



## *Catch The Buzz*



*Memphis Area Beekeepers Association* [www.memphisbeekeepers.com](http://www.memphisbeekeepers.com)

P.O. Box 38028, Germantown, TN 38138

Meeting Location: 7777 Walnut Grove Rd # C, Memphis, TN 38120

**MEETING DATE & TIME: April 13, 2020** – MABA April 2020 Meeting – **Cancelled** – Y'all, the Agricenter has cancelled this meeting due to the SARS-CoV-2 virus, AKA the COVID-19-causing coronavirus. We will be in contact with our current members in the days ahead. While we weather the days ahead, stay socially connected yet physically distanced, so that we can all come back together when the storm has passed. Mentors are continuing to contact their mentees and will help as they are able to. The first group of Nucs arrived from Mr. Coy, and the others will be contacted as previously agreed upon by the producers. Bee well and bee safe!

**Please check the Swarm List**, updated before sending this newsletter. Listed swarm list members must be current MABA members. **Please renew ASAP for your yearly membership and if you want to be included on the swarm list.**

**While cancelled for now, Stay tuned for MABA field days**, we will post these on this website, as well as on Facebook and Twitter!

### **APRIL AND THE BEEKEEPER**

- The objective is for all colonies to be queen-right, healthy, and well-nourished so they can build up to maximum populations for the major nectar flow. This all needs to be done while keeping a fine balance between the growing population and the amount of space available so that the bees do not have the chance to think about swarming.
  - On a calm, warm day go through your hives and do a thorough inspection.
  - Remove mouse guards and replace poor quality frames or brood frames with new comb or foundation.
  - Move brood down (if you can), honey frames to the side, and empty comb over-head. Note: Both boxes will probably be filling up with brood by mid-April. In many cases, the queen may start heading down on her own to find more space to lay.
  - Clean up bottom boards.
- Is it time to make splits? Each split will require a new queen. Before your queen emerges, mature drones are needed. Drones are mature 8-10 days after they emerge and hang out on the edge of the brood nest. Queens prefer sunny, 75-degree days, with winds less than 10mph. Use the splits to replace winter losses or increase your hive numbers. If increasing your hive numbers, pick out your next location. Splits are a great way to create increase or replacement nucs. It also helps facilitate a robust honey crop and is a form of varroa control as it disrupts the brood.
- Consider adding disease free dead-out brood boxes to booming two-story hives in anticipation of making splits with them when your new queens arrive. It will relieve congestion and give these overly populous hives something to use and will make an excellent split later.



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- If you already have queen cells, what kind are they: swarm, emergency, or supersedure? Note: This can also indicate the timing is right to start making queens. What will you do with the queen cells?
  - Move them to make nucs or splits.
  - Try to cut them all out and keep rechecking.
  - Make a nuc with the queen mother.
  - Let the bees bee.
  
- Place swarm traps around mid to late April.
- If you want to give your hives a boost, feed with equal parts sugar and water.
- DISCONTINUE simulative sugar feeding before supering.
- The 'Rule of Thumb' for putting supers on hives is when the dandelions bloom.
- Wax moth activity dramatically picks up when the temperature rises, keep an eye on your stored supers – especially ones that contained pollen or brood.
- Leftover honey frames should be adding in to live colonies, or frozen before small hive beetle (SHB) moves in and ruins them.

Adapted from: <http://www.indianahoney.org/2016/03/Beekeeping-Tips-for-April.cfm>

3/27/2020 National Honey Board Report: <https://usda.library.cornell.edu/concern/publications/>

**TENNESSEE:** The unstable weather that we have had this spring has set the bees back about 3 weeks from normal spring build up. We keep having a few warm days with rain and then the temperature drops and all of the blooms freeze before the bees can collect nectar. Red Maple, elm and hazelnuts have been trying to bloom for a couple of months but the keep getting frozen back. Forsythia, dandelion, henbit and other wildflowers have been trying to bloom. Colonies that have enough winter stores or are being fed are doing well.

**ARKANSAS:** No report issued.

**MISSISSIPPI:** As with the other Southern areas, rain was the main factor in the bees not being able to get out of the hives and work more. Most have only been able to work one to two hours a day before the weather comes and stops them. Lots of flooding in many areas and some beekeepers have not been able to check in on their hives as they would like. There is blooming going on in the state but the bees have not been able to fully take advantage of it, beekeepers are hoping for better weather.



