



the **Queen City** **BUZZZZZZ**

Official Newsletter of the Regina & District Bee Club, **2018 Autumn**



Laws, Ethics and Reputation Edition

Honey bees are amazing creatures to keep and from which to learn from. They're also a huge responsibility. This issue provides tons of information that a beekeeper should think about - whether they're a commercial operator or beginning hobbyist with only one hive.

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Upcoming Events



Clean Farms
Disposal of expired/obsolete
pesticides
October 1-5th
[Various locations](#)



Friday, October 19th
6:00 p.m. start / come and go

An informal networking event for
beekeepers
Bushwacker Brewpub, Private Room
2206 Dewdney Ave, Regina
Order and pay from menu for meals
and beverages

RSVP on Facebook or by
e-mailing
lloveBees@ReginaBeeClub.ca
Be responsible. Always plan a safe
ride home.



November 19-24th

Evraz Place, Regina

To Volunteer, contact Ed Rodger
ed.rodger@sasktel.net
[\(306\) 757-7059](tel:(306)757-7059).



Sask Beekeepers Development
Commission

Convention and Annual General
Meeting

November 28, 29 and December 1st

Radisson, Saskatoon

[Visit the Commission's web site to
register.](#)

Beekeeping Volunteers Needed

Agribition, November 19-24th



This year, our club is hosting two booths at Agribition. The primary focus of both booths is education.

- Our education centre booth consists of various displays about beekeeping and honey, with a focus on the situation in Saskatchewan, and also features an observation hive. The booth is usually very popular with visitors, including school groups, families and Agribition attendees in general.
- Our producer booth has a priority on education as well, but also sells honey and products of the hive. This year, our producer booth is moving from the food pavilion to the main trade show area where we will be situated beside other producer groups.

Both booths run from Monday, November 19 to Saturday, November 24.

The booths operate on volunteer work, and bee club members or other beekeepers are invited to help out by giving some time at the booth to explain the displays, talk about beekeeping and answer questions. It's a great way to promote beekeeping, meet fellow beekeepers and learn some new things.

If you think you could help out by volunteering at the Agribition booths this year, or have questions, please contact Ed Rodger at ed.rodger@sasktel.net, or at [\(306\) 757-7059](tel:3067577059) (landline) or (306) 539-2800 (textable). Volunteer shifts can be as little as a few hours, or as many times as you'd like over the days that the booth is up. Any level of beekeeping experience is fine.

RDBC Honey Sellers Program

Occasionally, the Club facilitates the sale of local honey and products of the hive (beeswax, candles, cosmetics, etc.) to consumers at trade shows. The biggest such event is typically Agribition. To help members and organizers, we have created an official program description and a Product Submission Form. The documents are on the Club's Facebook page in the files section and will be posted to the Club web site soon.

The deadline to notify organizers if you are planning to provide products for sale is October 31st. Those who are providing product will be notified of the delivery dates and location.

If you have questions in the meantime, you can direct them to any board member or Ed who is handling Agribition.

Stop, Thieves! Preventing Robbing

One of the most important parts of the provincial Apiaries Act is that it is designed to prevent the spread of the highly contagious and deadly American Foulbrood Disease, which is caused by robbing. Robbing is when bees from multiple hives - and strangers' hives - are allowed to move to a food source.



This hive was set out for a very short while, but hungry honey bees came out in droves to the honey buffet. As all those bees mix, disease spreads between the bees and to the hive equipment.

By Karen Pedersen

I like to compare robbing bees to shoppers on Black Friday in their frenzied quest to get a good deal. They'll trample the guards and injure themselves, spreading diseases the whole time, in search of a good deal. Consequently, my biggest tip to prevent robbing is not to advertise or have any fire sales. (Don't give robbing bees any access to easily obtained syrup or honey.) It's easier to prevent robbing than to get them to stop once they have found a good source so make sure you don't get them started robbing in the first place.

Keep your equipment, particularly your boxes in good repair, fixing any broken corners or knot holes so that the only entrance to your hives is the entrance that you control. If you have to, staple duct tape over holes and gaps on a hive to close the gap.

