIN BEEKEEPERS ASSOC.
 President: Ben Cooper (814) 324-4550
 ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY BEEKEEPERS ASSOC.
 President: Loyd Luna (410) 757-5797
 APPALACHIAN BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION
 President: Jerome Cassidy (301) 334-8631
 ASSOC. OF SOUTHERN MARYLAND BEEKEEPERS
 President: Karen Cooksey (301) 705-7611
 UPPER MARLBORO BEEKEEPERS ASSOC.
 President: Anthony Drake (301) 352-3663
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 HAGERSTOWN VALLEY APIAN SOCIETY
 President: Mark & Sara Gibson (301) 371-0811
 MONTGOMERY COUNTY BEEKEEPERS ASSOC
 President: : Jim Fraser (301) 518 518
 SUSQUEHANNA BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION
 President: Mike DeWald (410) 276-2647

MDA OFFICE OF APIARY INSPECTION

Jerry Fischer (410) 562 562, FischeJE@mda.state.md.us

MSBA HOME PAGE:

www.mdbeekeepers.org, webmaster@mdbeekeepers.org

Please check the MSBA membership "thru date" on your mailing label! If your dues are not current, please pay them at the February 19 meeting or mail to: MSBA Treasurer, Robert Crouse, 1606 Dogwood Lane, Bel Air, MD, 21015.

Also note: we will only accept dues payments for a single year. Additional payments may be credited as MSBA donations.

THE BEELINE

c/o A. Burnham
 318 12th Street NE
 Washington, DC 20002



Address corrections requested

West Virginia's Beekeeper Immunity Law: What Lessons for Maryland?

In April 2010, the State of West Virginia passed HB 4527, "Registration of bees; identification of apiaries; limitation on liabilities," in effect creating a set of rules protecting beekeepers from civil liability.

Considering the numerous Maryland jurisdictions where beekeeping is under threat, a positive move in a neighbor state is both encouraging and may provide guidance for developments in our own state.

In a September 2010 *Bee Culture* article, "West Virginia Passes Immunity Law: First State To Do So," Dan O'Hanlon, Secretary, Cabell Wayne (WV) Beekeepers Association lays out the terms by which West Virginia became the first state in the nation to pass a law giving beekeepers immunity from civil liability for ordinary negligence. Several key West Virginia lawmakers have beekeeping in their families, and the bill passed with overwhelming majorities. Hanlon also mentions, "[I]t helped that the honey bee is our state insect!"

The West Virginia law requires several familiar milestones that we here in Maryland have taken on: beehives must be registered, and absolute immunity from civil liability from ordinary negligence depends on beekeeper compliance with rules derived Best Management Practices [BMP] promulgated by the West Virginia Department of Agriculture. The result is 14 rules which "relate mainly to urban beekeeping and being a good neighbor," including:

- Posting a warning sign in every apiary and limiting the number of hives in any one location based on the lot size. "This varies from no more than four hives on a half-acre lot, to no more than eight hives on a lot of more than an acre. If all the hives are at least 200 feet from all property lines, there is no limit."
- Hive entrances must face away from neighboring property and the beekeeper must have a six foot barrier if the hives are within 50 feet of the property line.
- Beekeeper must maintain a water source near the colonies at a distance less than the nearest unnatural water supply.
- Locating a hive within 50 feet of where any animal is tethered or kenneled is prohibited.
- Opening a hive when neighbors are present in the immediate vicinity is prohibited.
- Avoid purchasing queens and bees from areas known to have Africanized honey bees [AHB]. Replace

all queens which head colonies which exhibit such defensive behavior.

- Manage hives to prevent swarming.
- Bees used for public demonstrations, entertainment or educational purposes must be enclosed so as to prevent release in public.
- Bees being transported need to be screened to prevent escape, and a caution sign posted at sights where bees are collected prior to shipping. All bees being transported must be secured and netted.
- All pesticides and control agents must be discarded properly following label directions.

O'Hanlon points out that "the Department reserved the right to promulgate additional rules in the future if AHB became established in West Virginia, but these rules are something beekeepers can live with for now."

