

The Voice of
Professional and
Backyard
Beekeeping

Cowlitz
Beekeepers
Association
Newsletter

Dedicated to Preserving the Honey Bee through Community Action, Awareness and Education

June 2021

Issue 6

Next Meeting:

Where: Anywhere worldwide on your computer via Zoom or in person at the “Sons of Norway” building. 224 Catlin St. Kelso WA.

When: January 19, 2023 7pm

Speaker: Bill Holmes

Topic: To be announced

If you live in Cowlitz county or the surrounding area and find honeybees fascinating, then you should consider joining us. Reach us on Facebook by searching for Cowlitz Beekeepers Association or check out our website at:

<https://cowlitzbeekeeping.wixsite.com/website>

Association Officers and Board:

Ken Curtis President (360)261-2795 or

cowlitzbeekeepers@gmail.com

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Zenobia Scott, Secretary (360) 425-2314

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Barbara Skreen, Treasurer

Elizabeth Peters, Trustee (360)241-6954

Dave Scott, Trustee (360) 425-2314

Anna Pitkin, Trustee

Ray Davis, Trustee (360) 431-2882

Handmade Proud:

Looking to buy new woodenware at reasonable prices?

- Bottom Boards - Top Covers - Inner Covers - Hive Boxes and more...

Contact **Gerry Herren**

Ph. (360) 355-0051

Swarmchaser40@gmail.com

Welcome to 2023,

Ken Curtis

2022 certainly presented beekeepers with plenty of challenges. The spring rains didn't seem like they were ever going to quit. Not to mention an unexpected spring snow storm in April. Fortunately, there was a day here and there that allowed the bees to get out of hives and forage for available resources.

The late rains had an adverse effect on fruit trees and early berries such as strawberries. They just didn't produce well if at all. Many flowering plants did ok, but some produced later than normal. For example, bees were collecting blackberry and clover pollen until mid-August. which was kind of a blessing as bees were able to bring in more late summer nectar and pollen than normal.

Almost miraculously around mid-June the bee gods heard our prayers for dry weather, and the rain faucet was closed. It didn't take long for plant growth to explode, and flowers appeared everywhere flowers to explode.

Around mid-September the weather was hotter than normal so more bees than normal were out foraging as available resources were disappearing. In October, we were still having 80°F temperatures. Bees were still trying to attempting to forage. As a result of so many bees flying, and few available resources some beekeepers experienced dwindling winter stores.

Dealing with a weird weather year such as 2022 was challenging. Beekeepers were forced to learn new skills from each other. In 2-3 months, we will all know if our efforts paid off. 2022, a year to record of for future reference.

Beekeeping tasks for January

- If the temperature reaches 50°F, go hunting for evidence that your bees are still alive.
- Read up on beekeeping history, philosophies, and new techniques.
- Inspect all equipment to make sure it is ready for the spring beekeeping season. Repair or replace unserviceable equipment.
- If you have plans to expand your apiary, make the appropriate plans and equipment needs.
- Render left over wax from last season.

Out in the Bee Yard

Bill Holmes

Creamed Honey

If you enjoy honey that is spreadable on your baked goods you need to creamed honey. It is thick and creamy but still just honey and nothing else. My customers are always curious about what it is, especially since they've heard of creamed, spun, whipped, churned and other names used for this product. There are just 3 processes leading to only two products both of which may be called the same name.

The first, which should be the only product called whipped, requires a stand mixer and, ideally some partially crystallized honey but could be made with fully liquid honey. I made this a few years ago and was not satisfied with the results but I think I could have a successful redo if I were to try it again. Begin with a jar of crystallized honey and a jar of liquid honey add them to the mixer bowl. the whisking attachment, turn the mixer to medium and mix minutes. Opinions vary, but some stop at this point while rest the mixture for an hour and then mix again for 20 minutes, then repeat again. The large crystals in the mixture been beaten into very small smooth crystals and the entire mixture is now almost white and thicker than regular honey. can store it on the counter but that will result in a mixture will begin to separate in a few weeks. Storing it in the refrigerator will keep its form much longer. Always keep honey in a jar with a tight lid.



