SOUTHERN CAROLINA NEWS

The South Carolina Beekeepers will hold their one-day annual spring meeting at the Farm Bureau Building on Knox Abbott Drive, Columbia, on 4 March 2006. The February newsletter will give further details of the meeting. The summer meeting is scheduled to be held at Clemson University on 20-22 July 2006. Mark your calendars now for these two important meetings.

Three honorary awards were presented at our South Carolina Beekeepers 2005 summer meeting in July. Frank Blanchard of Chapin was selected to receive the “2005 South Carolina Beekeeper of the Year Award.” Frank has been an avid beekeeper in South Carolina for the past 30 years. He is known for his passion of sharing his knowledge of honey bees and beekeeping to beginning beekeepers and other citizens of our state. For the past 6 years, Frank has organized and helped teach a beekeeping short course to groups and individuals interested in becoming beekeepers. He has been the driving force supporting the Midstate Beekeepers training as well as assisting other nearby beekeeper associations. One of his 2005 training projects comprised a 4-H Club which he not only arranged and conducted the training, but he also helped these young people obtain equipment and supplies to begin their new endeavor. Frank makes honey bee presentations to many different groups on a regular basis. His talks range from simple presentations given to kindergarten groups to more involved presentations to garden clubs and senior citizens groups. Frank is also active in manning the South Carolina Beekeepers booth at the State Fair in Columbia. He recognizes this as one of the best ways to meet people who are interested in becoming beekeepers, but more importantly, as a very good way of promoting the benefits of the honey bee to the public. Frank has served as president of the Midstate Beekeepers and is one of only two beekeepers in the state to serve two terms as president of the South Carolina Beekeepers. He continues to be very active in both organizations and plays an important role in planning and hosting meetings. Frank is also on the local Clemson University Extension Service Office call list to assist people who have problems with honey bees in or near their homes or offices. He is always willing to respond, with beekeeping equipment in hand, to honey bee emergency calls. According to the letter of recommendation, the author states, “I believe that there are few, if any, better ambassadors of beekeeping in South Carolina than Frank Blanchard. I feel that he is very deserving of being named the 2005 South Carolina Beekeeper of the Year.”

James M. Corn, a member of the “Lowcountry Beekeepers,” was presented the “South Carolina Junior Beekeeper of the Year Award” which is an award given annually to recognize a deserving young beekeeper who is 18 years of age or less. James is a seven year old boy who fell in love with honey bees at the young age of two. He joined the Low Country Beekeepers in 2004 and has not missed but one meeting in 2005. Not only is James eager to learn everything he can during the meeting, but he also goes to the library for more information and has included his knowledge of honey bees in his schoolwork. At a young age, James has shown a true desire to become a great beekeeper. Keep up the good work James and we look forward to seeing you grow as a beekeeper and a fine young man.

Gilbert Miller, Clemson University Distinguished County Agent in Bamberg County, was selected to receive the “Extension Agent of the Year Award.” This is the third time Gilbert has been selected to receive this award. Gilbert has worked many years with beekeepers in Bamberg County and other surrounding counties. The Edisto Beekeepers of Bamberg County was founded in August 1997 and Gilbert was very instrumental in helping organize this group of beekeepers. As a result of Gilbert’s help, the Edisto Beekeepers is a thriving organization and continues to grow. Gilbert is presently involved in conducting research on seedless watermelon variety trials and drip irrigation at the Clemson University Research and Education Center in Blackville, where he hosts field demonstrations and other projects.
Gilbert is a long time beekeeper who has a good knowledge of bee management and the value of honey bees. According to the letter of recommendation, “Gilbert is an extension agent who brings much credit to Bamberg County and the Clemson University Cooperative Extension Service.” Our hats are off to Gilbert and we appreciate his continued support of the South Carolina beekeeping industry.

EAS TO MEET AT YOUNG HARRIS COLLEGE

The Eastern Apicultural Society will host their 51st annual short course and conference at Young Harris College, Georgia on July 31st - August 4th, 2006. The college, founded in 1886, is a small, private, liberal arts college located in the picturesque, Appalachian mountains of Northern Georgia near Hiawassee. South Carolina beekeepers should take advantage of this regional conference for a great meeting. You will hear more about this meeting in the next newsletter or you may go to <www.easternapiculture.com>.

