The Massachusetts Bee
Quarterly Newsletter of the Massachusetts Beekeepers Association

Massachusetts Beekeepers Association

Uniting beekeepers through education, advocacy and sponsorship so as to protect and foster honeybees and beekeeping in Massachusetts and beyond.

President’s Message
2018 Year End Recap

Mass Bee has had a very exciting year. Great attendance at our three events this year lets us know that our speakers and topics are relevant and necessary. I thank you our members and county associations for attending and participating. I also thank our Mass Bee board of director’s for making all of the planning meetings and following through on all the assigned tasks. Any organization needs good people to execute the schedule and plan laid out at the directors meeting. I thank our membership for voting in our executive board nominees at the fall meeting. We have a couple new faces on the board from current delegates and the board members that have come off were appointed to other important positions on the board that need

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continuity beyond the re-election process every 2 years.

One of the feathers in our cap in 2018 is the “Honey Queen” program and the outstanding participation from our members and member counties. We thank Desiree Gracie who is wearing the crown until the end of the year. She has traveled the State working various events. She has also enthusiastically worked our events; she certainly learned a lot and earned the Scholarship. She is going to the National competition in Myrtle Beach in January; we wish her luck and hope she wins. Chris and I plan to be there to cheer her on at the conference. I encourage all of our county associations to help us crown a new Honey Queen for 2019 by nominating a candidate by the end of the year for consideration by the board of directors.

At our fall meeting at Bristol Community College we initiated a survey asking for feedback regarding our meeting organization, speakers and venue. We need to know what our members want, and this should give us something to discuss at our next board of directors meeting in January. If you have anything that you would like us to review, please send your thoughts to me at bodl@massbee.org. Again, your participation is necessary and appreciated.

Hopefully you had a good year with your honey bees this year and received a good honey crop. This fall has had considerable rain, but I hope you had time this fall to put your bees to bed correctly for the winter. Hopefully you have eradicated the mites and the bees have plenty of feed on to make it through the winter. We all know that we need to keep a close eye on our bees during the winter months.

Next Year 2019 have most of our speakers contacted and working towards getting all the details worked out, should have more info in our spring newsletter. Your participation and attendance are greatly appreciated to keep this great organization on top. Please visit our website or follow us through Facebook to get updates about future meetings and current topics.

Thank You All

Pete Delaney
Interested in Becoming the 2019 Mass Bee Honey Queen?

*Guidelines for successful acceptance and scholarship award*

A Mass Bee Honey Queen candidate must be a young woman in her seventeenth year of age at the Annual meeting. She must be sponsored by her county association and presented to the Mass Bee Board of Directors at one of their 4 meetings a year. She must be gracious, poised and demonstrate a willingness to present and speak before an audience.

She must present documentation and recommendations from her peers on her activities during her reign as the county honey queen to the Mass Bee Board of Directors.

She must present her goals for a possible reign as the Mass Bee Honey Queen and marketing representative to the Board of Director’s at one of their regular meetings prior to a Mass Bee Annual Meeting in November.

She must successfully be awarded the Mass Bee Honey Queen crown at an Annual Meeting in November followed by an acceptance speech to the membership outlining her hopes for the upcoming year.

She must attend all county and state events that she is invited unless they conflict during her 1-year reign. Honey Queen Expenses such as travel, lodging or meals are to be the responsibility of the host group.

Event donations given for her appearing to speak and educate shall be directed to the Mass Bee Honey Queen Program. Funds are used to create, produce and acquire educational materials for various presentations.

She must keep a portfolio of her work such as; press releases, news articles, photo documentation and all Honey Queen Functions. With a copy to be retained by Mass Bee archives. It is hopeful that she will use this portfolio to apply for the National American Honey Queen Program.

She must report her activities to the Mass Bee Board of Directors at their 4 regular meetings a year. She must present a closing year report to the membership at the next Annual meeting following her reign and welcome the newly crowned Honey Queen and give her a couple of pointers to consider for her new reign.

Upon successful completion of her reign she is eligible for a scholarship to a school that she is currently enrolled or will shortly be enrolled in. The Scholarship will be directed to the school or reimbursed for college course expenses that have been documented.

The Scholarship amount shall be determined by the Treasurer along with input from the Board of Directors. County associations as well as any individual that wants to assist in a young person’s education are encouraged to donate to the Mass Bee Honey Queen Program Scholarship.

If you are interested in learning more about the Program or becoming the next Mass Bee Honey Queen, please contact Chris Delaney at [Cadelaney13@Gmail.com](mailto:Cadelaney13@Gmail.com). **The deadline for applications is December 31, 2018.**
Overview 2018
Mass Bee Fall Meeting

We hope you did not miss the 2018 Mass Bee Fall Meeting. We had a very good turnout, even though the first snow storm of the year the day before the event gave us a little scare. The three speakers, Dr. Jamie Ellis, Dr. Samuel Ramsey, and Ann Harman were entertaining and provided a lot of great information on topics ranging from honey bee biology and behavior, to the importance of a healthy bee fat body, to what it takes to be a winner in a honey contest.

