



Pennsylvania Beekeeper

The Official Organ of the Pennsylvania State Beekeepers Association

DECEMBER 2023, VOLUME NO.12

In this Issue

News 'n Views.....	1
Upcoming Events	3
Honey Queen Report.....	6
Ask 2 Beekeepers	8
2024 Farm Show Volunteers Needed	12
Farm Show Marketplace Product Needed	15
Jeremy's Corner.....	17
Inner Nature.....	20
New! Cici's Bees	24

PSBA

PRESIDENT:

Mark Gingrich
7070 Bull Rd
Dover, PA 17315
717-817-1398
President@pastatebeekeepers.org

1ST VICE-PRESIDENT:

Frank Ruthkosky
316 Stafford Ct
Chester Springs, PA 19425
484-678-1938
VicePresident@pastatebeekeepers.org

2ND VICE-PRESIDENT

Paul Snellen
1531 Eaton Ave
Bethlehem PA 18018
610-657-0685
2ndVicePresident@pastatebeekeepers.org

SECRETARY

Regina Rhoads
1033 N Grange Ave
Collegeville, PA 19426
610-304-8903
Secretary@pastatebeekeepers.org

TREASURER:

Carleen Vorisek
1001 Pinetown Rd
Lewisberry PA 17339
724-422-5847
Treasurer@pastatebeekeepers.org

NEWSLETTER

Penelope Malish
newsletter@pastatebeekeepers.org

PSBA MAILING ADDRESS

PSBA
c/o Carleen Vorisek
1001 Pinetown Rd
Lewisberry, PA 17339

WEBSITE:

<http://www.pastatebeekeepers.org>



News 'n Views...

Mark Gingrich, PSBA President

For many the reward of the beekeeping season is the harvest. Numerous areas across the state reported that they weren't as nectar plentiful as in years past. It's satisfying to me to see jars filled with liquid gold, evidence of the hard work the bees we keep performed throughout the long season. This honey is not just a sweet reward; it's a testament to the strength of our bee colonies and our commitment to their care. Every seasoned beekeeper is well aware of the role weather plays in our success, constantly throwing challenges our way. Maybe it's just me, but it sure seems that the unpredictable weather is getting more unpredictable as time marches on. True to our spirit as beekeepers, we adapt and persevere. The honey bee, resilient as ever, seasonally overcame these challenges, and together, we managed to navigate the fluctuations. For many of us, beekeeping is not just a hobby or profession—it's an important part of our lives. It's a challenge fostering the well-being of these incredible creatures that play such a vital role in pollinating our crops and sustaining our ecosystems. Keeping bees is a balance between patience and dedication, often in the face of uncertainty and adversity. And when we taste the honey from our own hives, we're reminded of the profound impact our work has on the world around us. At least for me, as we get older, we find ourselves cherishing the breaks that beekeeping offers from the demands of our daily lives. The hum of the bees and the peaceful moments spent with our hives offer a welcome respite. These moments remind us of the wonders of the natural world and the intricate web of life that we are a part of. As I reflect on this successful season, I am reminded that the role of beekeepers extends beyond enjoyment and profit. We are stewards of these pollinators, and it's our responsibility to safeguard their future. I hope we are able to continue to adapt to the changing climate, learn from our bees, and innovate in our practices to ensure their long-term existence.

Thanksgiving is a time for reflection, gratitude, and togetherness. It's a day when families and friends gather around a table laden with delicious food to share a meal and express thanks for the blessings in their lives. Thanksgiving is more than just honey-baked turkey and mashed potatoes, it's a time to celebrate the values of gratitude and appreciation. It's a good time to remember that the challenges we face only make our successes sweeter.

I had the honor of being the featured speaker at the 2C's and a Bee Association's annual banquet, held this year in Ebensburg, Pennsylvania. It was a standing-room-only event, a testament to the enthusiasm and dedication of the beekeeping community in this area. For those who may not be familiar with the club, it was founded in 1987 with the stated goal of uniting beekeepers from Cambria, Clearfield, and Blair counties. What's truly special about this association is its inclusivity, welcoming beekeepers of all levels, from beginners to seasoned experts, and encompassing hobbyists, sideliners, and commercial operators. Over the years, their reach has expanded to include members from surrounding counties as well. With monthly meetings held from March to December, including a summer picnic, the 2 Cs and a Bee Association create a vibrant and supportive beekeeping atmosphere. I encourage anyone passing through the area to consider visiting one of their meetings. I am certain you will find it well worth your time.

If you have not heard, the secretary of agriculture announced the theme for the 108th Pennsylvania Farm Show. This year it is "Connecting Our Communities." The 2024 PA Farm Show, known as Pennsylvania's State Fair, will run from Saturday, January 6 through Saturday, January 13 at the Farm Show Complex in Harrisburg. The Pennsylvania State

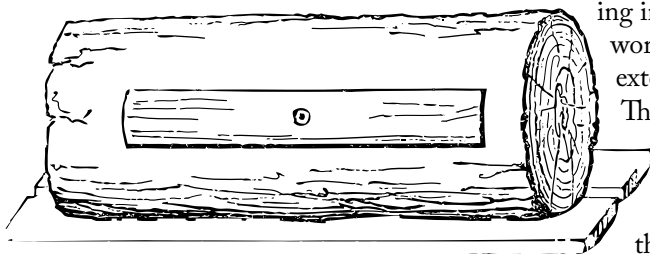
Beekeepers Association has a huge footprint at this event. This is a great time and an opportunity for you to volunteer your time and expertise at the ice cream stand, market-place, or learning center. There are links to sign up on our [website](#).

On November 15, 2023, the Senate passed a resolution to fund the federal government through early 2024. This includes a House bill that extends the 2018 Farm Bill until September 2024, a one-year extension. This stop-gap measure ensures that programs such as Agriculture Risk Coverage, Price Loss Coverage, ELAP, and Dairy Margin Coverage continue in effect for the 2024 crop year. Congress must pass the extension by early 2024 to avoid significant impacts to agriculture and consumers. If the extension isn't passed, "permanent laws" that date back to 1938 and 1949 would become effective. Consumers could potentially see major increases in the price of milk, wheat, and other commodities. The Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018 (the 2018 Farm Bill) amended the 2014 Farm Bill which authorized the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP). ELAP provides emergency assistance to eligible producers of livestock, honeybees, and farm-raised fish. It covers losses due to eligible adverse weather or loss conditions, including blizzards, disease, water shortages, and wildfires, as determined by the Secretary. ELAP covers losses that are not covered under other disaster assistance programs such as the Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program, Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP), and the Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP). There are many beekeeping operations, both large and small, that utilize the ELAP program. Further details can be found on the (FSA) Farm Service Agency and USDA United States Department of Agriculture website.

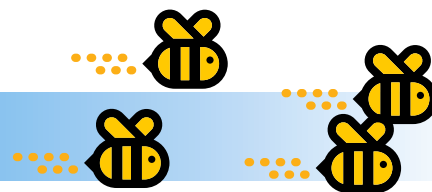
While we are on the topic of budgets, The Pennsylvania General Assembly passed Penn State's 2023-24 nonpreferred appropriations bill also on November 15 after a delay of more than four months. The bill, which has been signed by Governor Shapiro, includes flat funding of \$242.1 million for Penn State's general support appropriation — money that Penn State passes on to Pennsylvania students as an in-state tuition discount. The bill also includes a \$3.235 million (12%) increase for the Pennsylvania College of Technology. In August, the General Assembly approved level funding for Penn State Agricultural Research, Extension, Penn State Health, and the College of Medicine as part of the state's main budget legislation. Penn State's general support appropriation last increased four years ago when the state approved a 2% increase for the 2019-20 fiscal year. This funding is used to lower the cost of tuition for Pennsylvania resident students, directly benefiting more than 43,000 in-state students and their families for the current academic year.

