

# The Buzz

Newsletter of the

*Iowa Honey Producers*

Association



March 2025

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



**Learn more about Iowa  
Honey Bee Day at the  
Capital on Page 7.**

**Get an update from Tyler  
on the California bees  
on Pages 8 and 9.**



**See what the Southern Iowa  
Hive Handlers Bee Club  
has been up to 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!



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# Letters from the Wildhills

Sometimes too much planning doesn't pan out...

In my last article I wrote about having been reading over legislation for cottage laws in preparation for this month's Buzz, I think I planned things out a bit too much.

It would be wrong of me not to take this time to address the very large, and concerning losses going on in the beekeeping industry at the moment. If you see the different Facebook group chats, there are a lot of people reporting larger losses than normal and some reporting none, but the large majority are talking about large losses.

In recent weeks more and more has been pushed out in forums and chat groups talking about strong hives are completely gone now, some estimates of losses (on average) are 70-100% loss. On January 1, I was thrilled to report 22 out of 24 of my colonies were strong and thriving, now that number is 7. Only 7 of 24 left. I have spent hours reviewing my notes, going over timings of treatments, feed, supplements, and insulation. I've reviewed EVERYTHING and for all accounts, have done EVERYTHING to make sure I came through winter with at least 75% survival, yet here I am, with 30% left and praying they make it through the next week of subzero weather. My losses are severe, and gutting, but on grander scales we know of commercial operations with 10,000 hives now under 1,000. I'm a hobbyist, for them, it's their livelihood. This is being referenced as worse than Colony Collapse, and there are articles out there talking about impact on the food industry, I don't have to remind this group about the importance of the pollination work bees do.

So what is the cause of this? Right now, no one knows and there is A LOT of research going on. On the Facebook pages, discussion comes up with things like mite management and the every popular chemical, a.k.a. pesticides or other field sprays mixed making a deadly mix. Interestingly, I just listened to a podcast with Bob Binnie where chemical exposures was brought up. Surprisingly, he said no to this, because the issue we are facing is nationwide and logic would say, not all bees were exposed to the same sprays. Can we rule this out? Not yet.



Mites - we know its an issue and in that same podcast Bob brought up a good point: Are the mites themselves changing again or are they becoming resistant to the treatments used? I feel like this is a very real possibility.

Environmental factors - going into the fall, I was convinced I would have 48 hives in 2025, everyone was just booming, but something felt off and this resonates with what Andrew Joseph has been talking about since last fall. Loads of hives lacking any eggs or brood. This is what I noticed, why wasn't the queen laying? That time is critical to getting strong winter bees to get the colony through winter, yet the ones emerging spent their time flying around during a very dry, hot and long fall. Simple math is going to say bees emerging in September will start to die off in December, which meant one thing, large losses of bees right as we were about to hit the first super cold stretch of our winter in January.

Agriculture - it's silly of me not to bring this up, but yes there likely is some kind of spray issue going on as well, a tipping point, but I'm not convinced this is the answer. In the same podcast that Bob Binnie was on he made a good point. The issue here is nationwide, he said it's highly unlikely all the bees being impacted were subjected to the same sprays during the year. I'm not saying this is fact, but it's a good point to talk about. I think you will all find my farming background is going to be one that wants to play nice with our farmers. We are all on the same boat, trying to get to the next year afloat.



# Letters from the Wildhills

Now, I do think there is something to be considered with aerial spray, frankly I have never been a fan of it and the light breeze blew that into the backyard. Simply put, it cannot be safe for anything; it's putting literal droplets of death into the air.

Mites - this is where we need to double down. I thought I had pulled out all the guns on this in 2024 but perhaps there is something we are not taking into account. Actually two things. Our season seems to be a lot longer in terms of warmer weather into the fall when there is a dearth. That means bees are going to be flying around a lot longer looking for food, picking up mites while expending energy. Do we need to rethink our mite management, look at alternative methods and change up what we are using/doing? I think so. Not only because of the longer seasons, but because we know mites are going to grow in resistance to the treatments already in use. Nature will always find a way, and likely that is the case here.

Now, I'm relatively new in my beekeeping journey, I'm not here for my expertise in this year yet, I'm here because of my experience in helping organizations move forward. However, struggle comes in many forms no matter if it's in the ag industry or corporate American. So I will end this with I'm by far no expert, but we have an amazing expert and that's Andrew Joseph. He saw signs of something going on early fall 2024, and I was lucky enough to get to hear him talk about it at my local club. If I had to leave you with one thing it was something I picked up in the podcast noted above that was a small beacon of hope for me, for all of us. Bob Binnie took the time to explain, going back to the 1800s there are documented cases of large scale colony losses about every 20 years, as if it's almost cyclical. It seems that the clock was up, and we will be

able to recover and rebuild. For me, that means Jason and Tyler are getting more orders from me than planned, just not as much for expansion as planned. I'm too stubborn to pack up my suit from a rough winter season.

Now let's talk about some happier things. I was thrilled to get invited by Joseph Klingelhutz of the East Central Beekeepers to meet with their group this past Monday. Originally I was going to be speaking in person, but alas, winter decided to arrive in February and I joined in on Google Meet Up. We had a great time talking for almost an hour and half about the "Danger Zone" of beekeeping, a.k.a. January through March and how to help the colonies grow, what we should be feeding this time of the year, when to be checking on colonies, what to do with any deadouts, and the status of the industry. They really are an amazing group of folks there and I'm really excited to be able to visit them in April. Coming up in a few weeks I'm going to venture to Davenport to visit with their club as well. I do think through getting all of us working as well...a hive, we can use our collective voice to really push some things forward in our state and help with pushing things forward in our country. Moreso, it really stresses the importance of community within our industry. If you have friends in your local clubs who are not members of the Iowa Honey Producers Association, please, take a moment to invite them. Benefits are greater than just a discounts to our events, it's a chance to network with a much larger group, and, just like a hive, a single bee can do a lot, but when working together, they accomplish so much more. If there are any other groups who want me to pop into their meetings, just reach out. For many it would be virtual but if I have the ability to get there, I would love to meet you all in person outside Summer Field Day in June, State Fair in August, or the Conference in October.



