



SEMBA -NEWS

Volume 18 Number 4 Newsletter of the Southeastern Michigan Beekeepers' Association
June-July 2008

SEMBA SUMMER PICNIC

When: Saturday, July 19, 2008, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Catered Lunch at noon by reservation,
\$5.00 per person

Where: Groeb Farms
10464 Bryan Hwy., Onsted, MI

Tours of the honey processing operation, bee supply store and other operations will be conducted. Ernie Groeb Jr. will address the group about the Groeb Farms operation.

Reservations for the catered lunch are due by July 14. To reserve, contact R. Sutherland 734-668-8568, e-mail rsuther@hotmail.com or D. Holly, 248-542-1316, hollysbees@yahoo.com

SEMBA SPRING MEETING REPORT

Thirty-five SEMBA members attended the spring meeting at Schoolcraft College. After the potluck dinner, a short business meeting was held followed by an excellent presentation by Fritz Sanders entitled "One year of Beekeeping - The Beginner".

Honored by naming them SEMBA Life Members were Ada and Ed Nowak. Ed began beekeeping in Massachusetts by taking over hives from his brother-in-law. Then, when General Motors transferred him to Detroit, he started keeping bees in Livonia. Under the direction of Dr. Byberg at the Cranbrook Institute of Science, Ed completed the first Michigan Master Beekeeper program. Over the years, he increased his number of colonies to over 150.

Ed and Ada, who have been SEMBA members since 1983, have assisted our organization in many ways: Ed has served as SEMBA President, started the SEMBA bee classes in 1997 and continues to serve in that capacity. He is a frequent presenter at bee club meetings and at the Annual Beekeeping Conference. The Nowak home, with Ada as an excellent hostess, has been used for SEMBA summer picnics, beekeeping classes and is the site for the 2008 Queen Rearing course.

The Nowaks market their honey, wax and beekeeping products at several local markets and craft shows in the area.

A presentation was made by Lynn Wellhausen regarding the Haagen-Dazs Ice Cream Company's donation of \$225,000 for CCD research and for their recently launched campaign to increase awareness of the importance of honey bees to pollination.

A motion was made and approved for SEMBA to donate \$500 to Pennsylvania State University to add to the Häagen-Dazs program. For more information on the Haagen-Dazs program visit: <http://www.helpthehoneybees.com/#/home/home/>

OUTREACH PRESENTATION COMMITTEE REPORT

The newly formed committee chaired by John Kates met following the SEMBA Spring meeting. Members attending were Roxanne Hook, Jane Levy, John Kates and Roger Sutherland. Short term and long term goals and objectives were discussed.

Objectives discussed during the meeting were:

- *Determine how to make future community outreach presentation more vivid by using age-appropriate display charts, posters, handout material and other items
- *Develop a list of bee and beekeeping reference material that would be passed out at community outreach presentations
- *Collect bee-related photographs from SEMBA members to have enlarged for use during community outreach presentations
- *Create specific age-appropriate bee-related presentation plans
- *Identify SEMBA members willing to do community outreach presentations for the remainder of 2008
- *Record the number of community outreach presentations performed by SEMBA members for 2008
- *Track the number of SEMBA members who provide community outreach presentations

The presentation committee would like input from the SEMBA membership who are interested in providing community outreach presentations by a response to the following:

Are you available to do community outreach presentations for the remainder of 2008?

Have you made beekeeping presentations?

What age groups are you comfortable doing presentations to?

How far are you willing to drive to do presentations?

Do you have specific display material that you would like SEMBA to have available for presentations? If so, what are they: charts, observation hive, photographs?

SEMBA members can share their willingness to participate, and make suggestions by contacting committee chairperson John Kates by e-mail: agingwell@hotmail.com or by phone: 313-273-8214.

SEMBA MEMBER WINTER LOSS SURVEY

~ By James Zablotny, Ph.D

At the SEMBA Spring meeting, seventeen SEMBA beekeepers provided data on winter hive mortality. Overall 47% of the hives perished this winter (n=3240 hives total, 1724 survived). 41% of the beekeepers treated for parasitic mites with 57% using a commercially available formic acid preparation.

Nationally, losses were 36-37%.