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The next process was developed by Professor Elton Dyce. He uses pasteurization and filtering to remove any crystals and kill any yeast that could lead to fermentation in the final product. If you were to become a large commercial operation this is the process you would use to create a consistent and reliable product. But if you are a backyarder and you prefer your honey to remain raw with all the antioxidants, enzymes, and pollen that makes honey a smart and healthy choice, then you will skip Dyce. After heating, the Dyce method would follow the same recipe as the raw honey method below.

Follow these steps for raw honey. Honey is a super-saturated sugar solution. It's natural for some of those sugars, primarily glucose, to come out of solution and crystallize. The natural crystals tend to be large, gritty and not pleasant on the tongue. The factors that encourage that are:

- Dust, pollen, and other small particles that the bees drop into your honey act as seeds for crystals to start forming.
- Temperature in the range of 50 degrees to 57 degrees Fahrenheit are ideal for crystallization.



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- The ratio of glucose to fructose in your honey. The higher the glucose component, the faster honey will crystalize. The flora around your hives determines the makeup of your honey.

We want to control the formation of crystals so that smooth oval shaped crystals are created rather than the large sharp crystals. Creamed honey is made by thoroughly combining finely granulated honey (“seed crystals”) with liquid honey then storing the mixture at a cool temperature. Seed crystals form the basis for the formation of smaller, less coarse crystals resulting in a smooth, creamy texture. All you need for this method is some existing creamed honey to provide your seed crystals and raw, liquid honey. You can purchase creamed honey if this is your first batch (**Sue Bee’s Spun Honey** on Amazon, or a product I have used purchased locally **YS eco bees honey**, I’ve read that Trader Joe’s has a very good product also). You could also use your own creamed honey from an earlier batch.

Before you start, it's important that your honey does not contain any crystals. If it does, they'll have to be removed. Your only option is heat and if you can keep the temperature between 95 and 104 degrees you can still retain much of the benefits of raw honey while liquefying and crystals. Mix your creamed starter honey into liquid honey at a 1:10 ratio (they should both be at room temperature). You can use more starter and I frequently use 1:8 in my batches.

Fully blend the starter and honey together but be careful not to add any air into the mixture. Stir slowly by hand or use a stand mixer on low, or even a drill with mixing attachment. Stir until the starter is thoroughly blended into the honey. I make 2 gallons at a time and mix using my Milwaukee Hole Hawg drill and a Jiffy stainless steel paint mixing paddle I bought on amazon. Once I’ve finished mixing the honey which usually only takes a couple minutes, I let it sit for an hour to let any bubbles rise then immediately jar it. I use both regular mouth and large mouth jars. Put lids on and then store the jars at 50 to 57 degree range until the honey has solidified. A wine refrigerator would be perfect. I have an unused garage refrigerator set to the coldest setting but plugged into an Inkbird digital temperature control which can be set for any temperature and holds the temperature within a couple degrees. For years I just put the jars in the garage during winter and they always solidified. How long it takes to solidify depends on the glucose level in your honey but typically about 2 weeks. Creamed honey can revert to liquid honey if it gets hot.

I also make vanilla, and lavender infused creamed honey. It’s a long process since I don’t heat my honey. For the vanilla I buy 25 grade B vanilla beans and chop them into small 1” pieces. Then mix them into 2 gallons of honey and store tightly sealed at 75-85 degrees for 3 months. Then I strain through a 600-micron mesh followed by the above creaming process. For the lavender I buy organic food grade dry lavender flowers and since I don’t write anything down, I just dump a bunch into the honey, maybe a cup. Let it sit for 3 months and strain. I do open the buckets every few weeks and give a little stir. You could do other flavors also, just make sure you don’t add any moisture to the honey or you’ll risk fermentation.