In 2025 we are excited to announce that Summer Field Day is going to traveling to the eastern side of Iowa, and we are working on securing a location in the Cedar Rapids/Iowa City area.

The date of the event will be on June 21 and registration will open mid-March 2025. The planning committee of Sara and Tyler Holton and myself are working to bring you a day of topics to help you in your beekeeping journey no matter where you are, and also be able to get into the Apiary and observe some inspections. This will be an event you do not want to miss!

If you are interested in participating in terms of being a host location or have a facility we can utilize for presentations please reach out to either Sarah or me.

# IHPA Officer & Director News

## *Ramblings from The Russian Bee Guy*

**Past President, Jason Foley**

When last we left off, Andrew Joseph and I were eagerly awaiting the arrival of our shipping container at the Port of Omaha of all places. We didn't even know that was a thing, but it is. Most people ordering a shipping container full of stuff typically have the materials delivered to them, but our friend, Mr. Holton had a 21 foot flatbed trailer he offered to loan us and we instead had arranged to just go and get the swingers from the shipping yard. Little did anyone realize that shipping yards ONLY allow registered semi shipping companies to enter them and retrieve merchandise. We had it in our heads that they'd drop the container in some designated loading area and we'd drive the loaders out of the container and then up the ramps onto the flatbed. Nope. They at least gave us the number of a local small shipping company that did odd jobs like this and after a number of hours they showed up and grabbed our container. Off to their company yard we went. Then came the next hurdle. The semi yard didn't have a loading dock, and our flatbed trailer was much shorter to the ground than the semi. The guys at the yard had an idea to stack up railroad ties and have us back the trailer up onto it. The plan worked and we were able to drive the swingers right out of the container and onto the deck of the trailer. By that evening we had the machines home.

The consensus so far is that these machines are a very close match for their Hummerbee counterparts. The display on mine isn't quite as fancy as the XRT, but who cares. I do like that the machine has analog back-up controls in the event something electrical goes wrong. That's actually a nice feature the American made ones don't have. It does have less horsepower than the U.S. made one, but for a final sticker price with shipping, tariffs, taxes, and every other bell and whistle of just \$27,000 she is in my opinion, a hell of a better deal than getting the \$75,000 American assembled one. I say assembled, because all the parts are still made in Italy, Germany, and other countries that go into both the U.S. and China machines.

Outside of this little road trip my life has been all-day-every-day in my woodshop. I can't tell you just how much I hate the smell of pine sawdust by this point in the season. I got several large orders for commercial guys needing boxes and am also trying to turn out all the kits I normally have available for my local customers. Every year I say I'm taking a winter off from woodworking, and every year someone talks me into making a few boxes. Then another person calls on a favor, and another, and eventually I'm standing there wondering how I have more work sitting in front of me than what I had the prior year, when I was so determined to take a year off.... Ah well, I'm hoping that we have so many kits prepped this year that it carries over and is inventory for next.





# IHPA Officer & Director News

## Legislative Update (Honey Bee Day March 26!)

### Good News

We are excited to share that our efforts to eliminate sales tax on honey bees and breeding queens in Iowa are gaining momentum! Davenport State Senator Mike Vondran has introduced HF247, which seeks to remove this tax. The bill has garnered support from 19 other representatives:

- Rep. Eddie Andrews (Polk Co.)
- Rep. Tom Jeneary (Plymouth Co.)
- Rep. Judd Lawler (Linn Co.)
- Rep. David Sieck (Mills Co.)
- Rep. Craig Johnson (Buchanan Co.)
- Rep. Travis Sitzmann (Plymouth Co.)
- Rep. Bob Henderson (Woodbury Co.)
- Rep. Derek Wulf (Black Hawk Co.)
- Rep. Austin Harris (Appanoose Co.)
- Rep. Devon Wood (Taylor Co.)
- Rep. Ray Sorensen (Adair Co.)
- Rep. Hanz Wilz (Wapello Co.)
- Rep. Henry Stone (Winnebago Co.)
- Rep. Bill Gustoff (Polk Co.)
- Rep. Matthew Rinker (Des Moines Co.)
- Rep. Dan Gehlbach (Dallas Co.)
- Rep. Jennifer Smith (Dubuque Co.)
- Rep. Ryan Weldon (Polk Co.)
- Rep. Tom Gerhold (Benton Co.)

If your representative is listed, please reach out to thank them for their support. We hope to see this bill passed this year!

### Not-So-Good News

A new bill, SSB1051, has been introduced to provide immunity to chemical manufacturers of herbicides, pesticides, and fungicides from lawsuits based on failure to warn claims. This protection would apply only to pesticides registered with the Environmental Protection Agency, such as Roundup, which contains glyphosate.

Opponents, including environmental and community groups, argue that this bill would strip Iowans of their right to sue pesticide companies for illnesses, including cancers. There are concerns that the bill could negatively affect beekeepers if pesticides harm bee

populations but are used according to their labels, leaving no recourse for damages.

Overall, the bill is highly contentious, with strong arguments on both sides regarding its impact on health, safety, and agricultural practices.

Bayer has settled over 100,000 cases related to cancer and Roundup, totaling more than \$11 billion. Although the Senate passed a similar bill last year, it stalled in the Iowa House. A similar bill has also been introduced in Missouri. The IHPA opposes this bill due to its restrictions on beekeepers' rights to seek relief.

