

The Buzz

Newsletter of the
Iowa Honey Producers
Association

August 2025



<https://www.iowahoneyproducers.org/>

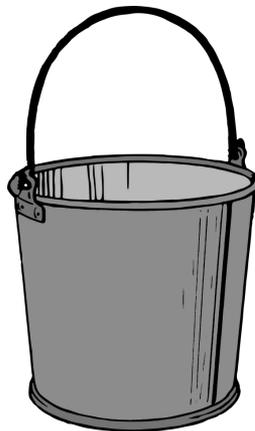
Fair Sweet Fair

AUGUST
7-17 2025

IowaStateFair NOTHING
COMPARES
800.545.FAIR | IOWASTATEFAIR.ORG

**There's still time to
volunteer for the
Iowa State Fair! Get
details on Page 12.**

**Learn about 1913 honey storage
from the IHPA Historian on Page 5.**



**Check out your monthly
to-do list on Page 14.**



The Buzz

The Buzz is a monthly publication printed by the Iowa Honey Producers Association (IHPA). This is one of the many perks of being an IHPA member!



You may opt to receive an electronic version of The Buzz, as a donation to the IHPA.

Please contact the editor at:
ihpaeditor@gmail.com

Letters from the Wildhills

So what's your walk away point? In stings. For me it's 7 because that's what happened yesterday....

Here I am checking on the hives, robbing empty supers from weaker hives and giving them to the stronger ones. It's a fun game. I'm working on a hive I have on pallets when I feel a little sting on my forearm ... dang how did you get me there, then another, and wait, there's something on my leg ... and another. You get the idea. Well I looked down and the hive right next to me clearly didn't like me visiting as both of my legs were covered in bees from the knees down. No idea what made them cranky with me, but it's a bee's world.

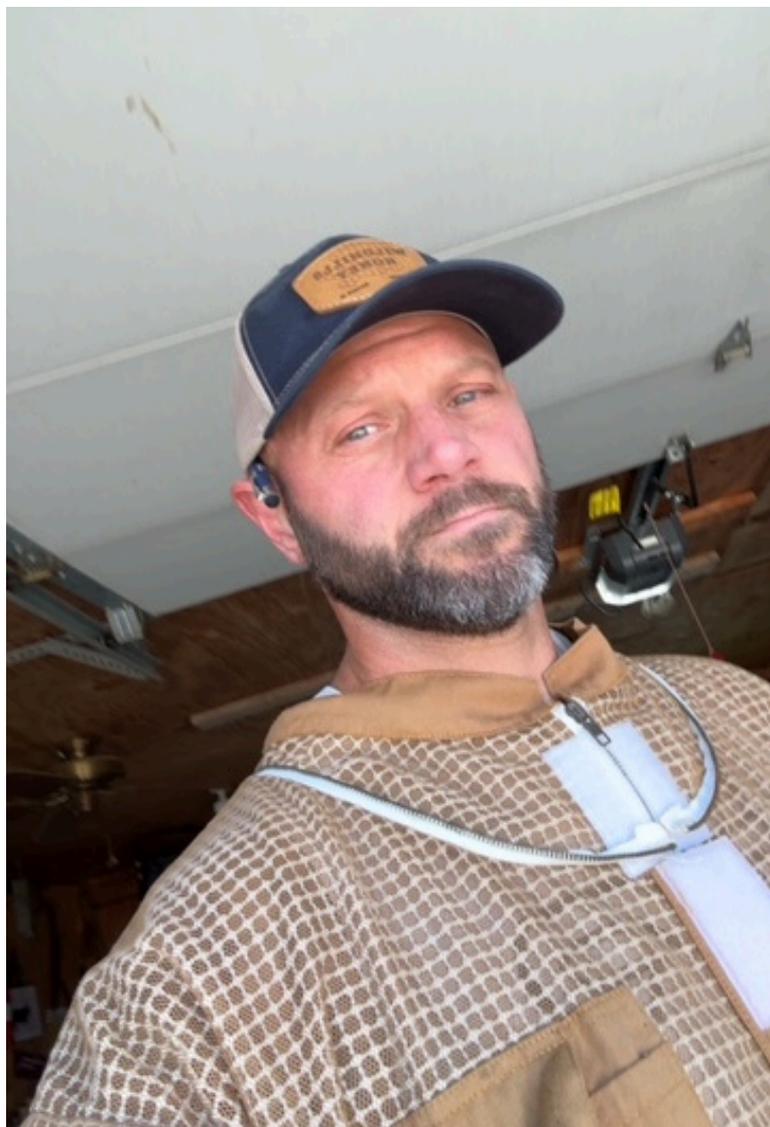
I think what's best about this, as most of you know, I wear a suit when working on the bees. I've never been one of those deal with the stings kind of people, more of a do what makes you most comfortable when working the bees. However, yesterday, they managed to not only sting through the suit, but also get inside and started traveling up my leg. So for any passerbys who saw a crazy guy in a bee suit quickly walking away from hives poofing the smoker everywhere while stopping to beat on his leg ... sorry. That hive followed me a good 50 yards before deciding to call it quits. I don't mind stings. I'm a beekeeper, it happens, but the itching the next day ... I could go without that. Nonetheless, I carry on, next week, cause 7 stings at once was sufficient for one day (and I'm wondering if I have a hole in my suit).

So what is going on? IT'S STATE FAIR TIME!! Did you know the theme is "Fair Sweet Fair." It's like they planned the whole event around us. What's sweeter than honey??

Heidi and crew have been hard at work getting everything set up. Bids were collected, selected and now we need some of your help! If you haven't already, please volunteer for a shift or two, I know the first weekend of State Fair does need some more folks, especially those afternoon and evening timeframes.

So, what all goes on at the State Fair? Well, a lot, but this is the largest/only fundraiser for the IHPA and we use the proceeds from honey and honey product sales along with honey lemonade to help bring things like the Summer Field Day, Annual Conference, and other programs to life.

What's a great perk of helping out? You get to hang out with a lot of other beekeepers at the State Fair and talk bees. And if we are being honest, we all love to talk bees. I



Chris still in his suit after his 7 bee stings.

will be there the first day through that Saturday before I have to head back to Dubuque for work. I'm also bringing my goddaughter along to help out. When not slinging lemonade or selling honey, I'll be doing what I do best: slowly going broke because my duty as godfather is never to say no, but to buy anything and everything she might want (within reason, but I hear a trip to Lululemon is in her plans).

