

East Texas Beekeepers Association



September 2022

September Report by Jim Biles

Some reminders about the ETBA booth at the East Texas Fair:

- We need member volunteers to work the booth in order to have a successful Fair. I'll have sign-up sheets at the September meeting. Let's fill up the schedule with volunteers! Everyone who works the booth will get a free ETBA tee shirt.
- If you want to sell honey at the Fair, please bring it to the September meeting. Honey should be properly labeled. You can also sell beeswax products....see me to make arrangements for that. Retail price for the honey will be \$12, producers will receive \$12 less the average credit card fee.
- Booth setup will be either Wed or Thur before the Fair. If you'd like to help set up, let me know and I'll contact you with information about timing.
- Bring any questions you have to the September meeting.

Let's work to make this a great year for fair goers to hear about honey bees!

President—Connie Collins
Vice-President—Joe Laws
Exec. Director/Reporter— Jim Biles
Treasurer—Jennifer Palmer
Secretary—Tish Kennedy
Member-at-Large—Matt Thomas
Program Director — Meagan Elzner
Newsletter Editor—Jenifer Babyak
Webmaster—Ken Wilkinson



Next Meeting

Sept 1st

United Methodist Church
405 West Main in Whitehouse

6:30 PM

FYI *by Meagan Elzner*



The September Program...

Our September speaker is James McCracken of the Consumer Protections Division. He will be going over the rules and regulations of bottling and labeling honey in Texas. Here are a few helpful links he shared:

General information for food manufacturers:

<https://www.dshs.texas.gov/foods/manufacturers.aspx>

For Food Manufacture/Wholesale/Warehouse Program Inquiries

Email: [Manufactured Foods Branch](mailto:Manufactured_Foods_Branch@dshs.texas.gov)

Phone: [\(512\) 834-6670](tel:(512)834-6670)

Fax: [\(512\) 834-6681](tel:(512)834-6681)

Online Licensing Services Website (you will have to register as a new user):

https://vo.ras.dshs.state.tx.us/datamart/login.do;jsessionid=M4xzk2lBkkJZufXI5atDVYolDavKO_n0-aP-D-jH.i-056811161c3095d2f

For Licensing Assistance

Email: [Business Filing and Verification Section](mailto:Business_Filing_and_Verification_Section@dshs.texas.gov)

Phone: [\(512\) 834-6626](tel:(512)834-6626)

Fax: [\(512\) 834-6618](tel:(512)834-6618)

Here are the current Good Manufacturing Practices (GMPs) that are required to be followed by all Texas Food Manufacturers. Here you will find all facility requirements, sanitation requirements, etc. :

[https://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac\\$ext.ViewTAC?tac_view=5&ti=25&pt=1&ch=229&sch=N&rl=Y](https://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac$ext.ViewTAC?tac_view=5&ti=25&pt=1&ch=229&sch=N&rl=Y)

See you there! -Meagan



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We offer pure, raw, local honey & bees to our surrounding communities.

~ Meagan and Isaac Elzner ~



Practical Experiences in the Bee Yard

by Stan Brantley



Several years ago at a Texas Bee Convention in the Metroplex, I heard a term with which I was not familiar. The presenter was a young student from Texas A&M and the term he used was “fat bees”. Beekeepers with several years under their veils recognize this to mean “the type of bee needed to carry the hive through winter and emerge as a strong hive in the spring”. During the presentation, the speaker said the way to obtain “fat bees” was to begin a program in September to ensure that the bees emerging now would meet the necessary requirements.

How do you get the needed “fat bees” to accomplish this? There must be a feeding program that starts in September and continues through the time the queen shuts off her egg laying cycle. The end of egg laying is caused by a decrease in the weather temperature as well as the length of the day.

The ArkLaTex is capable of radical weather changes as well as the loss of flowering vegetation that would provide the final bit of storable nectar. Depending on conditions in your area, bees may be able to collect nectar up until the first killing frost. You cannot take a chance on Mother Nature allowing this to occur. You must consider your needs and begin an aggressive feeding program to provide your hives with the sufficient stored pollen and nectar to carry them through spring.

In my area, I usually have a good Goldenrod bloom in the fall, though the lack of rainfall may affect this year’s bloom. I have been told many times that Goldenrod honey is not desirable as a table honey. To the best of my knowledge, I have not been able to determine if the bees were able to store enough Goldenrod nectar to get them through the winter. If your area has large patches of blooming Goldenrod that will allow the hive to store a super of honey, then you are in luck. This will ensure the hive should not have a shortage of food. Based on past experience, about 30-40 pounds (a full medium super) will provide sufficient winter stores.

Prior to the Goldenrod bloom, you may wish to make your last extraction of fall honey. This honey may or may not be capped. I have found that uncapped fall honey will usually be below the 18.5% moisture reading needed to prevent fermentation, particularly in a dry year. Before extracting uncapped honey, give it the “shake test”. If the honey rains out with a sharp downward shake of the frame, better leave it in the hive for the bees’ winter stores.

SHB and Varroa Mites are still a plague for all beekeepers. They are established worldwide, with the last remaining Varroa free country, Australia, recently finding the presence of mites. Australian beekeeping authorities are burning infected hives in an attempt to stop the spread. I wish them luck with that program but do not think they will succeed.

All beekeepers should be testing for mite populations. Elevated mite counts going into winter means the hive is more at risk of not surviving the winter period. The accepted norm is three mites per 100 bees in a test. Treatment is recommended if the count is above that. READ the miticide label. TREAT, then do another mite count. If the mite count remains over 3/100, use a different treatment and check the results after the second treatment. Consider asking your queen breeder to supply you with a hygienic stock to help control the mites. SHB can be reduced in the hive by keeping the hive in full sun for most of the day. I am working one hive that is in the full Texas sun 9:30 to 4:30. During today’s inspection, I did not see a SHB. I am not saying none are in the hive but there were no beetles trapped in the Swiffer sheet on the topbars of the frames. Beetle traps containing apple cider vinegar as an attractant and vegetable oil or soapy water inside the trap can also help reduce the SHB populations.



Got Questions?

*Question & answer group will meet from 6:00-6:30 before the meeting.
Join us if you are a new beekeeper or just have beekeeping questions?
We’ll try to get you some answers!*

Connie Collins - ETBA President



Hello Beekeepers!

Could fall be in sight? Or is the weather just teasing us? As I write this, there is a week's worth of rain predicted, and I do pray it comes our way.

I just have a quick note for you this month. I saw picture below posted on the internet, and I wanted to share it. I love how beekeeping can bring people together.

I have met wonderful people through beekeeping and have seen amazing places too.

I hope you will share beekeeping with others and do not wait until it is too late. Get an extra suit and take people out to your hives and let them see what it is all about. You will probably gain another beekeeper friend if you do because it sure is a catching experience.

Also, if you are looking for beekeeper friends, I highly suggest you volunteer at our booth for the East Texas State Fair. I have made true friends there over the years and cannot recommend it enough.

I hope you enjoy the rest of the summer and I look forward to seeing you at the meeting in September.



Amy Clukey
@AmyClukey

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Note from my dad found in his bee keeping equipment nine years after his death. He is missed.