### Forest and Fruit Tree Reserve Repeal

There is a new attempt to repeal the Forest and Fruit Tree Reserve of 1906, which offers a 100% tax exemption for eligible woodlands to encourage erosion control, watershed protection, and game cover. House File 142 and Senate File 219 aim to repeal this exemption, allowing counties to assess property taxes on these woodlands.

Beekeepers rely on Iowa's remaining 3 million forest acres for a full season of nectar and pollen. The IHPA fully opposes these bills to help preserve Iowa's natural woodlands.

Stay informed and engaged to support our beekeeping community!

H.R. Cook  
Legislative Rep for the IHPA





# IHPA Historian

Beginning beekeeper classes are in full swing around the state. I pray other locations are full of eager new honey bee inquisitors, like ours. Week 2 of our class is all about equipment for bee keeping. We cover where you can buy it, what you need, what is nice to have, the different options available, and everything in between. Your decisions are always based on your goal for keeping bees. Do you aspire to fill honey jugs to the brim? Do you want better pollination for your garden and orchard? Or are you striving to start a new bucket list item, take up a "grandma" hobby, or simply add to your homestead? There are different solutions for different directions. After you decide what you need to buy, then you have to decide what grade of wood you want to pay for, assembled and painted or "some assembly required." Either way, now is the time. Trucks of fresh honey bee packages will be here before we know it, along with spring blooms.

Winter is also the best time to work on this equipment. Whether that is scraping it down, putting in new foundation, or assembling new frames. It's a great time to read a classic beekeeping book or the latest edition of a periodical subscription. There is no free time for a beekeeper. Every month on the calendar has a goal that can be accomplished.

While you are looking through the latest catalogs, dreaming about that new tool you "need" or the new boxes you could use or that new hat and veil you really should replace, I thought this glance back in time might be of interest. It comes from an ad in the A.I. Root Company catalog, from 1914. This complete kit has everything you need to get you started - for a honey of a price.

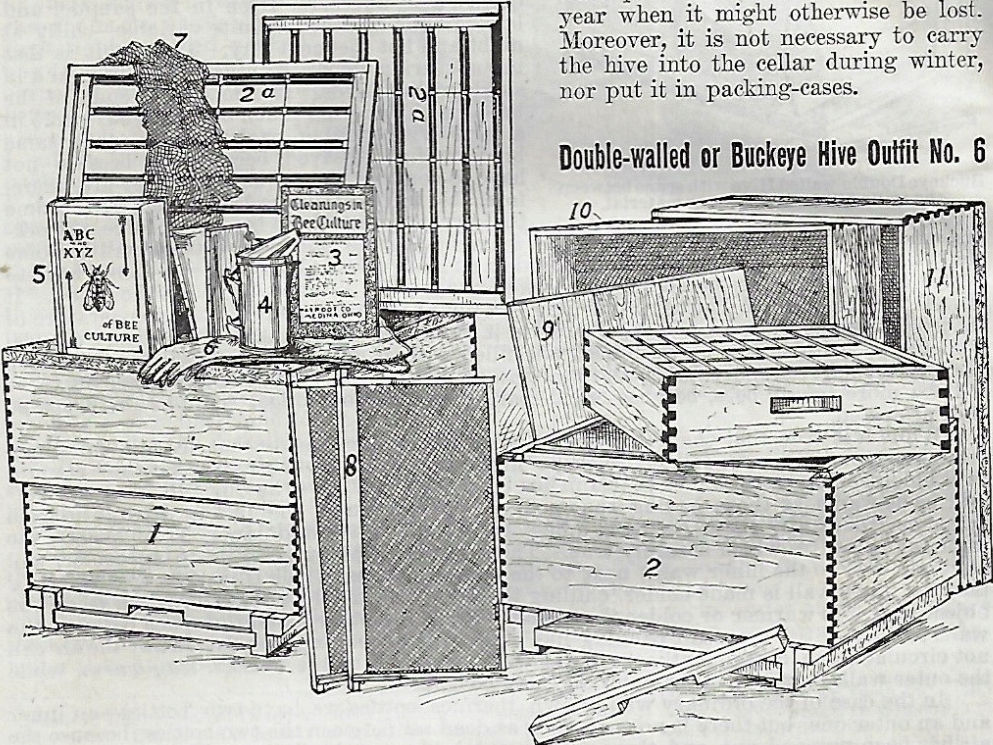
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## BEEKEEPERS' SUPPLIES

### Beginner's Outfit for a Start in Beekeeping.

Many beginners, whether farmer or back-lotter, desiring to make a start in beekeeping, are "all at sea" as to what outfit they should select from a catalog like this. For the guidance of all such we have made up the following list of supplies, which will make a nice start in bees. The Buckeye hive furnished with this outfit requires the least attention of any thing we sell; in fact, it almost "works for nothing and boards itself." With it the novice will be more sure of making a success because its double-packed walls protect the brood at times in the year when it might otherwise be lost. Moreover, it is not necessary to carry the hive into the cellar during winter, nor put it in packing-cases.