I might need a second job for this trip, kidding. I'll just cash out my Christmas club early ... (again, kidding). All joking aside, we would love to see as many of you as possible during the fair. I've had a preview of our float which is going to be truly amazing as well, hats off to Julie and Jason for putting their creative minds together to represent the IHPA!!!

Letters from the Wildhills

It's kind of crazy to think, but just after the State Fair is our Annual Conference coming up in October. I have to commend the team has one heck of a line-up of speakers coming in for it! Registration is already open and we have an early bird special going on for the first time ever. Take advantage of the savings!

We are working on building out the supplemental meetings. I have one request, for those who were there last year and saw the mess I have made over and over again ... wax processing. Who knows? Maybe I'm not cut out for candles and the like quite yet, but hopefully afterwards I will be a pro.

I am excited to get to listen to Bob Binnie. I have followed his YouTube channel for a while, and he's so relaxed and calm. (Unlike how I was yesterday when the bees decided they didn't want me around.) That's about all I'll say about the Conference for now, as I know H.R. will have plenty of updates. Keep an eye on social media for contests going on as well. If you haven't already, give our Facebook page a follow.

We will be hosting elections again (as we do annually). As always, I would encourage anyone with questions to reach out if you are interested in taking on a role within the IHPA.



What is going on in my little corner of the world? It's July and I took a short trip to Fort Worth over the 4th; it was nice. We survived the wicked storms that hit just last weekend, I have no idea how my hives didn't go down when they were just 20 yards from a line of old oak trees that were not as fortunate. It's gutting to see them gone when every memory I have of our pasture has them. We lost 20 in total, but knowing myself and my mom, we will replant some of the trees next year.

The hives are going well. Oddly until recently my little corner of Iowa has been very dry most of the year until now. It's helped with a strong flow, which continues. The hives that are doing well, are doing very well, with 6-7 supers on them. I'm even debating pulling some this coming weekend so I can get them back out there.

We planted a lot of Dutch clover this year, along with a lot more hay ground, and it's showing. So while yeah, I've gotten stung up (a lot for me), things are looking up. The kitchen we are putting is in being built out, and should be good to go before formal harvest, with plans to get it certified by the end of the year so I can produce some creamed honey flavors for sale in stores and just slow expansion.

So with that, I will say, thank you for your time, and I hope this finds you all well.

Bee Real,
Chris Puetz



IHPA Officer & Director News

Ramblings from The Russian Bee Guy

Past President, Jason Foley

Hello as always, and welcome to the August edition of The Buzz. Lets start off talking bees... The hives have pretty much stalled out since I last wrote an article. No surprise really, we just keep getting tons of rain and all the time. You may see a lot of stuff blooming out there, but the rain washes the nectar right out of the flowers and it takes a while before it can build back up in them. So a day of rain can have 2 or 3 days of lasting effect, and then if you get hit with more rain it just resets that whole process. If you want the hives to put on more honey here anytime soon, start praying that we get a nice long dry spell.

Next up on the IHPA calendar is the State Fair! I'm sure there will be stuff in this addition of The Buzz asking you to sign up to be a volunteer, and if not, "SIGN UP TO BE A VOLUNTEER" lol. After the fair is our annual conference, and that's what I really want to talk about this time round. We "accidentally" ended up with 7 stellar headliners for this conference. Seriously, the quality of speakers we keep getting for our conferences and the numbers of them really place our association up on the national levels for what one can go to. I've been to different national events and if we could just grow our vendor area we would actually be a serious contender. Not that we do a bad job with vendors, but we just can't get Hummerbee to bring in their swingers for display, or one of the jumbo extraction line guys to ship in a full set-up. That's the kind of vendor show space that stands out when you go to a national event. Early registration with last year's prices is now open on the IHPA website. Don't wait, because prices will go up!!!

After many years this will be our first conference that prob-ably won't have a quilt for auction (don't quote me on that, there is some talk about someone else possibly doing one). I've decided to step up and try to do my best in creating a substitute. I'm currently working in my wood shop to make a very unique and detailed langstroth hive. While it is an actual bee hive you could use, this will be more of an art piece. I am etching 3D designs into all the box sides and parts, and plan to clear coat it to bring out the design and woodgrain. I have some pictures here with my write-up on the progress I am making. I'd like to do what is called a "garden cover," for it. It basically looks like the roof on a house, and will be doing some fun stuff with that as well. If this goes well, then in future years I will do other fancy woodworking projects like an observation hive or a long top bar hive.



IHPA Historian

What's on your honey shelf?

Does it look like these Friction Top Honey Pails? You certainly can't beat the price. It appears you can get a 100 count case of 3 lb. cans for \$3. Seems like a pretty fair price for 1913.

I have to admit, I was a little surprised when I thumbed through this Beekeeper's Review and saw this ad. I don't think I had realized that this was normal fare for storing and selling honey in, ever. I can see now that this is part of an outdated practice, which utilizes galvanized metal or tin to store or process honey in. I, myself, have a vintage galvanized extractor up on the top shelf in the shed. I'm unable to use it for food safety reasons, but it was passed on to me and I can't bear to give it up.

It's fascinating to think how far we've come in honey storage. Without much research, one knows that some of our first options were molded and fired ceramics. With these cool and opaque vessels, destructive sunlight and moisture were kept at bay. It seems like glass has been an option for several centuries. It's always a good storage solution as it doesn't create chemical reactions with most food. More recent on the scene has been plastic. Whether it comes in bears, pails, or tubs, it is always a user friendly food-grade option. Your best options come marked PEHD-2 or PP-5. My advice, if reusing buckets from local bakeries and deli's, be keen to what's been in it before. We re-used some grocery store deli buckets a few years back for storage. I can't say we enjoyed the Teriyaki infused honey that developed.

So why did these metal pails fall out of use so quickly? The simple answer is honey reacts with the alloys in metal, because the honey is biologically active. Current medicine would say never to store our honey in iron, galvanized, tin, copper, or lead vessels. We know more, so we do better, right? A good storage candidate would prevent humidity from entering, limit exposure to sunlight, be free from odors (like Teriyaki), and optionally allow you to re-heat (aka un-crystalize) your honey.