Vendors donated some outstanding items for the raffles – these items raised roughly $1,000 which will be used to sponsor upcoming events. The Honey/Wax show and the cooking and photography show had good participation. Ann Harman did a wonderful job judging and helped the clerks working with her to further understand the judging process and what makes a quality honey.

We also had several organizations with information tables and representatives available to meet and answer questions (MDAR, USDA, UMass Extension, and AAS).

The volunteers from Bristol County Beekeepers Association did an outstanding job, as did the volunteer judges for the honey and photo contests.
Mass Bee 2018 Fall Meeting Contest Winners

**Honey Division**

Best 2 jars of light Honey: 3rd – Kathy Varney
Best 2 jars of light Amber Honey: 1st – Mary Duane  2nd – Mary Ann Zuber  3rd – Jim Gross
Best 2 jars of Amber Honey: 1st – Andy Principe  2nd – Jim Gross  3rd – Kitty de Groot
Best 2 jars of Dark Honey: 1st – Mary Duane

**Wax Division**

Artistic Article made of Beeswax: 1st – David Formanek  2nd – Kathy Varney  3rd – Mary Duane
Best Piece of Beeswax 2lbs or more: 1st – Kathy Varney  2nd – Murray Curham
Best Piece of Beeswax Under 2lbs: 1st – Kathy Varney  2nd – Murray Curham
Best pair of straight, plain tapered molded candles: 1st – Kathy Varney  2nd – Lucy Tabbit
Best Novelty Candles: 1st – Kathy Varney

**Cooking Division**

1st – Kathy Varney – Caramels
2nd – Evelyn Schraft – Pecan Pie
3rd – Mel Gadd – Honey Cake

**Photographs**

Beekeeping: 1st – Renee Ricciardi  2nd – David Formanek  3rd – Kelsey Janek
Swarms: 1st – Kitty de Groot  2nd – Mary Ann Zuber
Mass Bee 2018 Fall Meeting Contest Winners

**Most Points in Honey Show:**  Kathy Varney

**Best in Show:**  honey – Mary Duane   photo – Renee Ricciardi

**Ted Schylofsky Award for best wax in show sponsored by Essex County Beekeepers Association:**  David Formanek

**Perfect Scores:**  photo – Renee Ricciardi   wax - David Formanek

"The Keeper" by Renee Ricciardi

This photo was taken with an 8x10 inch view camera, using a large sheet of film. The camera used is the same that Ansel Adams used of the American West. The photo is a contact print, on silver gelatin paper developed in a darkroom. Beautiful!

Wax figurine by David Formanek titled "Waldeinsamkeit" (roughly translated from German meaning the emotion of solitude in the forest). David first made a sculpture in clay. Then a silicone mold. Finally, a plaster mold to cast the beeswax. Complicated, fascinating and beautiful!
Bee City!

If I have my way, Lexington will become a “Bee City". The Bee City program is operated by the Xerxes society as a way of promoting and certifying towns and campuses that actively promote and encourage pollinators. Although it refers to bees, they also make it clear that they intend to encourage all types of pollinators-- monarch butterflies and the lot. I read about this in a recent issue of the American Bee Journal and thought it may be a good vehicle to gather together the efforts in my town towards pollinator promotion. I have been talking with friends on the Lexington Conservation Commission for the past two or three years about actively promoting pollinators. Lexington, as a town, is very receptive to this idea and has encouraged me to place honeybees on town properties. They even intend to purchase some additional honeybees for me this spring for our community garden. It's a good place to "bee".

The Conservation Commission connected me with a nonprofit group called "Citizens for Lexington Conservation". This nonprofit group was also very interested in the program and looking forward to working with me on this. I made it clear that I do not intend to introduce new and expensive programs for our town (our taxes are already off the charts). However, the Town of Lexington has been environmentally active for decades and many of the pollinator promotion projects are already being done. Others can be improved and expanded.

Coincidentally, while I was meeting with the Conservation Commission, a scientist friend was emailing me an article from the New York Times about the "insect apocalypse." ([https://www.nytimes.com/2018/11/27/magazine/insect-apocalypse.html](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/11/27/magazine/insect-apocalypse.html)) Pollinator protection is an idea whose time has come.

Stay tuned as we progress. If this has a positive result, I may be looking toward some of our neighboring towns which are also very interested in pollinator promotion.