### Double-walled or Buckeye Hive Outfit No. 6



The double-walled hives suggested in this outfit are adapted for outdoor wintering, relieving the beekeeper of the work of preparing the hives for winter; and for those who want to keep bees for pleasure as well as profit, we recommend this outfit most highly. Following is a list of articles included in the above outfit, numbered to correspond:

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| <b>No. 1—Full Colony of Bees in 10-fr. double-walled Buckeye Hive, Complete with 1M-10 Super</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | <b>16.00</b>   |
| 1 Tested Italian Queen for Above                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | 3.00           |
| <b>No. 2—Empty Hive Complete for Hiving New Swarm, YVW71M</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | <b>7.35</b>    |
| <b>No. 2A—Two Extra Comb-honey Supers, 1M/10</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | <b>3.80</b>    |
| <b>No. 3—One Year's Subscription to Gleanings in Bee Culture (large semi-monthly, illus.)</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | <b>1.00</b>    |
| <b>No. 4—Standard Root Smoker</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | <b>.85</b>     |
| <b>No. 5—A B C of Bee Culture</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | <b>2.00</b>    |
| <b>No. 6—Pair of Bee-gloves</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | <b>.50</b>     |
| <b>No. 7—No. 2 Bee-veil</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | <b>.60</b>     |
| <b>No. 8—Shows two brood-frames with full sheets of foundation, from which the bees build honey-comb. There are ten of such frames in each of the hives. No 9 is a super-cover. No. 10 is a tray which is filled with chaff or other packing material to afford protection in winter. No. 11 is the hive-cover or roof which telescopes the hive-body as shown in No. 1.</b> | <b>.30</b>     |
| <b>No. 12—One Escape-board</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | <b>.40</b>     |
| <b>No. 13—One Steel Hive-tool</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | <b>.40</b>     |
| <b>SPECIAL OFFER</b> { Delivered free on board cars, the bees to go by express, the other goods by freight, purchaser paying transportation charges.                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | <b>\$35.00</b> |

The investment here is a little more than for some of the other outfits we furnish; but if you expect to keep a few bees only, just for recreation or to make enough honey for your own table, you will not need to make any further purchases for some time, except a few extra sections the second season.



# Iowa Honey Bee Day at the Iowa State Capital on Wednesday, March 26th

The Iowa Honey Producers Association is hosting a Legislative Reception/Breakfast on Iowa Honey Bee Day. It will be in the Rotunda of the Iowa Capital Building on Wednesday, March 26. It will be from 7 a.m. to noon, and all interested elected officials, honey bee keepers and citizens are invited. We have asked Governor Kim Reynolds to sign a Proclamation designating March 26th as Iowa Honey Bee Day along with many city mayors and county supervisors across the state. In the proclamations they will be stating that honey bee and native insects are important pollinators for a third of the food we eat. Honey bees face serious threats from invasive pests, decreasing bee friendly forage, variable climate and increasing pesticide and herbicide pressure. IHPA expects beekeepers and concerned citizens from across the state to attend this reception and meet their Legislators.

We have established a great tradition of having a legislative breakfast on this special day. I believe this is the 7th year we have had it. Our very own Julie Swett organizes and prepares so many breakfast items made with honey to serve all that attend. Yummy!! She and her husband, Mike, lays out the red carpet for us and the legislators.

On this day we also have the opportunity to learn the legislative process. We do have an influence on legislation that favors honey bees. This year a bill in the Legislature to exempt honey bee sales from sales tax (HF 247) has been introduced. Let's all get there to lobby our legislators to pass this bill.



For more information please contact:  
Jamie Beyer  
269 U Ave., Boone, IA 50036  
[beyersbog@aol.com](mailto:beyersbog@aol.com) (515)-231-0215

Remember this is our chance to tell our story to Iowa's Legislators and to the media. I am confident that media coverage will be present. It does start early, 7 a.m., but that is when legislators start arriving and are not already in meetings. So please come around that time to help set up and then eat some breakfast. Queens from around the state are planning to be in attendance. Also, anyone that wants to tour the Capitol is welcome to after the reception. An organized tour will be scheduled.







# Talks with Tyler

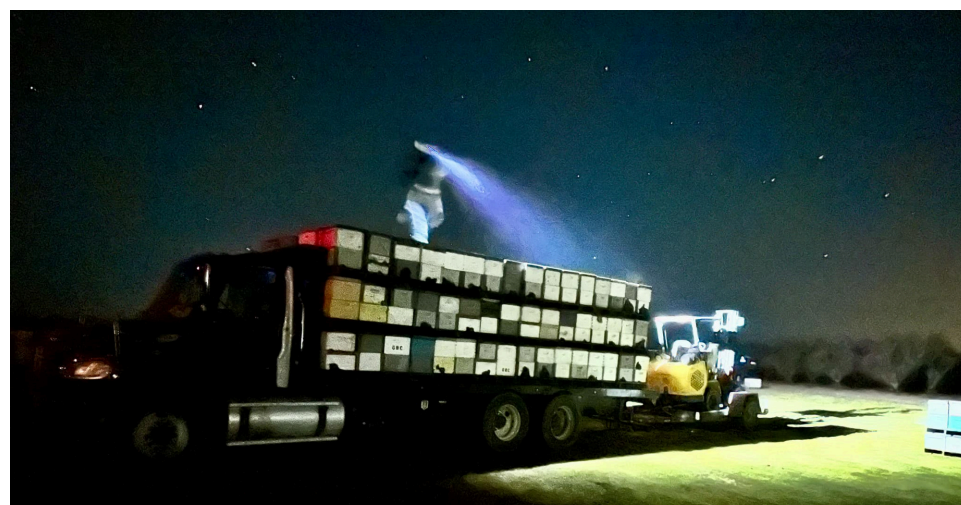


The almonds are blooming.

It's like clockwork that Feb 14th you can see the almonds really starting to open up here in the Central Valley of California.

It's has been an interesting 2025 season. The weather has been cold and rainy, which means not great for the bees, and not great for the any early blooming areas or varieties, and certainly not for the beekeepers.

California is not built for rain. It has mud made for nightmares. Some areas have mud that never ends, like the quicksand I was told about in stories. Some areas get mud that makes the top 1/4 inch of the ground so slick you will slide off the road in park, or not see any kind of traction from your tires. Then there is the clay mud that sticks and builds. The kind that makes your 4 inches taller from walking in it. The kind that sticks to your wheels and packs in so tight that you nearly blow up your forklift because the tires can't roll. The kind that even a pressure washer has a hard time cleaning off!







