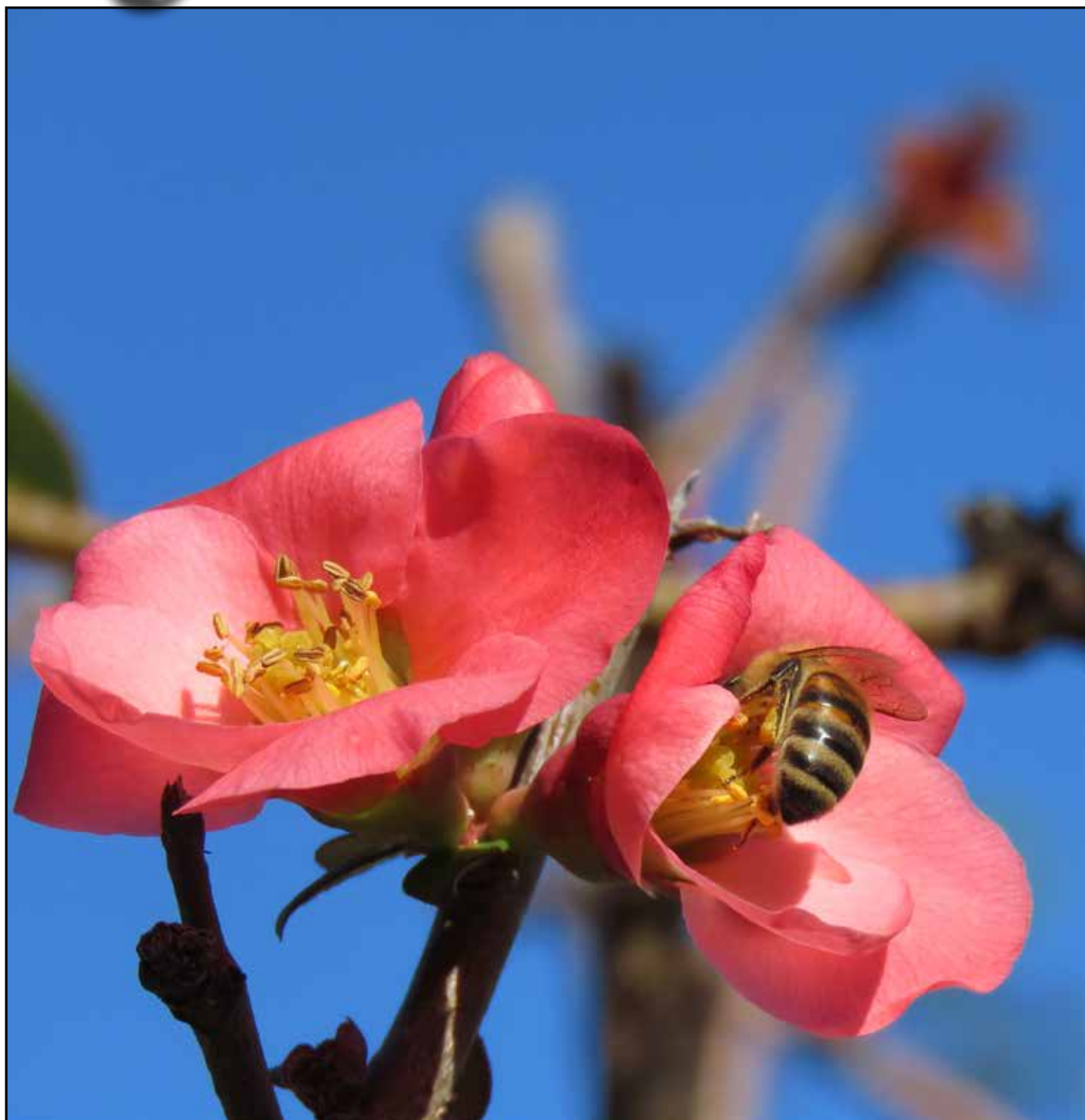


The Texas Beekeepers Association

# Journal



Picture from Martha Jeske, former ETBA Honey Princess



Jan / Feb 2015

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Issue 15-1



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# President's Report

*from Blake Shook*



I hope all of you have enjoyed a somewhat mild winter as we have in North Texas. Our bees managed to overwinter very well, and by the time you read this, we will be in California for Almond Pollination with the majority of our hives. Crunch time has arrived for the commercial beekeeper!

But, no matter how many hives you have, it is important to check on your bees now that we are getting some warmer temperatures. We checked our hives in late January for mites, and found that in several of our yards we were finding 2-4 mites per sugar roll test, so we treated. Be sure to keep up on your mite levels, and check your hives honey stores.

TBA has been very active the past few months. We have been working to plan a huge, and very different Summer Clinic. You

will see much more information soon, but this year our Summer Clinic will be like a mini-conference, at a much lower price. I look forward to seeing many of you there!

We are continuing to work on the many legislative issues we face in Texas, and are working on many new benefits for all of you as members. I greatly appreciate the many of you who are volunteering to accomplish all that there is to be done. As a commercial beekeeper, it would be impossible for me to be President of this organization without the amazing volunteers who do so much of the work for this association.

I've got to get back into the bee yard, so this report will be brief, but I wish you and your hives all the best as we head into spring!



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## Vice President's Report

*from Chris Moore*



### Is it March Yet?

I am so much like a Honey Bee - if it's below 55 degrees I don't want to leave the house either. This time of year is unpredictable 75 degrees one day and 35 the next.

I get excited when I go out and see that the queen has laid several frames of fresh eggs, but sad and disappointed a week later when I see that the cold nights and/or protein deficient diet have caused them not to survive. We have been busy feeding syrup and a little pollen patty. Not too much pollen patty this time of year as the bees are starting to carry fresh pollen and the Small Hive Beetles are now active and looking to take advantage of the weaker hives and any uneaten patties.

Don't neglect your hives this time of year; you need to make sure they have plenty to eat. When the early pollen starts coming in, the hive really gets busy and consumes a lot of honey. There is nothing worse for a beekeeper than going out and finding dead colonies from starvation.

TBA is still working on two Legislative issues. The first is just to update Texas Agriculture Code 131 ( Bee Law & regulations). The second, a proposed exemption for small beekeepers from the Food Manufactures License. We have been working on both

of these for months. As soon as we have the official bill we will email everyone for your review and support.

CCD, what's the latest ? I attended the ABF Convention the first week in January. After listening to many presentations and after eight years of research there are still no answers. Big AG (those producing & selling chemicals) are still blaming the Varroa Mite and viruses transmitted by the mites. But more research is showing chemical effects - for example, a chemical might not be lethal to the bees, but it kills the stored sperm in the queen, causing the queen to lay infertile eggs, which eventually causes the hive to die. Sub-lethal effects : Fertility, Immune system, nervous system. Plus chemicals some beekeepers use to fight the Varroa Mite also have side effects and are potential deadly when a second chemical, such as fungicide on blooming flowers, is applied at the same time. So we have to be careful where we place our hives, what we use to control Varroa and when we apply that control.

Our bees seem to have turned the corner as they are now carrying fresh pollen and have warmer and longer days. If it will just stay warm.....

Then the bees & I can work



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## \$2.5 Million Falsely-labeled Chinese Honey Seized in Houston

*from Catch the Buzz*  
*Originally from Dylan Baddour,*  
*Houston Chronicle*

For the second time in two years, U.S. Immigrations and Customs Enforcement confiscated falsely-labeled Chinese honey from the Port of Houston.

Agents allege merchants lied about the honey's origin to evade hefty taxes, but investigations were ongoing to determine who was responsible.

About 450,000 pounds of Chinese honey, worth \$2.45 million, were seized between January 23 and 27 and will be destroyed. "They were bringing in honey and declaring that it was coming from Latvia and it wasn't. The documents they were using were false," said Brian Moskowitz, special agent with Homeland Security Investigations, a branch of ICE.

Chinese honey is subject to a 221 percent import tax in the U.S., meant to keep American honey competitive on the domestic market. Brokers of Chinese honey may try to disguise the origin of their import to evade the tax. In November 2013, agents at the Houston port seized \$4.2 million of Chinese honey falsely labeled as Indian and Malaysian and arrested one Houston area man.

"This is a scheme that seems to be pretty prevalent and Houston seems to be the hub of honey imports at this time," said Moskowitz.

In this most recent case, HIS agents in Frankfurt, Germany, worked with Latvian officials to determine that certificates of origin associated with the seized honey were fake.

Chinese honey has been subject to high import tax since 2001, when the U.S. Department of Commerce determined that Chinese producers were selling their products at less than production costs and underselling American producers—a practice known as "dumping."

Other Chinese products subject to the anti-dumping tax include garlic, shrimp, wire hangers, steel and magnesium.

"We do this to ensure those who play by the rules are not harmed by those who don't. If a foreign company is trying to undercut American business then we're there to make sure that doesn't happen," said Moskowitz.

---

## Marshall Beekeepers Association Donate to Food Pantry

*from Beth Derr*



Beekeepers work to educate everyone about the importance of keeping bees healthy and working to pollinate fruits and vegetables. But the Marshall Texas Beekeeper's Association took that love of bees a step further when they recently donated \$500 to the United Churches of Marshall Food Pantry.

"Bee your brother's keeper," said Davis Whitehurst, bee club member.

James Beasley organized an auction of hand-painted honey supers, which are boxes where bees work to store honey. The auction was held during December's club meeting and raised the funds donated to the Pantry. Professional and student artists designed and painted scenes on the boxes.

"We're incredibly grateful for this financial support," said food pantry volunteer Rebecca Searcy. "It's a nice twist to have beekeepers working to help bees who work to help with the food production and to have beekeepers take an extra step to help us feed hungry clients."

Club President Stanford Brantley and Treasurer Beth Derr presented the check to Rebecca Searcy during the January bee club meeting.

# The Second Year Beekeeper

*A new series from Roger and Sue Farr*

Roger and Sue began their beekeeping adventure in January 2014 in northeast Texas. They planted dozens of fruit and nut trees, and berry bushes, on their six acres and then realized that they could keep bees for pollination purposes. They learned a lot about bees and beekeeping in their first year by tending their three hives. This column chronicles their second year of beekeeping and how they have learned from their mistakes and now continue to grow as beekeepers.



## 2014 Lessons Learned and a TAIS Inspection

We are completing our first year as beekeepers, and we're thinking about what we did right and what we would do differently. We're also thinking about our 2015 beekeeping goals.

**What we did right** – We started with three hives and ended with all three hives healthy, with good food stores and ready for winter. We chose to build our apiary using all medium boxes, and we're glad we did. We built raised platforms for our hives, and since we're both over six feet tall, that was great back saver! Our queens and workers did their jobs; we had honey and hive products to give to family and friends.

**What we will do differently** – We purchased nylon jackets with veils, and those were miserably hot in July. We recently purchased one of the cool mesh jackets which worked very well, and we will purchase more. We started to work without gloves, but we are too careful (slow) to do the work without gloves. We'll have to try working the bees bare-handed again in 2015. We used pine needles in the smoker, but the fire usually went out halfway through the process. We now know how to light the bottom of the pine needle bunch before inserting it into the smoker. We also learned to include paper strips from our home shredder.