For more information about this program, you may refer to the Bee City website ([https://www.beecityusa.org](https://www.beecityusa.org)) or contact me.

Alexandra Bartsch

[www.lexingtonbee.com](http://www.lexingtonbee.com)

Looking for a good town policy on beekeeping? Ask Alix for a copy of the **Belmont Health Department Beekeeping Policy.** It is a shining example of bee friendly- people friendly governance.

*Kudos to Alix on her great work with the Town.*
MEETING WITH MDAR COMMISSIONER JOHN LEBEAUX

Background: On March 31, 2015, Massachusetts Governor Charlie Baker issued Executive Order #562 commissioning a complete and comprehensive review of all existing Executive Branch regulations.

The Massachusetts Dept. of Agricultural Resources (MDAR), their review of regulations pertaining to livestock, decided to revise the current regulations regarding Apiaries. The revision process requires MDAR to draft a revised regulation and initiate a process of soliciting comments from stakeholders, in this case Massachusetts beekeepers.

The draft regulations contain a number of proposed changes that Massachusetts beekeepers object to. The original draft called for: 1) mandatory registration of all beehives in the state; 2) that MDAR be notified of all shipments of bees coming into Massachusetts, that each container of bees be marked with the name and address of their destination, and that each shipment carry a certificate of inspection within 90 days prior; 3) that beekeepers notify MDAR of any instance of honey bee disease within their colonies; 4) bee suppliers and county associations must maintain, for at least 3 years, name and address records of the destination apiary of all bees sold in the state. There were a number of other minor revisions, but those are the sticking points.

After 2 years of listening sessions and draft revisions, some improvements were made, but the mandatory registration requirement remained, although it was changed to require registration of each apiary location rather than each hive.

A large number of Massachusetts beekeepers oppose the mandatory registration requirement, some from the standpoint of privacy, some oppose government intervention into their hobbies, and some believe that this will lead to fees and taxes being imposed on beekeepers.

The Massachusetts Beekeepers Association (Mass Bee) felt that it was time to bring this to a higher level.

Based on input he received, MDAR Commissioner John Lebeaux called a meeting regarding the proposed apiary regulations. Invited were Mass Bee officers, county association presidents, and some prominent commercial beekeepers. The meeting was held on Nov. 7, 2018 at the MDAR office in Boston.

This meeting was requested by Commissioner Lebeaux to address strong objection to the proposed apiary regulations from beekeepers. It was different from the previous listening sessions - it was a smaller group and discussion was more focused. We ran through the draft regulations section by section, and Commissioner Lebeaux noted our concerns.

These are my notes as observed at the meeting:

Points made by the beekeepers:

• Inspection/requiring certificates of inspection of bees coming into the state is good because it keeps the quality up and keeps suppliers on their toes. We don't want Massachusetts to be a dumping ground for substandard bees because we're not looking.

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Mandatory registration will force many beekeepers to go "underground", that is, not register, not ask for inspections, and hide their apiaries from sight. This will make it harder for MDAR to trace or attempt to mitigate a disease outbreak. It will also undermine the inspection program.

The inspection program has improved, but we would like to see it made more efficient by scheduling inspections in local areas rather than have inspectors zig-zagging across the state. We'd also like to go back to a more "beekeeper-friendly" style where recommendations are made and beekeepers are educated during the inspection.

Clubs/suppliers do record who the packages/nucs are sold to but keeping the records available for 3 years is not necessary. Disease can really only be attributed to the source in the first year; after that, it is the owner's issue.

MDAR needs to explain the benefits of the inspection program and of registration (even if it's voluntary).

There is a trust issue for beekeepers; they don't want the government involved if there's no benefit. People are afraid of fees being imposed later on once we're all registered.

In the absence of registration, county associations must be willing to work with MDAR to identify apiaries if a disease outbreak is noted.

"Honey Bee Disease" was defined as any affliction, including viruses. It is not practical to expect that beekeepers will report viruses like DWV, etc. or infections like Nosema to MDAR. However, it is reasonable to request that people report highly contagious disease like AFB or EFB.

It is not practical to expect that bees coming in to the state will be marked with the name of the recipient.

It was suggested that a program to inspect all hives in the state, instead of registration, might go over better with beekeepers. This would require staffing changes.

Those are the main points. There were other small things and edits suggested.

Points made by MDAR:

- There is no desire or intent to tax or charge fees to beekeepers. The process requires meetings, hearings, etc., and the money would not benefit the apiary program. There are no plans to do this. (I told him that we want written assurance of that to convince the skeptics).
- MDAR recognizes the value of honey bees to the state's agriculture and wants to do all they can to protect them and insure their health. (I believe that he was sincere).
- MDAR recognizes the value of honey bees to the state's agriculture and wants to do all they can to protect them and insure their health. (I believe that he was sincere).
- The state wants to keep bees in the agriculture/livestock "category". (Many agreed that they belong there).
- MDAR wants to make the inspection program work for all of us. This will be reviewed.