# Talks with Tyler



Another interesting thing is the massive shortage of bees for pollination. I'm seeing orchards with no bees in them still, and not as many beekeepers out late working. Beekeepers from all over the country are reporting massive losses, or dwindling hives not strong enough to make the pollination grade. Hives for pollination typically need to be 8 frames of bees on average, and a minimum of 6 (75% bee coverage on both sides of the frame is 1 frame). The consensus seems to be that the old bees are dying faster than young bees can replace them. The cause is still unknown.

But now that the hard part is over, the bees are nearly all in the orchards. It's time to get to the real beekeeping part. We will go to the orchards and work the bees. We will rotate boxes, equalize all the hive to the same strengths, and mite treat. This is an incredibly important step because it paves the way for the rest of the year going smoothly. The big hives are less likely to swarm if we can give some of its excess to a hive that could use a boost. That hive getting a boost will thrive. At splitting time everything will be on the same page.

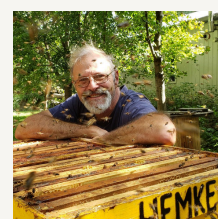
Soon I'll be heading to Mississippi and getting ready for splitting season. Stay tuned!







# From the Honey House



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

## March is Rough on Beehives

It may not seem like it now, but the promise of spring is in the air. Winter temperatures, wind, humidity and other factors are hard on the bees. It's more of a prayer when we pack up the bees for winter. Did we medicate, feed and prepare our hives sufficiently for winter?

It can be hard to explain to new beekeepers that it seems like the month of March is the hardest on the honeybees. This starts the transition period between the end of winter and the start of springtime. The queen has usually started to brood up the hive already, so the temperature of the inside of the cluster must be increased to over 90 degrees to keep the new larvae warm enough. The winter bees are starting to die off, and it's a race to repopulate the hive with the new bees to start out the spring. Food stores are being used up faster.

A lot of new beekeepers ask me the best way to check on their hives over winter, and my response is to just leave them be. Depending on the weather, we usually start popping lids in late February or early March to do our hive checks. This is a simple process; 1. Are the bees alive? And 2. Do they have food? We will swap out our candy boards if need be, replacing an empty or nearly empty board with a full or mostly full one. You shouldn't be feeding sugar syrup yet because it introduces moisture into the hive, but you can add dry sugar or fondant if food is needed. In March we may also add pollen patties for the extra protein, which helps to stimulate the bees to raise more brood. Once you start patties, you should be doing this continuously until pollen starts to show up.

Some people are tempted to pull frames at this point to

see if there is brood, and that's bad. It's not good to chill the bees and brood at this point. Let the bees do their thing, and just trust that they are on the right track. They are bees, and they are pretty good at what they do. We generally do not open the hives up very long initially, just see what you need and close them up.

One of the biggest problems in March/April are the temperature swings. This makes raising brood difficult. Again, depending on the weather, once the temperatures are warmer, we may start feeding sugar syrup. And once you start feeding, you need to keep feeding until nectar starts to show up.

It's interesting to see the bees flying while the temperatures are still in the 30's. They need those cleansing flights to relieve themselves. They've normally been holding it in a while. You may see dead bees in the snow in front of the hives. Some of the bees don't make it back to the hive, but this also means that your bees are still alive. I normally don't worry about a few bees in the snow.

If you have deadouts, it's time to order replacement packages. I'm hearing about a lot of losses from around the country in the last few weeks, so get your package orders in early. In March you can clean out your deadouts if you want. It's sometimes easier to do it right away, rather than waiting until temperatures are higher, with the possibility of the dead bees molding up. Make sure you close up the entrances on the deadouts also, to keep the mice out.

Wishing everyone happy beekeeping!

Andy Hemken, Bee Guy  
andy@hemkenhoney.com





# From the Beeyard

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

*Written by Phil Ebert*

I have three colonies sitting near our steel building. Two of them were flying during the warm days (late January). There was a lot of traffic but it is too early to make a judgment. Sometimes, the first warm days give the sick bees a chance to fly off and die. Colonies that look good in February often dwindle down to little or nothing by March. Years ago, if we got our colonies to the first of March, we had it made. Now, that is when they really start to die. Other than the three colonies that sit at my house, the rest are in Texas. The weather has been cold down there. It has really held the bees back. Alex and Adam were down there in mid-January to feed and medicate. They will go back in mid-February to see if we have enough good ones to send a load to the almonds. They are definitely short of bees in California and are offering to pay a pollination fee for 4 framers.

One of the problems when you begin beekeeping is that you get a lot of advice. It is often conflicting. You have to decide who to listen to. A guy I relied on a lot was Dick Blake. He operated in the Shenandoah area and was up to around 2,000 non-migratory colonies at one time. He always had good practical advice. Two things he told me have stuck with me thru the years. One was "Do not hoard beekeeping equipment. It will only deteriorate. Get rid of it. You can always buy more." You may have noticed, I usually have something for sale. The second one was, "Do not buy a new truck." Dick did have one nice vehicle. I don't remember what kind it was but it had a short aluminum flatbed that they used to haul some of the supers. His main beekeeping truck was a 700 series Ford that dated back to the '70s. It was pretty tall but he had a lift gate on the back of the bed. I often think about Dick when I climb into the '95 which is approaching 320,000 road miles. It also reminds me of the old Timex ad with John Cameron Swayze—"Takes a lickin' and keeps on tickin'."