Speaking of Penn State, they have been interviewing for a new Director of Extension. This is a key position with challenging responsibilities. It entails managing an enterprise with hundreds of employees extending to all counties of the Commonwealth; working with a diverse group of stakeholders including communities, governments, NGOs, and industry partners. This group plays a significant embedded role in contributing to the land grant mission of the college and the university. In addition, the Director of Extension is also an associate dean in the college, working in the dean's council on college policies, providing input to promotion and tenure cases as well as to faculty hiring, working with academic departments to advance and support their extension programs, and collaborate with various university units.

Thus, the person must have strong management and leadership skills as well as demonstrated accomplishments in academic scholarship. The university announced that Jeff Hyde has accepted their offer and will return to Penn State to serve as the Director of Extension. His tentative start date is May 1, 2024.



Upcoming Events



If you would like to have your event posted please send it to webmaster@pastatebeekeepers.org **no later than the 20th of the month** prior to the newsletter publication month. IE: Submit by November 20th for the December newsletter. For the most current list of Upcoming Events please visit our website at <https://psba.wildapricot.org/Local-Club-Events>.

PA Farm Show

The 108th Pennsylvania Farm Show will be held Saturday, January 6 through Saturday January 13, 2024, in Harrisburg, PA at the PA Farm Show Complex & Expo Center, 2300 N. Cameron St., Harrisburg, PA 17110.

<https://www.farmshow.pa.gov/pafarmshow/Pages/default.aspx>

Beekeepers of ABCI (Armstrong, Butler, Clarion, Indiana counties)

Beekeepers of ABCI (Armstrong, Butler, Clarion, Indiana counties) will hold their monthly meetings of 2023 at HEALTH & WELLNESS PAVILION OF ACMH 79 Glade Rd. (off Rte. 422 West Hills exit), Kittanning, PA from 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM.

Montgomery County Beekeepers Association

Beginner Beekeepers Course held monthly over 8 months on the 3rd Thursday of each month from February to September. This class is intended to give an introduction to hobbyist beekeeping and help beekeepers through their first year of this challenging journey. www.montcopabees.org

Tri-County Beekeepers Association of Southwestern PA

Meetings start at 6:30pm the 3rd Wednesday of each month. The location is the California United Methodist Church, 227 3rd St, California, PA 15419. For more information, contact Fred Miller at 724-317-2009, or frmler@yahoo.com.

Lackawanna Backyard Beekeepers

Serving (but not limited to) Lackawanna County. Mission: To foster interest in backyard beekeeping and provide a forum for discussion among local beekeepers. Free and open to the public. Meetings are held at Abington Community Library, 1200 West Grove Street, Clarks Summit, Pa. 18411 (570-587-3440) in the Ryon Room, at 6:30 pm on the third Tuesday of the month. Date may change, if library has a conflict. Please check the Facebook Page or contact us or phone to confirm the date. Co-leaders Renee Czubowicz, Brad Seward. Meeting are held the 3rd Tuesday of the month September - May. 6:30pm. June July and August meeting are TBA

Website: <http://lackawannabackyardbeekeepers.blogspot.com/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/lackawannabackyardbeekeepers>

Email: lackawannacountybackyardbeekeepers@gmail.com

Lisa Caputzal

Lisa Caputzal, spouse of Lou Caputzal, passed away. Lisa was a longtime volunteer for the PSBA. She enjoyed PSBA and Capital Area Beekeepers Association people and their events. She enjoyed helping at the PSBA conference. Lou mentioned that they stayed at the Ramada in June for the Xerces short course. When they left, they joked that before they knew it, they'd be back for the conference. This year with the change in schedule, the conference was on our 45th wedding anniversary, Oct. 21 so they did not attend. Life can change quickly.

<https://www.centralpaprofessionalservices.com/obituaries/Lisa-Caputzal/#1/Obituary>

February 9th & 10th, 2024
Gateway High School, 3000 Campus Blvd,
Monroeville, PA 15146

**Western Pennsylvania
Beekeeping Seminar**

**Guest Speakers including Dr. James
Tew, Dr. Brock Harpur, Dr. David Peck,
Dr. Robyn Underwood, and more!**

**Industry vendors, small games of
chance, and a buzzing good time!**

Early bird tickets on sale now at
<https://westpabee.eventbrite.com>, or scan the
QR code below!

Dedko's
HONEY BEE SWARM REMOVAL
www.dedkosbees.com
610-349-9597 | dedkosbees@gmail.com



2024 Pennsylvania Honey Queen & Princess Brochures



Queen Cheyenne Brown and Princess Libby Heaton, Pennsylvania Honey Brochures are now available. A \$10 donation for a pack of 100 brochures is requested. You can purchase brochures by contacting the representative in your area listed below or you may print them from this [pdf file](#) if you prefer.

Cathy Vorisek and Lucy Winn at honeyqueen@pastatebeekkeepers.org

- 5-frame nucs
- Mated Queens
- Virgin Queens
- Queen Cells
- Hives
- Beekeeping Supplies
- Beginner Kits
- Local Honey



Buzzin Acres

Lebanon County PA
717-376-6784

order @ buzzinacres.square.site

Specializing in the breeding of winter hardy, productive, and gentle queens selected for resistance to Varroa Mites.

5 Frame Medium Nucs



Our Queens are
raised from
Hygienic and Mite
Tolerant Stock

2023 Pricing:
Over-Winter Nucs - \$250 each
April Nucs - \$185 each
May Nucs - \$170 each

Pick up will be at our location in Trout Run, PA

Spring 2023 Tentative Pick up Dates:
Saturdays Apr 15th & May 6th

Visit our website or call Josh for more details.
www.huffshoneyfarm.com 570-916-9086

Medium frame Nucs fit 6 5/8" Boxes

We Have Equipment!

Stop in for all your equipment needs:

- Complete 8 and 10 frame hives
- 8 and 10 frame hive components
- Plasti-cell or wooden frames
- Foundation



• Miscellaneous supplies



Now Accepting Package Bee and Nuc Orders for Spring 2024



Approximate delivery dates:
March 27th, April 10th,
and April 24th

Pick up locations:
Hanover, PA, Hazelton, PA,
Clark Summit, PA, Frederick, MD,
Cortland, NY, McClean, NY
and Whitney Point, NY

Call or text Hal at 570-419-1542 or email
Hal.J.Mack@gmail.com.