Key point to remember – honey never spoils. Two

496

THE BEE-KEEPERS' REVIEW

Friction Top Honey Pails and Cans



The Friction Top honey pail is the same as all are familiar with at the grocery store, containing corn syrup and other syrups, and is one of the most simple seals on the market, for all one has to do is to fill the pail with honey, crowd down the cover and the fit is so snug that there is no leakage.

Approx. Capacity	Per 100 Lots of 50	Per 100 Lots of 100	Per 100 Lots of 500	Per 1000 Lots of 1000
2 lb. Can.....	.....	\$2.25	\$2.15	\$20.00
2½ lb. Can.....	.....	2.75	2.60	24.00
3 lb. Can.....	.....	3.00	2.85	28.00
5 lb. Pail.....	\$5.00	4.75	4.50	42.50
6 lb. Pail.....	5.25	5.00	4.75	45.00
10 lb. Pail.....	7.00	6.50	6.25	60.00
12 lb. Pail.....	7.25	6.75	6.50	62.50

Above Cans and Pails in wooden re-shipping cases, same as gollan square cans, will cost as follows:

24 cans in a case, 2 lb. Cans.....	\$0.60 per case
24 cans in a case, 2½ lb. Cans.....	.71 per case
12 pails in a case, 5 lb. Pails.....	.65 per case
12 pails in a case, 6 lb. Pails.....	.70 per case
6 pails in a case, 10 lb. Pails.....	.49 per case
6 pails in a case, 12 lb. Pails.....	.55 per case

The above containers are known as "Buckets" in some localities.

Address all orders to

The National Bee - Keepers' Association
Northstar, Michigan

variables to that notion are the vessel it's stored in and any additives you impart. Both of those can greatly reduce the longevity of its shelf life. We work hard for the honey, so careful attention to the details is paramount to preserve our harvest.

On that note, it's time to get back to work. Honey harvest is upon us! Praying your crop is bountiful this year!

Tina Marshall, IHPA Historian
Waggle More – Sting Less

From the Beeyard

A collection of information from those with direct, personal knowledge about beekeeping

Written by Phil Ebert

Arvin Foell is gone. Other friends have passed. We know life is finite but it makes a stronger impression as we get closer to the end. I have cheated death a number of times. I was 10 the first time. I spent three months in the hospital and was not expected to survive. My appendix had been taken out, but I failed to recover. My dad was not happy with the doctor so he had me loaded into an ambulance and taken to the Osteopathic Hospital in Kirksville. Clyde Ham, our neighbor, drove the ambulance. Harold Kidd rode shotgun. Harold was the local undertaker. I have wondered from time to time if Harold came out of good will or was hoping for a customer. I prefer to think it was good will. They opened me back up at the hospital and found quite a mess. When you are a kid, you don't think much about it. It's just, "I will be okay." Reflecting on it as an adult, you realize it was a big deal. My dad kept me alive. I was in the army during Viet Nam but didn't get shot at until I went to Israel. I survived a horrific car crash when I was 80. There have been other times that were less serious. Overall, I have been one lucky son-of-a-gun, but I think I have used up most of my nine lives.

There is a carpet of Dutch Clover almost everywhere. I don't recall ever seeing this much. There is also a lot of trefoil and sweet clover in the road ditches — the ones that don't get mowed. So far (as of June 25), the bees have not gotten much nectar from it. Hot humid weather is good for the bees, but we have had too much rain. The rain will prolong the clover, but the bees can't get out of the box when it is raining.

The Field Day at our Mount Vernon facility was well attended. The meetings are getting a lot bigger. It seems like I know fewer of the attendees than I used to. This might be age related. Maybe I just can't remember them. When I first started coming to meetings in the late '80s, there were a number of prominent beekeepers in Iowa. Gradually, they mostly disappeared. I remember Manley Bigalk, Leroy Kellogg, Bob VanDeHof and others. Of course, Stanleys were still around. Manley survived but the others went out of business. They were mostly replaced by hobby guys. The last few years, more people have appeared who are, at least, going the sideline route with a fair number of colonies.

When guys started telling me they had received their ELAP payments, I wondered where mine was. I enquired at the FSA and was told it was being reviewed at the national office. I suspect the person who would normally review my form is probably at home drawing unemployment. I have no doubt that government is bloated, but the way the whole DOGE thing was handled was incompetent at best.

I am going to cut back on my number of hobby colonies. Prostate surgery has really knocked my energy level down. I get fatigued quickly. I have two pallets to the east of my steel building. They are in pretty good shape with several of them in the honey supers. I have two other pallets that have late swarms in them. The swarms are not real big. I don't expect them to make surplus unless we catch a late flow. I consider that an unlikely possibility since the timing of bean planting was one to two weeks ahead of last year. At least, they will keep the moths out of the boxes.

At what point can you no longer do it with junk? I have always focused on controlling expenses. We have used junk vehicles and equipment that was well past its prime. I still have a few boxes that say Old Taylor Bee Co. I picked them up at Francis Henkleman's sale. That was a good many years ago. I think Old Taylor liquidated in the '60s. Sometimes newer stuff does not prove as reliable as the older equipment. We bought a newer flatbed with 120,000 miles on it last year. The boys took it to Texas. The transfer case went out of it. That cost \$5,000. Then the turbo tubing blew apart. That was another \$600. We are not running the '95 real hard but it just keeps going.

Our numbers are way down — at least 30% and probably more than that. A number of the splits that got dropped at the Pella location died before we got supers on them. I have not seen them. I just know they are dead. We have been selling off equipment. It is almost impossible to keep the moths out of the combs. There have been many years when I have looked at the bloom and thought "We have great potential."

This is another year of potential. Will it be realized? You can't take potential to the bank.



From the Honey House



A collection of information from those with direct, personal knowledge about beekeeping

Change is Constant

When most beekeepers discuss beekeeping, it generally covers spring feeding, medicating, supering, extracting, medicating, feeding and putting the bees into winter. It all appears to be straightforward, like on a calendar. Nothing could be further from the actual application.