ABF PLANS SPECIAL PROGRAM FOR SMALLER BEEKEEPERS IN LOUISVILLE

Two days of extra programming tailored to the smaller beekeeper are planned for the annual convention of American Beekeeping Federation, which will be held January 11-14, 2006, at the Hyatt Regency in Louisville, KY. On Friday and Saturday, a short course will be offered for hobbyist and sideliner beekeepers, concurrent with the regular ABF program.

“While most of the regular ABF program is of interest to all beekeepers, our non-commercial beekeepers have unique needs and opportunities,” notes Danny Weaver, ABF Vice President and program chairman. “Having the separate program for the non-commercial beekeepers, we are able to arrange topics and presentations that will benefit them in particular.”

Over the course of the two days, experienced instructors will take the beekeepers through the full cycle of their year, from getting started in the spring, through honey production, harvest and sale, to wintering and breaking out the following spring. The sessions will have interactive format to allow the instructors to cover the beekeepers special interests.

The cost for the two days, including all handouts, coffee breaks, and admission to the ABF Trade Show and any portion of the regular program they wish to attend on Friday and Saturday is $95.00 with advance registration. Persons who register for the full four-day convention are welcome to attend any part of the short course on Friday and Saturday without additional charge.

“Louisville is one day’s drive or less for many U.S. beekeepers, especially those with smaller bee operations,” Mr. Weaver noted. “Therefore, we felt we should address the needs of sidewiners and hobbyists at this convention.”

The general convention begins on Wednesday morning and continues through Saturday evening. On Wednesday afternoon, the ABF Special Interest Sessions will allow Commercial Beekeepers, Package Bee and Queen Breeders, Honey Producer-Packers, and Hobbyist and Sideliner Beekeepers opportunities to focus on their segments of the industry.

The ABF Ladies Auxiliary has their annual breakfast meeting on Thursday. On Thursday evening, a reception will feature Kentucky author Tammy Horn, and she will speak about her book “Bees in America.” Friday evening, the beekeepers will have an opportunity unique to Louisville, when they tour the Frazier Historical Arms Museum, where a bourbon tasting will be available for those so-inclined. For more on the Museum, see www.FrazierArmsMuseum.org.

The ABF Educational Workshops will be offered on Saturday morning, this year incorporating the smaller beekeepers short course. The annual ABF Business meeting will occupy Saturday afternoon, followed by the annual banquet with awards and the crowning of the 2006 American Honey Queen.

To get on the mailing list for convention information, contact the ABF Office, PO Box 1337, Jesup, GA 31598, ph. 912-427-4233, fax 912-427-8447, e-mail: info@ABFnet.org, or visit www.ABFnet.org. Information is also available for opportunities to promote your business product or services at the convention.


NATIONAL HONEY CHECKOFF PROGRAM RULED CONSTITUTIONAL

HONEY PROMOTION PROGRAMS TO CONTINUE

The national honey checkoff program was recently ruled as constitutional by U.S. Department of Agriculture Administrative Law Judge Jill S. Clifton, whose decision supported the National Honey Board and denied petitioners’ claims.
“This ruling is great news for honey producers and the honey industry,” said National Honey Board Chairman Lee Heine, a Wisconsin honey producer. “We need to continue conducting the many successful and innovative honey market development and research programs funded through checkoff dollars.”

The honey checkoff program was launched in 1987 based on the Honey Research, Promotion and Consumer Information Act and Order to help maintain and increase demand for honey through research, marketing and promotion programs. The checkoff program assesses one cent per pound on domestic and foreign honey. In several referendums conducted since 1987, U.S. honey producers and importers have voted to continue the program.

In 2001, eight honey producers filed a petition, which objected to paying the honey checkoff assessments and stated that the assessments violated their First Amendment freedom of speech rights.