Authorized Dealer



7 Center Square | Hanover, PA 17331
(717) 688-7151 | dawg.gone.bees@gmail.com
www.dawggonebees.com



Hours



Monday | Closed
Tuesday | 10 am - 5 pm
Wednesday | 10 am - 5 pm
Thursday | 10 am - 5 pm
Friday | 10 am - 6 pm
Saturday | 9 am - 5 pm
Sunday | 10 am - 4pm



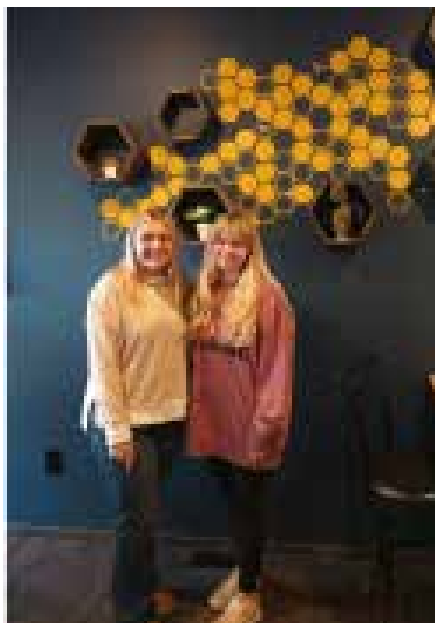
2024 Honey Queen & Princess



Cheyenne Brown, 2024 Pennsylvania Honey Queen

Hello, my name is Cheyenne Bastian-Brown, and I am proud to be serving this year as the 2024 Pennsylvania State Honey Queen! It is crazy to think that Libby and I are already into a month of our reign, but we have been busy preparing for the year ahead of us. On November 18th, 2023, we got to spend some time in Erie, Pennsylvania training without coordinators. During this time, we learned about various topics within beekeeping including honeybee anatomy, the life cycle of a honey bee, beekeeping tactics, and the various jobs of honey bees throughout their lifetime. In addition, we had the opportunity to start scheduling promotions and preparing for the 2024 Pennsylvania Farm Show. During our trip, we also had the opportunity to travel through Erie to learn more about honey operations like those at Vorisek's Backyard Bee Farm, and a quick stop at Nucleus Mead. At Nucleus Mead we learned more about the background into mead making, and just how long the process can take. Since our retreat, Princess Libby and I have been busy at work scheduling social media posts and events for the next eleven months. If you have an event that you would like to see the Pennsylvania State Honey Queen or Princess at please contact use at honeyqueen@pastatebeekeepers.org, we would love to hear from you!

Stay Sweet, Queen Cheyenne



If you would like to invite the Honey Queen or Princess to your event, please contact Cathy Vorisek and Lucy Winn at honeyqueen@pastatebeekeepers.org

**Order your
2023 Nucs
Now!**



Hackenberg

Apiaries
Buffy Bee Honey

We sell:

- Clean Beeswax in small blocks (approximately 1lb and 3lb blocks) and large blocks (approximately 28-30 lbs)
- We have over 8 different varieties of honey
- Honey in jars, 5 gallon buckets, and 55 gallon drums
- We also buy Honey and Wax
- We will be selling spring Nucs

Phone: 570-850-7492

January-March Phone: 570-428-5085

**We are located at :
1466 Crossroads Drive
Lewisburg, PA 17837**

Email: hackenberghoney@gmail.com

Website:

<https://hackenbergapiaries.us/>

Steve Repasky
EAS Certified Master Beekeeper
Author of "*Swarm Essentials*"

Email: meadowsweetbees@gmail.com (preferred)
or
Cell: 412.445.7872 with questions.



5 Frame Deep Frame Nucs Available

**Mid-April 2023
Pick up Only- Sewickley, PA**

**Cash/Check \$175
Credit Card \$180**

*Member of the PA Queen Bee
Improvement Project*

www.meadowsweetbees.com

Ask 2 Beekeepers

There is a saying in beekeeping: "Ask 2 beekeepers a question and you will get 3 answers."

Do you have a question for the Beekeepers? Email your questions to secretary@pastatebeekeepers.org and they will appear in the next month's Ask 2 Beekeepers. Please note that the questions or responses may include the opinions of the individual beekeepers and are not necessarily those of the PA State Beekeepers Association.

Question 1

Do you provide emergency feed in a feeding shim? If so, what is your favorite form of emergency feed? When do you put on emergency feed (when closing up the hives for the fall or when the hives feel light)?

Charlie: If I need to add emergency feed, I use an empty super as a 'shim'. I leave a queen excluder on all my colonies at the top, just under the inner cover. My emergency feed of choice, is an 8-10 lb candy block. I can easily take the covers off. Put the empty box on.

Place candy block on the excluder. Cover the sugar block with a burlap bag of wood shavings and replace the covers. The excluder prevents the queen from moving up. We don't want to be surprised with brood in the shim space. As I go about final winter prep, I lift each hive to get a feel for how much weight and whether the weight is high, low or balanced in the stack. I use a red building brick on the outer cover. If it feels good, the brick is flat. If it might need feed, the brick is on edge. If it's dead, the brick is on end. I can come by as winter progresses and know which colonies most likely need checked for food.

Mark: Yes, we do indeed provide emergency feed. I would not call what we use a feeding shim, but rather a candy board. A candy board is a feeder that is essentially a shallow super with a bottom. A sugar syrup solution is heated until it reaches the "soft ball" stage. Subsequently, it's vigorously mixed until firm and then poured into the feeder. If the candy forms a soft pliable ball, it is in the softball stage, about 235°–240°F. This is the stage you would cook to if you are making fudge. If the candy forms a firm but not hard ball, it is in the firm ball stage. The temperature of this stage is between 242°–248°F. Many beekeepers have gotten away from cooked candy due to the possible formation of HMF (hydroxymethylfurfural) which develops when sugar is heated to high temperatures and which is poisonous to the bees. Once the sugar solidifies, the feeder can be inverted



**Charlie Vorisek > < Mark Gingrich
& Steve Repasky**

onto the hive's top. We have at times mixed the pollen substitute into the sugar. Shims are a versatile component in beekeeping, serving the purpose of creating a perimeter that creates a ¾" to 1½" gap between the brood chamber and honey supers. This space can serve multiple functions, such as accommodating the feeding of fondant, dry sugar, pollen patties, and winter patties. We normally add them in December.

Steve: I use emergency feed on the majority of my hives more so for insurance purposes than anything

else. Several of my yards can be difficult to access during the winter months so if we have bad storms or heavy snowfall that would impact accessibility, I want the bees to have that good when needed. Generally speaking, I put on the candy boards sometime in mid to late December or early January as I find that those are the times when we begin to get "winter" and bees may have used up their stores if it was a poor fall flow. This is also when some colonies begin rearing brood again (or sometimes I find they never really shut down) and so the increased availability of carbs does them good.

Question 2

Do you insulate and if so, what type of insulation do you use?

Charlie: I use a 1" Styrofoam board over the inner cover, under outer cover. I block the outside edge vent of the inner cover, so there is no top ventilation. I do not insulate the outside walls of my full size 10-frame colonies. Some layers of newspaper above the inner cover hole will absorb and hold excess moisture. The bees can use the moisture as needed.

I have never had success over-wintering wooden 5-frame nucs. I started using a 6-frame polystyrene nuc box and had remarkable success. No top ventilation. The screened

bottom is baffled or blocked, but not sealed. The bees are able to better control air movement. Moisture does not wick through the walls like wood and frost on the inside walls. I also assure the cover to box edge is clean and seals tightly.

There is a significant difference of how bees use a full size box and nuc box during winter.

Mark: Increasing the thickness of the wall, which results in a higher R-value, reduces the energy required and physical effort exerted within the cluster's space. It's a straightforward concept. Additionally, there's another practical implication, that is the cluster must maintain its tightly knit cohesion, otherwise, it won't effectively keep the bees warm. Whenever the temperature dips to the low 50's, the bees within a hive naturally congregate into a cluster. That may be best described as a tightly formed ball of bees within the hive. This cluster serves the vital purpose of enveloping the brood and queen, their combined efforts generating and maintaining the necessary heat to sustain life. Both blue Dow foam board or commercially available wraps are good options for insulation. We use concrete curing blankets. These curing blankets are a deep black on the exterior to provide maximum temperature gain from solar heat and to help the interior insulation layers maximize R values.

Steve: The only insulation I use is reflectix under my migratory cover. Other than that, I find that there is no need to insulate in Pennsylvania as we do not have harsh winters and with the fluctuation in temperatures being rather common, I find that insulation can cause more harm than good.