**Our 2015 beekeeping goals** – We have six basic beekeeping goals for 2015:

1. Keep our bees healthy and happy
2. Plant bee-friendly plants on our property
3. Be positive "beekeeping ambassadors" to our neighbors and local community
4. Serve effectively as an officer for our local club (Caddo Trace Beekeepers' Association)
5. Increase from 3 to 6 hives
6. Mentor new beekeepers

We are currently working hard to accomplish goals 1-5. The bees are fed, medicated, and happy as they winter. The wildflower seeds are sown. Our neighbors are happy with bottles of honey and beeswax hand cream bars. Caddo Trace Beekeepers' Association is thriving, with visitors each month and a new beekeepers' class starting in January.

This is the point at which the Texas Apiary Inspection Service (TAIS) comes into play.

We want to mentor new beekeepers and sell bees. The current apiary laws in Texas (Agriculture Code, Section 131.023) require that those selling queens or bees have their apiaries inspected within the last 12 months and supply their buyers with a certificate of inspection or they may provide an affidavit that the bees are not diseased and that the queen candy meets certain requirements. In our family knowing and complying with the laws of those in authority over us is important, regardless if we agree with them. So, if we were going to sell bees in 2015, the best course of action for us was to have an inspection.

Fortunately for us, Mark Dykes, the Chief Inspector for TAIS, was scheduled to speak at our club's December meeting. We asked him to come by and inspect our hives...all three of them! Mark graciously made it happen.

We're relatively new beekeepers, so it felt like being back in grad school, taking an oral exam from a Nobel Prize-winning professor. Fortunately, Mark is a great guy and excellent beekeeper himself, so he shifted from "inspection" mode to "teaching" mode as the inspection progressed.

**Mark taught me three important tips to better my beekeeping:**

- **A neat way to use pine straw to light my smoker** – take a fist-sized bundle and light one end; when the bundle is burning well, stuff it into the empty smoker, burning end down, and begin puffing. As the flames rise higher, stuff in additional fuel. The trick was to light the initial bundle of straw outside of the smoker and make sure it is completely engulfed in flames, before stuffing it inside! This simple step makes a big difference.
- **How to properly catch and mark a queen** – only one of our hives had a marked queen, but as we opened the other two for inspection, the unmarked queens happened to be on the first frame we inspected. Roger asked Mark to use a marking pen, recently purchased at the TBA convention for just such a purpose. Mark obliged and then showed me how to do it. We found a few drones still in the hives, and Mark showed how to practice with drones before marking the real queen.
- **Replacing old comb and frames** – We use only medium equipment in our apiary so it is easy to swap frames around in the boxes. Since the inspection was in December, we



were surprised to see that all three of our queens had completely shut down; there was no brood in any of the boxes! The bees were happily consuming the pollen they had stored and the honey we had left them after taking our “crop” in October. In fact, the bottom box was nearly devoid of bees and only had minor amounts of uncured honey and pollen; Mark surmised that the bees were abandoning these resources. Therefore, all of the original frames we received with the nucleus hive from our bee supplier last April were now empty and could be replaced. This would get all of the old frames out and allow us to have new (and one-year-old), clean equipment to start 2015. The inspection helped us realize how quickly the bees stopped brood production and what abandoned resources looked like.

As we closed up the hives, Mark recorded the data and location of the hives on his portable data logger. TAIS is building a database so they can better serve beekeepers should there be a disease or pest outbreak; TAIS will know where hives are and can inform beekeepers to take precautions. The exact location of our hives is a trade secret and kept confidential from the public. The data Mark collected will only be made public in aggregate form.

Take-aways from our TAIS: Mark is a great guy to work with and have as our TAIS Chief Inspector. The inspection was “painless” and a great learning experience. Our hives are currently disease and varroa free. We have our inspection certificate and can sell bees in 2015, should we achieve our goal of producing good nucleus colonies; and that is the topic of next month’s article!

The men of experiment are like the ant, they only collect and use; the reasoners resemble spiders, who make cobwebs out of their own substance. But the bee takes the middle course, it gathers its material from the flowers of the garden and field, but transforms and digests it by a power of its own.

~ Francis Bacon

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# TBA Legislative Committee Report

*from Leesa Hyder, Area 2 Director*

The TBA Legislative Committee has been working over the past several months on several matters related to legislation that affects beekeepers in Texas. The Committee was established to be representative of all beekeepers and is comprised of two hobby beekeepers, a sideliner, and two commercial beekeepers. Considerable time has been invested by the Committee to research current laws, to obtain advice from related regulatory agencies, and to seek out state legislators who would be interested in working with TBA to address changes we believe are beneficial for Texas beekeepers. We will be working with Legislative Council in Austin to get formal drafts of proposed legislation. When formal drafts are completed, TBA will send them by email to all TBA members for review and comment prior to introducing any proposed legislative changes. We know there is considerable interest in these matters. Therefore we would like to provide the following update regarding the work of the Committee.

## **Texas Agriculture Code Chapter 131 - Bees and Honey**

Chapter 131 has not been updated since 1986. TBA has known for quite some time that these regulations needed to be updated. We invited the Texas Apiary Inspection Service (TAIS) -Mark Dykes, Bill Baxter, and Mary Reed to the table to help us in an advisory capacity to address changes to Chapter 131 that better reflect the current needs of Texas beekeepers. Areas for suggested changes include the following:

- Streamlining the interstate permit application process so that multiple permits are not required in a twelve month period and doing away with the requirement of intrastate permits.
- Providing for an annual beekeeper registration for a minimal fee. Registration would be mandatory only for beekeepers maintaining over 25 hives, but would be beneficial for all beekeepers. Registration would meet the requirements for compliance with the Texas Occupations Code for beekeepers involved in bee removals, as well as provide a registered brand for equipment identification.
- Providing for additional means of identifying apiaries to those required under current law, while allowing an exemption from identification for apiaries located at a beekeeper's residence.
- Broadening defined diseases to include pests and unwanted Apis species to better deal with current and future issues related to the health of bees.
- Providing for the Chief Apiary Inspector's role to include not only publishing current information on disease identification and treatment, but also presenting educational programs related to these areas.

## **Proposed Texas Honey Sales Act**

Under current Texas Law a beekeeper is a "Food Manufacturer" as soon as they put honey in a container, label it and offer it for sale. Therefore, every beekeeper who bottles and sells even one bottle of their own honey must obtain a Texas Food Manufacturers License issued by the Texas Department of State Human Services (DSHS) and meet certain facilities requirements. These requirements include among other things, commercial kitchen features and facilities that are completely separate from a residence.

TBA and its affiliated local associations are committed to promoting beekeeping in Texas. We are concerned that the present regulatory requirements are detrimental to the small scale beekeepers who, under current law, are not reasonably allowed to sell their own honey in local markets. Furthermore, we are concerned that this may create an impediment to the overall growth of hobby beekeepers in Texas.

Therefore, TBA is proposing an exemption by legislation from the Texas Food Manufacturers License for small scale beekeepers who produce a limited amount of honey. This will allow them to sell honey produced by their own hives in certain venues, direct to customers, without being in violation of the law. TBA representatives met with DSHS regulatory officials who expressed support for this type of exemption.

Several have asked "Why not add honey to the list of Cottage Foods under Cottage Food Laws?" Under Chapter 131 of the Texas Agricultural Code dealing with Bees and Honey, it is unlawful for a person to sell a product identified as "honey" unless it is "pure honey" as defined under this Chapter. The DSHS has the authority to enforce provisions of Chapter 131 which TBA believes are important to protecting the identity of honey in Texas. These provisions also serve to protect consumers. If honey is made a cottage food, DSHS loses this enforcement power. TBA believes it is important to all honey producers, large or small, for DSHS to maintain this enforcement authority.

## **Open Space Land Appraisal (Property Tax Exemption) for Beekeepers**

Texas passed legislation which became effective in 2011 to allow beekeeping as an agricultural use enterprise in open-space land appraisal, thereby allowing beekeepers to qualify for special property tax valuation on land used for keeping bees. The implementation of this law got off to a slow start in some counties and there is still a lot of misinformation with respect to the requirements that must be met in order to qualify for the special valuation. TBA is exploring possible options to make the qualification process more uniform throughout the state and to help beekeepers better understand the law so that they are equipped to deal with the application process in their county.



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# BEGINNERS' BOX

*from Cameron Crane, Liberty County Beekeepers*

## BEE SPACE

Rev. Langstroth is generally credited as having discovered bee space. A few other people around the same time had noted the bees preference to having control of the open space in their home. Anything less than 1/4 inch will eventually get filled with propolis and anything more than 3/8 inch will get filled in with comb. Langstroth designed his hives around this space and behavior.

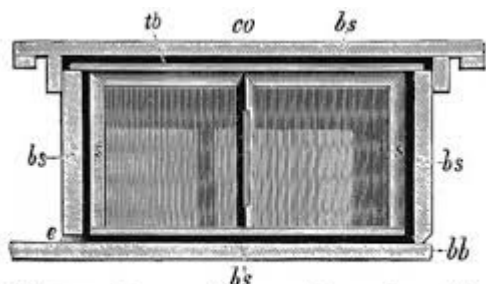


FIG. 11.—SECTION OF LANGSTROTH'S ORIGINAL HIVE AND FRAME (Scale, 1/2).  
Cover; bb, Bottom Board; and e, Entrance of Hive; bs, bs, Bee-space;  
tb, Top Bar; and s, s, Sides of Frames.

Notice in Langstroth drawing that there is bee space on top, bottom and both sides. This crawl space is important to the bees. Less space in the brood comb means less space to heat or cool and less space to patrol for pests.

So, why is this spacing so important? In the old days of beekeeping the main reason was that bee space made our standard hives with removable frames workable. With this space on the sides, top and bottom the bees don't typically attach the frame to the sides of the box allowing you to easily remove the frame. Frames are also designed to space the comb between them leaving enough (bee space) so the bees don't attach one frame to another. The frames also leave bee space between the top bars for the bees to pass through and move into the next box. This is an important point to why your frames should be pushed tightly together in the box- to maintain the proper spacing between comb layers. Let's look at what happens if you leave a little bit of extra space between the frames. Look at the bottom of the picture on the left- The bees have put propolis between the side boards of the frame.

Now they will be a little more difficult to remove either of those frames. Also with



that propolis there, even after your next hive inspection when you loosen those frames from each other, you won't be able to slide them back together tightly so the bees don't "re-glue" them back together. With that little bit of extra space, it will be harder for the bees to keep the brood warm in the winter months. I've learned some of this the hard way. I've learned when I finish putting the last frame back in a box, I always put my hive tool at one end near a corner between frame and box and give it a twist to be sure all the frames are tightly together and repeat at

each corner. See on the right what happens when you leave a lot of space. Those two frames are going to be hard to remove and will make a mess of things for the bees to fix. Would you not rather your bees are gathering nectar and pollen, taking care of the queen, or raising more bees instead of spending time building bur comb or propolis up extra small spaces? We make the bees redo this work when we break that bur comb apart during inspections. As you find these situations in your hive- clean them up and get those frames pushed back together closely.



Those darn Small Hive Beetles: Here in Texas we are all dealing with small hive beetles. Our bees do what they can to run them off. Any extra space in the hive makes it harder on the bees. Maintaining good bee space helps. If you build any of your own equipment, keep those sizes in very close tolerance to maintain proper bee space. Don't create small gaps with saw cuts that give the beetles a place to hive or lay eggs. I run a small bead of glue along the inside of my boxes corners to close off any small gaps where the wood comes together.

