

Mountain Empire Beekeepers Association

Minutes

March 22, 2018

The meeting was called to order at 6:33 p.m. by Anthony Ellis in room 105, Fincastle Hall Wytheville Community College. 29 members and 3 guests were present.

Minutes and Treasurer's Report: Motion to approve minutes—Herman Hearn, seconded by Alana Yates. Minutes approved. Mickey Cunningham presented the treasurer's report. The report was filed for audit.

Speaker: Ben Templeton, Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
Cell (276) 690-0841
Office (276) 228-5501
Email - Ben.Templeton@vdacs.virginia.gov

Presentation: Causes of Hive Loss (and their prevention)

How to recognize a health hive:

1. **Colony Condition**-You need lots of bees, about 50,000 bees. You should have several frames of brood. good queen, no late swarm, not weak
2. **Plenty of surplus of food stores**- The amount and proximity of food stores are very important. You should have approximately 60lbs. of honey per hive. (1 full shallow super = 25lb)

It is important to know how to make fondant for two reasons:

- A. If the bees should run out of their food stores, the fondant will give them needed food to survive.
 - B. During prolonged cold, bees will not break the cluster. They starve in place. Apply fondant directly to the cluster. It can be applied on a cool day if done quickly. ~50°F
3. **Cold Conditions**- The cluster size and hive strength are very important. You need to control moisture. The condensation can kill the bees. Good ventilation is important.
 4. **Pests and Diseases** need to be controlled. i.e. Varroa mite, small hive beetle, Nosema

Virginia BeeCheck

In cooperation with our stakeholders, the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS) developed Virginia's Voluntary Plan to Mitigate the Risk of Pesticides to Managed Pollinators. The plan is a set of voluntary recommendations and best management practices intended to increase protection of managed pollinators from pesticides while allowing effective control of pests that adversely affect crops, structures, public health and domestic animals. A key component of the plan is timely and voluntary communication and coordination among key stakeholders, including beekeepers and agricultural and commercial non-agricultural pesticide applicators. To facilitate communication between beekeepers and agricultural producers and pesticides applicators VDACS has acquired BeeCheck™, Apiary Registry by FieldWatch®. BeeCheck™ is an on-line tool for mapping apiary locations and providing beekeeper contact information. Hobbyist and commercial beekeepers are encouraged to enroll in BeeCheck™ to provide contact information to pesticide users. Enrollment in BeeCheck™ is voluntary and free; and, monitored by data stewards at VDACS. To enroll in Virginia BeeCheck™ go to <http://va.beecheck.org>.

For more information on BeeCheck™ and the Voluntary Plan to Mitigate the Risk of Pesticides to Managed Pollinators visit our Beekeeping and Apiary Inspection webpage at <http://www.vdacs.virginia.gov/plant-industry-services-beekeeping-apiary-inspection.shtml>.

Old Business:

- Jim Atwell - Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services - Division of **Consumer Protection**
James.atwell@vdacs.virginia.gov 276-228-5501, 276-223-2434, 276-228-6579 Wytheville Investigator
<http://www.vdacs.virginia.gov/about-division-of-consumer-protection.shtml>
- Representatives from the USDA, Ron Hale- Washington and Smith Counties and Aaron Blackburn- Wythe and Bland Counties, spoke about an insurance policy ELAP – Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program and other financial assistance programs. One must have at least a 15% loss to qualify. For more information: Washington & Smith Counties (276) 628-8186, Wythe & Bland (276) 228-3513.
- A motion by Mickey Cunningham for two youth from the beekeeping class to receive a nuc each was passed. Connie Armentrout seconded the motion. The youths will either receive a nuc or be reimbursed the price of a nuc.
- The United Nations have declared May 20 World Bee Day. Every year on this day, the attention of the global public will be drawn to the importance of preserving bees and other pollinators. People will be reminded of the importance of bees for the entire humanity and invited to take concrete action to preserve and protect them.
https://www.huffingtonpost.com/mr-dejan-idan/world-bee-day-to-bee-or-n_b_10055350.html

New Business:

- Tim Service is selling package bees for \$125.00. Delivery will be around April 21, 2018. If interested contact Tim at canoemaker@centurylink.net or (276)- 952-5077.
- Highland Beekeepers Association is sponsoring a Queen Rearing workshop May 5, 2018 preregistration is requested.
- Tim Service was contacted by the Wytheville Farmers Market who would like MEBA to participate in the Pollinator Week again this year.

Bees in the News: None

Raffle Winners:

Fred Williams– unassembled nuc
Fred Williams–split bottom frames
Austin Reynolds – MEBA cap

Adjourned at 8:49 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Connie Armentrout
Secretary, MEBA