Another guy that influenced me was Roger Bailey. He operated out of McCool Junction, Nebraska, and later in North Dakota when forage decreased in Nebraska. He had thousands of colonies. I was a lot farther down the trail when I met Roger. He didn't really give advice. He told stories. They always had a point but you could take



however you wanted to. It took me several years to realize he was coaching me. Roger is retired now and keeping a couple of colonies in his yard. We have stayed in touch. Here is a fun fact. He has a built-in organ in his house. Sometimes the music students come down from Lincoln to play it.

I have decided the one good thing about old age is that I get to quit work when I feel like it and sometimes I get to choose what I do. So far this winter, I have painted a lot of boxes and poured a lot of wax. I have pretty much given up candle making, but we handle a lot of wax. We buy from several beekeepers around the upper Midwest. A lot of it arrives in 40 lb. blocks. For people who want large quantities of unfiltered wax, we just resell the big blocks. For customers that need filtered wax we have to melt down the big blocks. We have two tanks for this. They each hold about 200 lbs. of wax. We went thru 20,000 lbs. of wax last year.

I have sat at the computer for the last 20 minutes trying to think of a catchy signoff. It is not happening. I will just say. "Think spring." May your bees still be alive.





# Recipes by Emma Ingram

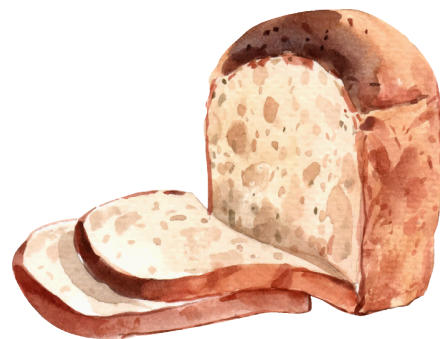
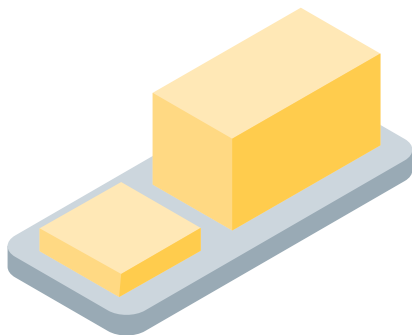
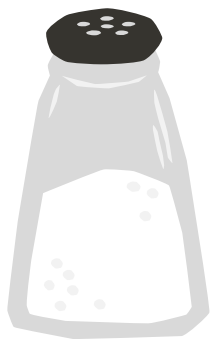
March always appears as I am just getting ready for February. Those 28 days are rarely enough, but since they are gone, I am working on getting my seeds started, prepping my new bee yard, and thinking thoughts of spring. What better way to kick off a new month than with a new favorite recipe? I decided to try another variety of bread (You can never have enough favorite bread recipes... right?) and something a little healthier: veggies!

## Honey Buttermilk Bread (Pg. 14)

|                        |                                   |
|------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1 envelope yeast       | pinch of ginger                   |
| 1 teaspoon sugar       | 1/4 cup warm water                |
| 2 cups warm buttermilk | 1/3 cup honey                     |
| 1 teaspoon salt        | 3/4 teaspoon baking soda          |
| 6 cups white flour     | 1/4 cup butter, melted and cooled |

In a medium bowl, mix the yeast, ginger, sugar, and warm water. Set aside for 5 minutes or until it's foamy. Whisk the buttermilk, honey, salt, and baking soda together and add to the yeast mixture. Add three cups of flour and mix until smooth, about 3-5 minutes on low in a stand mixer. Pour in the butter until it is totally mixed into the butter. Add the rest of the flour, one cup at a time, keeping the mixer on low speed. When dough pulls from the sides of the bowl, move it from the mixer to a lightly floured surface. Knead until elastic and smooth. Place in greased bowl, turn to grease the top, and cover with a clean tea towel. Allow the dough to rise for 1 1/2 hours or until doubled. Punch down and form into 2 loaves. Place in greased loaf pans. Cover and allow to rise for 45 minutes or until it is just about to the top of the bread pans. Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Bake for 30 minutes. Turn out of pan and onto a rack. Brush with butter while still warm.

**Emma's Notes:** We really enjoyed this bread. It had a slightly sweet flavor, but not so much that it wasn't tasty for a good ham sandwich. This bread was also one of the nicest slicing breads I have made. It did not dry out very quickly, but the tops did get a little dark in the oven. Next time I make this bread, I will reduce the oven temperature to 375 and bake an additional 5 minutes. Honey browns much more easily than sugar and this difference can be fixed by reducing the oven temperature. The bread was dense, but didn't feel heavy when eating it.



Recipes continued on next page







# From the Editor

Sara Sleyster, IHPA Editor

[sarasleyster@gmail.com](mailto:sarasleyster@gmail.com)



Hello, everyone!

I'm always interested when an article about bees comes my way. Last year, Reader's Digest had an article called "The Buzz About Bees" that listed 13 interesting facts about bees. The one I found most intriguing was No. 12 where bees were being used to find dangerous landmines in previous war-torn countries.

The feat was possible because of bees' heightened sense of smell. According to the article, bees can detect odors in parts per trillion, which is like being able to find a grain of salt in an Olympic-sized swimming pool with just your nose. Researchers then trained bees to associate the scent of explosives with a sugar mixture.

Once the bees are released, they will head toward the smell of the landmines in search of a sugar solution. And since they are so light, they are able to land on top of the dangerous area without causing an explosion.

Thankfully, this is not a skill Iowa bees need to have, but it's a great example of the super smelling power of bees.

Bye for now!  
Sara



This image of bees "finding" landmines was made using AI.