The Commissioner could not guarantee that these points would be adopted but he did promise to review them with the team. Any changes would go through a public hearing before moving on. He advised us that this process will take time, and a final regulation is still in the distance.
Personally, I think he heard how strongly we feel about mandatory registration, and I think it will go away. But that’s just my feeling. I think it was a productive meeting, much more so than the listening sessions. We now have a stronger connection directly to Commissioner Lebeaux on this, and that should help. This will be an ongoing process and will not likely be resolved any time soon. Updates will be provided along the way.

Ed Szymanski

Mass Bee Membership

During the Fall 2018 Meeting, a proposed amendment to the Mass Bee membership fee structure was approved. The individual annual rate at $15 remained unchanged and the Family and County association rates increased slightly to $25 and $50 respectively. These new rates begin January 1, 2019.

As part of the discussion on the proposed amendments, Peter Delaney, President of Mass Bee outlined a few of the benefits of Mass Bee membership:

- **Three Membership Meetings a Year**
  - The Field Day at UMass in June. The Field Day is a tremendous event allowing interactive, hands-on bee demonstrations that give great confidence to attending beekeepers of all skill levels.
  - The Spring and Fall meetings. The location of these meetings moves from County to County allowing all areas of the State to participate. At these meetings we strive to bring you 2 keynote speakers on relevant beekeeping topics. While hosted by a County, **Mass Bee covers the costs of the event** (venue, speakers fees and travel, food, etc.).

- **Legislative Support**
  Monitoring and responding to issues arising both locally and State wide. This Committee is politically active meeting face to face with law makers and regulators to rally for and protect Honeybees and pollinators. Updates on issues are presented in each Mass Bee Newsletter.

- **Pesticide Support/Advisory**
  The Mass Bee board of directors newly created a voting member position of Director of Pesticides and Applications. This position is a resource for all members and County Associations looking for the correct response to questions about the application of pesticides, fungicides, and herbicides.

- **State Representation**
  We speak for all beekeepers in Massachusetts and make our point of view to all the states in New England. We are paid memberships to all surrounding states, allowing us to keep members aware of surrounding States activities.

Our hope is that you continue to support Mass Bee with your membership and also become active members helping to guide and implement Mass Bee activities. **Please join or renew your membership today.**
Fall 2018 Legislative Update
By Cliff Youse, Plymouth County Beekeepers Association

As everyone knows by now, H.4041 - An Act to protect Massachusetts pollinators did not make it to the floor for a vote before the end of the last formal session of the 190th General Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. There is an outside chance that there could be informal session movement on the bill before the end of the year, but it is unlikely.

It is not uncommon for a bill to take several sessions to pass and Representative Dykema will re-file the legislation in January when the 191st General Court convenes. This means that the process starts all over again with a new bill number. We will need all of you to step up again and let your legislators know how important this legislation is to the long-term health of our bees and native pollinators. So please look for the calls to action as we go through the process again and do everything you can to let the public and our legislators know how important it is.

Although the bill did not pass this time, we have been extremely successful in raising awareness of the serious problems that neonicotinoids pose and of the significance of this legislation. There is now tremendous interest on the part of the legislature to see something happen. Several legislators have already indicated that they are looking forward to supporting the bill again, next year, in the 191st General Court.

I want to thank Tiffany and Jason at the Friends of the Earth for their hard work, dedication and passion in providing world class guidance, organization and logistical support to this effort. It is our hope that we will continue to work with them on getting this legislation passed in the new session.

Representative Carolyn Dykema is the driving force behind this effort. She filed the original bill in the 189th General Court and then re-filed it at the beginning of the 190th General Court in January of 2017. She has shown tremendous leadership, vision and courage by taking on this cause. Throughout the process, Representative Dykema and her Legislative Aide, David, have always been extremely supportive and accessible to us as we learned to navigate the halls and corridors of the Statehouse, meeting with legislators and talking about the bill. Thank you Representative Dykema.

It recently came to my attention that there is also pollinator legislation in the works on the national front. Representative Earl Blumenauer of the 3rd District of Oregon filed H. R. 5015 - Saving America’s Pollinators Act of 2018 in February of this year. With the changes in Congress in affect in 2019, a bill like this could have a chance in the House. In any case, it lends credence to the fact that there is a growing national awareness that something needs to be done. Going forward, we will be monitoring the legislative situation on the national front as well.

To learn more about the Massachusetts legislative process please refer to How An Idea Becomes A Law - Massachusetts Legislature and The Legislative Process in Massachusetts.

