

The Buzz

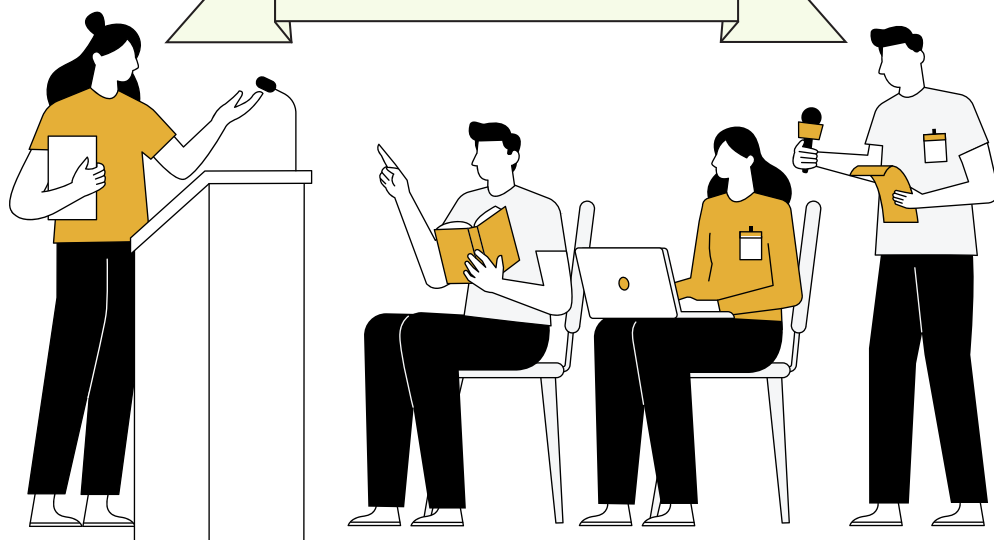
Newsletter of the
Iowa Honey Producers
Association



September 2024

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

Honey Bees



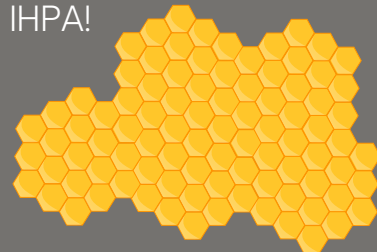
**Are you ready for the IHPA Annual Conference?!
Learn how to get registered on Page 6.**



**Get to know an IHPA presidential
candidate on Page 7.**

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 a member of the IHPA!



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

IHPA Officer & Director News

Ramblings from The Russian Bee Guy

President, Jason Foley

And it's a wrap for the 2024 Iowa State Fair.

Connie is going to kill me for putting this photo in The Buzz, but it was such a priceless candid shot. We had 11 days that were 14ish hrs long in the John Deere Ag Building, plus three days of set up prior, an evening of parade, and one day after the fair for tear-down. Why do we do it? Cause we are completely crazy. Naw, this is our biggest fundraiser of the year that allows us to do things like our college scholarships, hives and bees for our youth, our queen program, awarding grants, subsidizing the annual conference, and many other things. And it's not just our team of seven managers who pull all this off, it's also many, many, many members all donating their time to pull one or more shifts.



To all of you who helped out, I thank you from the bottom of my heart. Thank you, thank you for all the hard work. To show our appreciation we will be having a drawing where every single shift a "volunteer" worked, will earn them an entry into our drawing.

Prior to the fair we reached out to different equipment and bee suppliers for some donations. At this year's conference we will be announcing the winners of a 3 lb. package, 1 of 2 nuc donations, and a donated complete hive kit. You do not need to be present to win; it's just when we want to do the big announcement. Prizes can be collected this next spring from the donors. Your board is also working on a few other things to show you our appreciation.