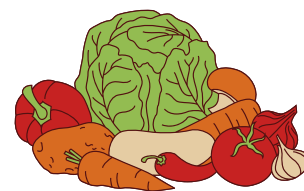
## Recipes Continued

### Honey-glazed Roasted Vegetables (Pg. 136)

1/4 cup honey  
3 tablespoons wine vinegar  
Salt and pepper to taste

1/4 cup olive oil  
1 clove garlic, crushed

4 cups of fresh vegetables of choice (halved red potatoes, sliced zucchini, thickly sliced onions, red peppers, carrots, sweet potatoes, sliced eggplants, or other vegetables)



Mix all other ingredients except the vegetables. Put vegetables in a roasting pan. Brush thoroughly with honey mixture. Bake at 400 degrees for 30 minutes stirring often.

**Emma's Notes:** The flavor was good, but a single batch of the honey glaze was enough to do a double batch of vegetables. It didn't stick well to the vegetables, but pouring the glaze over the vegetables on your plate allowed us to enjoy more of the tasty glaze. I used frozen vegetable packs but look forward to trying the recipe again when the gardens start producing again.





# Beekeeping Club News

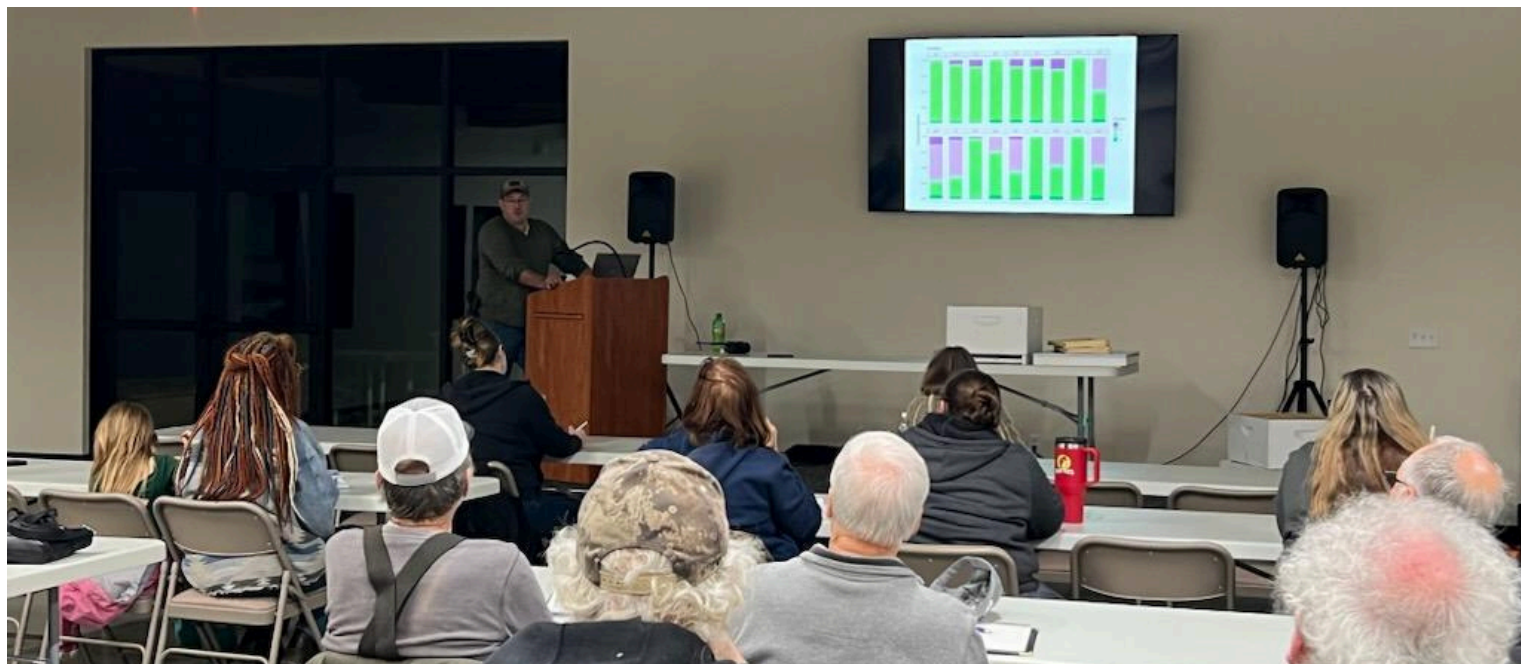
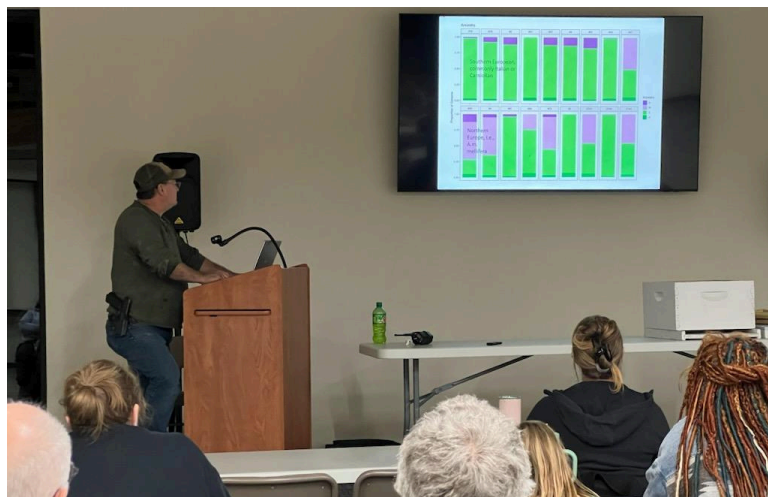
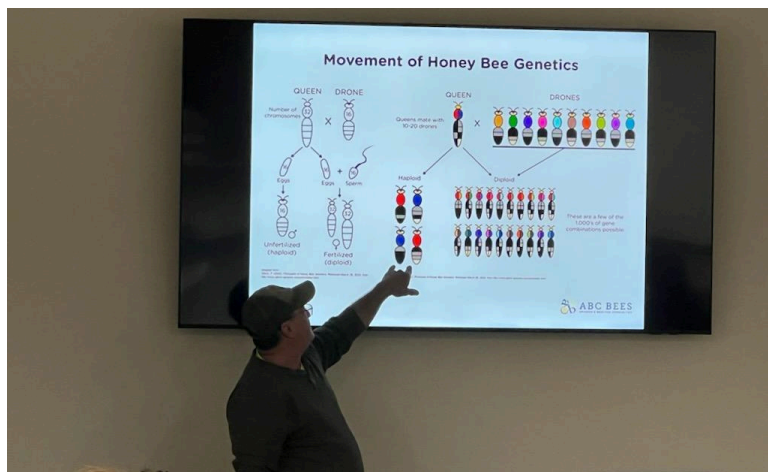
Southern Iowa Hive Handlers Bee Club had their first Advanced Bee Class for the year on February 3. We also had an all-day Beginning Beekeeper Class for those who were interested in beekeeping or just wanted a refresher.