Question 3

What is the best way for a smaller scale beekeeper to render wax without a lot of extra cost in specialized equipment?

Charlie: I am not a good authority of rendering small amounts of wax. I would drain the cappings and/or let the bees rob the cappings to remove as much residual honey as possible. Once drained/cleaned, place cappings in a large pot with a couple inches of water in the bottom. Slowly heat on a stove top. The wax will melt and can be ladled off. The water acts as a double boiler, prevents scorching and separates dirt and debris. Filter the wax through an old white sweatshirt. (fabric color dyes will color the wax) Fleece side up. It can all be poured through the filter and left to cool. Some dirt may go through filter with the water, so I would ladle first and then pour into a separate container. Our cheap and easy container of choice is a milk jug with top cut off. The wax will float. It can be cut apart to get the wax out.

Some people use a crock pot with some water in the bottom. Certainly safer than a stove top.

Mark: Back in the day, we would purchase inexpensive aluminum crock pots. They were black and had the heat control on the electrical cord. If I remember, there were (4) quart models that came with a glass lid. We would add 1½ quarts of water and whatever wax we wanted to render at the same time, then turn the unit on to the lowest setting. Beeswax has a melting point of around 145 degrees Fahrenheit. After all the wax had melted, we would simply unplug the unit and let it cool. All of the wax would float to the top. The pots had a non-stick quality, so the resulting cake was easily removed. On the bottom of the wax cake was all the debris. We would use a course cut rasp to remove the accumulated debris. We repeated the process 2 or 3 times and ultimately had nice clean wax cakes.

Steve: Solar wax melters can be bought at all levels from very small and basic to more "fancy" and complex. Once the wax is melted into some form from the solar wax melter it can be rendered very easily at home with no special equipment. Some cheese cloth, double boiler system from 2 pots and some molds to pour into is all you need.



Do you have a question for the Beekeepers?

Email your questions to

secretary@pastatebeekopers.org



Stronger & Healthier Hives

PROVEN TO PRODUCE RESULTS EQUAL TO NATURAL POLLEN

ULTRA BEE

HIGH PROTEIN POLLEN SUBSTITUTE



- Produces results statistically equivalent to natural pollen (American Bee Journal 2014)
- Bees utilize ALL of the available protein with a complete amino acid profile
- Increased brood production
- Promotes healthier and stronger bees
- Beneficial vitamins, minerals, and fats
- No animal byproducts

40 LB \$103.95

BULK 2100 LB \$2,829.75



QUALITY NUTRITION
BENEFICIAL VITAMINS,
MINERALS AND FATS



HIGHER HONEY YIELDS
LARGER THRIVING COLONIES
PRODUCE MORE HONEY



READY TO USE
EASY POLLEN SUBSTITUTE
IN POLLEN DEARTH



PROTEIN RICH
HIGHEST PROTEIN
AVAILABLE

Ultra Bee
Dry Feed



Bees Need Pollen to Brood

Scientifically developed to provide the best bee nutrition, Ultra Bee has been proven to match natural pollen's results in the field by providing a complete amino acid profile that allows bees to make the most of the beneficial vitamins, fats, and minerals that they need to be at their best. Your bees mean business, you should too.



THOUSANDS
of products



EXCLUSIVE
online sales



MANN LAKE
MANNLAKELTD.COM

800-880-7694



SIX RETAIL
locations



CUSTOMER SERVICE
for all your needs

AT HOME BEEKEEPING WEBINAR



At Home Beekeeping Webinar

Distance Learning for Beekeepers



We're offering beekeepers the chance to attend virtual meetings from the comfort of one's own home using a computer or mobile device. Speakers include university researchers and extension specialists from across the SE US as well as USDA ARS researchers. Each event will bring participants up to date on timely beekeeping topics with time for Q & A included.

All are welcome!! Join us for this free event!!

- January 30, 2024 – Tropilaelaps Monitoring and Management, Rogan Tokach, Auburn University
- February 27 – TBD – Esmaeil Amiri, Mississippi State University
- March 26 – TBD Cameron Jack, University of Florida

**Last Tuesday of
the month**

**6:30 – 7:30 pm
Central Time**

Watch via Zoom Webinar

<https://auburn.zoom.us/j/904522838>

or Facebook Live: <https://www.facebook.com/LawrenceCountyextension/>

Questions? Email Allyson Shabel ams0137@aces.edu

Our institutions are equal opportunity educators and employers. Everyone is welcome! Please let us know if you have accessibility needs.

2024 Farm Show Volunteers Needed!

The 2024 PA Farm Show is right around the corner, and we need volunteers for the 3 venues that the PSBA maintains, namely the Learning Center, the Market Place, and the Honey Waffle and Ice Cream Stand. The show is scheduled for **Saturday, January 6th to Saturday, January 13th**. Please consider volunteering some of your time at any or all the venues to support beekeeping in PA. Here are the descriptions of what the volunteers do at each venue:

Learning Center: The learning center is in a prime location near the famous butter sculpture and gets a lot of foot traffic from attendees. There are 2 observation hives with screened-in “flying cages” for the bees. There are tables with literature on beekeeping basics, vendor catalogs, bee equipment, bee suppliers, PA bee clubs, and beginning beekeeping courses that are being offered around the state. Volunteers talk to show attendees answering their questions about bees and beekeeping and helping lots of kids find the queen in the observation hives. No “selling” occurs at the learning center so there is no money handling...just talking bees with the public. If you enjoy talking about beekeeping, this is the place for you. Most of the people that you will speak with know very little about bees and beekeeping. So, first year beekeepers to those with seventy years of experience are encouraged to volunteer. Managers are Charlie Vorisek (814) 350-0662 or vbeefarm@windstream.net and Stan Poleshuk (717) 433-2830 or spoleshuk285@comcast.com.

Learning Center on-line signup: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/508044BADAB2AA1FF2-2019>

Market Place: Beekeepers from all around the state sell their honey or other hive products at wholesale prices to the PSBA and the PSBA maintains a honey Market Place booth where we sell the products to show attendees at retail pricing. The revenues generated by the Market Place support the PA Honey Queen program and her travels around the state and any other beekeeping promotions that the PSBA conducts. Volunteers in the Market Place are helping customers find their preferred honey or candles or lip balms, etc. and then “checking them out” by taking money or credit card payments. All the product prices are marked. Manager is Carleen Vorisek (814)571-5036 or gdrclarleen@yahoo.com.

Market Place on-line signup: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0F4DAEA72FA1F4CF8-44336453-farm>

Honey Waffle and Ice Cream Stand: The PSBA has several ice cream manufacturers that add honey to their ice cream just for us to sell at the Farm Show food court. In addition, we mix honey into standard waffle batter and cook them right in the stand to put together a “waffles and ice cream” combination that is very popular with show attendees. The Ice Cream Stand needs quite a few volunteers, especially at peak mealtimes (lunch and dinner primarily) to interface with customers and take their payments (cash or credit), to dip ice cream and to cook the waffles. So, volunteers have a choice of doing some food handling in accordance with safe food handling practices or handling money and making change, etc. Once again, the revenues generated in the stand support the PA Honey queen program. Contact manager Fern Stiffler (814) 873-1891 or fernbemis@gmail.com or Carleen at (814) 571-5036 or gdrclarleen@yahoo.com.