In May of this year, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the national beef checkoff program was constitutional, overturning lower court decisions. In addition, the national watermelon checkoff program was recently ruled as constitutional.

The National Honey Board, through its staff in Longmont, Colorado, conducts research, advertising and promotion programs to help maintain and expand domestic and foreign markets for honey. The Board’s work, funded by an assessment of one cent per pound on domestic and imported honey, is designed to expand the awareness and use of honey by consumers, the foodservice industry and food manufacturers.


AHB in Florida?
By Malcolm T. Sanford

There continues to be more news about the “Africanized,” called by some “African,” honey bee now better termed by the more neutral, less sensational moniker, “AHB.” A recent press release revealed that this infamous insect has now been found in the town of Brightstar. Ed Levi, Arkansas Plant Board Inspector reported that the unwanted visitors probably came from Texas. He also said that in August 2004, a work crew in the southwest Oklahoma community of Tipton was attacked by a swarm of AHB, but there was no reason to panic.

“Honey bees in general are very defensive,” he is quoted as saying. “Some are more defensive than others.” “If somebody sees a colony of bees, they need to get away from it,” he added. “If they get stung, they need to run to a place of safety.” But the best bet is simply avoidance. “You just need to respect the space of bees,” Levi said. One might find the above advice somewhat confusing. No doubt this is the result of the kind of reporting by those who know little about honey bee behavior quoting experts in the field. It’s the sort of thing we’ve all come to expect when it comes to the 20th century’s “pop insect.” Another press release by Texas A & M University reports that the state is abandoning its AHB quarantine program, that has been in place ever since the AHB crossed the border from Mexico in 1990.¹

Now comes a release from the University of Florida’s Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS) quoting Dr. H. Glenn Hall in the Department of Entomology and Nematology as saying the AHB may eventually spread throughout the state and move into other areas of the southeastern United States.² “The bees, which tend to sting in large numbers, have been found and stopped at various Florida ports over the past decade, but now it looks like they’re here to stay, according to Dr. Hall, who said Florida’s warm climate is ideal for the bees, which could be bad news for the state’s $16 million honey bee industry.”

“If African honey bees become established in large numbers over the next few years, they will affect the beekeeping industry and the pollination of many crops,” Hall said. “Public safety, recreation and tourism may also be affected, leading to liability problems.”

“Hall, a bee geneticist who developed DNA markers to identify African honey bees, said that to the untrained eye they look the same as resident European honeybees. African bees may swarm as many as 16 times a year while European bees swarm about three times a year,” he said.

“The African bees invaded five southwestern states in the 1990s and have periodically turned up at Florida’s deep-sea ports since 1987,” Hall said. “Until recently, swarms entering through ports such as Jacksonville, Miami and Tampa have been successfully captured in bait hives maintained by the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.”

“However, new finds in the Tampa area suggest that African bees are spreading and becoming established in the state, and they are being found farther inland from the ports,” Hall said. “We did not believe that enough bees could arrive on ships to form an established population, but they did so in Puerto Rico, and now appear to be doing the same in Florida.”
In response to the press release, Jerry Hayes, Florida’s Chief Apiarist, has also provided a list of talking points with the help of Dr. John Capinera, Chairman of IFAS Department of Entomology and Nematology, University of Florida.

“For the last decade, Florida has been surveying for the insect and established the country’s first AHB detection program that is jointly operated by the Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services (FDACS), Division of Plant Industries (DPI) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). The program involves placing bait hives in ports, and educating ships’ crews and dockworkers to identify and report suspicious swarms. Today, nearly 500 bait hives are in place throughout the state, primarily in port areas, along Interstate-10 and on the Florida/Alabama border. The bait hives are checked on a three-week cycle based on the reproduction habits of the AHB.

“When a suspicious swarm is found in one of our traps, or an apiary inspector identifies more defensive bees in a managed colony, samples are taken. Of the 653 samples collected since 2002 (when the first AHBs were detected in a Tampa Bay area), 59 have turned out to be positive for AHB genetics. In addition to coming in on cargo ships, they are being detected in the honey bee colonies that return to Florida after being shipped around the country at different times of the year for pollination purposes, particularly from almond orchards in California where the AHB is already established.