Here in southeast Wisconsin, our honey flow runs from the first week of June through the middle/end of July. Occasionally a late flow. Three years ago, the bees made honey from the third week of May and ended around the beginning of July. Weird, but true. What changed?

New beekeepers eventually learn and understand that there are few constants in beekeeping. There are many variables that affect the bees: weather, equipment, bees, beekeeping practices, medicating, etc. Often, several things come together to cause a change in beehive operations. One year it seemed to rain every other day, and we ended up with a 20-pound honey average per hive. Two years ago was a serious drought, and the bees made a super of honey each week for over a month, resulting in a 65-pound average. Whether you are starting with drawn comb, or lots of foundation makes a difference. Different mite medications or timing makes a difference.

This year has been a sea of change. It seems that everything is late due to the weather, bad queens, monsoon rains, etc. Each of our beeyards are different this year. Some are cranking honey, some are behind, and some are mixed up.

Over time, you should be able to understand how things work in concert to cause different things to happen in a beehive. (I'm still learning.) Part of the solution is to read your bees, and start noticing the different things that may affect the hive. Just like suiting up if it's hot and humid out, or working bees early in the morning, we observe and react. Experience is a good teacher, and networking with other beekeepers can help with their observations. I will talk to beekeeping friends, and we discuss observations and experience, and compare notes. This year we are all noticing hives that requeen early, especially the packages. This could be from queen producers trying to push out more queens in response to the massive losses, or just coincidence. But we talk about our observations, and it reinforces our instincts, and helps in making decisions.

Taking notes of your hive visits, especially over years, can help. Was it a wet year, dry year, when did you start placing honey supers or when you medicated for mites, and what was the result? I find myself looking at notes and trends over a few years, which helps me spot anomalies. What changed?

There's been a lot of honey going through the extractor over the last 29 years. I pay more attention to the changes of the bees, looking for information that may help me decide what to do next. Watch and learn. I hope that everyone is ready for extracting!

Andy Hemken, Bee Guy
andy@hemkenhoney.com



Mrs... Foley's Russian Bees



When you really just want to hear from the better half of the business.

It Was Just Another Weekend

For the record, Jason wrote the slogan about the “better half,” I wrote the title. He’s clearly the better beekeeper

between the two of us! It was just another weekend as a beekeeper and small business owner – we hosted a U.S. Senator and attended our largest market of the year. Maybe we’ll try not to be so ambitious to participate in two big events like that in the same weekend again. 😊

In June, we received an email from Senator Joni Ernst’s office to ask if we’d give her a tour of our apiary, Honey Hollow, on July 12. What an opportunity! Despite some criticism we received on social media for hosting a politician, this was not a political visit. This was an educational visit. We regularly give educational tours to all sorts of groups who want to learn more about beekeeping. This was no different. The great opportunity came in educating an elected official so that hopefully when she’s making recommendations and decisions in the Agriculture Committee, she may wonder how the decisions she’s making affects not just traditional Iowa agriculture, such as pigs and soybeans, but also our slice of the agricultural landscape. She was very engaged in conversation, listened well, and asked lots of good questions.



In all actuality, it was us that brought up politics. We were able to share with the Senator about how Iowa is only 1 of 3 states that continues to tax the sale of honeybees, despite all state departments recognizing honeybees as livestock except the Department of Revenue. Even the Department of Transportation recognizes honeybees as livestock! Her response as she looked at the staffer who came with her was, "Who do we know that could help get that changed?" We shared that the Iowa Honey Producers Association has been working for years to get this change made - perhaps this next year will be the year!

Mrs... Foley's Russian Bees



When you really just want to hear from the better half of the business.

We also were able to speak with her about the Iowa Bee Rule, which prohibits commercial sprayers from spraying chemicals labeled harmful to bees

between the hours of 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. if within 1 mile of registered beehives. We acknowledge that farmers have to look out for the best interest of their crop, but we just don't want it to be to the detriment of ours. Before she left, she sampled some creamed honey and barrel aged honey and even purchased a few bottles of mead to take home. There were three media outlets who joined us for the tour, including the Indianola Independent Advocate who captured the image of her looking at a frame with us. Her staffer, John, got the photo of my husband's new haircut. 😊

The following day we attended our largest market of the year, Northside Market in the Oak Park-Highland Park neighborhood in Des Moines. We don't do a lot of markets since we have our farm store, but this one is just too good to miss. We heard that Mike and Julie Sander of MJ's Hometown Honey was also there! Before the market began, I wandered down to their booth to say hello and see what product they had. I was relieved to find out we had very few of the same items. They only sell honey in glass jars, and we had mostly brought plastic. They had all sorts of skin products like Itch-Ease, which I was wishing I had purchased after hunting down a kitten in some brush the following night... They also had creamed honey, and we didn't bring any. So I was glad to see I could send people their way if they needed a product we didn't have. We'd primarily planned on selling mead, but also brought some beeswax and a few other products. I really enjoyed our conversation that even included Julie telling me all about the best pricing she'd found on different jars. I love the sharing of information!

I watched as customers looked over products before purchasing. One guy picked up the big honey bear, then the 4 oz muth jar. Something about the way he looked at them made me ask if he was looking for a larger glass jar of honey. He was, so I happily referred him to our fellow honey producers down the street and thanked him for buying local honey! Before long, we had two different customers say they were sent to our booth because we had beeswax. What a partnership!

Like I said, we don't do many markets, but when we do, we try to work with the folks who are selling similar products to ours. I'd rather be sure a customer gets what they really want rather than settling for something that would just work. Even though we didn't make a lot of referrals to each other, I like to think we both made at least a few more sales because we weren't actively competing with each other. I went to a conference once when the marketing session was about how to out-do your competitor. I didn't care for that strategy. I prefer to think about offering a variety of products that will perhaps differentiate ourselves from other honey producers. We're all in this together, and I'd much prefer we spend more time lifting each other up than trying to steal someone else's sale.

By the end of the day, we'd sold quite a lot of product and were grateful to have fewer heavy boxes to unload when we got home.

-Shannon Bardole-Foley



IHPA ANNUAL CONFERENCE & TRADE SHOW

🐝 Bees Behaving Badly (and Why You Deserve a Break)

As we sweat and curse our way through the summer heat, sipping water through our veils and dodging kamikaze stingers, it's that time of year again: when our bees, once our gentle companions of spring, have transformed into something out of an Alien reboot.