Keep your boxes, combs and covers clean of gobs of propolis and wax so that the equipment fits tightly together.

Don't use leaking feeding equipment. Don't spill syrup. Don't leave out open containers of syrup or honey.

Clean up deadouts in the spring and close out weak hives in the fall ASAP before they are robbed out. (Don't wrap deadouts/almost deadouts for the winter.)

Store equipment (old and new) in a bee tight storage shed.

Run strong hives. (Ensure your hives have the population to fill the box they are in, are queenright and have low mite levels.)

Have different sized entrance reducers so that you can reduce the entrance when robbing season is on.

Limit the number of hives that you have open at any one time and how long you have them open during robbing season.

If the robbing gets bad while you are stripping honey, quit stripping that particular yard and come back another day.

We started using exclusion bags this year. During robbing season, we would take the cover off of our hives, cover the supers with a cloth exclusion bag and then lift the supers off on to the cover to work the hive. When we were done, we would put a bee escape on the hive and lift the supers back up, leaving the bag on under the cover until we came to pick up the honey the next day. They worked extremely well to prevent robbing both while we were working the hives and on the supers that we were stripping.



Pedersens' exclusion bag helps prevent robbing when stripping supers.

Using bee escapes instead of blowing bees reduced robbing significantly for us. We can strip a yard, no matter the weather and hardly disturb the hives.

Extract your honey in a bee tight location rather than trying to do it outdoors.

We are experimenting with some robbing guards but I don't have enough experience with them to comment.

Robbing makes bees defensive, spreads diseases, and is hard on the individual bees (they'll be polished, lacking hair). Prevent it from happening and you and your bees will be happier and better off.

By Andrew Hamilton

William: Don't leave spare equipment out. Any comb left out will attract robbers. Even dry comb can be a problem as it would be an attractant for the small hive beetle. We don't have the beetle in this province yet but correcting bad habits for the future is important. If you see a neighbour beekeeper leaving out comb, try to educate them on not leaving out any comb. A little honey left on your honey frames makes them enticing for the bees to move into next season.

Annamaria: Once you have robbers after one food source, they will look for other potential food sources to rob. Leaking pails are easy targets for robbers, so fix every leaking pail. There will always be leaks caused by pressure changes in the pail from temperature fluctuations, but leaks from faulty screens and damaged lid seals should be replaced. Never remove the snap on lid from a feed pail as the seal will eventually stop holding.

Rosalie: Do not keep weak colonies. Once fall comes, I stack weak colonies on top of other colonies. A weak colony will likely not survive the winter and will only cost you in feed and treatments. If you have a colony that is being robbed, reduce the size of the entrance. In a pinch, grass can be stuffed in the entrance.

Aksel: Feed your colonies in a timely manner. If they are hungry or trying to fill comb with food for the winter, they will resort to robbing. Getting your feed pails on shortly after the floral sources have disappeared will go a long way to reducing robbing. Robbing makes the bees more irritable to work on as well as spreads disease. The bees can pick up disease from other colonies they are robbing or from other bees they rub up against while robbing an open food source.

Bee in 4-H



This adorable future beekeeper is Julie-Anne's son Matthew.

By Julie-Anne Howe

As fall is here, we may be wrapping up our beekeeping year. But 4-H in Saskatchewan is about to begin. Did you know that 4-H has a bee project? I'll step back a bit and explain what 4-H is. 4-H is one of Canada's largest and longest-running organizations for youth. Most well known as a rural youth club for cattle and horse projects, 4-H is so much more! Members develop leadership skills primarily through the completion of projects, social service and components of 4-H such as judging, public speaking and parliamentary procedure. The program is based on engaging youth using the components of the four H's:

- **Head:** Focus on thinking, decision making, understanding and gaining knowledge. Members are required to analyze facts, discuss alternatives and make decisions.
- **Heart:** Show concern and compassion for the welfare of others and accept the responsibilities of citizenship and developing attitudes and values. 4-H promotes loyalty to friends, ideas and a program that has stood the test of time.
- **Hands:** Learn new skills and develop pride and respect for work completed. 4-H often provides members with their first real experience using their own initiative to complete projects and to work with the club and community.
- **Health:** Develop and practice healthy living physically, mentally and socially. As personal and group goals are set and met, confidence grows, and new situations are met with ease.