Something new that Scott Kent talked about was the genetics of bees. He sent honeybee samplings from 16 of his hives to Perdue University for ancestry analysis. He labeled each tube with the location of the hive, how old the queen was, and rated each on how defensive the colony was on a scale of 1-5. Each one of his hives resulted in a different genetic make-up, including species from African, Carnolian, Caucasica, and Italian. It was interesting to see all the diversity within the hives and discuss the benefits of high vs. low diversification.

Just wanted to share this information everyone in case other bee clubs are interested or want to learn more about the importance of genetics within the honeybee population.

Thanks!

Judy Kjellsen  
Member of Southern Iowa Hive Handlers





Foley's

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We carry many other bee related items in our farm store - come out for a visit some time!

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## Iowa Beekeeping Clubs



**Boone River Beekeeping Club:** contact Roy Kraft at [kroyster.rk@gmail.com](mailto:kroyster.rk@gmail.com)

**Cedar Valley Bee Club:** contact Ryan Dermody or Robert Stwalley at [dermody.ryan@gmail.com](mailto:dermody.ryan@gmail.com) and [robert.stwalley@hawkeyecollege.edu](mailto:robert.stwalley@hawkeyecollege.edu)

**Central Iowa Beekeepers Association:** contact Jamie Beyer at [beyersbog@aol.com](mailto:beyersbog@aol.com)

**Des Moines Backyard Beekeepers:** contact Ellen Bell at [ellenbell.ia@gmail.com](mailto:ellenbell.ia@gmail.com)



**Dubuque Swiss Valley Bee Club:** contact Paulette Lynn at [pjlynn1@gmail.com](mailto:pjlynn1@gmail.com)

**East Central Iowa Beekeepers:** contact Joseph Klingelhutz at [jo.aloysius@gmail.com](mailto:jo.aloysius@gmail.com)

**Friendly Beekeepers of Iowa:** contact Eric Kenoyer at [kenoyer1270@gmail.com](mailto:kenoyer1270@gmail.com)

**Great River Bend Beekeepers:** contact David Hayes at [prairiecreekfrm@netins.net](mailto:prairiecreekfrm@netins.net)



**Heartland Bee Club:** contact Tom Hart at [cedarvalleyapiaries@gmail.com](mailto:cedarvalleyapiaries@gmail.com)

**Loess Hills Beekeeping Association:** contact Chris Ruhaak at [LHBA@LoessHillsBA.com](mailto:LHBA@LoessHillsBA.com)

**North Iowa Beekeepers Club:** contact Richard Vonderohe at [vonderohebees@hotmail.com](mailto:vonderohebees@hotmail.com)

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**Quad City Bee Keeping Club:** contact Ron Fischer or Doug Dahlin at [qcbeeclub@yahoo.com](mailto:qcbeeclub@yahoo.com)

**Southern Iowa Beehivers:** contact Mindy Butcher at [msbutcher1@hotmail.com](mailto:msbutcher1@hotmail.com)



**Southern Iowa Hive Handlers:** contact Scott Kent at [clarkeccb@gmail.com](mailto:clarkeccb@gmail.com)

**Southeast Iowa Beekeepers:** contact Steve Hemphill at [snwfarm@mepotelco.net](mailto:snwfarm@mepotelco.net)



**Southwest Iowa Beekeepers:** contact Nathan Paulsen at [southwestiowabeekeepers@gmail.com](mailto:southwestiowabeekeepers@gmail.com)

**Siouxland Beekeeping Club:** contact Ron Rynders at [rrihpa@gmail.com](mailto:rrihpa@gmail.com)

**Tama County Bee Keepers:** contact Jim and Penny Dolezal at [busybeeacres@yahoo.com](mailto:busybeeacres@yahoo.com)





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Our package bees include an Italian queen.



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### Availability

We anticipate our packages will be available at the beginning of April. Watch our website and follow us on Facebook for updates.

During package season we are very flexible and usually available, but it's always best to call or text. We call and work our way down the list as packages are ready.

During package season we are typically available Mon - Sat 8-6 and Sundays by appointment only.

**SVHF Packages**  
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<https://www.iowahoneyproducers.org/officers-directors-now>

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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](mailto:ihpa1912@gmail.com)**



# The Buzz Newsletter

Iowa Honey Producers Association  
c/o Editor, Sara Sleyster  
2233 E. Virginia Avenue  
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!

Deadline to submit information for the April Edition of *The Buzz*

**March 10th at 11:59 p.m.**

*Please submit materials to: [ihpaeditor@gmail.com](mailto:ihpaeditor@gmail.com)*