Just a few months ago, they perched sweetly on our bare fingers, whispering dreams of weeks past and dreams of becoming a royal jelly-fed queen (or at least living the full 17-day fantasy). Now? They'd rather crawl in our ears than write us poetry. Ah yes... it's the best of times, it's the worst of times: an overflowing honey harvest—and a hive full of grumpy girls.

But fear not! Salvation is near.

Picture this: you, in a cool, dimly lit room, seated at round tables among hundreds of fellow beekeepers. The hum you hear is not from the hive, but from enlightening conversations, engaging presentations, and the sheer joy of geeking out about queens, splits, grafting, and bottom boards. That's right — it's the Iowa Honey Producers Association Annual Conference and Trade Show, happening Friday and Saturday, October 24–25, 2025, at the beautiful Prairie Meadows Resort and Conference Center.

🐝 What's the Buzz?

We've lined up a sweet slate of speakers, each presenting twice on different topics. So far some of the topics include:

- Amy Wu, University of Florida: Honey bees in Thailand & Resources for Beekeepers
- Scott McArt: Banning neonics — risk vs. benefit
- Dr. David Peck, Better Bee: Varoa treatment efficacy, & all the harmful insects
- Arian Avalos: Tracking disease resistance in bees
- Bob Binnie: The freestyle expert — he'll answer anything you throw at him!
- Judy Wu-Smart: Queen rearing
- Jennifer Tsuruda: Topics coming soon—we're buzzing with anticipation

And that doesn't even touch the breakout sessions—think splits, winterization, feeding strategies, “What am I looking at?,” big panel discussions bursting with knowledge, and a “State of the State” update from our ever-accessible State Apiarist Andy Joseph.

Want to sell honey legally? Bring your scale—Iowa's Weights and Measures Division will be on site Friday to certify it.

IHPA ANNUAL CONFERENCE & TRADE SHOW

🍯 Vendor Heaven & Hive-Raising Contests

So far, vendor commitments include: Dadant, Mann Lake, Lappe's Bee Supply, Better Bee, Hillco, Momentum Ag, Project Apis M, Eberts, Honey Hollow — and more coming in daily! Plus, friendly competition with categories like:

- Best Honey
- Best Painted Deeps
- Best Label
- Best Mead
- Best Food Made with Honey
- And an exhibit of the 2025 Iowa State Fair Blue Ribbon Winners



Prairie Meadows Event and Conference Center
1 Prairie Meadows Dr., Altoona, IA 50009

🕒 Early Bird Gets the Hive

Register early for just \$80 for IHPA members at iowahoneyproducers.org. Price rises in September. Questions? Send them to H.R. Cook at stagemaster35@gmail.com.

Don't get left out of the hive. Be one of the cool kids in Altoona this October.

Until then—zip up the veil and keep the honey flowing!

WHAT A LINE-UP!

REGISTER NOW!

ONLY \$80

PRICES GO UP IN SEPTEMBER



BOB BINNIE

Social Media Icon, Blue Ridge Honey



JUDY WU SMART

Assistant Professor UNL



DAVID PECK

Director of Research and Education BetterBee



AMY VU

University of Florida State
Specialized Agent & Extension Agent



SCOTT MCART

Assistant Professor,
Entomology, Cornell University



JENNIFER TSURUDA

University of Tennessee
Entomology and Plant Pathology



ARIAN AVALOS

USDA - ARS Research Geneticist

State Fair Volunteers

WE NEED YOUR HELP AT THE IOWA STATE FAIR BOOTH!! AUGUST 7-17, 2025

Dear Beekeepers,

I know it may be hard to start thinking about the State Fair; however, spring is here, and the Iowa State Fair is fast approaching: August 7-17, 2025. For those members new to the Iowa Honey Producers Association (IHPA), we have a booth at the State Fair annually in the Ag building, 2nd floor, selling honey products, honey lemonade, lotions, soaps, beeswax items, promotional merchandise, etc. We will still continue to schedule volunteers for candle rolling for the Queen Program. This is our main fundraising event, which is needed to help support our various educational programs. We ask our members to help make this event a success by volunteering their time assisting with cash register sales, bagging product, pricing, mixing and serving honey lemonade, candle rolling, and offering honey samples, etc. If you get thirsty while working at the booth, you will be given free honey lemonade, a free pass to the fair, and the chance to enjoy the fair's entertainment before or after your shift.

We had a successful 2024 thanks to all those who participated! Over the years we have had wonderful members, family, and friends volunteer their time, and we would love to see you again. We encourage new members, friends, families, and bee clubs to participate in this event too, because we need everyone's support to make it a success.

Every day, we have three shifts: 8:30 am-12:30 pm, 12:30 pm-4:30 pm, and 4:30 pm-8:30 pm, each requiring 11-14 people. We want to hear from you if you can volunteer for one or more shifts from August 7-17. All you need to do is mail the completed slip below, email the same details to ihpasecretary@gmail.com, or call 515-729-1761. If you need any clarification or have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask.

Heidi Love (IHPA Secretary) 1180 H Ave, Scranton, Iowa 51462. Cell: 515-729-1761

Name of Volunteers: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip _____

Phone no.: _____

Please write below the date(s) you would like to work and circle shift that works best for you. (Fair dates August 7-17.) We appreciate any help you can provide!

Date or Dates: 8:30am-12:30pm 12.30pm-4:30pm 4:30pm-8:30pm



Marketing Mistakes

with Sara Holton

When someone asks us "is your honey organic?" I get excited. Excited to educate.

Did you know that the USDA has no standards to certify honey as organic?

Since the USDA has no standard for organic honey, not a single U.S. beekeeper can legally label or tell consumers their honey is organic.

Now you're probably thinking ... but Sara, I see organic honey all the time at grocery stores. 🤔

It's true. You do. And that USDA organic logo is a quick way to identify imported honey.

Since the USDA has no organic standards for honey, they recognize organic certifications from other countries for honey imported into the United States. This means that honey labeled as "USDA Organic" is imported from countries like Brazil, Mexico, or India, which have their own organic certification standards for honey.