IHPA Officer & Director News



Alright, so many of you know that my July was a living hell with a flood on the 2nd and then again on the 28th. I lost 2 weeks of time I had been planning to use in making products for sale at the fair booth and prepping my fair entries. Of course there was bee work that needed done too during that time. Fair entries took the brunt of things. We had 17 tickets and only used 10 or 11 of them. Heck, I'm surprised I even placed in queenline honey jars and honey bears. I literally the day before just walked up to our bottling tank and poured out those entries. No fine filtering with a 200 micron filter, no checking the containers for imperfections, no using an eye dropper to get the perfect fill. I just needed to get-r-dun. I was even getting to the point of giving up on beeswax art for this year and probably would have if Tyler Holton hadn't teased me. I ended up starting on it at 4 p.m. and didn't stop until like 3 in the morning. So I'm happy to say, I took home blue in beeswax art for the 5th year in a row.

Each year my beeswax art gets a little more intricate and technical. I have even bigger plans for the 2025 fair, so watch out for me getting that 6th win!

Tomorrow begins yet another grueling time as I will be heading out by my lonesome to pull all our honey supers. I'll be sweating my booty off during the day and working late into the night extracting just to go out and do it all over again. Day after day the same thing until all the honey supers are back in the shop. At least my wife Shannon is there in the evenings helping with the extraction. Then comes fall prep and managing the girls so they are fat and healthy for the trip out to California.



Iowa Honey Royalty



Britta McCollum - 2024 Iowa Honey Queen

Happy September everyone!

With the Iowa State Fair over and school starting back up it's finally time to start thinking about treating our hives for mites and get those full honey supers off of your hives. At the Iowa State fair I was happy to see so many people supporting the honey bees at the Iowa Honey Producers booth and helping kids roll candles throughout the week. Along with that, I gave a few presentations on the basics of honey bees, the benefits of honey, and a few cooking presentations. I made banana pops, fruit salad, peanut butter, a strawberry banana smoothie, peanut butter kisses, and a fruity mocktail; all that I pulled out of the Iowa Honey Producers Cookbook. I also got to do a few radio interviews with the Big Show and Simon Cowell. While at the Iowa State Fair, I also got to see a lot of friends from around Iowa! And while we start slowing down this year with honey production, remember to mark your calendars for October 25th and 26th for the Iowa Honey Producers Annual Conference!

Remember to stay sweet and we will see you next month!



Iowa State Fair Photos

Iowa Honey Royalty



Britta McCollum - 2024 Iowa Honey Queen

A quick and easy peanut butter recipe from Queen Britta:

*2 Cups Peanuts *2 Tablespoons Honey *A pinch of salt

In a blender or food processor blend these ingredients all together and enjoy on a peanut butter and jelly or in your favorite scotcharoo recipe.



Iowa State Fair Photos



IHPA Annual Conference & Trade Show



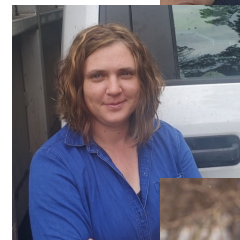
Like nature's seasons, the Iowa Honey Producers Association (IHPA) moves through the year with various events. After Bee Camp, the successful Summer Field Day, and the Iowa State Fair, our next big event is the Annual Conference on October 25th and 26th at Prairie Meadows Conference Center and Hotel in Altoona.

The IHPA Conference has gained a reputation as one of the best and biggest conferences in the Midwest for beekeepers. In 2023, we had over 425 attendees from five states, 30 vendors, six major speakers, and 10 breakout sessions. Due to the size of the 2023 show, the conference committee needed to find a bigger center with more amenities and hotel rooms. After a competitive bidding process, we found that Prairie Meadows Conference Center met all our needs and more. Located directly off I-80 near Des Moines, our conference center boasts remodeled luxury rooms at an affordable price, many restaurants and activities within walking distance, and a fantastic atmosphere for all ages.

If you have attended our annual conference, you know how educational and fun they are. In 2024, we anticipate record attendance again with our great lineup of speakers such as Randy Oliver, YouTube Beekeeping Superstar David Burns, Megan Mahoney, Dr. Larry Conner, Judy Wu-Smart, and more! We have added more breakout sessions ranging from overwintering to queen rearing, marketing a business, splitting, infusion, commercial kitchen prep, swarm control, and beekeeping and tax preparation.

Add in your favorite vendors with the latest products, a mead contest, best honey and honey swap, the awards banquet and auction, the President's Reception on Friday night followed by bee trivia hosted by the State Queen Candidates, snacks, cookies, and a chance to ask questions and talk about bees with people who share your passion.