MICHIGAN STATE FAIR August 20-September 1, 2008

Now is the time to prepare your honey and beeswax entries for the Michigan State Fair. Rod Jordan, Agriculture Division Director, has announced two important changes in the rules and regulations for the Apiary Division. These changes were approved by the SEMBA membership at the October 21, 2007 annual meeting. The changes are as follows:

- (1) Apiary – Section 3 will be limited to 1 entry per class, per individual and 2 entries per class per household.
- (2) Containers for class 8665 (Display of four 1 pound jars of creamed granulated honey) must be in G.C.I. style standard honey, glass jars. (These containers are manufactured by the Gamber Glass Container Company.)

In the past two years, some entries in the unfiltered white extracted honey class should have been entered as unfiltered amber honey. This year the judges will be using a color grader to determine if the honey entered is light enough to be considered white.

USA--OVER 4,000 SPECIES OF NATIVE BEES POLLINATE OUR FLOWERS

What pollinated flowers before settlers brought over the honeybee?

It's true that honeybees aren't native to the United States. Honeybees are considered a "cultivated" species. There are over 4,000 species of bees native to the United States such as bumble, digger, leafcutter, polyester, mason, carpenter and sweat bees. There are no common names for most species so they are only known by their scientific names.

~Apitrack Newsletter #112
newsletter@apitrack.com

PLACING VENOM UNDER THE TONGUE MAY OFFER ALTERNATIVE TO ALLERGY SHOTS

By [Charlene Laino](#)

WebMD Medical News

Reviewed by [Louise Chang, MD](#)

March 18, 2008 (Philadelphia) -- Taking allergy drops instead of enduring painful shots may someday become an option for people who are allergic to honeybee stings.

In a preliminary study, Italian researchers found that putting honeybee venom under the tongue was safe and significantly reduced reactions in people allergic to [bee stings](#).

Immunotherapy using the ubiquitous allergy shot is the standard treatment for [allergies](#) to everything from insect stings to dust mites. Tiny amounts of the allergens are injected into the patient until tolerance develops.

The new study involved a different form of immunotherapy, called sublingual immunotherapy. It involves putting extracts of allergens under the tongue. Like the shots, sublingual immunotherapy reduces allergic sensitivity in many patients over time.

Honeybee Venom Drops vs. Placebo

The new study, presented here at the annual meeting of the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma and Immunotherapy (AAAAI), is the first attempt to determine if sublingual

immunotherapy is effective against honeybee sting allergies, Passalacqua says.

The study involved 30 people with a history of local allergic reactions to honeybee stings. A local reaction is a large raised patch of pricked skin right in the area of the sting. These raised bumps are often called wheals.

The participants were randomly assigned to receive either sublingual immunotherapy in the form of honeybee venom drops placed under the tongue, or placebo drops.

Patients in the immunotherapy group got escalating doses of honeybee venom for six weeks, followed by a maintenance dose, given three times a week for six months.

"You hold the drop under the tongue for about one or two minutes, then swallow," Passalacqua says. Then came the bee sting challenge. "We put insects in a jar and then put the jar on the patient's forearm" and looked to see what happened, he says.

It worked. The median diameter of the sting wheals in patients given sublingual immunotherapy dropped from about 8 to 3 inches. Looked at another way, wheal diameter was reduced by more than 50% in more than half of them.

"This was a very apparent and very significant reduction in the size of the reaction to the sting," Passalacqua says. In contrast, there was no change in wheal diameter in the placebo group, and one person broke out in [hives](#).

The findings show that sublingual immunotherapy against honeybee stings works, Passalacqua says. The next step: Testing sublingual immunotherapy in patients who have more severe allergic reactions that spread far from the sting or that affect the entire body. Doctors call these systemic reactions; while uncommon, they can be life-threatening.

Clifford Bassett, MD, vice chair of AAAAI's public education committee and an allergist at Long Island College Hospital in Brooklyn, N.Y., says that if sublingual immunotherapy proves safe and effective in larger numbers of people, "it will offer an alternative treatment for our patients. It's always good to have multiple choices."

In the meantime, he tells WebMD, venom shots are more than 95% effective in reducing the risk

of systemic reactions in people with honeybee sting allergies.

While not always possible, avoiding the bees in the first place is the first line of defense, Bassett adds.

~ Apitrack Newsletter #112

newsletter@apitrack.com

SWARM TRAPS

~ By Winn Harless

What do you do with those old five-gallon plastic buckets when they are no longer suitable to put honey in?

My idea is to make them into swarm traps. To accomplish this, I drill about six ½ inch holes close together about 1 ½ inches from the bottom of the pail. Then I drill a lot of small holes in the bottom for drainage. Also, I saw up some of the plastic frames that are drawn out but no longer desirable for honey.