WASBA

Greetings BEEKS,

I pray this message finds everyone in good health and spirit. First, I want to thank each of you for your support this past season. However, we plan to take the upcoming season to a new level. Let me give you a quick glimpse of what I'm talking we are planning.

Club of the Year – Next year, we will select a big and small club of the year. The big club

will receive \$1000, while the small club will receive \$500. Every member club of WASBA is eligible to enter, with the winning clubs being honored at next year's conference. Rules will be published soon.

Beekeeper of the Year – Each member club will be eligible to select a beekeeper to compete for beekeeper of the year. The beekeeper of the year will be honored at next year's annual conference, receiving \$250 and a lifetime membership in WASBA. [Learn more here.](#)

Outreach Committee – WASBA voted on and approved that all club Presidents would, by default, be ADHOC members of the WASBA's outreach committee. The purpose of this committee is to help one another reach their local communities while assisting in building stronger clubs. Presidents, please contact me at president@wasba.org

Community involvement – We will support all member clubs in reaching their communities and building membership. However, we are no longer listing nonmember clubs on our website, and we will no longer refer beekeepers to them for membership.

Statewide honey-tasting competition – WASBA plans to host its first-ever honey-tasting competition at the State fair next year. The reason we are only planning is that it is going to require the local clubs to help us achieve this goal. We plan to allow local clubs to host a honey-tasting competition at their county fairs, each using the same standards. We will take the winning honey from each fair and judge them at the State fair to determine who has the best honey in the State. We will honor and provide a \$250 award at next year's annual conference.

Education – WASBA and WSU are currently working on a Master level beekeeping certification that will be top-notch and update our current certifications. We will only allow member clubs and affiliate organizations to teach certification courses or use our educational material. We will verify all instructors' membership when purchasing educational material. All educational material must be taught and used correctly, and all changes must go through the education board. Read Ellen's Education Update below!

Speakers – WASBA is collecting a list of speakers from local beekeepers willing to share valuable information about beekeeping. There is a very knowledgeable pool of speakers in the local clubs, and I would like to use them to teach other clubs and beekeepers. If you are interested in sharing your knowledge by speaking at our local clubs, please get in touch with me at president@wasba.org. You can view our current Speakers List as a Resource on the Speakers & Presentations page of website [here](#).

WASBA Family Fun Day – We are having a party for all beekeepers in Washington to attend. There will be music, games, food, and a great time with other beekeepers. Vendors are welcome to sell their bee products. So, please mark this day on your calendar at Medicine Creek Winery in Olympia on July 22, 2023, from 12:00 to 5:00 pm. More information to follow!

2023 WASBA Conference - The 2023 WASBA conference will be held in Western Washington next year. While we haven't finalized a place to hold the conference yet, we are eagerly working on our list of speakers. Please plan to attend the annual conference next year on October 7th and 8th on the west side of the mountains.

Personalized Beekeeping License Plates - We are getting customized license plates signatures. These plates will generate a continual income stream for WASBA, allowing us to invest more in the local associations. If you have not signed this document, please ask your local association or [read more and get a PDF copy for yourself below!](#)

Club membership – It's that time again when you can help us do everything I have listed above by [joining WASBA](#). While we know it won't be easy, we are willing to work hard to accomplish them all, but we will need the support of the local clubs and beekeepers. In other words, we are working hard to support you, but we need your help to do it. Please join today at <https://wasba.org/membership>.

Healing Through Hives - Every day, 22 veterans take their own lives as they try and re-engage with the community they serve. WASBA has partnered with a few different organizations to provide a means of support to our veterans. It is proven that beekeeping helps with PTSD and other brain injuries. So while we train veterans in beekeeping, our partners provide additional services. Therefore, if you have served or know someone who has, Healing to Hives can help provide the resources needed for relief. If you have any questions, please email bees@veterans-etc.org.

Thank You, and God Bless

Alan Woods,
WASBA President