I encourage you to register early and utilize Prairie Meadows Hotel for your lodging as you will want to be under one roof to BeeDazzled! Visit www.iowahoneyproducers.org for more information and registration. Don't miss out on this fun event!



We Have a Presidential Candidate!

Surprisingly, we have a CANDIDATE!!!

-President Foley-

I'm happy to announce that Chris Puetz has the forethought and passion to put himself out there months before our annual elections and give our members a chance to learn about their newest presidential candidate.



From our newest presidential candidate:

When asked about this role, some have said, 'You? You only have 30 colonies and have only been beekeeping for 5 years.' I have to say, I get that. There is a lot I have to learn, which is why I think it's exciting to run for this role and help to continue the momentum Jason and the team have started. From building an amazing Convention to the State Fair, we can easily say the Iowa Honey Producers Board and Directors have been doing an amazing job!!

'So, Chris, you are a newer beekeeper, why?' For me, getting into beekeeping had a huge learning curve, and it if wasn't for a few amazing mentors, I may not have stuck with it, but within the inexperience, is opportunity. I see hobby beekeeping continuing to grow, embracing those folks and inviting them into our Association will aid us in growth and provide opportunities for educational sessions, be that at the Annual Meeting or Field Days. Let's work together to create a "newbee" track and a secondary for more senior folks. I also see opportunities to rotate some education, perhaps the field day within the State, appealing to our members in East, Central and Western Iowa. We have some very talented beekeepers in our state, perhaps we can work with them and become more accessible for our neighboring states as well.

Never one to be short with words, I think the best reason why I'm running for President is simple. Five years ago, I got talked into taking a class at NICC here in Dubuque with my little brother, we got our first two hives after that, and I fell in love with this little hobby that is turning into a small business. I want to be able to help others share in this experience, help develop the tools and education to help them be successful, grow the Iowa Honey Producers Association, and push legislation to benefit beekeepers and Iowa Honey.

So with this, I ask for your support in October, and look forward to serving you.

Thank you,
Chris Puetz
Wildhills Honey, LLC

From the Beeyard

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

Written by Phil Ebert

There is more white sweet clover this year than I have ever seen before. There could be even more but the people around here mow their road ditches religiously. Sometimes, they go a ¼ mile in each direction from the house. I always ask them to wait until the sweet clover goes to seed but that request normally falls on deaf ears. It turns the road ditch in to a wasteland for, not only bees, but for other pollinators as well. For some reason, the bees never did get on the clover—either Dutch or sweet clover. For any of you who don't know, sweet clover is the stuff that grows 4 or 5 feet tall and has little yellow or white flowers. The yellow blooms first, then the white starts when the yellow is about half done. It is a legume and has a tap root that goes down five or six feet. The bloom is usually finished by the end of July.

The bees started flying in earnest around July 16 in our area. We got rain the night of July 28. That shut things off. It took a while for things to dry out but then the rains returned. We got 7" over a four day span. I had hopes for a late flow from the replanted beans in the flood areas. That hope was in vain. It's August 12th as I finish this. We haven't seen much goldenrod yet. The blooms are starting to show color but are not fully open yet in our area. Compassplant is blooming in the ditches. Partridge pea and chicory are along the roadsides. Chicory is a native plant but I only see it along the roadsides. The DOT must throw out some seed.

Our crop looks to be in the fair to poor range. I only see my three hobby yards but Alex is not very positive about the rest of them. Some yards are okay but others are definitely in the poor category. Surprisingly, we have made a decent amount of comb honey. Crop reports from the Dakotas are

good. Nebraska is spotty. I talked to a guy in the Grand Island area who was sure he would have a 100# average over 200 colonies. Farther east, it is not as good.

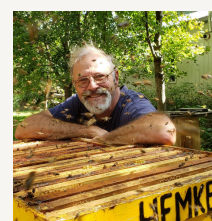
Alex has completed the Formic Pro treatments. He gave a single pad twice. We have not done any tests since the 2nd pad was put in. I am not sure how good they are going to work with supers on. The fumes will be spread over a larger area so they won't be so intense. I hope they are strong enough to still kill mites. I have not done my hobby yards yet. They were all late splits. I hope that means mite development was a little behind. I will be taking some ether rolls this week to see where those yards are at mite wise.