“Testing for AHBs in managed colonies is challenging and resource intensive. Florida alone has 200,000 managed colonies. FDACS/DPI has resources to analyze samples of approximately 10% of these colonies annually. If the results of these samples show AHB genetics, current control actions include eradication or other remediation methods such as re-queening – a process which attempts to replace AHB queens with European honey bee queens.”

A meeting of Florida’s Honey Bee Technical Council (June 29, 2005) reviewed the evidence of AHB in Florida. It shows an increasing number of finds last year and the first half of 2005 ranging from Tampa across the state and to the south. Most interesting was the fact that all have been confined to feral colonies, most often found in traps monitored by DPI, and none in beekeeper-managed colonies.

How long this will remain the case is uncertain. The question all this brings into focus is when authorities should declare to the general public that the state has a population of AHB. Clearly, many people including beekeepers are caught here “between a rock and a hard place.” If declared too soon, then authorities run the risk of being called sensationalistic by beekeepers and others; if too late (i.e., after some sensationalized stinging incident), they are likely to be blamed for providing too little advanced warning. Given the responses of all other states with AHB populations, there is little reason to believe DPI will have the resources or will to mount any kind of eradication and/or control program. There was discussion about possibly mounting a certification program for beekeepers to provide them with a fallback position (damage control) should any become involved in law suits due to stinging incidents.

Meanwhile it seems prudent to no longer deny to the press and others that AHB is in Florida. Beekeepers and others must face up to this fact. That does not mean, however, that they should contribute to the over dramatization of the situation, which is in all too many cases the unfortunate history of reporting on this insect.

This present situation appears to make my comments in the November issue of The Florida Beekeeper concerning these AHB finds more relevant and subject to change. “In the face of the current situation, it is difficult to determine where Florida beekeepers might go from here. At the present time, these finds must be considered incidental. They do not indicate a population of AHB has been established in the sunshine state [Author’s note: The current finds may be altering this perception]. It will take some time to ascertain whether this is so. In the meantime, the industry will have to be prepared to answer the myriad questions these and other subsequent finds may generate. As a consequence, I am republishing here an outline of remarks made by Mr. Michael O’Hara, communications and education division director, Florida Fruit and Vegetable Association, on crisis communications as reported in the August 1992 APIS Newsletter:"

The following should always be kept in mind when talking to reporters:

1. Individual Rights – No one from the press has the right to violate your individual rights.
2. Honesty – Never mislead or lie to a reporter. If the situation is under litigation, say this is so; if there is a question about profits, dollars or proprietary information, you can defer/refuse answering based on not informing competitors in the market-place.
3. Buzz Words – Never repeat an expression or inflammatory statement made by a reporter. As an example, if you are asked, “to what do you attribute this catastrophe?” do not repeat the word “catastrophe.” It then becomes attributable to you and you alone; you will “own” it.
4. Hostility – Never get angry; keep cool and remember the reporter always has the last word.
That is best to have a communications plan in place and persons trained in this area. Defer all questions to one or two designated (and trained) persons to avoid giving conflicting information. An offensively oriented public relations/communications plan is the best defense against sensationalistic reporting based on negativity. Appointing and training of designated persons to speak for the group would be good activities for beekeeping associations both now and in the future.

Fortunately, there are a good many resources that beekeepers can point to as training references and can be used for reporters that are bound to call about this subject should any stinging incident arise. My good friend Tom Fasulo, the point man for information on all manner of pests in the IFAS Department of Entomology and Nematology, University of Florida, has been quick to add several publications to his Pest Alert site, including both a fact sheet published in 1995 and a pointer to my previous APIS newsletter web site at the University, which details a history of this insect during my tenure as Florida’s extension apiculturist.

Florida residents and officials need not feel alone in being surprised by AHB. Dr. Eric Mussen in his From the UC Apiaries (May/June 1998) stated the following concerning readiness of officials in California, where the bee had been established for a number of years.