Cliff Youse
Plymouth County Beekeepers Association
Hi Mass Bee members - my name is Hannah Whitehead, and I’m the new Honey Bee Extension Educator at UMass. I received my Master’s from The Ohio State University, where I worked with Dr. Reed Johnson and Dr. Casey Hoy studying Varroa mite management. This extension position is funded by a 2-year USDA grant written by UMass professor and bee ecologist Dr. Lynn Adler.

I’ve already had the pleasure of working with many Mass Bee members over the past 7 months, and I look forward to meeting more of you this upcoming year. Here’s a little about Extension, a quick overview of a project we conducted this summer, and a snapshot of what to expect from UMass in the coming months:

**What is Extension?**

The role of the University Extension Service is to conduct science-based outreach and education on topics related to agriculture, nutrition and clean energy. Extension educators create educational materials, share scientific findings with stakeholders (like farmers, land managers or beekeepers), and solicit feedback from stakeholders to drive future research. Many participate in research projects as well. Extension has been around for over 100 years, and every land-grant university (like UMass) has an associated extension service. While UMass extension has well-established programs in vegetable, fruit and greenhouse production, this is the first time we’ve had a honey bee focused position in years.

Even though I am the only extension staff member focusing on honey bees, I collaborate regularly with researchers and educators from across the university (including bee researchers, pesticide educators, pollination specialists, etc.) in order to create science-based resources and educational materials for you.

**What have we been up to so far?**

This summer, in collaboration with MDAR and Cornell, my UMass colleague David Saleh and I carried out the beekeeper-initiated Massachusetts Hobbyist Health Survey. We visited 40 hobbyist beekeepers throughout the state and collected data on pesticides (from wax and pollen), Varroa mites, Nosema and viruses. This data will be combined with results from a similar project that was conducted in NY State, and will be analyzed by collaborators at Cornell. The goal is to explore the relationships between land use, hive location, and the distribution of diseases and pesticides.

We are still waiting to get the pesticide results. However, I can share a snapshot of our virus and Nosema results with you. As you can see, Varroa Destructor Virus and Deformed Wing Virus were the most common among our beekeepers, while the other viruses were relatively rare. About 25% of sampled beekeepers had detectable Nosema levels, but only 15% had levels above 1 million spores per bee, which is the treatment threshold:
Number of apiaries that tested positive for viruses in each sampling round (40 apiaries total in each round)

Virus Key
- ABPV Acute Bee Paralysis Virus
- BQCV Black Queen Cell Virus
- CBPV Chronic Bee Paralysis Virus
- DWV Deformed Wing Virus
- IAPV Israeli Acute Paralysis Virus
- KBV Kashmire Bee Virus
- LSV-2 Lake Sinai Virus 2
- SBPV Slow Bee Paralysis Virus
- VDV Varroa Destructor Virus

Percent of sampled apiaries (40 total) with the following Nosema levels:
- Early Summer
  - >=1 million spores/bee: 15%
  - <1 million spores/bee: 12%
  - Nosema absent: 73%
Upcoming Events

Stay tuned for a new pollinator-focused web page through the UMass extension website, which will have information about pollinator-related research at UMass, as well as links to UMass fact sheets and outside resources.

We are also planning several upcoming workshops:

- **Honey Bees under the Microscope (in collaboration with MDAR and the Adler Lab)** – Feb 9 (10am-4pm), Amherst
  - This workshop will be held at UMass Amherst. We will dissect honey bees and explore bee anatomy under the microscope. There will be a small fee for this workshop. More details to come.
- **Varroa mite IPM at the Berkshire Botanic Gardens** – March 9 (10am-12pm), Stockbridge
  - Varroa mite management is complicated and confusing. Learn how to combine effective control tactics (both chemical and non-chemical) into a yearly management plan. This is a hands-on workshop; you will leave with a draft of your personal mite management plan.
- **Varroa Mite IPM** – Spring, date TBD, Central Massachusetts
- **How to Safely Apply Miticides (in collaboration with UMass Pesticide Safety Education)** – Spring, date TBD, Central Massachusetts
- **Bee Health for Veterinarians (in collaboration with MDAR)** – Spring, date TBD

More information about workshops will be posted on the new website, and also distributed to bee clubs. As soon as the pollinator website is live, I will reach out to all of the bee clubs to disseminate the web address!

How to get in touch

If you have any questions or comments, please reach out to me at: hwhitehead@umass.edu

Also - I’m trying to meet as many beekeepers as I can, so please reach out if you’d like me to speak at your club meeting!

**Hannah Whitehead, M.S. Honey Bee Extension Educator**

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Think You May Have AFB or EFB?

Find Out With a FREE Sample Kit!