The Beekeeping project involves studying and managing bee hives for the purpose of selling honey. Hives and bees must be the property of the club member. Members will use a generic record book for their beekeeping project. The project year would start in fall and wrap up in September. All you need is a club, an adult willing to lead the bee project and a hive. If you have kids that are interested in beekeeping and personal development, this would be one sweet way to do both. In Saskatchewan, Bee Projects fall under a 4-H U project.

If you have kids interested in Bees and Beekeeping, I'd say this is a sweet match (puns intended).

For info on 4-H Saskatchewan and to contact your 4-H Regional Specialist to help get a project started check out their [web site](#).

For info on 4-H U Projects, you can learn more here: <https://www.4-h-learns.org/>

For a sample record book, this University of Virginia Project Book is excellent https://pubs.ext.vt.edu/content/dam/pubs_ext_vt_edu/380/380-070/380-070_pdf.pdf.

One boy's project changed his family's destiny

We all know, respect and learn from the many-generation beekeepers, but we rarely hear about the start. Who was the man or woman who began the family's story? Commercial beekeeper Calvin Parsons started beekeeping in 1968 as a grade ten vocational agriculture project. He lived in Moosomin, so there was no way he could have a calf, pig or acre of grain. But a single Texas honey bee package fit nicely into their backyard. The next summer, he had 10 hives, then 15 – all with a hand crank extractor. Fifty years later, he and his wife Jocelyn and their son Jeremy run 900 hives. As well, many Regina beekeepers also know their other son Graham, Saskatchewan Agriculture's Pollination Biosecurity Specialist. That was quite the school project that changed the course of history!

Calvin's tips for newbies:

- Bee health is the most important thing
- Keep mite levels low
- Feed bees well
- Make sure they're sheltered and protected from wind
- Control skunks, bears, ants and raccoons
- And never, never, ever enable robbing - it destroys colonies and spreads disease at the speed of light

"Bees are social insects with social diseases. A sick and hungry beehive only costs you money and dies. A dead hive makes you no money. There are very few shortcuts in beekeeping, no matter how many hives you have. Treated on time and at the correct dosage and well fed, they will return many times what you give them."

Last call for mites

Honey is done. Bees are fine. But are they? Are they really?

Using a variety of varroa mite treatments is best for overall control. And, before you wrap things up for the season, there's still time to treat your bees with Oxalic Acid. There are two methods – the drizzle method and vapourizer method.

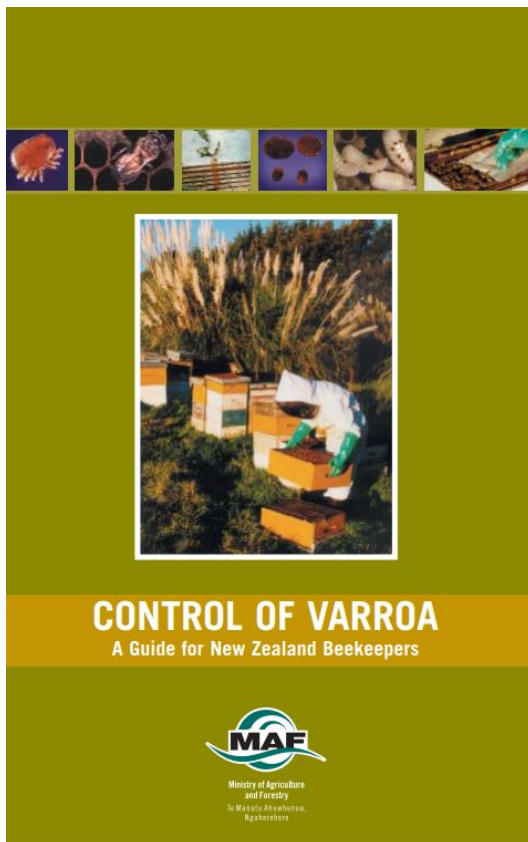
* For any hive treatment, always follow the label instructions.