Another fun marketing ploy I often see "US Grade A Honey."

At first glance you would probably think U.S. honey. Wrong. It is just a scale to give a grade to the honey based on clarity, color, absence of defects, flavor, and aroma. If you turn to the back of the bottle, somewhere in tiny print it will say the origin of the honey. Usually Brazil or Argentina, places far away from the United States.

So what do you want to look for when buying honey? Raw, Unfiltered, and Local to your area (a 50 mile radius or less is ideal).

Honey jars on most grocery store shelves likely won't tell you if the honey is filtered, but if it is unfiltered and raw it will likely be displayed proudly.

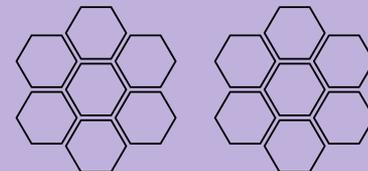
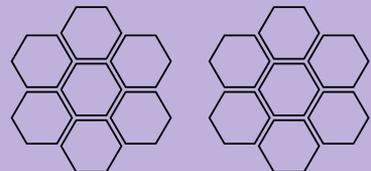
What's the difference between filtered and unfiltered honey?

Filtered honey is heated and strained to remove particles like pollen and wax, resulting in a clear, smooth product. It will likely never crystallize and the enzymes nutrients have been destroyed. In some cases it is even "ultra filtered." Ultra-filtered honey removes the pollen. At that point is it even still considered honey? 🤖

But I digress. Not all grocery honey is bad. Know your beekeeper. Buy small. Support local. Buy American honey. Do great things. 🍯

Stay Sweet,
Sara Holton





Buzz...worthy items to WAGGLE about in August

Submitted by Jim and Tina Marshall

- August is all about the Iowa State Fair! You might be too late to participate in the contests and competitions, but you are NOT too late to sign up to work in the IHPA booth. It is truly the highlight of our year. You get to work in the sweetest environment, with the state's greatest beekeepers, while talking honey and bees for hours. Special perk – free honey lemonade! Even if you are a hobby beekeeper or a new-bee, you CAN work the booth. Trust me when I say, what you know is ample, compared to the questions and inquiries you will get from the public.
 - Got a hankerin' for some ice cold honey lemonade, while you sit on the summer deck? Check out the recipe we use in the booth at the Iowa State Fair. It is on page 159 of the current cookbook.
 - Farmers Markets are in full swing. It is a great place to meet the buying public and unload a little surplus inventory. Take advantage this month before the markets close up for the winter.
 - Speaking of winter ... do you know the honey bee begins preparation for winter in August. While we are sweating in the humid brunt of summer, our beloved honey bee is deep in preparation for the dismal, cold winter dearth ahead. The brood they are rearing today is predominantly winter bees. Everything we can do to make them plump and healthy will insure their survival. This can include a high quality queen, low varroa pressure, plenty of incoming pollen, and praying for a good fall nectar flow. Besides winter brood, they are also preparing their winter stores of honey, so you may begin to notice less activity. By becoming less active they are able to store up resources for the colder months.
 - Aug. 16, 2025, is National Honey Bee Day. This proclamation made its inaugural debut in 2009 by Iowa's own Thomas J. Vilsack, while acting as U.S. Secretary of Agriculture. A day set aside to "bring together beekeepers, bee associations, as well as other interested groups to connect with the communities to advance beekeeping. By working together and harnessing the efforts that so many already accomplish, and using a united effort one day a year, the rewards and message are magnified many times over." What can you do to help promote, educate, and create awareness?
- The IHPA Annual Meeting is right around the corner on Oct. 24 and 25. One of the highlights is seeing what other Iowa honey producers are up to through the various contests. Consider entering. Do you know someone deserving of an award, maybe for Distinguished Service or Education? Submit a name for nomination. Help advocate for young, new beekeepers. Share with them the details of the IHPA Youth Scholarship, due Sept. 15. Better yet, volunteer to be a mentor for the program. Know an eligible candidate to be our organization's spokeswoman, The Iowa Honey Queen? Encourage her to apply by Sept. 30. These details and so many more are on our website.
 - If you aren't in the middle of it, you soon will be – extracting honey. A sticky job with sweet rewards! Here are a couple things to keep in mind, as we head into that season:
 1. The bees know when to harvest. They will cap honey at the correct moisture content. Ideally, this is between 17-18%. Above 20% moisture content can be susceptible to fermentation. A lot of times this can happen when we pull from frames with too much uncapped honey in the comb. The rule of thumb is not to pull frames with more than 10% uncapped.
 2. Pulling supers means getting the bees away from their stores. There are multiple options for doing this, some are quicker than others, but one of the primary things to consider is where is your queen? If you are using a blower, make sure there is not any brood in your super box first as this could mean the queen is in there. Blowing her out in front of the hive could lead to a queenless hive. Also, be observant of your bees. If there is still a heavy nectar flow, be sure to get some empty supers back on quickly. If not, have winter storage options for those empty supers determined ahead of time, as well as fall IPM strategies.
 3. Extracting is hard work. Consider inviting some friends and family to join you. Many hands make light work. A jar of honey might be the ticket to coaxing them in. While extracting, keep in mind there are several ways to do it. Crush and strain is a viable option if you don't have access to more automated machinery. All are effective at getting the job done. With each advancement you make in your harvesting equipment you will wonder, how did I ever get by without this.
 4. Don't forget to enjoy the sweet rewards! Sometimes in the heat, heavy lifting, and stickiness we forget to sample and truly savor what we have accomplished. Take a minute to let the light reflect through it, marvel at the steps in its production process, and feel the blessing of God's creation. Oh, honey!