Langstroth style hives have bee space between the top and bottom of the frames. Box designs from different manufactures will place this bee space either under the frames or on top with a deeper dado cut for the frames to rest on. It is best to stay with the same manufacture

so that as you stack boxes on the hive the space between top and bottom is correct. It seems more manufactures place this bee space below the frames. In the cut-away picture on the left, the top of the lower frame is almost in line with the seam between the



boxes. Thus the bee space is below the frames. I have found this a problem with hive beetles on the top box. There is then too little space over the frames in the top box. The bees cannot get in there to chase off the beetles unless you are using an inner cover that creates a little more space. The first year I was dealing with hive beetles I was using a solid inner cover or no inner cover. I found that beetle traps in the top box to be totally ineffective- I thought they didn't work. I discovered this was because there was not enough space for the bees to chase the beetles into the trap. I added a few spacers (like a popsicle stick) to hold the cover up a little more- Wow, a week later I had beetle traps full of hive beetles! Make sure your set-up allows for bee space (1/8"-1/4")

above your frames in the top box.

That should cover the basics of bee space.... But then there is an area of beekeeping that gets more in depth. Using supers with 9 or even 8 frames for greater honey production. I've not seen any studies or data, but when commercial beekeepers tell me that they get more honey out of a super with less frames, I figure they know what they are talking about. Over and over again I read: when adding a super with just foundation (no drawn out comb) put in all 10 frames. The bees will draw out the comb more evenly on both sides. In following year, with less than 10 frames in the super, they are spaced out and the bees will draw the comb out further making it deeper. The greatest advantage to having fewer frames than 10 in the supers is that the comb extending out past the frames is easier to un-cap and provides more wax. Even the bees believe in wider comb when storing honey. I've done many removals where the outer combs are packed with honey often 2" thick- sometime more than that. Brood comb in natural hives is also much thinner and closer together.

I heard a beekeeper say that he uses 9 frames in his brood when he is using 9 frames in his super. I was a little shocked at the idea. The reasoning was that it keeps the frames lined up between lower boxes and upper boxes thus making it easier for the bees to move from one box to another.

I went to researching the whole 9 or 10 frame brood configurations. Wow, what a can of worms.... it's a little more complicated than just the pros and cons of 9 or 10 frames. It seems that a number of people run 9 frame brood boxes with frames all put together in the center, or to one side. Then you have those that shave down their frames a little bit so that they are "more naturally" spaced and putting 11 frames in the brood boxes. Holy cow! Yet, another choice. Bottom line what is the best choice...

After my research of this subject, I am still dead set that 10 (or 11) frames in the brood is the proper way to go because you are maintaining bee space. I'd decided this was a good subject for an article. First let's be clear, when talking about supers- there are a number of opinions about the number of frames to put in a super- BUT, the "general" consensus is to start a new super with 10 frames: that is one with just foundation, let the bees draw out foundation (build comb) while there are 10 frames. This helps keep the bees making comb that is more even and straight across the frames. The next year when you are adding supers with frames of drawn out comb, you pull one and have only 9 frames and space then out.

As best as I can tell, the most common set-up if a beekeeper does not stay with the traditional 10/10 in all boxes is to have 9 frames in the supers and 10 in the brood. Most beekeepers seem to prefer using ten frames in the brood boxes—and for good reasons. Using 9 frames in a brood box also has it's own split: 9 frames spaced or 9 frames together. Those running 9 frames together do so simply for the reason that it is easier to remove frames from the brood box and keep the frames pushed close together for the reason those who run 10 frames in brood boxes- it's better not to have brood frames spaced out. I don't see the issue or problem doing inspections with 10 frames in a brood box. I don't want to lose a frame of brood and I know the bees will eventually fill that extra space with bur comb.

I found the argument that it is harder for the bees to travel from a 10 frame box to a spaced 9 frame super interesting. So I went on another research binge. This issue has been going on for

over 120 years! It seems the frames were made wider when the whole removable frame hives started in the mid 1800's. By the end of the century many beekeepers had experimented and found frames closer together had advantages and made beekeeping easier to manage, quotes from the days of old - as found on Michael Bush's website: "Frame—As before mentioned, each stock hive has ten of these frames.... The width both of the bar and frame is 7/8 of an inch; this is less by 1/4 of an inch than the bar recommended by the older apiarians.

Mr. Woodbury—whose authority on the modern plans for keeping bees is of great weight—finds the 7/8" bar an improvement, because with them the combs are closer together, and require fewer bees to cover the brood. Then too, in the same space that eight old fashioned bars occupied the narrower frames admit of an additional bar, so that, by using these, increased accommodation is afforded for breeding..."—Alfred Neighbour, *The Apiary, or, Bees, Bee Hives, and Bee Culture...*

"... with frames 7/8 of an inch wide, spaced just a bee-space apart, the bees will fill all the cells from top to bottom with brood, provided deeper cells or wider spacing is used in the storage chamber. This is not guess-work or theory. In experiments covering a term of years I have found the same results, without variation, in every instance. Such being the fact, what follows?

In answer, I will say that the brood is invariably reared in the brood chamber—the surplus is stored, and at once, where it should be, and no brace-combs are built; and not only this, but the rearing of drones is kept well in hand, excess of swarming is easily prevented, and, in fact, the whole matter of beekeeping work is reduced to a minimum, all that is required being to start with sheets of comb just 7/8 of an inch thick, and so spaced that they cannot be built any deeper. I trust that I have made myself understood; I know that if the plan indicated is followed, beekeeping will not only be found an easier pursuit, but speedy progress will be made from now on."—"Which are Better, the Wide or Narrow Frames?" by J.E. Pond, *American Bee Journal*: Volume 26, Number 9 March 1, 1890 No. 9. Page 141. Note: 7/8" plus 3/8" (max bee space) makes 1 1/4". 7/8" plus 1/4" (min bee space) makes 1 1/8".

Nowadays frames are made such that the side bars space the frames for you, so long as they are all pushed together. Thus, I was further convinced, keep all 10 frames in the brood box. The advantages for the brood box to be full and together seemed to out way concerns about bees traveling between boxes. I still wanted to see what effect 9 frames in a super would have over a 10 frame brood box. I went to the work shop and put together two boxes with 3 sides and added thin rails to hold up the frames on the short side. Below are the pictures of how they line up with 9 frames spaced over 10 frames tightly together.







Frames at the end were very lined up and moving towards the middle the frames were progressively more off-set. Last year I had running a couple of video cameras for several months in the bottom of a hive testing a Beetle Baffle (another story). Watching many hours of video, I knew the bees seem to move up into the hive on the back wall or side walls of the box. The bees also move

around in the hive very quickly, around corners and over baffles and other objects with ease.

As a side note: The bees had a lot of interest in the cameras at the bottom of the box and the one that had IR LEDs got comb built over the LEDs, where the one without night vision was not combed over.

Seems from their behavior, the bees coming in the hive with nectar to store are not traveling up through the center. So I don't see the off set in the middle much of an issue so I don't buy the argument that it is harder for the bees when the frames are not all lined up from brood box to first super. Perhaps this summer I'll put on plexi-glass sides on those three sided boxes and video what the bees are actually doing going between boxes.

I'm hoping you understand the importance of bee space and remember when you are in your hive to push all the frames together tightly. Don't leave extra space or leave frames out unless you are putting on a super with frames of drawn comb. The bees will stay busy so let them be working on their regular tasks and having to waste time and energy filling in spaces they don't like.

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## 2015 Drought Watch in California

### *from Catch The Buzz*

Despite an uptick in precipitation and a slight boost in reservoir storage in December 2014, top California water officials say the state is now in a fourth year of drought that will pose ongoing challenges for water managers, crop growers including almond growers, and Beekeepers in 2015.

California experienced some strong storms in early December, but has not seen a major precipitation event since then. The Sierra snowpack, which typically provides about 30% of the state's water when it melts in the spring, was at about one-third of average for the date as of Jan. 15, 2015.

According to the U.S. Drought monitor, 39% of California was in "exceptional drought" on Jan. 13, while 78% was in "extreme drought" and 95% remained in "severe drought."

To prepare for potential operational challenges as drought conditions evolve, state and federal agencies submitted a drought contingency plan to the State Water Resources Control Board in mid-January. The plan outlines possible modifications to water quality rules and water rights permits that may be needed as dry conditions continue.

#### **Consecutive Dry Years**

The 2014 water year (Oct. 1, 2013 through Sept. 30, 2014) was one of the driest in decades and followed two consecutive dry years throughout the state. Taken together, the 2012, 2013 and 2014 water years are now the driest three-year period in California's recorded history.

The dry years have left millions of acre-feet of empty space in reservoirs across California. That space cannot be filled by several typical winter storms or even a particularly powerful storm. Groundwater basins also are stressed, with many areas relying heavily on water in underground aquifers to make up for the lack of surface water supplies in 2014.

State water officials say they will continue to apply lessons learned

in 2014 and emphasize interagency coordination as they manage through a dry 2015.

#### **Conservation a Priority**

Water conservation will remain a priority, and local water agencies will continue to comply with emergency statewide urban water conservation regulations adopted by the State Water Resources Control Board in July 2014. The regulations prohibit certain outdoor water-wasting activities and require water agencies to implement mandatory outdoor water use restrictions as part of their water shortage contingency plans. The regulations also require water agencies to report monthly water production data and provide an estimate of per capita water use each month in their service areas.

Data reported by local agencies shows that Californians have made considerable strides in water conservation, with urban residents using nearly 20% less water in November 2014 than they did in the same month the previous year.

As of Jan. 15, at least 257 local water agencies have implemented some form of mandatory restrictions / conservation in response to the drought and emergency regulations adopted by the State Water Resources Control Board in July.

The governor declared a drought emergency for the state Jan. 17, and issued a subsequent executive order on April 25 to strengthen the state's ability to manage water effectively and urge Californians to redouble their water conservation efforts.

On July 15, the State Water Resources Control Board passed emergency regulations that prohibit certain outdoor water uses and require water agencies to file monthly reports on water use and production. Find the latest fact sheet on the state regulations [here](#).

**Save Our Water** -- a partnership between ACWA and the California Department of Water Resources -- is in high gear to reach out to consumers with information on reducing household water use, both indoors and outdoors.