Different beekeepers in West Virginia are, if course, divided about these rules and there are those who would omit some requirements and prioritize others, though according to O'Hanlon "wiser heads are urging all beekeepers not to open Pandora's Box and allow non-beekeeping delegates and senators to begin adding rules that they feel would better regulate bees in West Virginia. After all, the rules are completely voluntary so you can simply run your operation as you see fit, the same as you did before the law was passed. You will still be subject to civil suits, but the choice is yours."

The article mentions welcome side effects to the law, including lower insurance premiums for some beekeepers. Here in Maryland, our greater concern might be the impact such protections could have on the increasingly common zoning conflicts our members confront.

Would a state law protecting beekeepers from civil liability demonstrate the value our community places upon beekeeping, and provide a set of legal precedents about density and use that our zoning officials would consider persuasive, or might it create additional concerns in our more and more suburban jurisdictions?

West Virginia beekeepers should be proud to have their hives in the first state to help shield beekeepers from lawsuits, and their willingness to take on beekeeping issues on the state level deserves congratulations.

Here in Maryland, we have hive registration and Best Management Practices, and should consider the next steps which could help guarantee a future for beekeepers and beekeeping in the Free State.

Beekeepers Ask EPA to Remove Pesticide Linked to Colony Collapse Disorder, Citing Leaked Agency Memo

By Heather Pilatic, Pesticide Action Network & Jay Feldman, Beyond Pesticides

In December, Beekeepers and environmentalists called on EPA to remove a pesticide linked to Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD), citing a leaked EPA memo that discloses a critically flawed scientific support study. The November 2nd memo identifies a core study underpinning the registration of the insecticide clothianidin as unsound after EPA quietly re-evaluated the pesticide just as it was getting ready to allow a further expansion of its use. Clothianidin (product name “Poncho”) has been widely used as a seed treatment on many of the country’s major crops for eight growing seasons under a “conditional registration” granted while EPA waited for Bayer Crop Science, the pesticide’s maker, to conduct a field study assessing its threat to bee colony health.

Bayer’s field study was the contingency on which conditional registration was granted in 2003. Groups are calling for an immediate stop-use order on the pesticide while the science is redone, and redesigned in partnership with beekeepers. They claim that the initial field study guidelines, which the Bayer study failed to satisfy, were insufficiently rigorous: the field test evaluated the wrong crop, over an insufficient time period and with inadequate controls.

According to beekeeper Jeff Anderson, who has testified before EPA, “The Bayer study is fatally flawed. It was an open field study with control and test plots of about 2 acres each. Bees typically forage at least 2 miles out from the hive, so it is likely they didn’t ingest much of the treated crops. And corn, not canola, is the major pollen-producing crop that bees rely on for winter nutrition. This is a critical point because we see hive losses mainly after over-wintering, so there is something going on in these winter cycles. It’s as if they designed the study to avoid seeing clothianidin’s effects on hive health.”

Clothianidin is of the neonicotinoid family of systemic pesticides, which are taken up and expressed through pollen, nectar and gutation droplets from which bees then forage. Scientists are concerned about the cumulative effects of the multiple pesticides bees are exposed to in these ways. Neonicotinoids are of particular concern because they have cumulative, sublethal effects on insect pollinators that correspond to CCD symptoms – namely, neurobehavioral and immune system disruptions.

According to James Frazier, PhD., professor of entomology at Penn State’s College of Agricultural Sciences, “Among the neonicotinoids, clothianidin is among those most toxic for honey bees; and this combined with its systemic movement in plants has produced a troubling mix of scientific results pointing to its potential risk for

honey bees through current agricultural practices. Our own research indicates that systemic pesticides occur in pollen and nectar in much greater quantities than has been previously thought, and that interactions among pesticides occurs often and should be of wide concern.” Dr. Frazier said that the most prudent course of action would be to take the pesticide off the market while the flawed study is being redone.

Clothianidin has been on the market since 2003. With a soil half-life of up to 19 years in heavy soils, and over a year in the lightest of soils, commercial beekeepers are concerned that even an immediate stop-use of clothianidin won’t save their livelihoods or hives in time.