In Remembrance

Arvin Joseph Foell

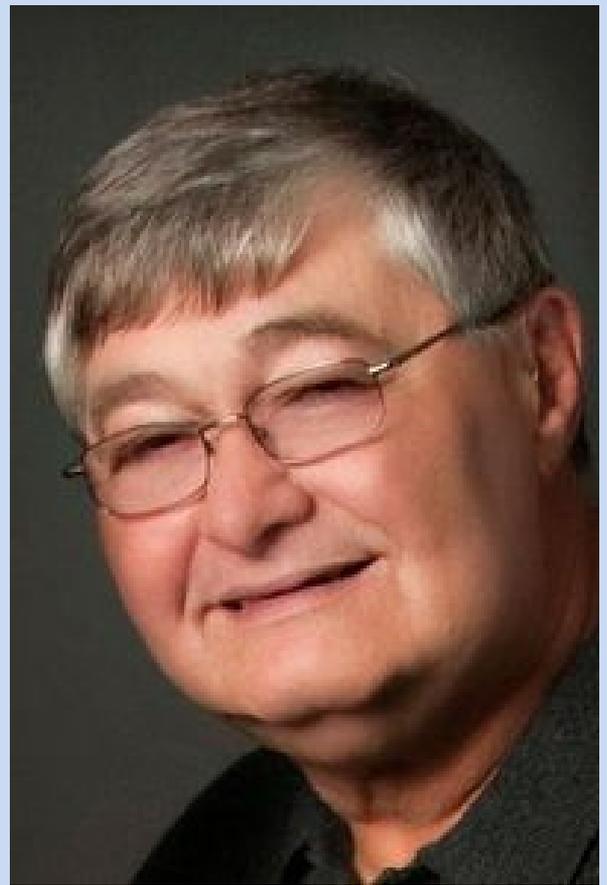
September 5, 1948 - June 6, 2025

Arvin Joseph Foell, 76, of Kelley, Iowa, passed away suddenly on June 6, 2025, while working on his farm. Born on September 5, 1948, in Hampton, Iowa, Arvin was a devoted Christian whose faith shone brightly through his decades of teaching Sunday School and leading Bible studies. Early mornings or after dark, Arvin could be found sitting in his recliner with his laptop and multiple Bible translations within arm's reach. He often prepared for the next Sunday School or Bible study after a long day outdoors tending bees, in the garden, or mowing the grass – 3 of his favorite hobbies.

Arvin's legacy of faith, family, and service will forever inspire those who knew him. A memorial service was held at CrossRoad Baptist Church in Ames, Iowa, on June 23, 2025.

Arvin's passion for beekeeping began in 1977 after taking a beekeeping course in his last semester at Iowa State University. Tasting his first honey crop sparked a lifelong love for bees. Arvin became an active member and past president of the Central Iowa Beekeepers Association (CIBA) and the Iowa Honey Producers Association where he contributed significantly to the local and statewide beekeeping community. He also loved to travel the nation attending beekeeping seminars and visiting beekeepers and bee yards.

For the past decade in his "retirement," Arvin was a respected State Apiary Inspector who dedicated his time teaching about and troubleshooting issues with bees. Arvin looked forward to the Iowa State Fair every year, where he would man the honey booth most days and talk bees with friends and strangers from far and wide. He mentored many aspiring beekeepers and was always willing to share his knowledge with anyone who crossed his path, whether in person, via phone, or on Facebook.



His time at ISU led to another hobby of judo, where he showcased his discipline, tenacity, and competitive spirit. He rose to the rank of third-degree blackbelt under Grandmaster Yong Chin Pak and won many awards and competitions throughout his 30 years of practice; including taking gold in the 1988 Iowa Games alongside his daughter.

Arvin leaves behind his beloved wife since 1971, Jeanne Foell, with whom he just celebrated 54 years of marriage on May 22. Arvin is survived by his children, Aymi Paradise-Flores of Huxley; Kristi Arthur (Daniel) of Lynchburg, VA; Katie Robinson (Justin) of Norfolk, NE; and Andrew Foell (Grace) of Cottage Grove, OR; his cherished grandchildren, Jonah, Violet, and Justice Joseph Flores; Adelynn and Cailynn Arthur; Abigail and Samuel Robinson; and Archer Foell; his siblings, Alvin Maklenburg (Lori) of Manly and Arlene Lockwood (Jerry) of Clarion; and many nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents, Arvid Foell and Allene Roeder (Herman); his siblings, Allen and Albert Foell; his half-sister Marion Lindenberg and half-brother Richard Roeder; his niece Jenny Foell, nephew James Foell, and nephew Michael Hanks; and his granddaughter, Sara Robinson.



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You are still welcome and encouraged to send stories to ihpaeditor@gmail.com.

When sending photos please send them as separate files and not embedded in a Word document or Google doc.

Iowa Beekeeping Clubs

Back to Basics Beekeepers Club: contact Tina Marshall at marshalltmf@gmail.com



Boone River Beekeeping Club: contact Roy Kraft at kroyster.rk@gmail.com

Cedar Valley Bee Club: contact Ryan Dermody or Robert Stwalley at dermody.ryan@gmail.com and robert.stwalley@hawkeyecollege.edu

Central Iowa Beekeepers Association: contact Jamie Beyer at beyersbog@aol.com

Des Moines Backyard Beekeepers: contact Ellen Bell at ellenbell.ia@gmail.com



Dubuque Swiss Valley Bee Club: contact Paulette Lynn at pjlynn1@gmail.com

East Central Iowa Beekeepers: contact Joseph Klingelhutz at jo.aloysius@gmail.com

Friendly Beekeepers of Iowa: contact Eric Kenoyer at kenoyer1270@gmail.com



Great River Bend Beekeepers: contact David Hayes at prairiecreekfrm@netins.net

Heartland Bee Club: contact Tom Hart at tomhart1107@gmail.com

Loess Hills Beekeeping Association: contact Chris Ruhaak at LHBA@LoessHillsBA.com

North Iowa Beekeepers Club: contact Richard Vonderohe at vonderohebees@hotmail.com

Northeast Iowa Beekeepers Club: contact Gerald Hunter at gmhunter@neitel.net

Northwest Iowa Beekeepers: contact Tim Olsen at nwiabeekeepersresearch@gmail.com



Omaha Bee Club: contact Pam Newell at AskOmahaBeeClub@gmail.com

Pollinators Paradise Bee Club: contact Dan Whitmore at Paddledan@gmail.com

Quad City Bee Keeping Club: contact Ron Fischer or Doug Dahlin at qcbeeclub@yahoo.com