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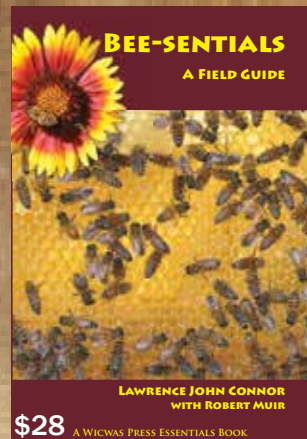
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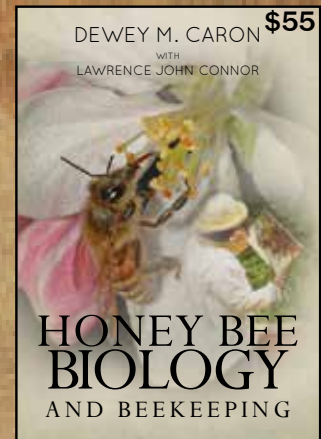


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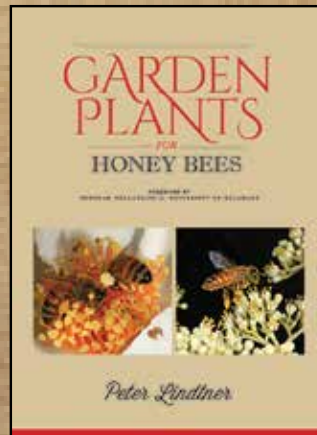


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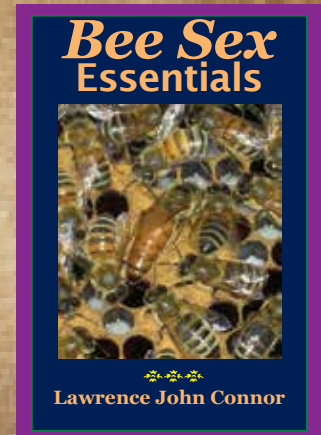
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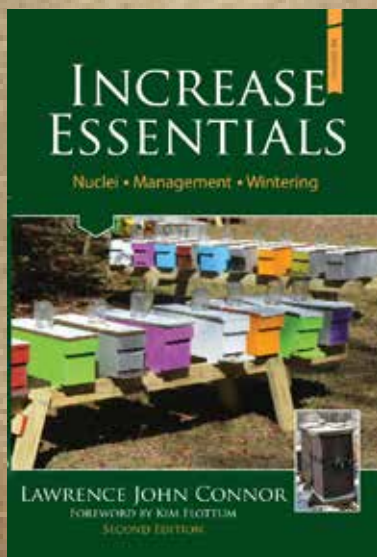
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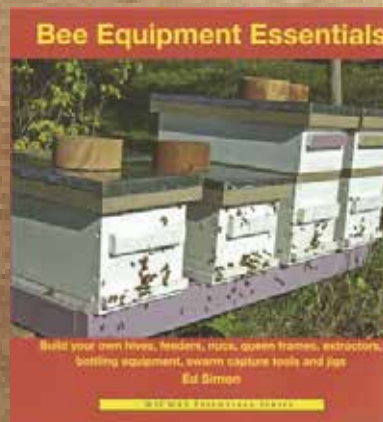
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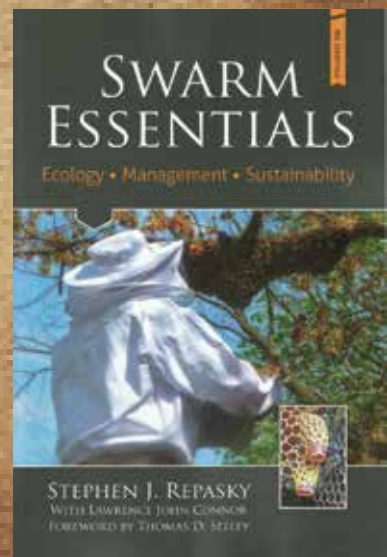
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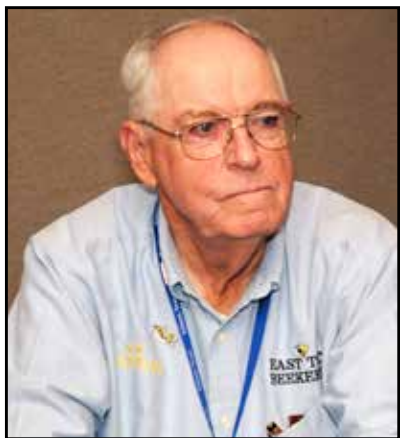


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## The Brantley Column

*from S. S. Brantley*  
*East Texas Beekeepers Association*

January had numerous cold and freezing days that our hives hopefully survived. Bees will do well in such weather if the hive is properly prepared, has adequate stores, and is properly ventilated to prevent condensation. Heat and moisture generated by the cluster must be allowed to escape and not condense in the top of the hive. Condensation in the hive can cause the cluster to become damp and susceptible to cooling. Placing a thin piece of wood on the rim of the Inner Cover is sufficient to allow condensation to escape.

If you use Telescoping Outer Covers, as do most non-commercial beekeepers, you should also have an Inner Cover between the top box and the Outer Cover. Inner Covers have a deep side and a shallow side. The shallow side is usually turned down to preserve the correct bee space over the frames. When I feed pollen patties, I place the patty on top of the frame topbars. Then I add the Inner Cover with the deep side down. The added space on the deep side makes it easier for the bees to move about between the topbars and Inner Cover to feed on the patties.

If you use Migratory Covers, you will not have an Inner Cover underneath. In order to give the bees room to feed on the patties, you can add a shallow super between the box and the Migratory Cover. Some of the beekeeping supply houses sell a shallow feeding super for about \$20 plus shipping. A frame made of 1x2 strips works just fine and gives enough room between the topbars and the Migratory Cover for the pollen patty.

It is a good time to do some early season inspections on the warmer days we have between cold fronts. I know most of us do inspections when circumstances and schedules allow but the general rule of thumb says it is better to be opening the hives when it is at least 60 degrees and not windy or rainy. I always carry a good flashlight to check the cluster. By shining the flashlight down into the box, I can easily see how the bees are distributed on the frames. If the bees are clustered, I pull a frame or two along the outside of the cluster to determine if there are stored food supplies. I try to leave the cluster intact and undisturbed to ensure that they can survive the cooler evening temperatures.

On warmer days, the bees may be out of cluster and spread over all of the frames. Then you can quickly check to see if brood is in the hive. At this time of the year, you will generally find small patches of capped brood, ranging from the size of a silver dollar to the size of a tea cup. Strong hives with large bee populations and a healthy queen may even have brood on a couple of frames.

If you do pull frames, be aware that the queen is light at this time of the year and can easily fly off and often will. Do not keep the frame with the queen out of the hive very long. She can become nervous, begin to run and then fly away.

During warmer day inspections, have a few frames of foundation or drawn comb with you. Use it to replace any damaged frames you find in the hive. If the frame has undrawn foundation, only place it on the outside of the box, i.e., spaces 1,2 or 9,10. After the bees draw out that foundation, you can move it more toward the center of the hive. Never put a frame of undrawn foundation in the center of the brood nest. This effectively divides the brood area and may cause serious problems from which the hive may not recover.

Let's talk about bottom boards. Many beekeepers use screened bottom boards as a part of their varroa mite control. I have some hives with screened bottom boards and some with solid bottom boards. I do not close the screened bottom boards during the winter. Some beekeepers do place a piece of plywood under their screened bottom boards, feeling it is needed to keep cold drafts out of the hives. At the 2014 ABF convention, I sat next to a sideline beekeeper from Illinois. Winters in Illinois are a lot colder than winters in East Texas. He used screened bottom boards and did not close them for the winter. He reported no problems with his hives surviving the cold Illinois winters with their screened bottom boards open.

If you have not done any mite treatment, you still have short window for an abbreviated treatment. Most miticides state that treatments should be removed before the honey flow begins. In East Texas, depending on weather conditions, we usually see honey flow starting by mid-to-late March. Be sure to follow manufacturer's instructions.



# Announcing the New Texas Master Beekeeping Program!

*from Lance Wilson*

In case you have not heard, there is a new Texas Master Beekeeping Program! The program has been initiated by the inspiration and hard work of Mr. Mark Dykes, our new Texas Chief Apiary Inspector. The Texas Master Beekeeping Program (TMBP) is managed by the Texas Apiary Inspection Service (TAIS) in close association with the Texas Beekeepers Association (TBA), Texas AgriLife Extension and Texas A&M Honey Bee Lab.

The members of the Texas board overseeing this program include Mark Dykes as Chairperson, Catherine Zettel Nalen, a professional entomologist who has valuable experience running the Florida MBP program, Dr. Juliana Rangel-Posada of Texas A&M is a member for her valuable expertise in apiculture science and entomology. Mr. Fred Hall, an AgriLife Extension Specialist will help with the extension component of this program. Lastly, I will provide input where appropriate and promote the program at the club level.

Mark Dykes has decided to use the Florida Master Beekeeping Program (FMBP) as a model for the new Texas program. He is very experienced with the ins and outs since he worked extensively with Dr. James Ellis implementing and managing the Florida program. The Florida Master Beekeeping Program has a national reputation for being rigorous. In addition, the State of Florida shares our unique set of issues. Both states deal with a robust Varroa population due to our almost year-round brood cycle. Secondly, both states are inhabited by feral populations of Africanized bees. This poses unique management challenges which have already been addressed in the Florida program.

The Texas Master Beekeeping Program, like the Florida program, offers four levels of training and promotion beginning with the Apprentice level. Other tiers include Advanced, Master Beekeeper and Master Craftsman Beekeeper. Each level takes a minimum of one year to complete, except for the Master Craftsman tier which takes two years.

Everyone wishing to participate must begin with the Apprentice level even if they have much more than the requisite one year of experience required. The reason for not allowing participants with many years of experience to "opt out" of the first level is simple: we wish to avoid gaps in knowledge that might follow an experienced beekeeper through the ranks if not identified early through testing. Someone with experience however, should be able to easily pass the first level and be on their way in no time to more difficult material.

An Apprentice applicant can sign up for a test date at any time provided that, at test time, one year or more of personal beekeeping experience has accrued. Please monitor <http://masterbeekeeper.tamu.edu/> closely for registration instructions and a welcome letter from Mark Dykes with additional information. We hope to have two testing dates a year, in spring and fall. This year the spring date and location has been set and will start at 8:00 AM. The testing session will begin with a four hour review of material and it will be held at the Washington County Fairgrounds in Brenham, TX on March 27th (Friday).

This is the day before the Central Texas Bee School holds their annual event. The Apprentice level exam will begin in the afternoon and include two practical exams, one written and will cost \$50 in total. If somehow a beekeeper does not pass, no worries, they are welcome to apply for a retest at the very next testing date.

So that you have some idea as to what to expect, let's discuss the exam components for the Apprentice exam. One of the two practical exams will include a live hive inspection. A beekeeper will be asked to light a smoker and keep it lit. He or she will open a hive and be evaluated on how they manipulate the woodenware. They will be asked to identify the three adult occupants of the hive and point out eggs, larvae and capped brood. Pollen and honey stores will also need to be recognized. Identify propolis, describe its function and the layout of a brood nest. A simple overview as to how the colony seems to be doing might be asked. The second practical exam will consist of one or more tables of beekeeping tools and equipment. An applicant will need to correctly identify and explain usage of 70% or more of these items in order to pass.

If both practical exams are passed, the applicant may take the written exam. The written exam will include multiple choice and matching. To get ready for the first Apprentice level exam it is important to hit the reading list on the Texas Master Beekeeping Program website. I would read the monthly issues of Bee Culture magazine and American Bee Journal religiously as they are issued. Attend educational presentations monthly at your local bee club. Mark Dykes will have a list of topic areas for students to focus on so that the applicants will know from what subject areas the questions will likely be drawn.

It would also be wise to attend as many Texas seminars as you are able. This provides timely information in the ever-changing world of bee science. Fortunately, in Texas you have a treasure trove to choose from. Texas has made significant progress in its annual seminar offerings as of late. The Austin Area Beekeepers Association is now putting on a seminar in January which just completed. The Central Texas Beekeepers Association puts on an impressive seminar, this year to be held on March 28th in Brenham Texas. Information can be found at <http://www.centraltexasbeekeepers.org/>. It is poised to roll out another banner year with record attendance of over 500 attendees! The Texas Beekeepers Association is expanding its summer clinic in June and will provide a rich array of presentations in this daylong seminar, stay tuned for more details. Lastly, the Texas Beekeepers Association annual convention in November attracts some top national presenters in a multiday format.

Upon passing the Apprentice exam you will receive a certificate, patch and be recognized at the Texas Beekeepers Association's annual convention. This accomplishment qualifies someone to pursue the advanced Level practical and written exams after another year of beekeeping. There will be additional portfolio requirements documenting service requirements and knowledge in subspecialty areas for this more advanced level.