Part one of Karen Pederson's video is online on Regina Bee TV now. It explains the equipment required to do the drizzle method. Part two will be available online soon. There, she'll show us all how to apply Oxalic Acid using the dribble method.



Ian Stepler from Manitoba explains the vapourizer method.



Do you know enough about Varroa Mites? If not, check out this [New Zealand guide](#). Not everything in it is relevant for Canada, but it is an amazing resource to get a full understanding of this terrible honeybee parasite.

Bee a Honey Ambassador



By Louise Yates

There are few days where a [“fake honey”](#) story doesn't come through my Facebook feed. Internationally, it's quite an issue where one country's honey is dumped onto the international markets to make huge profits and kill the competitiveness of their target countries. While most hobbyists don't have to lay awake at night thinking about those bigger issues, every beekeeper regardless of size is an ambassador for honey. They either enhance the pure natural image of honey, or degrade it.

There are laws, and there are ethics. The laws must be followed, but ethics are what often makes the news. Honey has a pristine image and we should all strive to keep it that way.

- Is your honey pure? Do you never, never ever feed while supers are on?
- Are you following the home food processor regulations? If someone watched you extract your honey would they want to eat it?
- Are your labels accurate and not misleading? Do you claim that your honey is organic when it's not certified organic and ergo the organic claim is a lie? Do you make unusual claims about how your honey is filtered or not filtered?
- Do you allow your bees to swarm – especially in urban settings?
- Do you allow your bees to become sick and suffer?

And, every beekeeper should be aware of the laws by which they must abide. Here are the most relevant laws for all of us - and in particular for anyone who sells any amount of honey or products

of the hive: Click on the title to take you to each Act or Regulation.

Provincial

The Apiaries Act, 2005

Provides detailed beekeepers' responsibilities under The Apiaries Act, 2005 of Saskatchewan, particularly for the prevention of disease, including registration, legal combs, inspection, permits, and robbing prevention.

Apiaries Regulations

Provides detailed certificate and permit requirements.

The Food Safety Regulations

Provides explicit requirements for those wishing to use the Home Food Processor exception to sell honey.

Supplementary Home Food Processor Fact Sheet

Provides an easy check-sheet to enable Home Food Processors to abide by regulations exemptions.

The Municipalities Regulations, Chapter M-36.1 Reg 1

Impacts property tax assessments of beekeeping buildings, which ultimately impacts property and school property tax rates. (Although some municipal administrators may try to convince you otherwise, buildings used for beekeeping purposes are classified as Other Agricultural Land and Improvements.)

Federal

Honey Regulations

List specific metric net weights (container sizes) that honey can be sold in Canada.

Food and Drug Regulations – Honey Section

Provide packaging instruction

- The Canadian Honey Council helps beekeepers who wish/need to use the [nutritional label](#) by providing it for free download

Use of the Organic Logo/Claim

Regulates that beekeepers must not state that their honey is organic unless it is certified organic.

Hive Inputs

Items such as mite treatments are regulated pesticides. And, Oxytetracycline is a regulated drug. Other products, such as bee repellents used to pull honey or feeding stimulants are not regulated, but can potentially leave residues in the honey so beekeepers must be careful when using them. Here are the federal government agencies responsible for regulated products:

To help Saskatchewan beekeepers use only approved products, the provincial Agriculture Ministry publishes Beelines. If you're registered with the province, you will have received the 2018 edition (it is not yet available online – however, [back issues](#) are). If you're not yet registered with the province, you can e-mail Geoff Wilson to register at geoff.wilson@gov.sk.ca.

[Regulatory information for cosmetics](#)

Those producing cosmetics for sale – balms, salves, lotions – must comply with federal legislation.