Southern Iowa Beehivers: contact Mindy Butcher at mshbutcher1@hotmail.com



Southern Iowa Hive Handlers: contact Scott Kent at clarkeccb@gmail.com

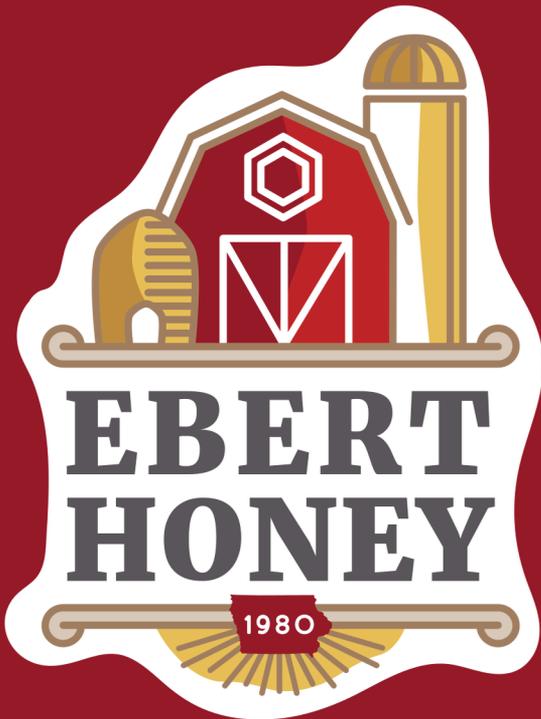
Southeast Iowa Beekeepers: contact Steve Hemphill at snwfarm@mepotelco.net

Southwest Iowa Beekeepers: contact Nathan Paulsen at southwestiowabeekeepers@gmail.com



Siouxland Beekeeping Club: contact Ron Rynders at rrihpa@gmail.com

Tama County Bee Keepers: contact Jim and Penny Dolezal at busybeeacres@yahoo.com



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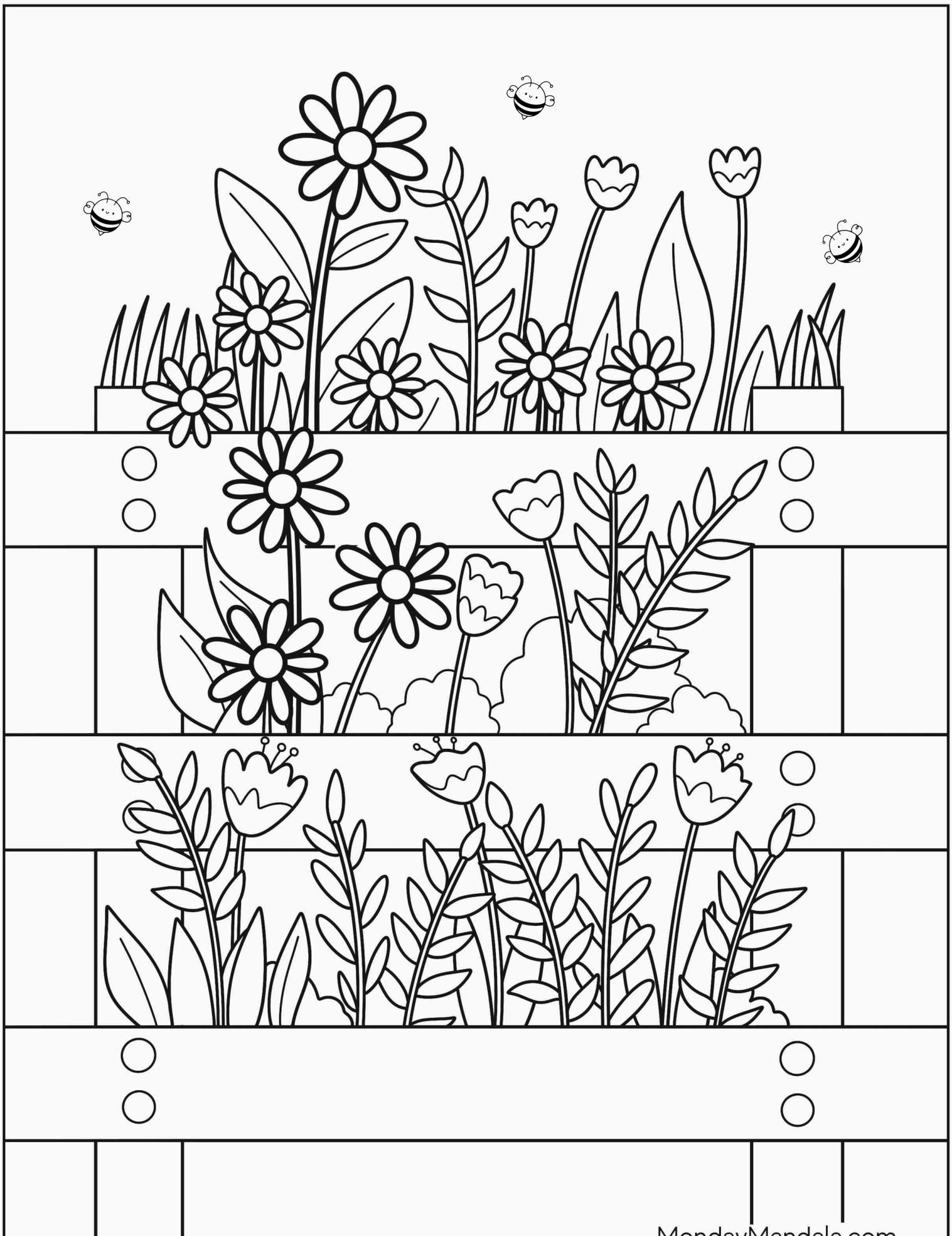
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If you would like to become more involved in the IHPA, we could certainly use your help!!!

Please email ihpa1912@gmail.com

The Buzz Newsletter

Iowa Honey Producers Association
c/o Editor, Sara Sleyster
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Des Moines, IA 50320



The Buzz is a monthly newsletter published by
the Iowa Honey Producers Association
which is an affiliate of the Iowa State
Horticultural Society



Deadline for submissions to *The Buzz* is always the 10th of the month at 11:59 p.m. the month prior to when you would like to see information published.

If writing an article for *The Buzz*, submissions must be 800 words or less. Pictures are encouraged!

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August 10th at 11:59 p.m.

Please submit materials to: ihpaeditor@gmail.com