We have not started extracting yet. We were hoping to get the supers topped off a little. We usually start around the middle of July. This year, it is going to be the middle of August. I have some customers from Kansas that come up here to pick up comb honey. The women came this year. They were interested in the plants growing around my dock. I learned a few things. A plant I thought was related to ragweed turned out to be motherwort. Because it is in the mint family, it has a square stem. I didn't know that either. It grows all over my place. I usually see bumble bees on it but honey bees have been working it this year. It has long been used in folk medicine. Sweet clover is also known as lespedeza. I had heard that before but had forgotten about it.

It is time to be checking your mite load if you have not done it already. As brood rearing decrease more and more mites are concentrated on fewer and fewer bees. This leads to a spike in mite pop. If you do not control this your bees will be dead.



From the Honey House



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

Honey Harvesting; Moisture

Beekeeping is an endeavor challenged by many variables. A lot of beginning beekeepers maybe not be aware of the importance of honey moisture content, until they get to that part of their learning, and then some become paranoid.

The bees take a plant sugar (nectar around 80% water) and through their body functions and actions, convert this chemically to a simple sugar. Honey is basically sugar in suspension in water. Obviously, it's more complicated that, with the vitamins, minerals and the other 160 or so compounds included, that make it honey. Depending on where you get your information, honey should be between 16% and 18.5% moisture, measured with a refractometer. In this condition it is shelf stable for a long time.

When pulling honey, ideally all of the frames in your super will be drawn out, filled and capped. But what happens when not all of the cells are capped?

Over the years I have pulled capped honey that has tested around 18.5%+ (rare), and partially uncapped honey that has tested out around 16% moisture. What gives? Depending on outside temperatures and humidity levels, the bees will probably cap their honey in the acceptable range. In periods of high humidity, the bees have to work harder to evaporate the water to obtain good moisture levels. No wonder the bees are irritated during periods of high humidity! I've found over the years of pulling honey that sometimes the outside temperature and humidity are good, and the nectar flow is on, that the bees simply skip capping the cells to concentrate on bringing in more groceries.

Another factor I use in extracting is that while some of the uncapped honey might be a little high in moisture, the capped honey is fine. So when these are in your accumulation tank/bucket, the combining of the honey evens out. Measuring the moisture content of the bulk of the honey frequently ends up in the acceptable range.

High moisture honey can be dried by putting open buckets in a closet or small room with a de-humidifier for a while. I opened my bulk tank one time, which is heated to 100 degrees, and put a floor fan to blow air over the surface. And stirring up the honey once in a while, I lowered the moisture content by a half percent over 24 hours.

More surface area is better to expose the high moisture honey to warm air. Honey normally gives up some moisture if you coax it.



Occasionally we do have honey that is high moisture and starts to ferment. We make mead out of it.

All things considered the honeybees do a good job producing high quality honey. We as beekeepers should keep this in mind, and follow a few simple guidelines when pulling our honey supers; pull capped honey, be aware of weather conditions when pulling partially uncapped honey, and measure your moisture levels with a calibrated refractometer. If you don't have one, you can sometimes bring a sample of your honey to a friend to measure with theirs.

We've been pulling and extracting honey for the past couple weeks here in Wisconsin. Good luck to everyone in their honey harvest!

Andy Hemken, Bee Guy andy@hemkenhoney.com



Recipes by Emma Ingram

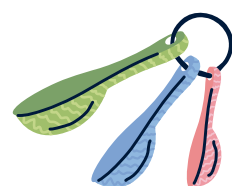
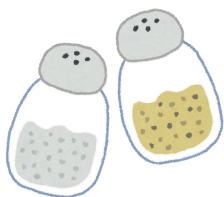
Every year at the State Fair, the Iowa Honey Producers Association sponsors a cooking competition in the Elwell Food Building. This cooking competition is always an exciting opportunity to taste new foods, see creative ways of using honey, and meet other people with a passion for food. This year was no different! We had a great turnout of about 30 food entries! The competition ranges from yeast breads to quick bread to honey creations. Our overall winners this year were honey salad dressing and protein balls.