Ice Cream Stand on-line signup: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0F4DAEA72FA1F4CF8-44337014-farm>

All of the venues offer free parking passes to anyone that volunteers and the days are typically broken up into “shifts”. All three venues have on-line signups where volunteers can pick their preferred times to work and then perhaps enjoy the Farm Show for the remainder of the day. Due to the number of volunteers needed and relative difficulty of working at the Ice Cream and Waffle Booth, we offer hotel reimbursements if you drive over 2 hours, work an evening shift, and/or shifts over multiple days. If you work one evening shift you may be reimbursed %50 of your hotel cost up to \$50. If you work an evening shift and a shift the next day you may be reimbursed %100 of your hotel cost up to \$100. Make sure you have receipts and talk to Fern at the Honey Ice Cream and Waffle Booth. Please consider volunteering for one or more venues to spread the challenge around. You can also contact the venue managers if you have questions or to sign up. Get a group together from your club or your neighborhood to make it a fun trip!

Stony Springs BEE FARM

Cogan Station, PA
570-998-9464

NORTHER BRED STOCK

**Taking orders for 2022 Packages due the first week of April 2022.
2022 Packages: \$130**

We are committed to hygienic and mite resistant lines that are winter hardy.
We utilize a chemical free natural selection breeding program and isolated mating yards.

- PA Certified Breeder of Northern Queens and Nucs
- Members of Northern State Queen Breeders Association
- Top Quality Queens and Nucs Available May thru September
- 2022 Northern 5 Frame Deep Nucs: \$140
- 2022 Northern Queens: \$30

www.gingrichapiaries.com



- * *Northern Bee Stock - Queen Breeder*
- * *Custom Honey Extraction*
- * *Nucs*
- * *Small Scale Pollination - 4 Way pallets*

717-292-1249
Dover, PA



Mark Gingrich
mingrich@gingrichapiaries.com

Bees-N-Trees Farm Package Bee Run 2023 Order Form

We have your package delivery scheduled for April 8th, 2023.
In the event of bad weather and slow build-up we would reschedule for April 15th.
Please Email your order to Beesntrees@hotmail.com:

Name: _____
Address: _____
Phone #: _____
Email Address: _____

Mail Checks & Order forms to:

Bees-N-Trees
P.O.Box 744.
Hershey, PA 17033
Beesntrees@hotmail.com
717-329-3216 Cell
<https://bees-n-trees.business.site/>
[Copies of order form here](#)

Date of Order? _____
Number of Packages Ordered @ \$*130: _____
Number of Marked Packages Ordered @\$*136: _____
Number of extra Queens @ \$*40: _____
Number of extra Marked Queens @ \$*46: _____
5 Frame Med* NUCs @ \$155: _____
5 Frame Deep* NUC @ \$175: _____
- 3 Med. 8 Frame Starter Hives/Colonies:
Complete marked Q. Med. Hives with bees. **Package April 15th @ \$ 431: _____
Complete marked Q. Med. Hives with bees. NUC Colony May 17th @ \$ 441: _____

Total of Order: \$ _____

Deposit Paid: \$ _____

Amount Due by March 31: \$ _____

Pick up location: Bees-N-Trees LLC Hershey @ 240 Quarry rd Hummelstown, PA 17036

* I will have limited supplies of NUCs available Starting May 15!

Cost for 5 frame NUCS is \$155 med and \$175 deep. \$42 for NUC Box

****I will have limited supplies of Starter Colonies for new beekeepers** wanting a first-year complete sustainable colony. I will install the package on April 10 and sell painted 8 frame x 3 medium boxes starter colonies for \$431 with marked queens. Starting May 15 I will have 5 frame Nucleus Colonies in the same starter hive configuration for \$441. Text or email orders. First ordered... First delivered! (in season queens as available... call2C)

Limited quantities of equipment available such as frames, boxes, covers, bottoms, hive tools, smokers, suits, excluders, pollen traps, other stuff & etc. Call or Text me for a complete list.

Email me for a simple black and white order form if needed! Beesntrees@hotmail.com

Farm Show Marketplace Product Needed

Carleen Vorisek, PSBA Treasurer

The Farm Show is January 6-13 and is among the largest indoor agricultural focused events in the country with over 1 million square feet under one roof. It provides PSBA with our largest fundraising opportunity as we operate both a Honey Waffle and Ice Cream Booth and the Marketplace.

The Marketplace showcases Pennsylvanian honey and hive by-products from across the state to sell to the general public. And for many honey connoisseurs, this is where they get their annual honey haul. This means, we're looking for product to put on display and sell at the Marketplace Booth, regardless of the size of your operation.

The process is simple and I can be contacted directly if you have any questions at 814-571-5036 (texting is ok too) or via email at gdrccarleen@yahoo.com The process is outlined below:

- Items are received at our booth in the Main Hall (close to the butter sculpture) on **Thursday January 4th from 9:00am-5:00pm or Friday January 5th from 9:00am-12:00pm**. The McClay street entrance is the best option and does have a ramp allowing you to use a dolly / cart to haul your load.
- Products must be submitted with an **invoice which will be confirmed at drop off**. Sending products with a liaison, such as local club member, is fine too as they can confirm items on the invoice. Include your contact information on the invoice.
- **Label products according to regulations** and include the nectar source if it's known. Basic label requirements are: common name of product (honey), net weight (oz or lbs), ingredients (100%), origin, contact information (address). Proper labeling is required for all size containers.
- We operate in **good faith that all products submitted are raw and unprocessed**. We do our best to keep honey from crystallizing while in storage so be sure it's clear and retail ready before dropping it off.
- To be certain we have all producers on the table, **pack honey in boxes with your label (or name) on the outside**. Boxes that can be stacked are much easier to handle and prevent jars from toppling over and leaking.
- We use the **November 2023 Bee Culture Regional Honey Report** as a guide to set prices and ask that you do the same when setting wholesale prices. Keeping in mind, this is a great outlet for you to sell product AND that this is a PSBA fundraiser. If you are uncertain, the document is available without subscription on the Bee Culture website.
- We do our best to sell out, it's a benefit to you, the Association, and our tear-down crew! However, **any remaining product must be picked up on Saturday January 13th** before 5:30pm. It is your responsibility to arrange product to be picked up. I do my best to inform those who have product remaining so pickup can be arranged but welcome a phone call (814-571-5036) if you want to know the status of your products. Unsold products are deducted from the invoice.
- Checks get mailed after the Farm Show and typically before the end of the month.

I do my best to make this process as painless as possible all for the glory of having a variety of honey from all over this beautiful state. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any additional questions. (Carleen Vorisek, Treasurer@pastatebeekkeepers.org)

Est. 2004

BEDILLION HONEY FARM

HONEY NUCS SUPPLIES
HICKORY, PA



Come visit our newly remodeled on-farm shop. In stock beekeeping supplies & tools, protective gear, varroa treatments, feeds, extractors and more.

Free Honey Tasting!
Come Find Your Favorite Honeys!

Open Tue-Sat 10am-4pm

1179 Burgettstown Rd.
Hickory, PA 15340
724-356-7713

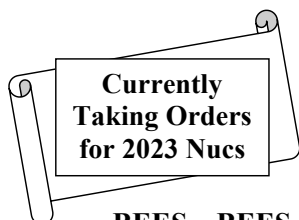
Shop Online at BedillionHoneyFarm.com



Licensed &
Inspected twice yearly
by the PA Dept of Ag
for the sale of honeybees.

