



Catch The Buzz

Memphis Area Beekeepers Association <http://memphisbeekeepers.com/>

P.O. Box 38028, Germantown, TN 38183

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

MA
BA

MEETING DATE & TIME: December 14, 2020 – MABA December 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.

DECEMBER AND THE BEES

- The bees are often in a tight cluster at night to stay warm – they will be flying as soon as it is 50.
- This is a great time to move your bees, especially during early mornings when it is freezing. Tape up the entrance and no bee can come out, not that they will at that Temp.
- Though we are in an area where bee colonies are seldom broodless, early cold temperatures may cause the queen to slow her laying. Take this opportunity to treat for varroa with whatever method you prefer – oxalic, formic, or the other commercially available products (Apiguard, Apistan, Apivar, Hopguard, or Mite Away). Just be certain to follow the recommended treatment schedule.
- Feed your bees if they are light – 2:1 syrup is best, and avoid 1:1 syrup. If colder, consider granulated sugar.
- Monitor your hives – just make sure they are heavy enough – 60# of honey is needed for the winter.
- Ground maintenance – this is the time to weed and treat the area around your hive.

DECEMBER AND THE BEEKEEPER

- Plan your apiary, and order your equipment. If you have it already, start assembling!
- Plan and conduct an inventory to make sure you have what you need for the Spring Season.
- Make sure you join and attend your local beekeeping club
- Register your hives with the state
- Read up on beekeeping
- Clean up your smoker and hive tool



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11/25/2020 National Honey Board Report: <https://www.ams.usda.gov/mnreports/fvmhoney.pdf>

TENNESSEE: The fall nectar flow in Tennessee is over for all but extreme southern TN. The fall flow was one of the best we have seen in many years. Although honey production across the state appears to have been better than average this year covid-19 restrictions have caused many beekeepers to have little to no income from honey sales. Most beekeepers across the state sell the bulk of their honey at farmers markets, festivals, fairs and other venues. Cancellation of these venues has been financially hard on the beekeepers. The number of people coming out to farmers markets has been extremely low resulting in little to no honey sales. Several beekeepers that rely on honey sales at these venues for a living have reported that many times they do not sell enough products to pay for their setup and travel to the venue. On a positive note, beekeepers across the state are reporting that their colonies are in better shape going into the winter than they have been for many years. Hopefully this will result in stronger colonies next spring with fewer overwintering losses.

ARKANSAS: During the month of October temperatures were mostly below normal across most of the state. Precipitation during October was slightly below normal across most of the state. The storms that hit Louisiana veered more East and bypassed a large part of the state. According to the U.S. Drought Monitor website, Arkansas had mostly normal soil moisture for October. Too few prices exist to establish a current market price for wholesale white honey.

MISSISSIPPI: The bees are just waiting it out before the cold months come along and getting out of the hives picking up food from what is left of the Goldenrod bloom. Beekeepers report that the bees are in good condition and the hives have all been treated. \$1.85-2.00 per pound per barrel of light amber honey.



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BEEKEEPING READING LIST

Crazy' Beekeepers Determined to Make it in Tough Times

<https://apnews.com/article/virus-outbreak-business-bees-california-56d5b8aaf39af986c7d7c0cfdee2dd35>

By: Martha Irvine And Carrie Antlfinger

IOLA, Wis. (AP) — They wrote it right into their business plan — an expectation that, each year, at least half the stock on which their livelihood depends would die.

Building a business around bees is not for the faint-hearted. “You have to be a little crazy,” says James Cook, who, with wife Samantha Jones, started beekeeping eight years ago. They knew well the challenges their bees face — parasites and the impact of pesticides among them.

Even so, they were hopeful. 2020 was to be their year to go off on their own, after working several years for another beekeeper. They and their bees spent the past winter in California’s massive almond orchards, full of white blossoms that turn into nuts, thanks to the many beekeepers who travel extensively with their hives to pollinate many of the nation’s crops.

Then the coronavirus hit and, for a moment, Cook and Jones panicked.

“Do we stay? Do we go?” they asked each other. By that time, they had packed up their tent and trucked their hives from California’s San Joaquin Valley to another temporary home in the state’s foothills, where the bees could “detox” from the agricultural work.

There, they raised “nucs” — hive starter-kits, of sorts, with new queens — which they sell to other beekeepers to replace bees that inevitably die over the course of a season. This work and the almond pollination each represent about a third of their business.

But they didn’t want to get stuck in California’s pandemic shutdown. The other third of their business was in their permanent base of Wisconsin, where they own a farmhouse and spend the summer honey season.

Deemed essential agricultural workers in a line of work that’s generally quite solitary, they decided to wait it out. Then they and the bees trekked back to Iola, Wisconsin. There, marshaling their 750 bee colonies, they would set out to create their brand, Bird and the Bees Honey.

The bird in the title is Kat, their free-ranging parrot who often rides in the cab of their truck and who also happens to like honey.



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This summer, Cook and Jones and their small crew worked day and night to build an extraction and bottling facility out of old semi trailers.

They were exhausted and in debt, having taken on loans to get the business up and running — but also excited.

Jones, 38, noted how much of the honey available in grocery stores is blended and cooked. “It would lose all those fine, delicate flavors that honey has,” she says. “And I thought that people deserved good honey.”

Unlike other agricultural crops, honey also can be stored indefinitely. That’s fortunate since the pandemic has left them fewer outlets for sales; farmers’ markets have been limited and restaurants and breweries have cut back, as well.

Cook, 35, says the experience of starting a business in these challenging times will make them more resilient.

“I think beekeeping sort of taught me (that) inside of this space of sheer chaos and uncertainty and fear and danger, in a lot of ways, you kind of need to look for the optimism and the beauty that you can find,” he says. “Because otherwise, it’s really hard to wake up in the morning.”

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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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	\$7.90	\$8.09	N/A	\$7.93	\$7.83	\$7.95	\$7.61	\$7.76	
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	\$5.01	\$5.05	N/A	\$5.03	\$4.96	\$5.00	\$4.89	\$4.88	
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

To subscribe to the National Honey board newsletter visit: <https://www.honey.com/signup>

UPCOMING EVENTS

January 11, 2021 – MABA January 2021 Meeting – Speaker and subject TBD! More details ahead!

January 30, 2021 – MABA 56th Annual Beekeeping Short Course – We welcome everyone to attend the MABA 56th Annual Beekeeping Short Course! Prepare yourselves for a fun and fact-filled day to learn more about bees and beekeeping! More details ahead!

Enjoy the cool weather, feed your bees as needed, prepare next year's equipment, and visit your bees as the weather allows!



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HONEY-BASED RECIPES (<https://www.honey.com/recipes>)

HERBED TURKEY BREAST: Makes 6 servings

<p>INGREDIENTS</p> <p>1/2 cup - honey 1/4 cup - orange juice 2 T - butter or margarine, melted 1 1/2 tsp. - dried sage 1 tsp. - dried thyme 1 clove - garlic, minced 3/4 tsp. - salt 1/4 tsp. - pepper 1 - boneless, skinless turkey breast, about 2 lbs.</p>	<p>Preheat broiler. Position oven rack 6 inches from heat source.</p> <p>Combine honey, orange juice, butter, sage, thyme, garlic, salt and pepper.</p> <p>Place turkey breast on rack set in broiler pan. Brush with some of honey mixture. Broil, brushing frequently with remaining mixture, turning turkey once, until no longer pink inside, about 40 minutes.</p> <p>Let stand 5 minutes before slicing.</p>
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