“The truth of the matter is that we have fallen behind. When AHBs arrived in southern California, they caught the attention of the general public and public officials. Local and regional task forces were assembled and training sessions were held for decision-makers and emergency responders. Funds were made available for production and distribution of printed information, slide sets, videotapes and a school curriculum targeting AHBs. We did a lot of information dissemination. So, how did we get behind?

“Over the years, AHBs did not spread as fast as we anticipated. They just were discovered in the southernmost tip of Nevada and a portion of San Bernardino County, the fourth ‘colonized’ county in California. We have had only seven stinging incidents in California attributed to AHBs since they arrived nearly four years ago, but in the most recent incident a field worker was stung over 300 times. We were concerned that the attending physician may not have been aware of the problems with ‘organ failure’ (kidney failure) that can occur up to a week after such a sting patient is released from the hospital. (Three different Steering Committee agencies conveyed the message to the doctor, independently).

“The greatest problem is personnel turnover. A substantial portion of the previously trained health and emergency provides have ‘moved up’ or ‘moved out.’ New replacements are ignorant of the problems encountered working around defensive colonies of honey bees.”

Malcolm Sanford is a former Extension Specialist in apiculture at the University of Florida.

References:


NATURAL WAX MOTH CONTROL PRODUCT PRODUCTION RESUMES

Beekeepers across the globe can now have access to an organic and natural control product for one of their biggest out-of-season pests: wax moth. Vita (Europe) Ltd has just launched B401 (also known as Certan), a biological control that is up to 100%
effective against wax moth, but is harmless to bees, humans and the environment.

Wax moths can cause huge problems for beekeepers by decimating honeycombs that have been put into seasonal storage. B401, a concentrated solution of the microorganism *Bacillus thuringiensis* subsp aizawai, kills the wax moth larvae and is easily applied as a preventative measure by spraying a diluted amount directly onto combs just before they are put into storage. B401 will be available globally through Vita’s global distributor network.

B401 has many advantages over other treatments such as PDCB (paradichlorobenzene) crystals which are toxic to humans and honey bees and leave residues in wax and honey.

“Wax moth can be an extremely destructive pest and can destroy empty combs in a very short space of time,” explained Dr. Max Watkins, technical director of Vita. “In the USA it is estimated that wax moth damage costs the industry more than $5 million annually. Wax moth is worldwide pest and causes most damage in areas where winters are mild.”

Watkins continued: “We are already receiving many enquiries from Greece and other countries where several major brands of honey had to be recalled because they contained unacceptably high levels of paradichlorobenzene. As a completely natural product that leaves no residues, B401 enables beekeepers to keep their produce pure.”

Unlike their larval stages, adult wax moth cause no physical damage to combs but both adults and larvae can transfer pathogenic bacteria to the wax in their faeces. It is important to target the larvae as the most destructive and harmful stage of this pest. B401 acts by producing a natural toxin specific for the moth larvae. The larvae ingest the spores of B401 which then germinate in the gut and release the toxin which destroys the gut lining, killing the larvae. The reproductive cycle of the wax moth is therefore stopped.

ABOUT VITA (EUROPE) LTD

Vita (Europe) Ltd is a mite control and honey bee health specialist based in the UK and operating across the globe. Vita researches, develops, manufactures and markets acaricide products and is the world’s dominant supplier of honey bee health products to the honey and pollination industries.

In the development of new and ecologically-sensitive approaches to mite pest control, Vita collaborates with universities including Cardiff, Milan, Udine and institutes including the Tierhygienisches Institut (Institute of Animal Health) in Freiburg, Germany and the UK Central Science Laboratory. Vita’s innovative research and development work has received support from the UK Government.

Vita’s products are available through a network of 40 distributors in 47 countries and have been registered by more than 60 veterinary authorities. Its product range includes anti-varroa acaricides (Apistan® and Apiguard®), chalkbrood and wax moth controls, and foulbrood diagnostic kits. All products are designed as elements of Integrated Pest Management programs to inhibit the build-up of resistance and wherever possible use natural compounds and biological control agents that are benign to all but the target pests.