- * Honey
- * Beekeeping Supplies
- * Woodenware
- * Beeswax
- * Nucs, packages & queens
- * Pollination services
- * PA Maple Syrup
- * Soaps, Candles, Gifts & More

Wildflower & Varietal Honeys
Available in buckets & drums



YOUNG APLARIES INC
136 Wright Road
Cogan Station, PA 17728

Certified Pennsylvania Honey Bee Breeder



**BEES – BEES – BEES
NUCS & SINGLE HIVES
W/ 2023 QUEENS**

AVAILABLE STARTING IN APRIL

5 Frame Deep Nucs - \$175 – With Pro Nuc Box

6 5/8 (med depth) 10 Frame Single Hive
#1 Quality Equipment - \$185

6 5/8 (med depth) 10 Frame Single Hive
#2 Quality Equipment - \$135

Quantity Discount: 20+ hives/nucs \$5 discount
50+ hives/nucs \$10 discount

Complete Hives Also Available

Large and small quantities available
Strong and Healthy Bees

Contact
Kevin Young
Office
570-998-8417

Cell
570-220-2337
Email
key136@gmail.com

- * Used telescoping covers and bottom boards each
- * Honey – PA Fall Crop Barrels Available
- Knotweed
- Goldenrod – ELA and LA
- * Beeswax-Lt. Yellow(very nice melter run)\$7.00/lb
Sold in approx. 30 lb blocks
- * Feeder buckets – 3 ½ Gallon \$1 each
- * Pollen Traps \$10 each
- Wax Melters:
- * Olsen Combine Wax Melter: steam or hot water
with slum rakes
- * Beam scales
- * Double 4 Frame Deep Nuc Boxes (wooden) \$25

**HELP WANTED
COMMERCIAL BEEKEEPING OPERATION
FOR POLLINATION
AND HONEY PRODUCTION**

Seeking Self-Motivated Hardworking Individual
Willing to Train



Jeremy's Corner

Winter on the Susquehanna.

With apologies to Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

By the leafless trees of poplar,
Willow, oak and black acacia,
At the entrance of her tree hive
Banked along the Susquehanna,
In the pleasant winter morning,
Wings unfolded, all a-tremor,
A bee (a worker) fanned and waited.

The air was rich with expectation,
All the earth was cold but joyous -
Yuletide, Kwanza, times of gifting,
Lights and colors, food and singing -
As before her, through the sunshine
Passed the girls on cleansing flights,
Released for now from winter cluster,
Gleaming, humming in the sunlight.
Our worker bee was as a lighthouse,
Sending rays of home direction
Should a sister, in her rapture
Need an aisle of home-bent incense.

A female sanctum (drones are gone)
Feasting on their horde of honey -
Rich and strong, as gifts from Magi :
gold and frankincense and myrrh -
The sentience of every worker
And, hereafter, for their savior,
Their source of life, esprit de corps,
Their genetic core for ever after -
Their mother queen, but not their ruler,

She is waiting for that signal -
Longer days and shorter darkness -

When once again the annual cycle :
Rebirth, expansion, and partition
Precedes the stores of amber honey -
And in this way does life continue.
As go the bees so go their keepers -
Hunkered down in winter climes,
Embracing hours of purple vapors,
Precious sights of sun at sunset,
In the purple mists of evening,
In the regions of the home-wind,

Of the northwest winds of Erie,
Of the southeast isles of Schuylkill
In the woods of Allegheny
Tioga, Pinchot and Bendigo,
In the long and somber evenings
Afore the beauty of the day-dawn
We share the warmth of hearth and fire
We share the music and the stories,
As, with bees, we wait in clusters
For the birth of this new season.

You whose hearts are fresh and simple
Who have faith in love and nature
Who believe that in all ages
Every human heart is human,
That in every bee and keeper
There are longings, yearnings, strivings
For a life of shared fulfillment.
All will add to our enchantment
To the pleasure of the season
For the beauty of the day-dawn
For the pleasure of the morning -
The beginnings of a new day.

BJORN APIARIES – 2023

www.bjornapiaries.com

717-571-0087

Mikenida@ptd.net

Certified Pennsylvania Breeder of Northern Bred Queens and Nucs.

Italian 3 lb. Packages with queen. \$123.00 (plus tax if applicable)

Call/Email for bulk discounts or Farm tax exemption orders

Pick-up scheduled for April 8, 9, 10

Northern Stock 2023 Nucs.....\$145.00 Queens.....\$35.00

Check website for availability of nucs and Queens.

**Other Classes at Bjorn Apiaries, additional products & services
are listed on the website. Follow us on Facebook!**

alwayssummerherbs
Happy, Hardy Honeybees



HOME OF THE MITE-BITING BEES

- ✓ Purdue Leg-Chewers
- ✓ Mite Maulers
- ✓ Martha Carpenter Mite Maulers
- ✓ 5-Frame Nucleus Colonies
- ✓ Mated Queens
- ✓ Virgin Queens
- ✓ 48-Hour Queen Cells
- ✓ Certified Breeder Queens



**Heartland Honey Bee Breeders
Cooperative Member (Pennsylvania)**



PA Queen Bee Improvement Project

- Awarded 7 USDA SARE grants
- Purdue Mite-Biters vs. control group showed:
 - 69% better winter survival
 - 35% more honey production

To read the full report, google "USDA FNE17-863"



Call **724.735.4700** or order online:

alwayssummerherbs.com

COUNTRY BARN FARM

Allegheny County, PA



Northern queen bees, beekeeping equipment
& online beekeeping classes

Learn more and sign up for our
online beginner beekeeping class
with Joe Zgurzynski by scanning the code.



Queen bees available May through September
www.countrybarnfarm.com

INNER NATURE

Virgin Birth

Vidya Rajan

December seems a good time of year to bring up the topic of virgin births. Religion aside, this is actually an interesting and significant biological topic. Curiously, virgin births have been documented in all vertebrates with jaws with the exception of mammals. To be clear, the majority of organisms on this planet — single celled bacteria and protists — normally demonstrate virgin birth. Dramatically, each organism cleaves itself into two, and each goes on its merry way. There is no sex that occurs before the production of such offspring. Then there is the complication that the majority of life's forms are neither male or female, some are hermaphrodites (like plants and most worms and many fish). Some fish conveniently change genders. Some test the imagination — the everyday baking yeast has 2000 dissimilar mating types. When “sex” or the fusion of nuclei from two genetically different individuals does happen, it is not dramatic and involves a cytoplasmic bridge being made between two individuals whose nuclei fuse and then divide into new individual offspring. But this is such a big subject I am going to stop there and move on to what we actually mean when we talk of “virgin births”.

What we mean by the term is the unusual situation where a female who is not known to have engaged in sexual intercourse shows up pregnant. Many of us who like to cook have sliced open a bell pepper and found a second, developing, pepper inside, or a seed in an apple that appears to be germinating. People seem to accept plants as more primitive than animals, such that such occurrences are acceptable. (It might surprise you then to know that animals are evolutionarily about 300 million years older than plants as a group.) Many plants also are hermaphroditic, with both male and female sexual parts, and it is only the biologically uninformed that don't know this is the case for many animals as well. Sufficiently isolated, many animals can quite happily mate with themselves, a condition termed parthenogenesis, specifically automixis. Typically out-crossing is preferred because it leads to more genetic diversity and better future outcomes for coming generations. In-breeding is not a good evolutionary decision.