My responsibility on the TMBP board is to help introduce

# Chief of Apiary Inspection - Texas Apiary Inspection Service

*from Mark Dykes*



Greetings from the Texas Apiary Inspection Service. We hope everyone had a great holiday and also had their fair share of honey sweetened holiday foods. Even though it has been a relatively cool winter down here in College Station we have still been buzzing. TAIS has been busy attending conferences and gathering some good information that will hopefully help the beekeepers of Texas.

First off I attended the Bee Informed Partnership (BIP) conference in Anaheim, CA. As I'm sure most of you know the BIP team is doing wonderful research for the beekeeping industry. You can find out more about this group at [beeinformed.org](http://beeinformed.org). I highly recommend you check out their web site and see how they can help you. As we have mentioned before, Texas is hopefully soon to be home to the newest Tech Transfer Team. The Tech Teams, as they are called, help commercial beekeepers identify pest and disease problems and allow them to make management decisions based on their findings. If you are a commercial beekeeper who is interested in using this service please email Dr. Juliana Rangel at [Juliana.Rangel-Posada@ag.tamu.edu](mailto:Juliana.Rangel-Posada@ag.tamu.edu) for more information.

After the BIP meeting I stayed in Anaheim to attend the American Beekeeping Federation's annual conference. There were many outstanding talks on a wide variety of topics. The highlight of the conference was the keynote address by Dr. Jim Frazier from Penn State. He spoke on the hazards of pesticides and also about the opportunities for change in our industry. He received a very heartfelt standing ovation from the crowd afterward. In addition to the many great talks, I attended the planning meeting for the Apimondia bid for 2019. Apimondia is the international

beekeeping conference. It has not been held in the USA since the 1960's. ABF members have formed a group to put in a bid to bring the conference to the US in 2019. If you would like more information about how you can help support the bid please go to <http://www.apimondiausbidfor2019.org>.

Lastly the staff of TAIS attended the Apiary Inspectors of America (AIA) annual meeting in Tucson, AZ. The AIA is the national organization that represents the apiary inspectors from around the US and Canada. We work together to help establish laws and regulations to suppress honey bee pests and diseases. We use the meeting to get updates from the other state inspection services on what's happening in their part of the country as well as address national issues. I am honored to announce that at the meeting I was voted in as the new president of AIA for 2015. In addition we also attended the American Association of Professional Apiculturists (AAPA) meeting that coincides with the AIA meeting. We heard many good talks about current honey bee research and were able to meet and exchange ideas with many of the nation's top bee researchers.

So after using the winter months to keep updated about the current research and happenings in the beekeeping community, the staff of TAIS are recharged and ready to start the spring season off strong. If you have not already renewed your permits for 2015 or if you are a queen breeder that needs to be inspected in the spring, please contact us so we can help get you squared away. Also if you have any questions for us we are here to help. You can find all of our contact information as well as a wealth of other information at <http://txbeeinspection.tamu.edu/>. As always, keep on keeping bees!

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## (continued from page 16)

the program to Texas beekeepers and provide encouragement and support to those wishing to move through its ranks. The Texas Beekeepers Association has enthusiastically embraced this program because a master beekeeping program helps individual beekeepers greatly enhance their theoretical knowledge and practical beekeeping skills. This in turn creates mentors and presenters which helps to elevate everyone's beekeeping husbandry.

This program is currently a work in progress but we have some preliminary information at <http://masterbeekeeper.tamu.edu> with more information coming. As mentioned, we expect to have two testing dates, one in the spring and one in the fall and the 2015 spring date and location has been set. For those wishing to get started, I would recommend the following:

- Go to <http://masterbeekeeper.tamu.edu> to get more information and sign up on "Give Us a Buzz" and monitor it closely since info is being added.
- Get started on the recommended reading list in the URL above.
- Please send me an email to [lance@beekeepinghelp.com](mailto:lance@beekeepinghelp.com) just letting me know you plan on working towards Apprentice. I will put you on my mailing list for TMBP updates.

There has been a great deal of enthusiasm for this program and consequently we are excited to find out how large and impactful this program may become. We hope you are interested in finding out more, in the meantime if you have any questions I can be reached at [lance@beekeepinghelp.com](mailto:lance@beekeepinghelp.com).



# Greetings from Dr. Juliana Rangel at Texas A&M University

*Assistant Professor of Apiculture, Department of Entomology, Texas A&M University*

Happy New Year to all the readers of the TBA Newsletter! I have some exciting news from the honey bee lab at Texas A&M University, as members of the lab participated in many scientific meetings in the last two weeks.

First, I was invited as a guest to the Bee Informed Partnership (BIP) Annual Meeting on 5 and 6 January 2014 at the Disneyland Resort in Anaheim, CA. The purpose of the meeting was to get all the people involved in BIP projects present a progress report. During the meeting I got to interact with all the members of the Tech Transfer Teams from Florida, California, the Pacific Northwest, and Minnesota. My main goal in attending this meeting was to get acquainted with all the logistics involved in getting a Texas Tech Transfer Team (a.k.a. "T4") created in our state this spring. As I have said before in previous newsletters, the T4 will be organized and partially funded by grants received by the BIP, led by Dr. Dennis vanEngelsdorp from the University of Maryland. I encourage you to visit their website at <http://beeinformed.org/team-2/tech-transfer-teams/>. To make a team possible in Texas we will need the time and financial commitment of at least 15 sideline and commercial beekeepers for one year. This program is heavily subsidized by grants the first year, and in return for a one-time \$1,500 contribution for the first year, participants get as many as 200 bee samples collected and processed for Varroa, Nosema, and viruses. It's a great deal for the investment, so if you want to participate simply send me an email!

Second, I had the pleasure to stick around in Anaheim for the annual convention of the American Beekeeping Federation. My main purpose at the meeting was not only to see some interesting bee talks, but to support Liz Walsh and collaborator Rong Ma (UT Austin), as they were two of 5 recipients of this year's prestigious scholarship from the Foundation for the Preservation of Honey Bees. Along with receiving a certificate and a monetary stipend, the students were flown to California, all expenses paid, to present their research to the public and to interact with the 900+ attendees of this notorious convention. Congratulations Liz and Rong, we are very proud of you!

Third, I was invited as a 2-talk speaker on 17 January at the Austin Area Beekeepers Association Bee Seminar, held at the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center in South Austin. I gave an update on the research projects being done in the lab right now, introduced the lab members, and entertained questions. The

other talk was about queen superseding and colony management, which had more than 60 people in attendance. It was truly a wonderful time and I enjoyed speaking to the group!

Lastly, as president of the American Association of Professional Apiculturists (AAPA), my job is to co-organize the annual American Bee Research Conference (ABRC), which meets in alternating order between the American Beekeeping Federation (ABF), the American Honey Producers Association (AHPA), and the Apiary Inspectors of America (AIA). Got enough acronyms? Learned them all yet? I know, it's confusing! Anyway, this year the ABRC was held on 22-23 January near the USDA bee lab in Tucson, AZ, and we met with the AIA. It was a wonderful meeting of about 65 people, and there were about 30 scientific presentations during the 2-day event. The keynote speaker for the meeting was no other than famous bee researcher Dr. Mark Winston, who gave a talk about his new memoir, *Bee Time*. His decades of work on behalf of bees and beekeepers has been admirable. I have now passed on the gavel and presidency to Dr. Jennifer Tsuruda, Extension Specialist for Apiculture at Clemson University, NC, who will be leading the organization this year. In January 2016 the ABRC will take place in conjunction with the ABF in Jacksonville, FL.

In the next newsletter I will officially set out a call for those interested in participating in the queen rearing workshop that we are organizing for Saturday, 2 May with world famous Sue Cobey! So stay tuned. Registration will be \$75-\$100 with lunch included, and it will be an all day event to be held at the Riverside Honey Bee Facility. So stay tuned!

Here's to hoping that 2015 will be a good year for beekeepers in Texas. As always, thank you for your support! If you have questions, please email me at [jrangel@tamu.edu](mailto:jrangel@tamu.edu).



# Texas Beekeepers Association

# Summer Clinic 2015

Saturday June 6th, 10 am to 4 pm

Montgomery County Fairgrounds

Conroe, Texas (Texas 89 off of Hwy 45)

<http://www.thelonestar.org>

Hosted by Montgomery County Beekeepers

TBA Summer Clinic 2015 is headed in a new direction: Continual Learning.  
Summer Clinic theme: All aspects of Beekeeping from observer to producer.  
Please join beekeepers from across the state of Texas to share, help or learn.

**Cost: \$40/person, \$70/couple & \$15 Children 16 and under**  
(entrance fee includes catered lunch)

Look for registration to open soon at: [www.texasbeekeepers.org](http://www.texasbeekeepers.org)

Sessions already planned for:

Hands-On Inspections, Honey Extraction, an Ask the Experts panel, Beekeeping 101, Kids keeping Bees (taught by kids), Bottling and Marketing, observations hives and a Bee Gazebo.

Working out speakers and presenters for:

Turning your Beekeeping Hobby into a Bees-ness! Options on setting up your apiary Urban Beekeeping How to successfully build a Nuc apiary for personal benefit and financial bonus! Why become a Beekeeper?" or "So you want to Bee a Beekeeper! Honey Bee Foraging or Beneficial Bee Flowers Effective Varroa Management through IPM Brood Disease Identification and Control Swarm Capture Techniques	Top Bar Hives Colony Supersedure and Management Beekeeping in South Africa with Mark Dykes Beekeeping Through the Eyes of an Apiary Inspector Beescapes - Choosing Honey Plants Chemical Free Beekeeping Honey Extraction Demonstration Langstroth Equipment Assembly Demonstration Lighting a Smoker Demonstration Making Increase with Splits Managing Bees in an Africanized Zone - Texas!
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**Nearby Hotel Accommodations:** Ask for the beekeepers group rate

Fairfield Inn by Marriott (Exit 89) - \$109 / Night or Holiday Inn Express (Exit 88) \$114 / Night

# Our Mentor Program

*from Doyle Burchett, Montgomery County Beekeepers Association*

"Ok, I made it to the bee meeting; this should be easy! I have always wanted free honey; they can even pollinate my garden... this is where we start. No one has even bothered me, this is going to be great! What? Two deeps and a shallow...what is that? Gearing up for a nectar flow, foundation, drawn wax, inner cover? Larva, supersedure, swarm cell, what? What? My bees could just leave!! ? One bee could cost \$40 dollars, and there should be three pounds in a hive? I.P.M. Oh great, what does that stand for? Chemicals, OMG!! That old man up there looks like he isn't smart enough to raise a goldfish, much less bees! These people are speaking a foreign language, and I don't know anyone. I'm outta here!"



That confusion is where we lose new beekeepers and get lost in beekeeping. There is a LOT of information to learn. The learning is a daunting task without help. We all need help. We all need a little help from our friends! That is where a good mentor/mentee program in your beekeeping club will thrive. What? Give out free information? Help someone for nothing? What, is this a cult, or religion of beekeepers..."beekers!?" Well, to answer that question, yes, it may be a type of cult. If you listen to beekeepers, they usually talk about their favorite hobby or job, beekeeping. They talk about it because there is sooooo much to learn, and this topic changes so much with new diseases and methods to keep bees alive long enough to do what God designed them to do, make more bees and more honey! God's little creatures are good at that!