“We are losing more than a third of our colonies each winter; but beekeepers are a stubborn, industrious bunch. We split hives, rebound as much as we can each summer, and then just take it on the chin—eat our losses. So even these big loss numbers understate the problem,” says beekeeper David Hackenberg. “What folks need to understand is that the beekeeping industry is at a critical threshold for economic reasons and reasons to do with bee population dynamics. Our bees are living for 30 days instead of 42, nursing bees are having to forage because there aren’t enough foragers and at a certain point a colony just doesn’t have the critical mass to keep going. We are losing our livelihoods at a time when there just isn’t other work. Another winter of ‘more studies are needed’ so Bayer can keep their products on the market and EPA can avoid a difficult decision, is unacceptable.”

Citing the imminent economic and environmental hazards posed by the use of clothianidin, the National Honey Bee Advisory Board, Beekeeping Federation, Beyond Pesticides, Pesticide Action Network, North America and Center for Biological Diversity are asking EPA administrator Lisa Jackson to exercise the Agency’s emergency powers to take the pesticide off the market. “The environment has become the experiment and all of us – not just bees and beekeepers – have become the experimental subjects,” said Tom Theobald, a 35-year beekeeper. “In an apparent rush to get products to the market, chemicals have been routinely granted “conditional” registrations. Of 94 pesticide active ingredients released since 1997, 70% have been given conditional registrations, with unanswered questions of unknown magnitude. In the case of clothianidin those questions were huge. The EPA’s basic charge is “the prevention of unreasonable risk to man and the environment” and these practices hardly satisfy that obligation. We must do better, there is too much at stake.”

From CATCH THE BUZZ**Beekeeping and Pollinator Groups Meet with EPA, Pesticide Industry, University Researchers***Submitted by Xerces Society*

PENSACOLA, Fla. (January 24, 2011) - Last week representatives from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the pesticide industry met with university researchers, conservationists and beekeeping groups in Florida to discuss the way that pesticide risks to bees are evaluated. The conference, which was organized by the Society for Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry (SETAC), is considered by U.S. government agencies and industry-watchers to be the first step in evaluating whether current guidelines on measuring pesticide toxicity are effective.

Currently, the EPA only evaluates pesticide toxicity to honey bees, while bumble bees and other crop-pollinating bee species are given no consideration. Beekeeping groups have also questioned the validity of the existing honey bee hazard evaluation process in the U.S., and have pushed the agency to develop stricter standards in the wake of highly publicized bee deaths. Previous SETAC conferences have reviewed the pesticide risk standards to wildlife such as fish and birds, resulting in more stringent requirements on the part of manufacturers. This was the first SETAC conference focused specifically on bees.

"We are generally pleased with the increased intensity of pesticide screening that was discussed, as well as the inclusion of non-honey bee species in the testing process," said Mace Vaughan, Pollinator Program Director at the Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation, who attended the conference. "We hope that this will lead the EPA to adopt more thorough risk management strategies for pollinators."

Pollinators have been the focus of several conservation initiatives spearheaded by the Xerces Society and beekeeping groups in recent years, who point out that the ecological service bees, butterflies and other pollinators provide is necessary for the reproduction of more than 70 percent of the world's plants. This includes two-thirds of the world's crop species, whose fruits and seeds together provide over thirty percent of the foods that we consume.

Dramatic declines of both wild and domesticated bees have resulted in a growing awareness of threats such as habitat loss, diseases and pesticide use.

"It is vitally important that the EPA better address the impact that these toxic substances have on honey bees and native bees," said Zac Browning of the American Beekeeping Federation, who also attended the conference. "Adoption of the final recommendations from this workshop, which are expected in the next several months, is a good first step. But much more will need to be done to truly protect these important pollinators."

In the U.S. alone, more than 1.2 billion pounds of pesticides are applied annually. Penn State researchers have identified traces of more than eighty different pesticide products in nearly all honey bee hives they examine, with several of these compounds being implicated in bee deaths.

The Xerces Society and the American Beekeeping Federation recommend that the EPA:

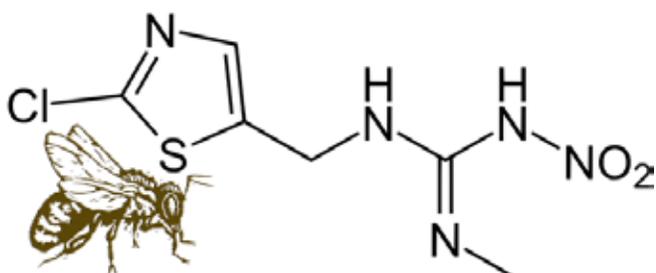
- Adopt a strong risk assessment strategy for both honey bees and native bees based on the information developed at the conference.
- Conduct a robust review of neonicotinoid pesticides, which have been implicated in bee deaths.
- Develop better labeling so that consumers can easily determine which pesticides are most toxic to bees and understand how to use the pesticides while limiting risk to pollinators.