Next, I secure a piece of thin frame to a block of wood that is 2 ¾ wide and place a piece of foundation on each side of the wood, with the old drawn comb in the middle. I then attach this inside the lid with drywall screws. Put the lid on the bucket. You now have a cheap bait hive that smells like honey and has some honey comb for the swarm queen to start laying in. Hang the bait hive up and hope for some free survivor bees.

MICHIGAN HONEY PRODUCTION UP 16 PERCENT IN 2007

Michigan honey production for 2007 totaled 4.61 million pounds, up 16 percent from 2006. This estimate included honey from producers with five or more colonies. Nationally Michigan ranked ninth in honey production in 2007, up from eleventh in 2006. Yields from Michigan's 72,000 colonies producing honey averaged 64 pounds in 2007, compared with 55 pounds the previous year. Michigan prices averaged \$1.14 per pound, down 3 cents per pound from last year. Value of production totaled \$5.25 million, up 13 percent from 2006. Honey stocks were 2.35 million pounds, up 12 percent from 2006.

~USDA Reporting Service

ASSIST WITH HONEY BEE RESEARCH

If you would like to assist the USDA at the Beltsville Lab by supplying information for research, call Bart Smith at 301-504-8205 e-mail, Bart.Smith@ars.usda.gov or write to 10300 Baltimore Avenue, Bldg 476 BARC-East, Beltsville, MD, 20705. Contact Larry Yates for more details -- 248-649-5078.

BEE STINGS

It is often stated that the best way to remove a bee sting is that the sting apparatus should be scraped off using for example a knife blade, credit card, or fingernail. One should never pluck the stinger out with a forceps or fingers. However, a study published in 1996 (Lancet, vol. 348, pg. 301) questioned the soundness of the above advice based on the structure of the sting. The authors of the study self-administered stings to their forearms in order to assess the effect of delaying sting removal with the effects of different methods of sting removal. Wheal (swelling) size was measured 10 minutes after each bee sting. What they found is that wheal size increased as the time from stinging to removal of the sting increased, within a time frame of a few seconds. After 2 seconds, the method of sting removal, scrape or pinch, made no difference in the wheal response. The authors concluded that immediate treatment of bee stings should emphasize rapid sting removal without concerns for the method of removal. Their recommendations agree with an earlier study by another group that used rabbits as experimental subjects in which it was found that at least 90% of the venom sac contents were delivered within 20 seconds. What is the best bee sting remedy? William Brantley posted a series of treatments for self-administered bee stings in 2003. He compared what he categorized as pharmaceutical remedies that included Skeeter Stik, Survivor Gel Stick, Ban Roll-On, Benadryl Extra Strength Itch Stopping Cream, CVS Maximum Strength Hydrocortisone Cream, and Caladryl. The worst pharmaceutical remedy in his tests were Skeeter Stik and Survivor Gel Stick. The best was Caladryl. For home remedies, he compared raw white onion, tobacco, honey, vinegar/baking soda/meat tenderizer paste, toothpaste, and ice. The worst was onion and tobacco while toothpaste and ice were best. Brantley concluded from his tests that toothpaste and ice were overall the best remedies for bee stings.

~Source: *The Piping Queen*, April 2008. Courtesy of SEMBA member John Wrosch who now lives in Nashville, TN and has membership in the Nashville Area Beekeepers Association.

SEMBA Bargain Corner

For Sale:

- SEMBA caps and DVD "How I Got Started in Beekeeping". Call 734-668-8568 to order.
- 5 frame nucs, \$75. Call Winn Harless, 734-453-2914
- Hive equipment and systems. Keith Lazar, C 248-361-1710 or P 248- 815- 5522

Wanted:

- Beekeeper to locate bees on my property near 8 Mile Rd. in Livonia. Call Margaret Danko, 734-474-6813

Notice:

- Honey for sale or honey wanted: **Send your name to the Sutherlands, 5488 Warren, Ann Arbor, MI 48105, or rsuther@hotmail.com** Names will be printed in the next newsletter and posted on the sembabees.org web pages.

SEVEN PONDS BEEKEEPERS' CLUB -- Club meetings are held the fourth Tuesday of each month at the Seven Ponds Nature Center in Dryden, MI. For information call Terry Toland, 248- 421-6601.

Southeastern Michigan
Beekeepers' Association
Organized April 1, 1934

Oakland Beekeepers' Club



Schoolcraft Beekeepers' Club



Seven Ponds Beekeepers' Club



SEMBA Membership
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