Do you want to keep and retain those "newbees" who visit your bee meetings? It is an easy task, you old timers know a visitor, they smell different when they come through the door. Simply walk over to the newbie and ask them what you ask your smelly

old friends at each bee meeting: "How are your bees do'in? How many hives do you have? Why do have or want bees? Pollination? Honey? medical reasons? Profit?" Bee friendly, use a smile and offer to let a newbie come look over your shoulder the next time you are going through your bee yard or apiary. Yes, loan them one of your good bee suits and a pair of gloves without holes in them! Let them hold a frame. (picture #1) It will change their lives, just like it changed yours!

Now, to the nuts and bolts of a good Mentor/Mentee program in your club. If you go to [www.mocobees.com](http://www.mocobees.com), attached is a copy of what we made up several years ago for our Mentor/Mentee program. Also there are the Mentor/Mentee requirements and the Mentor/Mentee applications. Use it as you will, change what you want, it's FREE! I previously gave out entire packets of the program, now I only give out the applications and send the rest electronically after each meeting to those that sign up. The mentee requirements are a list I made up by asking a number of old beekeepers in our club and several others. I also looked at other states and university programs. However, this is not enough to make a mentor program work or be successful! You must have a team of several (about 15% of your organization's membership) veteran beekeepers who are willing to be mentors.

You MUST have a committed president that is on board fully with the Mentor program and is willing to share quality time at each meeting and "hoopla" for 2 graduations a year. The club needs to invest in some Quality Certificates and maybe an award of some type for the graduating beekeepers. In our program I encouraged the Mentees to thank the Mentors with a small gift. I'm not sure that is going on but our Mentees are ALWAYS very thankful! (and involved enough to continue). Our vice presidents and other club leaders act as public relations for the Mentorship Program, consistently giving positive reinforcement in our club and our community.

There is a LOT of first time enthusiasm with newbees and our mentors stretch that as far as they can, but some first timers find out they can't do it, and drop out. Beekeeping is not for everyone; some are even allergic to it! Mentors encourage the Mentees to come to the meetings (only 12 a year!) and throughout the year (requirement #6) can answer most questions over the phone. Your club should be interested in education. One or two of our backyard beekeepers put on a two or three session lesson on how to make queen cells (one of the requirements). We explain 10 or 20 ways to make queens and then we go through the process of making queen cells with a Cloake Board. (picture #2) With today's technology, pictures are sent with ease. Our mentors find that they learn as much from the mentees as they teach. Some of the mentors have made lifelong friends. Several of our mentees have said, "I would have quit beekeeping if it were not for my mentor".

The director of the Mentor/Mentee program has little involvement, simply matching the mentees with the already-willing, and able, mentors, but usually our mentors have already met a newbie and brings them over to help sign them up and offers to mentor them. Most (all) of the details are completed





through emails. Then it is just a matter of an Excel program to keep up with who, when and how much time. The mentors qualify the mentees who are only expected to complete 85% of the requirements. Sometimes they let me tell stupid jokes, but our club is currently looking for another director.

I would be more than happy to talk to your officers or the whole club about the program if our President Leesa is willing to drag me down to your club meeting and buy me a steak dinner on the way .... Did I mention that you really must have a committed president? I have called and attempted several times. Ha!

Seriously it is seasoned veteran beekeepers like Leesa, James and Chari Elam, Earl & Anita Arendall, Bob & Betzy Rabuck, Craig and Ursula Heffelman, Tom Miessler, Jerry and Janell Ronquille, Michael Baraksma, Ronnie Whitman and MANY other mentors who have mentored many beekeepers with their time, patience and bee sting meds. These mentors do this with NO thought of reward other than service to God's little creatures and the Souls willing to learn.

Actually I may just send my mentee to explain this program, as soon as he/she is finished scraping and cleaning my hives.

## East Texas Beekeepers Royal Court

*from Dan Eudy and Vi Bourns*



Willow Lanchester, 2015 ETBA Honey Queen, is the 16 year old daughter of Ryan and Lani Lanchester. She is a home schooled Sophomore and is also taking courses at Tyler Junior College. She served as the 2014 ETBA Honey Princess.

Willow began beekeeping in 2013 after receiving a Youth Beekeeping Scholarship from the East Texas Beekeepers Association. Beekeeping has become a family project.

In addition to beekeeping, Willow is a Cadet in the Civil Air Patrol, participating in search and rescue, aviation, leadership, and community service. She is a founding member of the Red Cross Youth Club in Tyler. Her leadership responsibilities include serving as club secretary, Fire Safety Chairperson, and Disaster Preparedness Team Puppeteer.

Willow is also a budding artist using pencil, pastels, and watercolors. At home, she enjoys reading, cooking, beekeeping, her art work, and spending time with her family.

Brittany Miller, 2015 ETBA Honey Princess, is the 16 year old daughter of Darla and Tim Miller of Gilmer, Texas. She is a homeschooled eleventh grader with a goal in life to become a pediatric nurse.

After successfully completing the ETBA scholarship program in 2014, she and her dad have increased their two original hives to by catching swarms and splitting hives.

She is an experienced speaker and has been educating children in her area about beekeeping.

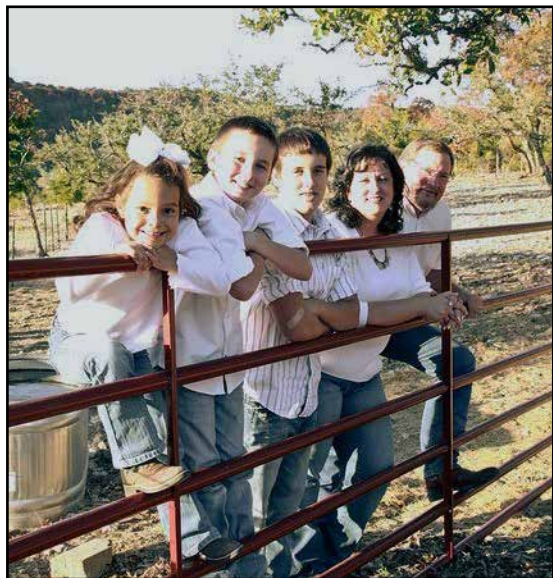
She is a volunteer at her local church and with a young women's organization of Gilmer which reaches out to others in disasters.

She loves cooking with honey, caring for younger children and animals.



# Beekeeping Property Tax Special Valuation From A Chief Appraiser's Perspective

*from Wendy Grams and Joe Bader*



*The Grams Family*

Wendy Grams is the Chief Appraiser for Bandera County. Joe Bader is a beekeeper who has applied for an agricultural exemption for beekeeping in Kendall and Travis Counties and is in the process of accumulating the required five year history.

The special valuation for agriculture, which includes beekeeping, is often referred to as an agricultural exemption. In the property tax world an exemption removes value from the appraisal roll while a special valuation places a special value on the property and is fully taxable at the special value. So even though one often hears the words "ag exemption" it is actually an agricultural special valuation. Special valuations for agriculture came into effect in 1978 so that farmers and ranchers could keep possession of their land and not lose it to taxes. Since the inception of this, society has evolved and changed and so has agriculture to include non-traditional activities such as wildlife management and beekeeping. An applicant for beekeeping special valuation should be someone who has at least 5 acres and not more than 20 acres, devoted to bees and who is willing to keep the records that any other agricultural producer would have to keep in order to show evidence for their special valuation. The annual deadline for applying is April 30th of each year. The form is easy to complete and can be found online at the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts website (<http://www.window.state.tx.us/taxinfo/taxforms/50-129.pdf>) and from your local appraisal district's office and website. Texas law requires a five year history before an agricultural valuation begins. A property owner can apply the first year to begin the process or can wait until they have the five year history. The only advantage to applying early is that it might motivate you to keep better records.

Each county has different soils and vegetation. Whether the appraiser is considering cattle, goats or bees some land is going to be more productive and some less productive. The general state guidelines are 6 hives for 5 acres, but the individual appraisal districts have reasonable autonomy in the guidelines they use. Actual guidelines will be different from county to county. These guidelines are set up and approved with the help and advice of the Agricultural Advisory Board. Check with your county appraisal district for their requirements and guidelines.

Keep normal business records like invoices for when you bought bees, hive boxes, replaced queens, bought sugar or any other supplies pertaining to the beekeeping operation. The appraiser wants to see that you have a water source for your bees, that you are supplemental feeding them or other evidence that you are actually working your colonies. Record when and how you extract honey and how much you extract. Even if you don't sell it, you want to show production. For each year as you are building your history and beyond, keep records to show that you maintained your hives. In your recordkeeping, set yourself apart from a person who keeps bees as a hobby and from the person who sets hives on his property just for the special valuation and then forgets about them.

Once you can show a five year history with your records, the ag appraiser will review your application for completeness and usually do an on-site inspection to verify that you do have bees and to look at your equipment. If the appraiser agrees that you have satisfied the requirements, you are granted the special valuation. If there is anything that the appraiser feels is lacking in your records, you will be given written notice that the requirements have not been met. This will give the applicant time to rectify the deficiencies. If this is not done, then the property will not be granted a special valuation. If the special valuation is not granted you have the opportunity to present your evidence to the appraisal review board.

Agricultural property values will be different from county to county. There has been some research done on a statewide level on the average annual costs and production from an average hive. Your appraisal office may also compare beekeeping acreage to other agricultural valuation for cattle or goats. The appraiser's goal is to be fair and equal within the guidelines of the law. The property tax reduction from agricultural special valuation could make your beekeeping and record keeping effort worthwhile. If you have a home or other improvements on your land, their values will remain the same. The market value of the land is not reduced. There is a special productivity value on the land that is used for taxing purposes. Productivity value is determined by the quantity of product that is producible on a particular type of land. The productivity value may greatly reduce your tax burden by as much as 80 to 90%. Keeping in mind this reduction is only on the land portion of the property and productivity values differ county to county.

Mrs. Grams says "Some people are intimidated by their local appraisal district. Don't be afraid of coming in to talk to us. We



welcome all property owners and their firsthand knowledge of their property. We can't know as much about your land as you do so if you have additional information we hope you will share it with us. I would encourage people to come in and visit any time."


Your county appraisal district is also a great source of information. Bandera County, like many other counties, has a GIS mapper that can produce interesting maps of your property and other properties in the county. Recently they assisted a geography teacher with topography maps to help in her teaching. The appraisal district is a resource for you and the community.

Since beekeeping has become a new way to qualify for a special valuation through agriculture, the need to become more educated about beekeeping was essential for the District. Mrs. Grams also has a personal interest in beekeeping and taking a class was a way to fulfill both a professional and personal need. "I took a class offered by the local agricultural extension office. I own 10 acres and I was interested to see if I should start a beekeeping operation. The person who taught the class was excited about beekeeping and made the class fun. It gave me a lot of information and I realized how much work is involved in a true beekeeping operation. I also realized that maintaining several hives on my property was going to be very difficult because of the soil types and lack of desirable vegetation for bees. I decided against becoming a beekeeper, but realize how important bees are to our gardens and food production." Mrs. Grams said.

Bees are important and beekeepers are necessary. Many beekeepers are hobbyists and they fulfill an important role, but will not qualify for an agricultural special valuation. Some beekeepers meet the requirements for the special valuation of their property and are willing to do the work involved. They should apply and take advantage of this opportunity.




*Picture from Shelby Kilpatrick*



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## 2015 Texas Honey Queen Tabitha Mansker

Hello everyone!