As a result of its primary research of natural control agents, Vita is currently engaged in new projects exploring mite control in the agricultural, veterinary, and horticultural industries, as well as public health and human allergen control.

Vita has purchased the B401 wax moth control product as part if its acquisition of Swarm SAS, a French company. Swarm will now be known as Vita-Swarm SAS.

### WAX MOTHS

Adult female wax moths (greater and lesser wax moths: *Galleria mellonella* and *Acrhia grisella*) fly at night and lay eggs on honeycomb and in tiny crevices in hives. After a few days the larvae hatch, crawl onto the comb, and begin to feed, damaging or destroying combs by boring through the cells as they consume cocoons, cast skins, and pollen. As they chew through the wax, they spin silken galleries for protection, reducing combs to a mass of debris and dust. They also pollute the combs with faeces, which may contain pathogenic bacteria and a mass of webbing, rendering what is left of the wax comb, useless.

WEB: www.vita-european.com


EDITOR’S NOTE: As of October 2005, Certan is not available for use in South Carolina.
RECIPIES

SUBSTITUTING HONEY

Did you know that sugar can be replaced by honey in most of your favorite recipes making them healthier, moister and better for you? Here's how …

- Substitute honey for up to one-half of the sugar. With experimentation, honey can be substituted for all the sugar in some recipes.
- Reduce the amount of liquid in the recipe by 1/4 for each cup of honey used in baked goods.
- Reduce oven temperature by 25˚F. This will prevent over-browning of baked goods.
- In baked goods, add 1/2 teaspoon of baking soda for each cup of honey used.

TIPS AND HINTS ON USING HONEY

- One 12-ounce jar of honey equals one standard measuring cup.
- Beeswax from the honeycomb rubbed on baking utensils will keep baked goods from sticking.
- Honey will naturally crystallize. If honey crystallizes, remove cap and place container in warm water until crystals dissolve.
- Honey contains vitamins, minerals and antioxidants.
- Honey is fat-free, cholesterol-free and has no sodium (salt).

SOURCE: Tara Beekeepers Association Newsletter, Sept. 05

Honey Spiced Cider

5 cups apple cider  
⅓ cup honey  
24 whole cloves  
2 small navel oranges, quartered  
7 (4-inch) cinnamon sticks  
1 (4-inch) strip lemon zest  
¼ tsp grated nutmeg

Combine cider and honey in a medium saucepan over medium heat. Stir until the honey dissolves. Push 3 cloves into the rind of each orange quarter. Add to the cider along with the cinnamon sticks, lemon zest, and nutmeg. Bring mixture to a simmer. Reduce heat to low, cover, and simmer for 20 minutes. Remove the fruit and spices with a slotted spoon and discard. Serve hot. Makes 8 servings (about 6 ounces each).

SOURCE: National Honey Board

Respectfully submitted,

William Michael Hood
Extension Apiculturist

Honey Mustard  
(like what's served at Fuddrucker's)

Serves: 16  
Prep Time: 5 minutes

1 1/3 cups mayonnaise  
3 Tbsp prepared mustard  
3 Tbsp honey  
3 Tbsp vegetable oil  
1 Tbsp apple cider vinegar  
1 dash cayenne pepper  
1 dash onion powder

Combine all in a bowl and store in refrigerator.


2006 Calendar

January 11-14, 2006  
ABF 63rd Annual Convention & Trade Show  
Louisville, KY

March 4, 2006  
SC Beekeepers Annual Spring Meeting  
Columbia, SC

July 20-22, 2006  
SC Beekeepers Annual Summer Meeting  
Clemson University, Clemson, SC

July 31-August 4, 2006  
Eastern Apicultural Society Annual Short Course & Conferences  
Young Harris College, Hiawassee, GA
Please mail your change of address to: News for SC Beekeepers, Tammy P. Morton, 116 Long Hall, Clemson University, Clemson, SC 29634-0315.

Name:___________________________________________________________________________________________

Address:_______________________________________________________________________________________

City:__________________________________ State:_________ Zip Code:________________________

County:______________________________ Phone number: (____)______________________________

E-mail address:______________________________________________________________________________