



WHAT'S THE BUZZ?

Current events from the Ashtabula County Beekeepers Association and bee news in general

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Neonics and the Ohio Sensitive Crop Registry

Thomas deHaas, Agriculture Natural Resource Educator for the OSU Extension in Lake County, gave an informative presentation about neonicotinoids and the Ohio Sensitive Crop Registry. Mr. deHaas also explained the way that pesticides work inside the plant, the length of time the pesticide will remain active within the plant, and the proper pesticide application methods for neonicotinoids.

The Ohio Sensitive Crop Registry is an online registry of locations that contain sensitive crops, including apiaries. Pesticide applicators are supposed to notify registered apiaries at least 24 hours in advance if they will be spraying within half a mile of the apiary.

The Ohio Sensitive Crop Registry can be found at this web address: <http://www.agri.ohio.gov/scr/Default.aspx>

Presented by Thomas deHaas



Photo courtesy <http://blog-crop-news.extension.umn.edu/2015/06/when-is-it-too-windy-to-spray.html>

ACBA Events at a glance

Next ACBA meeting:

The ACBA Holiday Party!

December 9th

12pm - 2pm

At the OSU extension office

All are welcome, you do not need to be a member to attend!

Bring a dish to share & bring some honey/ honey recipes to share!



Honey taste-test!

Bring your honey and honey-themed baked goods to the Christmas party in December for other members to taste! It will be fun and interesting to sample the various honeys from apiaries across the county, as well as the baked treats that can be made with honey!





TIPS FOR NEWBEES: Winterizing your hives

Winter can be the most difficult time of year for both the hive and the beekeeper. Now is the time to ensure that the hive is strong, that there are plenty of resources (food) to last them until Spring, that mite and other pest levels are low, and that there is a good balance between adequate ventilation and proper protection from wind and moisture.

While every beekeeper has a preferred method of preparing their bees for winter, it is important that you have a plan in place and an idea of your preparation timeline. There are four major things, in my estimation, a hive needs to survive the winter and be strong and healthy in the Spring: 1. good health 2. food 3. protection from wind 4. ventilation.

1. Health - Mite counts skyrocket in late Autumn, and a heavy mite load can take a healthy hive to the brink of collapse in just a few days. Some mite treatments like MiteAway strips require warm temperatures to be effective. Others, like Oxalic Acid vapor, are effective at any temperature. At this point, you should be completed or nearly completed with mite treatments, and mite levels should be very low. Other pests and diseases like small hive beetles should also be low. If you need to place beetle traps, now is the time. Opportunities to open the hive for inspections or treatments will become fewer as the weather deteriorates into winter.
2. Food - How much honey is enough to get through winter? This is a question with as many answers as stars in the sky. Some people say 100 pounds of honey are needed, others say 40 pounds is enough. The exact answer is specific to the colony and impossible to determine. 100 pounds of honey is around 12 full deep frames, and there are many ways to divide them between two deep boxes. Hive-top feeders and community feeders filled with 2:1 sugar water can help increase your hive's resources of food, but keep in mind that syrup needs to be warm for the bees to evaporate the water out of it. If the syrup itself is colder than about 50° F, it can't dry into honey. At colder temperatures, dry food should be used, such as candy boards or 'mountain-top feeding' with dry sugar poured on the top of the inner cover.
3. Protection from wind - Bees need ventilation for the hive to stay dry, but they also need to be protected from direct wind. Your hives will need a windbreak. People usually locate their hives in an area with some kind of windbreak on the hive's most vulnerable side, such as in front of a line of trees or a fence or building. Some people put up temporary fencing on one side of the hive as a windbreak, and some people put bales of straw against the windiest side of the hive. Some people wrap their hives in protective layers of tar paper or commercially-produced 'Bee Cozy's, which can also serve as a type of windbreak and provide some insulation from the cold, although the bees will make their own heat as long as ventilation and food sources are both in place. If you have a screened bottom board, close the screen so wind can't get up underneath.
4. Ventilation - Ventilation is the 'other side of the coin' from insulation. Even in winter, bees need air to escape. When bees generate heat, they also produce moisture that then cools, condenses, and can fall as cold drips onto the bees, chilling them and killing them. That warm, moist air needs a place to escape so the bees stay dry and cozy. The hive entrance should be reduced but open, and there should also be at least one upper hole where moisture can escape and that bees can use as another entrance. Moisture buildup is one of the main winter killers of bees, and ventilation is the solution.