My days and weeks are just flying by! I started off the month with my first plane ride ever. I flew to Anaheim California for the ABF Convention at the Disneyland Resort. The whole experience was exciting and a little nerve racking. I will never forget the way my stomach felt when those wheels came off the ground. Seeing the ocean makes you feel small, but flying makes you feel microscopic. My favorite part was going through the clouds and then being above the clouds! It just took my breath away.... did I mention the clouds?! I am already considering being a flight attendant when my Honey Queen days are over. (Just so I can live with my head in the clouds) I say all this to say, the Queen has taken her first flight! (sadly the drone quality decreased significantly once you left the Texas airport!)



Speaking of firsts... this was also my first time to California! I would like to report to you, that not everyone there has long blond hair and carries around a surf board.... (the typical stereotype) this was about how much I knew of California. (Nothing!) Flying in, the view was beautiful and the weather was perfect all week. The American Beekeeping Federation Convention (ABF) was the largest I have attended. All the

speakers and sessions were very informative and interesting. I am always amazed to learn about all the research, study and hard work going on to better this industry. It was very encouraging to see all the enthusiasm throughout the convention. I met many new people and had a chance to fellowship with some old beekeeping friends. I love how much this industry becomes a family to you and you always feel welcome. California definitely wasn't the same as Texas, and the pace of Anaheim is a little too fast for me, but I really can't wait for my next chance to go back and visit.

Since I got back from "The Golden State", I have had a very bad cold. So I've been drinking lots of hot tea with honey. Now as we head right into the busy time of the year to work our bees, and as the seasons are changing and different plants are starting to bloom, our allergies start acting up. We must face the fact that yes, indeed, our allergies can knock us out or cause us to slow down more than we would like. So even if you're just fighting your seasonal allergies, common colds, serious viruses, or other world sicknesses being spread around, (Ebola), we must be wise and take care of ourselves. Now I am not a doctor and please don't take this as a scientific study. I would just like to share with you a little bit of what I have researched on the benefits of honey and healing. Again these are all just recommendations from 19 year old, Tabitha Mansker, legal citizen of the United States of America, and avid allergy fighter. So read on with open minds (and lots of caution).

Ok so imagine with me for a minute that you are not feeling well. You go to the doctor and find out you just have a really bad cold. But you don't have time to deal with the sore throat, sleepless nights and all the annoying coughing and sneezing. So you ask your doctor for a prescription for some antibiotics. Now you are probably asking "What's so bad with taking antibiotics?" I'm glad you asked! Well over the past few decades, we've seen a rise in bacteria capable of resisting our modern antibiotics. The result has been potentially dangerous and even deadly infections.

The overuse of antibiotics can contribute to resistant bacteria, so doctors now ask patients to think twice about asking for prescriptions. Sore throats, for example, are often caused by viral, not bacterial infections. That means antibiotics won't help. Now of course there are plenty of times when we need to take antibiotics, but let's make sure it's not something we can solve with a few simple things at home.

What cause sore throats? Allergies, dry air and outdoor

(continued from page 24)

pollution, as well as illnesses like the common cold, flu, measles, chickenpox, mononucleosis (mono) and the croup, can all cause sore throats. These illnesses are all viral infections that will not respond to antibiotics.

(Bacterial infections are responsible for only a small percentage of sore throats, including those linked with strep throat, whooping cough, and diphtheria. Most doctors recommend calling a doctor only in cases of severe sore throat accompanied by a fever, or when swollen tonsils block the throat.)

So now you're asking "What should we do to help ease our common illnesses?" For us Beekeepers the answer should be obvious. Eat raw honey! Most of you know the many benefits of honey, so just hold your horses as I go through a few of the amazing things honey contains.

Raw honey contains up to 80 different substances important to human nutrition. Containing fructose and glucose, honey is a great source of energy. Honey contains all the B complex, A, C, D, E, and K, minerals and trace elements: magnesium, sulfur, phosphorus, iron, calcium, chlorine, potassium, iodine, sodium, copper, and manganese. Raw Honey also contains pollen, propolis, phytonutrients and antimicrobial and antibacterial factors. Our bodies need these nutrients especially when we're feeling under the weather.

"Which honey is the best? Again I am not a doctor, but the best honey I could prescribe to you is... Your own! And I have 3 very scientific reasons for this:

1. You know exactly where it's from. (or you should!)
2. You know how or if it has been processed. (this is very important!)
3. You have put enough sweat, time, and money into your bees, it's about time they help you a little. (You deserve it!).

Now I'm not recommending you go eat spoonful after spoonful of honey, but I do have a few ideas. First start with lots of hot drinks, (NOT coffee and hot chocolate) herbal and green teas are best. There are lots of varieties out there, so just find one that you like and add your favorite honey to it. Another thing you can try is mixing 2 tablespoons of honey with 1 teaspoon cinnamon. Mix well and eat or dissolve in hot water or tea. (Cinnamon is great for you too!) These, among others have helped my sore throats. Another thing is after getting something hot, get some REST! (Yes, that includes you tough Commercial Beekeepers!) Remember there is only one of YOU... so take care of yourself!!

I hope you found something helpful in my article and I encourage you to do some research of your on this subject. The next time you have a sore throat try some hot tea and local honey. Be careful working your bees, and enjoy each day you have! I look forward to seeing each of you at the Delegates meeting in February.

And finally, after attending the ABF Convention I am confident in saying I represent and serve the best beekeeping organization in the world! Ya'll are the best! Have a blessed day!

Fun fact: The live enzyme content of honey is the highest of all foods.

## Mono-Cultures Have Their Roots in the Past

*from Catch the Buzz*

Agricultural decisions made by our ancestors more than 10,000 years ago could hold the key to food security in the future, according to new research by the University of Sheffield.

Scientists, looking at why the first arable farmers chose to domesticate some cereal crops and not others, studied those that originated in the Fertile Crescent, an arc of land in western Asia from the Mediterranean Sea to the Persian Gulf.

They grew wild versions of what are now staple foods like wheat and barley along with other grasses from the region to identify the traits that make some plants suitable for agriculture, including how much edible seed the grasses produced and their architecture.

Dr Catherine Preece, who worked on the study with colleagues from the University's Department of Animal and Plant Sciences and Department of Archaeology, said: "Our results surprised us because numerous other grasses that our ancestors ate, but we do not, can produce just as much seed as wild wheat and barley. It is only when these plants are grown at high densities, similar to what we would find in fields, that the advantage of wild wheat and barley is revealed."

The study identified two key characteristics shared by the wild relatives of current crop plants. Firstly they have bigger seeds, which means they grow into bigger seedlings and are able to get more than their fair share of light and nutrients, and secondly, as adult plants they are less bushy than other grasses and package their big seeds onto fewer stems. This means crop wild relatives perform better than the other wild grasses that they are competing with and are better at growing close together in fields, making them ideal for using in agriculture.

"The results are important because our expanding human population is putting increasing demands on food production," said Dr Preece.

"Before humans learned how to farm, our ancestors ate a much wider variety of grasses. If we can understand what traits have made some grasses into good crops then we can look for those characteristics in other plants and perhaps identify good candidates for future domestication."

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## Texas Honey Queen Chair Rachael Seida

Dear Texas Beekeepers,

2015 is here and we are off to a buzzing start! (Pun intended) Including sickness! I don't think I have ever spent so much time feeling poorly – guess I better increase my daily dose of honey! This year looks to be very exciting! Our 2015 Texas Honey Queen is Tabitha Mansker, and I hope you plan on inviting her out for your local events! Our calendar is filling up fast, so make sure to get your requests into me early at [texashoneyqueenchair@gmail.com](mailto:texashoneyqueenchair@gmail.com).

It is so wonderful to look to all the local clubs starting, re-starting, or continuing Honey Queen Programs! By my count (which seems to change almost weekly), we will have seven local Honey Queens and Princesses in 2015. Truly amazing!

In January, we (Hayden, Tabitha, and I), flew to California for the annual ABF Convention. This year was better than ever with over 900 registered attendees, more speakers than ever, and to top it off, the convention was held at the Disneyland Resort! It was a blast! And after the convention I even had the pleasure of taking Hayden to Disneyland, her first time in an amusement park! Of course a large part of the convention is American Honey Queen and Princess Contest.

And I am truly excited to announce that your 2015 American Honey Princess is Hayden Wolf! We are so proud of her, and can't wait to hear about her successes and adventures this year.

As a reminder – Check us out on Facebook and Twitter to follow Tabitha's journey across Texas this year.



*2014 American Honey Princess  
Elena Hoffman – center*

*2015 American Honey Queen  
Gabrielle Hemesath – right*

*2015 American Honey Princess  
Hayden Wolf – left*





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888-537-7088**

# Listing of Local Beekeepers' Associations in Texas with TBA Delegate and Regular Meeting Information Shown for Each

Please forward any changes and/or additions to  
John J. Talbert, Executive Secretary, [john@sabinecreekhoney.com](mailto:john@sabinecreekhoney.com)

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## **Alamo Area Beekeepers Association**

Rick Fink - (210) 872-4569

[president@alamobees.org](mailto:president@alamobees.org)

[www.alamobees.org](http://www.alamobees.org)

**Meetings:** 3rd Tuesday on odd # months; at

Helotes Ind. Baptist Church

15335 Bandera Rd., Helotes @ 7 pm

## **Austin Area Beekeepers Association**

Lance Wilson - (512) 619-3700

[lw@ausapts.com](mailto:lw@ausapts.com)

8701 North Mopac Expressway #150, Austin TX 78759

[www.meetup.com/Austin-Urban-Beekeeping/](http://www.meetup.com/Austin-Urban-Beekeeping/)

**Meeting:** 3rd Monday of each month

Old Quarry Library, 7051 Village Center Dr., Austin TX 78731 @ 7pm

## **Brazoria County Beekeepers Association**

Larry Hoehne - (979) 848-8780 or (979) 236-1385

233 Crestwood, Clute TX 77531

[bcbaassociation@gmail.com](mailto:bcbaassociation@gmail.com)

[www.brazoria-county-beekeepers-association.com](http://www.brazoria-county-beekeepers-association.com)

**Meetings:** 2nd Monday of each month at 7pm;

Brazoria County Extension Office

21017 County Road 171, Angleton TX 77515

## **Brazos Valley Beekeepers Association**

Chris Barnes - (979) 220-0004

[info@bvbeeks.org](mailto:info@bvbeeks.org)

5105 Wallis Rd., Bryan, TX 77808

**Meetings:** 3rd. Tuesday of each month at 7pm

## **Caddo Trace Beekeepers Association**

Roger Farr - (979) 436-5310

6073 Farm Road 2348, Mount Pleasant, TX 75455

[rdfarr@gmail.com](mailto:rdfarr@gmail.com)

**Meetings:** 2nd Monday of each month at 7pm

Titus County Agrilife Extension Bldg, 1708 Industrial Rd.,

Mount Pleasant, TX 75455

## **Central Texas Beekeepers Association**

Michael Kelling - (979) 277-0411

[CentralTexasBeekeepers@gmail.com](mailto:CentralTexasBeekeepers@gmail.com)

[www.centraltexasbeekeepers.org](http://www.centraltexasbeekeepers.org)

1997 Tonckawa Hills Ln - Brenham, TX 77833

**Meetings:** Monthly on the 4th Thursday

(except November and December) at the

Washington County Fairgrounds

Brenham @ 7 pm

## **Coastal Bend Beekeepers Association**

Pete Hartje - (361) 229-0512

[pheartje@juno.com](mailto:pheartje@juno.com)