ABOUT THE XERCES SOCIETY

The Xerces Society is a nonprofit organization that protects wildlife through the conservation of invertebrates and their habitat. Established in 1971, the Society is at the forefront of invertebrate protection worldwide, harnessing the knowledge of scientists and the enthusiasm of citizens to implement conservation programs. To learn more about our work or to donate to the Society, please visit www.xerces.org.

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MSBA's Comments on Maryland's Proposed Regulations on "Local" Product Labelling

(from Page 4)

At its January 14, 2011 Executive Board Meeting, the MSBA approved the following comments from the organization with regard to the Maryland Department of Agriculture's "COMAR 15.01.09 Advertising Agricultural Products as Local or Locally Grown." The public comment period closed on January 18, 2011, but public hearings have yet to be scheduled and individual members are encouraged to contact MDA and their local leaders concerning this matter.



*Maryland State Beekeepers Assoc., Inc.
Dedicated to beekeeping in Maryland
since 1908*

Mark Powell, Chief of Marketing
Maryland Department of Agriculture
Marketing and Agricultural Development
50 Harry S. Truman Parkway
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: COMAR 15.01.09 Advertising Agricultural Products as Local or Locally Grown

Dear Mr. Powell:

The Maryland State Beekeepers Association, Inc. (MSBA) is concerned that the above-referenced proposed regulation may not accurately reflect both the nature of local honey production in Maryland and the impact these requirements may have upon the latter. We are hoping to both provide comment and to receive clarification concerning the relevance of this new regulation to honey production.

Section .02 "Definitions" lists forms of processing that are not applicable to the extraction of honey, though Paragraph (b), "Those physical processes that do not fundamentally alter the raw product and/or only separate a whole, intact food into component parts" could be construed to apply. None of the examples given to illustrate this definition are parallel to honey production. Extracted honey is a raw, not a processed, food and not all honey is sold in an extracted form.

Also, as you are doubtless aware, many Maryland beekeepers keep hives at several locations, both within the state and in nearby areas of Delaware, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia. In the course of a single season, a Maryland hive may also be moved across the state and across state lines in order to provide critical pollination services to local farmers. Because of the small amount of honey produced in the course of each pollination term, honey from hives that have been placed in

different apiaries is usually aggregated for extraction and bottling at a single location.

Until the present, most Maryland beekeepers have identified their honey as local when it is produced by a registered Maryland beekeeper from hives in Maryland maintained by the that beekeeper, rather than tying the product to a each specific pollination location where the honeybees have been placed during the year. Consumer feedback on this approach has been positive and consistent throughout.

Honey which is offered for sale must already meet Federal labeling standards (<http://www.honey.com/nhb/industry/labeling-information/>) The name and the address of the manufacturer, packer or distributor of the honey are required to appear on the label of each package, meeting the expressed goal of the Maryland Department of Agriculture to provide consumers with adequate information to determine whether the product meets their standard for "local" origin.

As a result, Maryland beekeepers – all of which are "sideline" or small, part time operations – have already invested in labels which may be potentially invalidated by the proposed legislation, even while serving its core mission.

The Maryland State Beekeepers Association, Inc., would propose that existing labeling standards for honey already address MDA concerns for providing adequate information to the consumer, and honey should be specifically exempted from additional advertising or labeling requirements should the regulation as currently written be deemed to apply to honey and hive products. The requirement to provide additional information would create a hardship for small producers across the state while failing to offer significant new information to the consumer.

Should these regulations be required for Maryland beekeepers, the only viable course for producers would not be to require hive location as the critical information for the consumer (even on the state level) but to identify as "local" honey from hives maintained by a registered Maryland beekeeper. Consumers would be guaranteed an agricultural product derived from an area ordinarily traversable by a small or sideline operator, and would not be faced with extensive and potentially confusing information.

Sincerely,

Toni Burnham

First Vice President