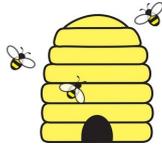
I've had varying degrees of success in overwintering hives, so I'm certainly no authority on the subject. I don't like pollen patties in the hive until Spring, since pollen patties make a lovely all-you-can-eat buffet for small hive beetles. Quilt boards are a shallow box with a screened bottom that is filled or partially filled with wood chips that, in theory, absorb moisture and insulate the hive. I've used them with varying degrees of success. A candy board is also a shallow board with a screened bottom, but filled with blocks of sugar 'candy,' fondant, or dry sugar. The theory here is that the bees can use it as a food source and the sugar will absorb moisture.

[How to make a candy board](#)

[Overwintering bees 1](#)

[Overwintering bees 2](#)

[Overwintering bees 3](#)



Ashtabula County Beekeeper's

Association news and events

Advanced Beekeeping Class

Presented by Peggy Garnes

Peggy Garnes, OSBA Western Reserve Representative/Ohio EAS Director, lead a very interesting and informative Advanced Beekeeping Class that was well attended by both ACBA members and nonmembers. The topic of the morning session was Winter Hive Management and the topic of the afternoon session was Spring Hive Management. Below are some highlights of the class.



Winter Hive Management

Bees begin preparing for winter at the summer solstice when the days begin to shorten. Beekeepers should do the same

Successful overwintering of a hive requires 1. enough food 2. disease free 3. enough bees 4. weather protection

1. **Enough Food** - The hive should weigh about 150 lbs going into winter. If it doesn't, you'll need to feed. For a two-deep setup, try to get frames 1&2, 9&10 full of honey in the bottom box and frames 1,2,3 & 8,9,10 full of honey in the top box, with one full super of honey on top
2. **Disease Free** - Start monitoring for varroa mites in March and monthly thereafter. Be proactive! It is not enough to look for varroa or just use a sticky board; do an alcohol wash for an accurate mite count or a sugar shake for a good approximation. Treatment can include oxalic acid vapor or drizzle, MiteAway Quick Strips, and chemical-free methods like splitting hives and using drone comb.
3. **Enough Bees** - make the hive the right size for the bees. Fewer bees can overwinter just fine if they are in a smaller box like a nuc or a single deep. A two-deep setup will need more bees.
4. **Weather Protection** - cold is OK, but moisture and wind are not. Set up windbreaks around the hive, such as tar paper, bee cozies, fencing, etc. but make sure there is adequate ventilation. Tilt the hive forward slightly so that moisture will run down the front of the hive rather than dripping onto the bees.

Cold does not kill bees; moisture and wind kills bees. Wet bees = dead bees!

Winter bees are different from summer bees. They are fatter and fuzzier.

Clean winter dead-outs when you discover them. Open the hive and vent it out. Let it get cold to kill varroa and mall hive beetles.

Spring Hive Management

Decide your goal for the season: Honey? Wax? More Bees?

If your goal is honey, put two honey supers on the hive as soon as you see dandelion buds (not blossoms). If your goal is more bees, put on two deeps instead of supers.

Regardless of the time of the year or the size of the colony, the colony should always maintain a brood pattern with a 4-2-1 ratio: 4 parts capped brood, 2 parts larvae, and 1 part eggs. If there is any other pattern, there is a problem and you should find out what the problem is.

Never, never feed your bees if you have honey supers on.

Ms. Garnes went into much greater detail and gave much more information than is shared here; too much to fit into this newsletter!