AFB/EFB Sample Kits

Kit Includes:
- Pre-labeled envelope
- 2 packs sterile Q-tips
- Labeled paper bag for samples

Beekeeper Cost (per kit): ~$3.00/postage

Request FREE sample kits from MDAR via email to bees@mass.gov. A sample kit and instructions will either be sent directly to you or distributed by your county beekeeping organization. Simply collect your sample by following the instructions provided and mail. Results are provided by the lab directly to the beekeeper within a few weeks after lab receipt. Currently, there is no fee to lab process samples, so you only need to pay for postage to mail each kit. Note that each kit contains materials to sample 1 hive. Limited quantities of these kits are available, so request yours today!

Voluntarily Register Your Apiary!

The Apiary Registration Process is easier than ever with the online form: https://www.mass.gov/forms/apiary-and-colony-registration-form. A total of 194 beekeepers have registered their apiaries with MDAR since April 2017 when this online form became available. Please consider taking a quick second to register your apiary today so that the MDAR Apiary Program Bee Team can better inform beekeepers when investigating apiaries in the vicinity of those discovered to have infectious disease(s).
Join the Apiary Program Mailing List!

We recently added the option for folks to receive email alerts and program updates: [https://www.mass.gov/forms/join-the-apiary-program-mailing-list](https://www.mass.gov/forms/join-the-apiary-program-mailing-list). There are currently 116 people on the list. Please consider signing up now to stay up to date on our efforts to improve honey bee health in Massachusetts!

What’s Your Varroa Mite Count?

Find Out With a FREE Alcohol Wash Jar!

Get a FREE alcohol wash jar and a brochure that contains basic information about Varroa mites along with an overview of the most current Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Strategies by requesting via email to MDAR bees@mass.gov. This practical sampling kit will either be sent directly to you or distributed by your county beekeeping organization. Each kit can be used for multiple hives. Limited quantities of these kits are available, so request yours today!

After receiving your kit, please take the following survey: [bit.ly/2Q5EImV](https://bit.ly/2Q5EImV) and input your mite count results into the MiteCheck map: [https://bip2.beeinformed.org/mitecheck](https://bip2.beeinformed.org/mitecheck).

Honey Bee Hive Pesticide Update

The following is a list of U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Massachusetts registered pesticide products labeled for use in honey bee hives. These general use products can be applied to individual beekeeper owned hives. If applying to hives other than those owned by the beekeeper, then a pesticide license is required. Visit the following pesticide regulations to learn about pesticide applicator license: [https://www.mass.gov/files/documents/2017/10/30/333cmr10.pdf](https://www.mass.gov/files/documents/2017/10/30/333cmr10.pdf).

Listed in Alphabetical Order by Product Name (active ingredient (a.i)):

- ApiGuard (a.i. thymol), EPA Reg. No. 79671-1;
- ApiLifeVar (a.i. menthol, oil of eucalyptus, and thymol), EPA Reg. No. 73291-1;
- Apivar (a.i. amitraz), EPA Reg. No. 87243-1;
- Apistan Anti-Varroa Mite Strip (a.i. fluvalinate), EPA Reg. No. 2724-406;
- CheckMite + (a.i. coumaphos and asuntol), EPA Reg. No. 11556-138-61671;
- CheckMite + Bee Hive Pest Control Strip (a.i. coumaphos and asuntol), EPA Reg. No. 11556-138;
- Formic Pro (a.i. formic acid), EPA Reg. No. 75710-3;
- HopGuard II (a.i. potassium salts of hop beta acids), EPA Reg. No. 83623-2;
- Mite Away Quick Strips – MAQS (a.i. formic acid), EPA Reg. No. 75710-2; and
- Oxalic Acid – OA (a.i. oxalic acid dihydrate), EPA Reg. No. 91266-1-91832.
2019 “Hive Dive” Events – Saturdays, 10am-noon

- April 13th – Winter Evaluation and Spring Management Part 1
- May 11th – Spring Management Part 2
- June 8th – Summer Management
- July 13th – Pests, Parasites and Pathogen Detection
- August 10th – Fall Management Part 1
- September 14th – Fall Management Part 2
- October 12th – Winter Prep

Join Us!

State Apiary Locations:

UMass Agricultural Learning Center (ALC) Farm
911 North Pleasant St
Amherst, MA 01002
(park in the field adjacent to the apiary)

Essex Technical High School
565 Maples St
Danvers, MA 01923
(park in the lot behind to the old Administration building, where the school buses are lined up)

STATE APIARY EAST:
Essex Agricultural and Technical High School
Danvers, MA
To Bee or Not to Bee

In the late summer of 2017, I was ecstatic to be moving from New Bedford to Dartmouth, Massachusetts. The main reason was, at the time, keeping bees was an illegal activity in New Bedford while Dartmouth was a “right to farm” community. As a lover of Bees and an apitherapist practicing Compassionate BVT, I also hoped to keep honeybees at my home.