Protein Balls (Youth Division, Honey Creations)

2 cups rolled oats	¼ cup honey
2 Tablespoons melted coconut oil	½ cup creamy peanut butter
1/3 cup chocolate protein powder	½ cup mini chocolate chips
1 tsp Vanilla	½ cup M&M's

Mix all ingredients together in a small mixing bowl, drop by tablespoon in a cookie sheet and chill until firm.

Emma's Notes: The flavor was really nice. The honey flavor was distinct, but subtle and overall, these were a tasty treat! When you try them out, I recommend using mini M&M's because the smaller ones incorporate more thoroughly into the mixture.



Honey Salad Dressing (Adult Division, Other Honey Creations)

¼ cup olive oil	2 tsp ground mustard
½ cup finely diced onion	½ cup finely diced carrot
2 Tbsp apple cider vinegar	½ tsp ground pepper
2 tsp. minced garlic	½ tsp salt
2/3 cup honey	

In a medium skillet, heat olive oil. Add diced carrots and onions and cook until onions are translucent. Add garlic and stir well. Lower heat; add honey, ground mustard, apple cider vinegar, ground pepper and salt. Simmer 3-4 minutes. Makes ½ pint.

Emma's Notes: This dressing POPPED. The flavor was distinct and left us wanting just one more bite. It was a perfect balance of sweet and salty. Overall, a really well balanced dressing.



From the Editor

Sara Sleyster, IHPA Editor
sarasleyster@gmail.com



Hello, everyone!

I had such a fun time volunteering at the Iowa State Fair booth this year! I had been looking forward to my morning helping out and it did not disappoint. Not only was it my first time volunteering, it was also my first time tasting the honey lemonade. (What a delicious bargain for only \$3!)

Heidi, the State Fair Manager, had the booth running like clockwork. I was impressed with all of the work she put into making it a great fair experience. My sister Breana volunteered with me so Heidi placed us at the lemonade station. I filled the cups with ice and Breana filled them with the lemonade. We made more than 400 cups of lemonade in our 3 and ½ hours there. Not too bad for a misty Tuesday morning!

While we were preparing the cups we also had a chance to see all the people walking through the Agricultural Building. I saw a former co-worker, people from my church, and even our Aunt Sue walked by. She was surprised to see us working at the honey booth since neither of us have bees.

One of my favorite parts though was getting to meet some of the great people who are part of the Iowa Honey Producers Association. My sister got to know JaCinda who was stationed at the cash register beside her. I had the pleasure of meeting beekeepers John and Marcy who were ringing up the various honey products for customers on the other side of me. Everyone who volunteered that morning was so helpful and welcoming.

If you've never volunteered for the State Fair booth, I highly recommend it. I'm already excited to sign up for next year's event.

Bye for now!
Sara



Above, The Buzz editor Sara, right, and her sister Breana volunteering at the IHPA Iowa State Fair Booth on Aug. 13.

Below, some of our fellow volunteers that day.





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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

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 or Diane Thoma at diane.thoma9046@gmail.com

East Central Iowa Beekeepers: contact Joseph Klingelhutz at jo.aloyusius@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 cedarvalleyapiaries@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

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

Red Rock Beekeepers: contact Jerry or Sheila Weldon at weldonjs@windstream.net

Southern Iowa Beehivers: contact Mindy Butcher at msbutcher1@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

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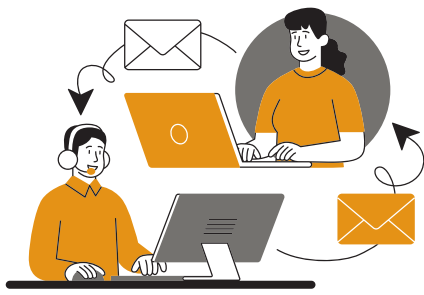
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If you would like to become more involved in the IHPA, we could certainly use your help!!!

Please email ihpa1912@gmail.com

The Buzz Newsletter

Iowa Honey Producers Association
c/o Editor, Sara Sleyster
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 October Edition of *The Buzz*

September 10th at 11:59 p.m.

Please submit materials to: ihpaeditor@gmail.com