1330 Whispering Sands, Port Aransas, TX 78373

**Meetings:** First Thursday of each month at 6:30pm;

City of Corpus Garden Senior Center

5325 Greely Dr., Corpus Christi, TX 78412

## **Collin County Hobby Beekeepers Assn.**

John J. Talbert - (214) 532-9241

[john@sabinecreekhoney.com](mailto:john@sabinecreekhoney.com)

P O Box 6 - Josephine, TX 75164

[www.cchba.org](http://www.cchba.org)

**Meetings:** 2nd Monday of each month;

Collin College Conference Center, (Central Park Campus)

2200 West University Drive, McKinney, TX 75071 @ 6:30 pm

## **Concho Valley Beekeepers Association**

Mel Williams - (325) 668-5080

[honeybeemanwilliams@gmail.com](mailto:honeybeemanwilliams@gmail.com)

**Meetings:** 3rd Tuesday of each month Jan-Nov

Texas A&M Research and Extension Center

7887 US Hwy 87 N, San Angelo @ 7:30 pm

## **Dino-Beekeepers Association**

Lee Burough - (817) 964-0238

[dino-beeclub@botmail.com](mailto:dino-beeclub@botmail.com)

[www.dinobee.com](http://www.dinobee.com)

**Meetings:** 2nd Tuesday of month

Glen Rose Citizens Center

209 SW Barnard St, Glen Rose, TX 76043

## **East Texas Beekeepers Association**

Richard Counts - (903) 566-6789

[dickcounts@bigplanet.com](mailto:dickcounts@bigplanet.com)

16239 Audrey Lane - Arp, TX 75750

[www.etba.info](http://www.etba.info)

**Meetings:** 1st Thursday of each month;

Whitehouse United Methodist Church,

405 West Main (Hwy 346), Whitehouse @ 6:45 pm

## **Fayette County Beekeepers Association**

Ron Chess - (979) 525-9254

[ragdale@industryinet.com](mailto:ragdale@industryinet.com)

**Meetings:** First Saturday of the month, Feb, April,

June, August, October and December

Fayette County Agriculture Building

240 Svoboda Lane, La Grange, TX 78945

## **Fort Bend Beekeepers Association**

1402 Band Road, Rosenberg, TX 77471

(281) 633-7029 (during office hours)

Jeff McMullan - Secretary - Treasurer

(281) 980-2363 (home); (281) 615-5346 (cell)

[jeffmcmullan@comcast.net](mailto:jeffmcmullan@comcast.net)

**Meetings:** 2nd Tuesday of each month (except

December) in the Fort Bend County

Bud O'Shieles Community Center

1330 Band Road, Rosenberg, TX 77471

## **Fredericksburg Beekeepers Association**

Joe Bader - (830) 537-4040

[joebees@gmail.com](mailto:joebees@gmail.com)

724 Cypress Bend Dr., Boerne, TX 78006

**Meetings:** Third Thursday of even number months (excl. Dec)

Gillespie County AgriLife Extension Office

95 Frederick Rd., Fredericksburg, TX 78624 @ 6:30 pm

## **Harris County Beekeepers Association**

David DeLong - (832) 347-8989

[honeybee@harriscountybeekeepers.org](mailto:honeybee@harriscountybeekeepers.org)

133 Mulberry, Lake Jackson, TX 77566

[www.harriscountybeekeepers.org](http://www.harriscountybeekeepers.org)

**Meetings:** 4th Tuesday of each month

Golden Acres Center - 5001 Oak Avenue

Pasadena @ 7 pm

# Local Beekeepers' Associations in Texas

## Heart of Texas Beekeepers Association

Gary Bowles - (254) 214-4514

[gbowles@peoplepc.com](mailto:gbowles@peoplepc.com)

**Meetings:** 4th Tuesday of each month  
(except December) at Vegas Buffet,  
505 N. Valley Mills Dr., Waco, TX 76710  
Dinner at 6 pm, Meeting at 7 pm

## Houston Beekeepers Association

Rita Willhite - (832) 654-7317

[rr.willhite@yahoo.com](mailto:rr.willhite@yahoo.com)

7806 Braeburn Valley Dr. - Houston, TX 77074

[www.houstonbeekeepers.org](http://www.houstonbeekeepers.org)

**Meetings:** 3rd Tuesday of each month; Bayland  
Community Center, 6400 Bissonnet St.  
Houston @ 7:30 pm

## Lakes Area Beekeepers Association

James Laughlin - (936) 368-7188

[jaycl161@yahoo.com](mailto:jaycl161@yahoo.com)

1299 FM 3017, San Augustine, TX 75972

**Meetings:** 1st Tuesday of each month  
San Augustine Chamber of Commerce Building  
San Augustine, TX 75972

## Liberty County Beekeepers Association

Cameron Crane - (409) 658-3800

[info@libertycountybeekeepers.org](mailto:info@libertycountybeekeepers.org)

2300 Belevvedere Dr., Baytown, TX 77520

[www.libertycountybeekeepers.org](http://www.libertycountybeekeepers.org)

**Meetings:** 1st Tuesday of each month at 7pm  
Business meeting at 6:30pm  
Liberty Agrilife Extension Office  
501 Palmer Avenue, Liberty TX

## Marshall Beekeeping Association

Beth Derr - (936) 591-2399

[derrbe@netscape.net](mailto:derrbe@netscape.net)

210 Meadowlark Dr. Jefferson, TX 75657

**Meetings:** 2nd Thursday of each month at 5:30 pm  
Centrall Marshall Fire Station  
601 S Grove St., Marshall, TX 75670

## Metro Beekeepers Association

Roger Evarrt, President

[evarttrog@yahoo.com](mailto:evarttrog@yahoo.com)

[www.metrobeekeepers.net](http://www.metrobeekeepers.net)

344 NW King St., Burleson, TX 76028

**Meetings:** 2nd Monday of each month; Southside Preservation Hall,  
1519 Lipscomb St., Fort Worth TX

## Montgomery County Beekeepers Assn.

Anita Stepp

[mocobees@gmail.com](mailto:mocobees@gmail.com)

[www.mocobees.com](http://www.mocobees.com)

**Meetings:** 3rd Monday of each month at  
Montgomery County Extension Office, 9020 FM 1484,  
Conroe TX @ 7 pm

## Northeast Texas Beekeepers Association

David Oliver - (817) 992-4517

[david.oliver@utsouthwestern.edu](mailto:david.oliver@utsouthwestern.edu)

631 VZ CR 4124, Canton, TX 75103

**Meetings:** 2nd Tuesday of each month; @ 6:45 pm  
Russell Memorial United Methodist Church  
Deen Building, George Hall  
201 South 4th Street (Farm Road 47), Wills Point, TX 75169

## Pineywoods Beekeepers Association

Terry McFall - (409) 384-3626

[tdmcfall@hotmail.com](mailto:tdmcfall@hotmail.com)

1700 FM 252, Jasper, TX 75951

**Meetings:** 2nd Thursday of each month  
Chamber of Commerce Building,  
1615 S Chestnut, Lufkin @ 7:00 pm

## Red River Valley Beekeepers Assn.

Doug Hill

1701 Fairfax

Wichita Falls, TX 76301

**Meetings:** 3rd Tuesday of each month  
(except December) Bolin Science Hall, Room 209  
Midwestern St. University  
Wichita Falls @ 7 pm

## Travis County Beekeepers Assn.

Tanya Phillips - (512) 560-3732

[info@traviscountybeekeepers.org](mailto:info@traviscountybeekeepers.org)

9874 Wier Loop Circle, Austin, TX 78736

[www.traviscountybeekeepers.org](http://www.traviscountybeekeepers.org)

**Meetings:** First Monday of the month at 7pm  
Zilker Botanical Garden, 2220 Barton Springs Rd., Austin, TX 78704

## Trinity Valley Beekeepers Association

Bob Richie - (214) 793-1516

[rgrichie@sbcglobal.net](mailto:rgrichie@sbcglobal.net)

8266 Barbaree Blvd., Dallas, TX 75228

[www.tvbees.org](http://www.tvbees.org)

**Meetings:** 2nd Tuesday of each month  
(except August), Continuing Education Center,  
C.C.Young Facility, 4847 West Lawther Dr.,  
Dallas, TX 75214 @ 7 - 9 pm

## Walker County Area Beekeepers Assn.

Ginger Plummer - (936) 435-2426

[jgplummer1211@windstream.net](mailto:jgplummer1211@windstream.net)

102 Tam Road, Huntsville, TX 77320

**Meetings:** Last Thursday of each month  
at Walker County Extension Office, #1 Tam Rd.  
Huntsville @ 7 pm

## Williamson County Area Beekeepers Assn.

Jimmie Oakley - (512) 388-3630

[jimmie.oakley@gmail.com](mailto:jimmie.oakley@gmail.com) - [www.wcaba.org](http://www.wcaba.org)

425 Sapphire Lane, Jarrell, TX 76537

**Meetings:** 4th Thursday of each month  
(except December) 1st United Methodist Church -  
McKinney Ministry Center, 410 E University Ave.  
Georgetown, TX 78626 @ 7 pm



## Directors -at-Large and Local Associations Served:

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<b>Area 1</b>	<b>Lisa Dittfurth</b> <i>dittfurths@gmail.com</i> 12992 CR 577 Anna, TX 75409 (972) 542-4419	Collin County Hobby Beekeepers Association Metro Beekeepers Association Trinity Valley Beekeepers Association Red River Beekeepers Association
<b>Area 2</b>	<b>Leesa Hyder</b> <i>lhyder@swbell.net</i> 82 Sandpebble Dr. The Woodlands, TX 77381 (281) 460-0344	Central Texas Beekeepers Association Montgomery County Beekeepers Association Walker County Beekeepers Association Brazos Valley Beekeepers Association
<b>Area 3</b>	<b>Mark Hedley</b> <i>mark@spiralhornapiary.com</i> 8247 FM 502 Rochelle, TX 76872 (325) 463-5319	Concho Valley Beekeepers Association Dino-Beekeepers Association Heart of Texas Beekeepers Association Rio Grande Valley Beekeepers Association Coastal Bend Beekeepers Association
<b>Area 4</b>	<b>Eddie Collins</b> <i>eddiecollins@brookshires.com</i> 10965 Ardis St. Whitehouse, TX 75791 (903) 871-2391	Caddo Trace Beekeepers Association Marshall Beekeepers Association Northeast Texas Beekeepers Association Pineywoods Beekeepers Association East Texas Beekeepers Association Lakes Area Beekeepers Association
<b>Area 5</b>	<b>Cameron Crane</b> <i>cameron@cameroncrane.com</i> 2300 Belvedere Dr. Baytown, TX 77520 (409) 658-3800	Liberty County Beekeepers Association Harris County Beekeepers Association Fort Bend Beekeepers Association Brazoria County Beekeepers Association Houston Beekeepers Association
<b>Area 6</b>	<b>Tammy Barr</b> <i>tammybarrbrands@hotmail.com</i> 216 N Painted Trees Rd. Fort Davis, TX 79734 (325) 642-2012	Concho Valley Beekeepers Association Dino-Beekeepers Association Heart of Texas Beekeepers Association Rio Grande Valley Beekeepers Association Coastal Bend Beekeepers Association
<b>Special Advisor to TBA Board</b>	<b>Lance Wilson</b> <i>lance@apartmentexperts.com</i> 17021 Conway Springs Court Austin, TX 78717 (512) 619-3700	Alamo Area Beekeepers Association Austin Area Beekeepers Association Travis County Beekeepers Association Fayette County Beekeepers Association Fredricksburg Beekeepers Association Williamson County Area Beekeepers Association

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