Wayne Andrews is a familiar name to many beekeepers in Massachusetts; not only for his knowledge but for his generosity, willingness and availability to teach and help anyone care for their bees. Wayne has kept bees for over 40 years; he knows honeybees. And, as an entomologist and instructor, and through his experience heading Bristol County Mosquito control; Wayne knows pesticides.

Tragically, last winter Wayne lost 20 out of 22 colonies due to pesticide exposure in Dighton, MA. For this reason, he decided not to keep bees anymore at his home and brought 2 colonies to keep on my property. It was in the hope that the bees would survive and not be exposed to pesticides at this new location.

On the evening of August 12, 2018, I noticed many bees dead and dying in front of the hives; they were exhibiting signs of what appeared to be pesticide poisoning. The next morning, I contacted MA state apiary inspector and the pesticide inspector; they were extremely responsive and made an appointment to visit me on the following day.

Paul Tessier, Apiary Inspector and Jesse Diamond, Pesticide Inspector arrived promptly at my home at 1pm, August 14th. To our surprise, during the inspection, we experienced yet another active bee kill; this meant that they could witness the evidence first-hand and that the samples they would collect were of high quality with minimal degradation. As this type of event is now becoming all too commonplace in Massachusetts, beekeeping is becoming less viable. Native pollinators are also greatly affected by these chemicals, and sadly, we have no way of accurately assessing the damage being done to them.

They took extensive samples of the dead and dying bees, the nectar, pollen, honey and wax. They also did mite

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counts. I have hereby included the results for you to ponder. The affected pollen was traced back to a local farm, and the levels of pesticides found in this pollen were extremely high. A Letter of Warning was sent to the farm, stating that they had numerous violations. The next steps are being carefully considered.

Renae Barton  
Pesticide Committee, Massachusetts Beekeepers Association  
renae@barton@gmail.com

Wayne Andrews, MS Entomology  
Chair, Pesticide Committee, Massachusetts Beekeepers Association  
wayne@andrews.net
- continued from prior page

**LETTER OF WARNING**

Dear Mr. [Name],

This shall serve as a Letter of Warning, issued by The Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources, pursuant to Section 6-A, M.G.L. c. 138B, to [Name], located at [Address], for violation of [specific regulations or laws].

The following violations were observed:

1. [Violation 1 Description]
2. [Violation 2 Description]
3. [Violation 3 Description]

The violations are in violation of [specific regulations or laws].

It is recommended that you make the necessary adjustments to avoid further violations.

[Name]
[Title]
[Date]

**EVIDENCE**

Evidence was collected as follows:

1. [Evidence Collection Method 1 Description]
2. [Evidence Collection Method 2 Description]
3. [Evidence Collection Method 3 Description]

The evidence collected indicates a violation of [specific regulations or laws].

[Signature]
[Title]
[Date]

**SUMMARY**

[Summary of findings and recommendations]

[Recommended corrective actions]

[Date]

[Name]
[Title]
Massachusetts Beekeeper of the Year Information

What is the nomination process and criteria for Mass Bee Beekeeper of the Year?

❖ A person does not have to be a Massachusetts Beekeepers Association member but must be a member in good standing of a Massachusetts County Beekeeping organization.

❖ This is a person who has willingly provided his or her time and knowledge over the years to help and educate others in the field of beekeeping.

❖ Nominees are submitted by the County Club president; this is a person who has demonstrated his/her willingness to help, train and educate others in the many aspects of beekeeping.

❖ The governing committee consists of David Thayer and two past recipients of the Massachusetts Beekeeper of the Year Award for a total of three people. The interim committee will be Dave Thayer and one past awardee and one other of his choosing if no other past awardees come forward.

❖ Deadline: All nominations must be submitted via email to Dave Thayer (wolfoog@hotmail.com) by December 28th. This gives time to for the committee to determine the recipient of the Massachusetts Beekeeper of the Year award and to have the award completed and ready to be presented at our spring meeting.

Any questions, please contact David Thayer at wolfoog@hotmail.com. Thank you!