Although queen honeybees and other bees appear to lay eggs in the absence of a male, the uninitiated do not know that the queen stores sperm from drones in her body for application when diploid worker eggs are produced, but not when haploid drone eggs are produced. This mechanism is called haplodiploidy. By contrast, female Cape honeybees — both queens and workers — from South Africa can undergo parthenogenesis by a process called thelytoky in the absence of males. The gene for thelytoky is controlled by the presence in the queen/worker of the same gene (homozygous condition.) But these autonomously replicating females are spreading — to other bee colonies where, like the brood-parasitic cuckoo bird, lay eggs for the host hive to raise. But, unlike the cuckoo, these fertile workers also live off the foraging of the host colony, but do not participate in the foraging. A bit like drones, I guess. Then the host colony, stressed by additional mouths to feed dies off and the Cape honeybees fly off looking for other hives to support them.¹

Animals, like the Caucasian rock lizard in the genus *Darevskia*, many geckos, and whiptail lizards in the genus *Aspidoscelis* from the southwestern United States, all of which are *not* hermaphroditic, have survived quite happily without any males ever being born in their society generation upon generation.² Even in this complete absence of males, the female babies that result do have some genetic diversity. This is because in ALL animals, the diploid cell determined to become an egg actually divides into 4 genetically dis-similar gamete cells by a process called meiosis. Only one survives to become the egg, and the other three become tiny polar bodies,

which more or less resemble what sperm are — genetic packets without much cytoplasm. One of those three polar bodies fuses with the egg — the process of automixis mentioned above — and the zygote then develops normally. However the embryo's genome is dissimilar to the mother's. There is a laundry-list of snakes,³ lizards, fish (including sharks)⁴ with parthenogenetic development. There are still questions about how specific types of parthenogenesis occurs, so more research is needed.

Back in 2018, a lady crocodile who had been living alone in a Costa Rican zoo laid a clutch of eggs.⁵ Thing is, this was a long-time solitary lady. Being located in a zoo, the ingress and egress of potential suitors was somewhat complicated, given that crocodiles cannot fly. So...she laid eggs. And one of the eggs had an embryo in it. Sadly, it did not survive to hatch out, but it still it was a surprise to the zookeepers. Similarly, at the Omaha Henry Doorly Zoo in Nebraska in December 2001, a bonnet shark which was placed with two other females gave birth to the surprise of the staff. Sadly, the baby did not live long. Considering the size of the ocean (fish and crocodiles) or expanse of desert (snakes and lizards), and the low probability of coming across a suitable mate, particularly for solitary species, it is not really surprising that evolution has provided a mechanism for persistence of the species. Had it not been for the fact that these individuals had been known to not have mated, it would not have even come to light.

Going back to religion, not just Christianity, but many other belief systems (some now obsolete), have a parthenogenetic event in their mythology. This includes the following: The Babylonian belief resulting in the birth of Madruk, as well as many other events within the Babylonian mythology; The Hittite mythology of the birth of Kumarbi (which has the explanatory foreshadowing where the mother of Kumarbi bites off the genitals of Anu, another god after defeating him), and apparently itself foreshadowing the mythology of the Greek god Uranus's castration and the birth of Aphrodite); The conception of Horus by Isis in Egyptian mythology; The birth of the Egyptian Pharaoh Queen Hatshepsut (who was unusually a woman Pharaoh and probably needed to have something to elevate her as exceptional and so devised her mother, Queen Ahmose being impregnated by the god Amun); The Hindu mythology of the birth of Krishna by immaculate conception by his mother Devaki; The birth of the heroic twins Hunahpu and Xbalanque from the spittle of their decapitated father landing on his mother's hand; The birth of Isaac from the aged Sarah who was infertile due to her old age...frankly there are so many stories I will leave you to read the rest of the stories for yourself⁶ or this paragraph will be three pages long.

Life does find a way. Mythology then elevates it.

References

1. Wikipedia. (2023). *Cape honey bee*. [online] Available at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cape_honey_bee [Accessed 18 November 2023]
2. Wikipedia Contributors. (2019, March 10). *Parthenogenesis in squamata*. Wikipedia; Wikimedia Foundation. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parthenogenesis_in_squamata [Accessed 18 November 2023]
3. Booth, W. and Schuett, G.W. (2015). The emerging phylogenetic pattern of parthenogenesis in snakes. *Biological Journal of the Linnean Society*, [online] 118(2), pp.172–186. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1111/bij.12744>
4. Holtcamp, W., 2009. Lone parents: parthenogenesis in sharks. *BioScience*, 59(7), pp.546-550. <https://doi.org/10.1525/bio.2009.59.7.3>
5. Greenwood, V. (2023). Scientists Discover a Virgin Birth in a Crocodile. *The New York Times*. [online] 6 Jun. Available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/06/06/science/crocodile-virgin-birth-parthenogenesis.html>
6. Wikipedia Contributors (2019). *Miraculous births*. [online] Wikipedia. Available at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miraculous_births [Accessed 18 November 2023]



HEART & SOUL

A family of beekeepers producing superior beekeeping supplies.

The lines on our skin hint at our age. Our backs ache, our knees creak and every morning we take that first step out of bed unsure if our legs will hold, but they do.

Our tools are covered in wax and propolis from decades of use. We clean them from time to time but our smoker's bellows still push calming puffs out and that's all that matters.

We're not new to this like some. We've seen 'em come and go over the decades. When you've been in the game this long you're bound to say goodbye to old friends from time to time.

Yet, after all these years there's still no quit in us. We pour our heart and soul into it, it's our livelihood and we wouldn't want it any other way.

Are you ready to see what over 150 years of experience can do?
Contact us today and let Dadant help.



Online dadant.com | Toll-Free 888.922.1293

Bee Packages & Queens



The original annual Bee Run is on for early **APRIL** delivery/pickup
Quantities are very limited – order ASAP to get in.

Fresh 3lb packages of proven quality bees.
Choose **Italian** or popular **Russian hybrid** queens
Queen marking and/or clipping options available.

Delivered within **hours** (not days), directly to a location near you (S/E PA).
Yield and health (and price) are far better than having them shipped.
The reliable economical alternative to nucs.

Certified Inspected Freshest Best Prices
Beginners welcome – we are happy to help!

For more info and pricing or to reserve your package(s):

Online: <http://chescobees.net/Packages.shtml>

Email: MartinBee@ChesCoBees.net

Martin Billingsley 215-789-9420



Meadow View Beekeeping

- **Mann Lake, Ltd** Dealer with plenty of stocked inventory
- Wholesale and Retail honey (PA Wildflower + US Varietals)
- Southern and Northern-raised queens in season
- Package bees and nucs
- Colony removals from buildings
- Swarm removals
- Beewax lip balms and candles
- Raw, bulk beeswax
- Presentations and demonstrations
- **Gamber Container** dealer with plenty of stocked empty jars and bottles

Two locations!

25 Dunkels Church Rd.
Kutztown, PA 19530

9351 Old Rt. 22
Bethel, PA 19507

Steve Finke: 610-737-7676 (steve@meadowviewbees.com)
www.meadowviewbees.com



CiCi's Bees:

Becoming a Keeper of Bees



CiCi Sweeny runs around 40 colonies in Grove City, PA, specializing in selling Northern Survivor Queens and nucs. CiCi is the President of Northwestern PA Beekeeping Association and is a member of four local clubs along

with the PSBA and Eastern Apicultural Society. She is an active member of EPIQ, an educational program led by Dr. Robyn Underwood focused on the production and insemination of queens. CiCi instructs eight-hour 'Basic' and 'Beyond Basics' Beekeeping classes locally, and does extensive speaking in the community about beekeeping to local clubs, schools, and groups.

Do you remember that exact moment when your life veered toward beekeeping? Mine came in the form of kindness from a Keeper, and a rumpled bee supply catalog.

My husband and I had just bought our first house, a bit over 20 years ago. It had 'good bones' with 4 acres, but we knew we had a lot of work ahead of us. Immediately after the signing, Shawn and I went to our house to celebrate with champagne flutes and a bottle of cheap wine.