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### **BEEKEEPING READING LIST**

**How Maine Beekeepers are Helping to Improve Bee Production and Health Across the Nation**, By: Julia Bayly, Bangor Daily News <https://www.beekeeping.com/catch-the-buzz-sentinel-apiary-programmaine-beekeepers/>

*Among the first flowers to bloom in the spring, dandelions are important food sources for Maine's pollinators, including honey bees. (BDN)*

STATEWIDE (BDN) — Few things can decimate an active honey bee hive like an infestation of Varroa mites or an outbreak of the Nosema infection. Both affect the bees' eggs, larvae and pupae — collectively known as the brood — and hinder the healthy development of adult honeybees.

If left unchecked, both Varroa mites, which are an external parasite, and the fungal nosema can overwhelm the hive's population causing disease, stunted growth of the maturing bees and death.

Early detection is the best defense against both. Through a national citizen science hive monitoring program, Maine beekeepers are helping to monitor Varroa mites and Nosema and contributing to a national database tracking the spread and impacts of the honeybee pests. The information is also being used to map strategies that work to control the mites and fungus. The data is mapped and available to be viewed online by the public.

The Sentinel Apiaries Program is a sort of early warning system for bee health, according to The Bee Informed Partnership, which began the program in 2016.

Participants monitor the health of their bees, the overall weight of individual hives and conduct month assessments of Varroa and Nosema on each hive. The goal is to collect enough data from sentinel apiaries around the country to establish trends that can alert beekeepers to increased disease, mortality or reductions in honey production.

Over time, the program will help in developing practices that help beekeepers improve the health of their bees.

In the meantime, beekeepers, such as Andrew Dewey of Jonesport, have noticed improvements in their apiaries after just one season of part of the program.

“Taking part [as a Sentinel Apiary] means you are closely inspecting your hives on a more regular and detailed basis than you may otherwise,” Dewey said. “And that helps you catch any issues early on and take preventive action or treat the problems.”

In Maine, the program is run by Maine Bee Wellness, an organization which works with backyard and hobby beekeepers.

“Taking part in the Sentinel Apiaries [program] is a great way to find out what is going on in your hives,” said Dewey, a master Maine beekeeper and educator with Maine Bee Wellness. “It's a way to collect a lot of great data and contribute to the national database.”



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Dewey has participated in the program for the past five years with his 14 hives in his Jonesport apiary. As a sentinel colony, for six months Dewey regularly weighs each hive, inspects and records the overall appearance and health of each hive and collects any Varroa or Nosema samples. These samples are then sent to the laboratory at Bee Informed for processing.

This data aids in the study of Varroa transmission among apiaries, charts any correlation and other information of the symptoms and mortality of diseases and is entered into a national database that tracks any effects the health of the sentinel colonies are having on the landscape.

“By empowering beekeepers with data on their colony health, beekeepers have been able to make data-driven management decisions,” according to the Bee Informed website. “Participation from beekeeper [citizen scientists] has helped us build one of the largest continuous colony level databases in the world.”

This year Maine Bee Wellness will sponsor five Maine apiaries participating in the Sentinel Apiary Project with a \$500 each for beekeeping expenses and membership fees to Bee Informed.

Acceptance is on a first come, first served basis, according to Dewey.

Last year there was one other Maine beekeeper in addition to Dewey participating in the program, from York County.

“I’d love to see more beekeepers be involved,” Dewey said. “I’d really like to see some from northern Maine and Aroostook County.”

To apply to become a Sentinel Apiary, beekeepers need to email [info@mebw](mailto:info@mebw) and indicate their desire to participate, prove they manage at least four honeybee colonies and that they are an experienced beekeeper.

Read or heard of good, science-based beekeeping articles? Please let us know, we will get them into the MABA newsletter.



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# MA BA

### UNIT HONEY PRICES BY MONTH

**Retail-Average Retail Price per Pound** across all reporting regions - Data from <https://www.honey.com/honey-industry/statistics/retail-honey-price> used with permission. Based upon average price across all reporting regions. Assumes various sizes sold at the same rate.

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
2020	\$8.03	\$7.88	\$7.95									
2019	\$7.28	\$7.54	\$7.86	\$7.66	\$7.66	\$7.72	\$7.68	\$7.62	\$7.89	\$7.71	\$7.85	\$8.08
2018	\$7.57	\$7.22	\$7.34	\$7.28	\$7.03	\$7.23	\$7.37	\$7.41	\$7.17	\$7.34	\$7.51	\$7.46

**Average Wholesale Case Price Per Pound** across All Reporting Regions. Data from <https://www.honey.com/honey-industry/statistics/wholesale-honey-price> used with permission. Based upon average price across all reporting regions. Assumes various sizes sold at the same rate.