SAVE THE DATE! Upcoming Events, Meetings & More

*Friday December 28, 2018 – Deadline for Clubs to Submit Nominations for Massachusetts Beekeeper of the Year

*Monday December 31, 2018 – Deadline for Massachusetts Honey Queen Nominations

*Tuesday January 1, 2019 – Dec 31, 2019 Mass Bee Membership Dues

*Saturday January 26, 2019 – Board of Directors Meeting – Worcester area TBA. Club Reps. Bring “Honey for the Hill” Donations

*Thursday February 21, 2019 – Dan Conlon “Getting Ready for Packages & Nucs/Care and Feeding Tips” – Franklin County Beekeepers

*Saturday March 16, 2019 – Mass Bee Spring Meeting, Topsfield Fair Grounds

*Thursday March 21, 2019 – Judy Turner “Swarming/Prevention & Control” – Franklin County Beekeepers


*Saturday May 4, 2019 – Board of Directors Meeting – Worcester area TBA


*Saturday June 1, 2019 – Langstroth Bee Fest, Greenfield

*Saturday June 8, 2019 – MDAR “Hive Dive” Summer Management – UMass Amherst

*Saturday June 15, 2019 – Mass Bee Field Day – UMass Amherst

If you have an event you would like listed, please contact correspondingsecretary@massbee.org
Honey Request - AG DAY ON THE HILL – Spring 2019

Every year MASS BEE sends a contingent of Beekeepers to the State House to distribute small jars of Honey to all the state Legislators and Representatives.

We need your help to accomplish this task; I am requesting that each county club contribute two cases of ½ lbs. glass jars of UNLABELED honey for our distribution.

2019 Labels will be printed; each County that contributes will be named on this label.

This donation is needed in early March 2019. In recent years the following clubs and companies have contributed:

- Berkshire County
- Franklin County
- Norfolk County
- Plymouth County
- Worcester County
- Merrimack Valley Apiaries

I plan on attending the spring Mass Bee meeting in March to accept your clubs donation.

Please feel free to reach out to me with any questions or concerns.

Thank you!
Susan Robinson  smrbus10@msn.com

Queen Management Survey

A group of beekeepers and bee professionals in Western MA are writing a grant to promote Northeast queen breeding among younger and under-represented beekeepers.

In order to develop a strong grant proposal, they need information about current queen purchasing and queen rearing practices in our area.

In other words, they need your help!

Completing the survey should only take about 5 minutes of your time.

Your responses will help us strengthen beekeeping in the region.

This survey is geared toward hobbyist and small-scale beekeepers.

Here’s the link: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1L5i6GIgJnKGByCtwNpRWarJsN8X2j4meukHtzVY1bW/edit

Want more information, you can reach out to Angela Roell at info@angelaroell.com
It’s time to renew your Mass Bee Membership!

We are now accepting online applications! This makes it easy to join & keep dues and information up to date using a credit card. The form can be accessed here: [https://www.massbee.org/membership/](https://www.massbee.org/membership/)

2019 Mass Bee Board Members

**President:** Peter Delaney 978-887-5726  
[president@massbee.org](mailto:president@massbee.org)

**Vice President:** Mary Duane 508 335 0433  
[vicepresident@massbee.org](mailto:vicepresident@massbee.org)

**Recording Secretary:** Alexandra Bartsch  
[recordingsecretary@massbee.org](mailto:recordingsecretary@massbee.org)

**Corresponding Secretary:** Kitty de Groot 508-308-1453  
[correspondingsecretary@massbee.org](mailto:correspondingsecretary@massbee.org)

**Treasurer:** Alexander Rancourt 339-244-1022  
[treasurer@massbee.org](mailto:treasurer@massbee.org)

**Registrar:** Evelyn Schraft 401-573-9480  
[registrar@massbee.org](mailto:registrar@massbee.org)

**Program/Communications Director:** Ed Szymanski 508-528-1317  
[webmaster@massbee.org](mailto:webmaster@massbee.org)

**Pesticide Director:** Wayne Andrews 508-824-8469  
[pesticide@massbee.org](mailto:pesticide@massbee.org)

**Web Site:** [www.massbee.org](http://www.massbee.org)

**Facebook:** [https://www.facebook.com/MassachusettsBeekeepers](https://www.facebook.com/MassachusettsBeekeepers)
Massachusetts Beekeepers Association Membership Application

Application Date: __________________________
Check #: ________ Amount: ______________________
Membership Year: ____________________________
New: __________ Renewal: _________________

All Memberships run from January 1st through December 31st in a given year.

NAME(S): __________________________________________________________________________

ORGANIZATION: _________________________________________________________________

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP TYPE: Individual $15.00 __________
--------------------------------- ----------------------------------
Family $25.00 __________
County Association $50.00 __________

ADDRESS: __________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

EMAIL #1: __________________________________________________________________________

EMAIL #2: __________________________________________________________________________

PHONE: ____________________________________________________________________________

County Beekeeping Association: _______________________________________________________

Completed applications along with payment made out to the “MBA” should be mailed to:

MBA Memberships
PO BOX 234, Halifax, MA 02338

Applications may also be emailed to treasurer@massbee.org

or

Fill out the form online on our web site at https://www.massbee.org/membership/

Annual membership dues are subject to change; please check our web site for current information.

Rev 12/14/18