And if you're not already overwhelmed, the federal food safety laws are likely changing. Here is the currently available information about the proposed changes:

- **Safe Food for Canadians Regulations**
- [Honey and Maple Products Specific Information](#)
- **Traceability Information**

Liability and Property Insurance Coverage



A honeybee stinger

Reprinted from the spring 2017 edition of The Queen City Buzzzzzz

By Rob Barlow, Dusyk and Barlow Insurance Brokers Ltd.

You are a responsible beekeeper. While you've placed your apiary in an area that is attractive to your bees, you have also been considerate to the safety of your neighbours by placing it in an area facing away from them and away from regular foot traffic. You've also installed fencing and shrubbery to direct flight patterns overhead to minimize human and animal contact.

Fortunately for many Saskatchewan beekeepers, these considerations are not onerous. Many apiarists in this neck of the woods are doing so in a rural setting and have the luxury of setting up hives in an area well away from property lines and neighbouring humans and animals.

Whether you're an urban or rural beekeeper, chances are you will eventually have to deal with a neighbour, passerby, houseguest or customer who has been stung by an encounter with one of your bees. Depending on the severity of that person's reaction, you could be dealing with a potential lawsuit as a result of such an encounter. However likely or unlikely it may be that you would be found guilty, you would still bear the cost of defending such a lawsuit.

Even though many apiarists operate from their home, the liability associated with those policies will not extend to business operations such as beekeeping. It's for reasons such as this that every small business should have commercial general liability (CGL) coverage. A CGL policy will protect a business owner against liability claims from bodily injury or property damage to others that arise from their premises, products, operations and completed operations. This includes the costs of legal defense for such charges even if you aren't found liable. Those who have a farm policy may have the option of adding liability coverage for beekeeping operations to their policy for an additional premium.

Apiarists may also need to consider product recall/product contamination coverage. If something has gone wrong in the harvesting or packaging of the honey, lawsuits could arise from sickness due to contamination. Add to this the cost of a product recall and replacement and this could make for a costly scenario.

In addition to CGL and product recall coverage, many apiarists will also want to consider property coverage for items such as their hives, harvesting equipment and honey stock itself. Most home policies only provide limited coverage for business property but it can often be easily added to a CGL or farm policy.

Club Note: If your beekeeping is a hobby and not a business, you are likely covered by your home insurance policy, but should check with your broker to be sure. The Regina and District Bee Club has \$5 million in general liability coverage through Wawanesa to cover injuries at club events and activities.



Health Canada issues warning on EpiPen devices

Check devices before an emergency situation arises to make sure they slide easily out of their carrier tube.

[Click for more details](#)

As always, thank you Andrew!



Andrew Hamilton hosted two fall training days at his apiary in September. Students learned how to prepare feeder pails, check for mites, treat for mites, and feed and wrap so they can survive our crazy winters.

Check out Regina Bee TV on [YouTube](#).





Witness the birth of a queen bee

Regina and District Bee Club

As a collective for beekeepers, the Regina and District Bee Club enables members to buy high-quality locally reared bees and queens. The Club educates members and the public about beekeeping, promotes products of the hive, and promotes the beekeeping industry.

Through the Club, members learn how to manage their bees responsibly so they are healthy, to co-exist with neighbours respectfully and peacefully, and produce safe, high-quality honey. Club members are a community resource to:

- educate children about bees and other pollinating insects,
- attend public community events such as the Regina Symphony Orchestra's Symphony under the Sky and the Canadian Western Agribition,
- promote and sell honey, wax and other products from the hive, and
- develop relationships with other Saskatchewan agricultural producers.

The Club shares best practice knowledge through events, the web site, and its Facebook page. New beekeepers are able to connect, network and learn from experienced local beekeepers, provincial regulators and the Newbee/Mentor Program. Member services include the following: Bee Nuc Order Program, Bulk Club Shipping Program (from Beemaid in Tisdale), Honey Extractor Rental Program, Drawn Comb Program and Apivar Strip Sales Program. Details about all programs and services are available on the Club [web site](#).

Back Issues of the Queen City Buzzzzzzz

are available the Club's [web site](#)

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