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
2020	\$4.89	\$5.12	\$4.91									
2019	\$4.16	\$4.32	\$4.33	\$4.41	\$4.41	\$3.55	\$4.51	\$4.42	\$4.46	\$4.52	\$4.62	\$4.64
2018	\$5.30	\$5.18	\$5.22	\$5.31	\$5.21	\$5.31	\$5.12	\$5.42	\$5.24	\$5.26	\$5.42	\$5.44



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### UPCOMING EVENTS

**Plan now for National Honey Bee Day 2019, which is Saturday August 15, 2020**

**April 9-11, 2020 – CANCELLED** – Kent Williams will host the [2020 Kent Williams Bee School](#) in Wingo, KY – **CANCELLED**, in case there is any doubt.

**May 11, 2020** – MABA May 2020 Meeting – Speaker and subject TBD. This meeting is **CANCELLED**. unless the May newsletter indicates we can meet at the Agricenter like normal. Bee well and bee safe!

**June 8, 2020** – MABA June 2020 Meeting – Speaker and subject TBD. We are hopeful to see y'all there!

**July 6-8, 2020** – [Heartland Apicultural Society 2020](#) meeting – **CANCELLED**.

**July 13, 2020** – MABA July 2020 Meeting – Speaker and subject TBD. See y'all there!

**August 10, 2020** – MABA August 2020 Meeting – Speaker and subject TBD. See y'all there!

**September 14, 2020** – MABA September 2020 Meeting – Mike Studer, Tennessee State Apiarist, will present the state of beekeeping in TN and how to keep our bees healthy and thriving. You will want to attend this meeting!

**September 15-16, 2020** – TN Apiary Inspector Course with Mike Studer, Tennessee State Apiarist. **Please let Charles know if you are interested in this class!**

To learn more about beekeeping in Tennessee visit the **Tennessee Beekeepers Association** website at: <http://www.tnbeekeepers.org/>



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**HONEY-BASED RECIPES** - <https://www.honey.com/signup>

### 1. HONEY-LACQUERED BACON BURRITO: Makes 2 burritos

#### INGREDIENTS

##### For Honey Lime Salsa:

- 1 lb. - tomatillos
- 1/2 cup - onion, chopped
- 1/4 cup - cilantro
- 2 - jalapeno peppers
- 2 T - honey
- 1 T - fresh lime juice
- 1/2 tsp. - kosher salt

##### For Honey Bacon:

- 4 slices - thick cut bacon
- 2 T - honey

##### For Potato & Beet Mixture:

- 3 T - olive oil
- 1 large - sweet potato, peeled and diced
- 4 small - Yukon gold potatoes, diced
- 2 - beets, peeled and diced
- 1 - yellow onion, peeled and diced
- 4 cloves - garlic, chopped
- 1 tsp. - kosher salt

##### For Burritos:

- 4 - eggs, scrambled
- 2 - 10" flour tortillas
- 4 oz. - monterey jack cheese, shredded

Remove the husks from the tomatillos and rinse. Place in a saucepan and cover with water. Bring the tomatillos to a boil and simmer for 5 minutes

Remove with a slotted spoon to a blender and add the onion, cilantro, jalapeño peppers, honey, lime juice, and salt. Pulse the ingredients until they are finely chopped and chill for at least one hour.

Preheat oven to 400° F. Cook the bacon on a wire rack over a sheet pan for about 10 minutes. Turn it over and drizzle with 2 T honey. Continue to cook for another 8-10 minutes or until the bacon is crispy. Remove from the oven and chop into small bits once cooled.

Place the diced potatoes, beets, and onions on a sheet pan and toss with 3 T olive oil. Roast for about 10 minutes and then add the chopped garlic, tossing well and sprinkling with the kosher salt. Return the pan to the oven and roast for another 10-12 minutes or until the potatoes are crispy and the onions are beginning to brown. Re-move from the oven and keep warm.

Heat skillet to medium heat, and place the tortilla on the skillet adding 1/2 the cheese along the middle. Cook for 2-4 minutes until the cheese begins to melt and the tortilla is soft and pliable. Add 1/2 the potato mixture, 1/2 of the scrambled eggs, and some of the salsa. Fold in the short ends of the tortilla and roll up the ingredients, tight-ening as you go to close up the burrito. Serve with additional salsa.