Unexpectedly, the previous owner's squatter friend was still there, with a folding chair and card table set

up next to a kerosene heater. "So you actually signed your life away for this place, eh? Didn't think you'd do it. Guess I should start packing." He marched us through our house while lecturing in detail on all its flaws. It had knob and tube wiring, no insulation, a bad roof, no kitchen, one decrepit upstairs bathroom, tons of decayed carpet begging to be torn up, and a wet hand-dug cellar with mostly crawl-space basement. "All you have to do," he confided with an attempt to be helpful, "is put the house on jacks, dig out the basement proper-like, and put it back down. Not worth much if you don't do that." He also showed a bedroom where something wet with a sickly sweetness darkened the paper on one whole wall. "I didn't do it! It was like that before I started watching over the place for my friend!" Our wine bottle went unopened that night, the excitement dampened by our 'tour.'

We discovered the bees the following week during demolition of the bathroom upstairs. Apparently the house was originally an 'L' shape, and the bathroom/porch was added on to make the house square. Honey bees found a way into the old soffit and decided it suited their needs very well. I called around, and found a beekeeper willing to come out. This gentleman looked at our property, and said, "How about I help you remove them, and if we get the queen, you can have some old boxes I'm retiring. The colony can be put right over there between the apple trees."

He left us the evening to consider what he said, and dug out an old beekeeping supply catalog from under his truck seat for us to look through. Shawn and I pored through each page, trying to imagine ourselves as beekeepers. Remember the exact moment being a Keeper became a real possibility for you? This is my moment.



In the morning, he returned with a bee vacuum, boxes, buckets and rubber bands ready to get to work. My husband and I were loaned head veils, and wore winter gloves. I stood with the Keeper on the porch roof, and rubber-banded comb into frames as he dislodged it. My first close look at brood comb was riveting. The Keeper described what I was looking at, pointing out eggs and larvae. In my excitement, the few stings through my jeans faded into the background. I was hooked.

Then came 'the end' of the rescue operation. Eventually the Keeper told us the queen was deeper in the soffit than he expected, and he couldn't do any more without damage to the structure. He packed everything up, gave his heartfelt apologies, and left. We were sympathetic to the confused honey bees that found their way into the house, clinging to the window panes with their backlit bodies shining like golden jewels... but we were also camping out in the dining room while we worked on the place. So we did what thousands of homeowners end up doing with bee infestations: we called an exterminator. Five days later, there seemed to be even more activity than before. Looking back, it was probably robbing activity to steal the honey, but at that time all we knew was that the insect madness just had to stop.

A floppy hat, tulle, and duct tape became Shawn's armor, and hornet spray his trusty lance. He drilled holes into the walls and emptied can after can, with not one bee attacking him. Victorious! The activity inside and out ceased by the next day, and he was able to safely clear out a huge bag full of poisoned comb from within the house.





Do you have a story to tell?

Who doesn't!!!

How did YOU become a Beek?



Email your story and photos to
newsletter@pastatebeekeepers.org



Gradually, the house was updated and became a home, boasting two bathrooms, a fully functioning kitchen and even a laundry room. The sickly smell of musty wallpaper and honey faded with new drywall and time.



W. Fisher Bee Farm



FOR SALE:

Spring and Summer 5-Frame Nucs

Taking Orders Now!

Starting at \$200, quantity discounts available.

Paraffin Soaked Plywood Sheets (28"x28"x3/4")
 \$6.00/sheet or discount pricing of \$4.50/sheet for
 orders over 100 sheets.

They make great weatherproof covers or can be
 used to make any bee related woodenware.

Call Aaron at 800-736-6205 or
 email aaron@fisherbeefarm.com

Early on, we attended a few local club meetings but although listening to bee talk was fascinating, we felt rather silly for being bee-less among beekeepers. Soon we just paid the annual family dues of \$3 year after year 'just in case.' Childrearing took center stage, while I continued to dream of bees. I became a lurker on multiple bee forums, started to buy beekeeping books and eventually attended conferences as I intellectually learned how to keep bees.

While my fascination with honey bees grew, my husband's interests turned to other things; however, his support of my interest in beekeeping never wavered.

Ten years later, I finally committed to keeping bees, and I found out I actually knew nothing. Scraping out the dead bodies from the bottom board, of what I thought was a perfect winter setup, showed me my ignorance. They thrived despite me, and I was quickly quadrupling colonies each year. I attended more local club meetings and state conferences to link 'intellectual knowledge' with 'practical skill,' and met amazing mentors that guided me in my development as a Keeper.



Every beekeeper has an origin story of how they began keeping bees. My story is hardly unique in substance. It starts with fascination and ends with passion. It starts with intent and ends with action, where we become a Keeper of bees.

Dealer for



Nelson R. Brenneman
4521 Zeiglers Church Road
Spring Grove, PA 17362-7585

717-225-3076

If no answer, leave message

"PA Carniolan" and Caucasian Queens

Our bees overwinter in Pennsylvania!



walnutfarmbees.com

717-609-0899

Carlisle Farm Shop with wax-dipped woodenware

Overwintered nucs and local spring nucs,
Nicholson, PA and Carlisle, PA



Pennsylvania Beekeeper Newsletter

Ad Rates & Specifications

	1 Month	3 Months	6 Months	1 Year	Sizes
Full Page	\$27.50	\$ 55.00	\$110.00	\$ 220.00	7.18" x 9"
1/2 Page	13.75	27.50	55.00	110.00	7.18" x 4.51"
1/4 Page	7.00	13.75	27.50	55.00	3.5" x 4.51"
1/8 Page	N/A	N/A	13.75	27.50	3.5" x 2.17"

Please send ads to treasurer Carleen Vorisek: treasurer@pastatebeekeepers.org.

For the best quality, please send your ad in either a PDF or JPG formats. Ads submitted in MicroSoft Word can have typeface/font conflicts. JPGS are best at 150 dpi final size.

Please also send checks to Carleen Vorisek, 1001 Pinetown Road, Lewisberry, PA 17339 and be made out to PA State Beekeepers Association. We do not except Pay Pal or credit cards. Invoices/receipts available upon request. Thank you for your support!

Address Changed? If you have changed your address (email and mail) please notify secretary Regina Rhoa, secretary@pastatebeekeepers.org

In order to reflect the interests of all facets of Pennsylvania beekeeping, articles submitted for publication may on occasion express ideas contrary to the philosophy of the P.S.B.A. or a majority of its members.

SPRING CREEK HONEY

3 LB. Spring Packages



Phone: 814.353.8505

Cell: 814.404.1669

240 Deer Creek Lane • Bellefonte, PA 16823



Application for New and Renewal Membership

Pennsylvania State Beekeepers' Association

\$20.00 Individual Dues q \$25.00 Family Dues q \$200.00 Lifetime Membership

\$1.00 Junior Membership (under 17)

Membership years are based on when you join, not the calendar year

JOIN ONLINE at <https://www.pastatebeekeepers.org/>

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____

Zip _____

Telephone _____

Primary Local Club _____

Email _____

Second Email for Family Memberships _____

____ New Membership ____ Renewal Membership = Total amount submitted: _____

Please make checks payable to: PA State Beekeepers Association or PSBA

Send to: Regina Rhoa, 1033 N Grange Ave, Collegeville, PA 19426

American Bee Journal Subscriptions:

You can now use your credit card & get the PSBA Discount Rate!

Getting the discounted rate on this excellent magazine keeps getting easier. You can now use your credit card for new or renewal subscriptions. Simply complete the form and mail it to American Bee Journal at the address shown on the form and save approximately 12% off the regular subscription rate. *You can't get this discount with online subscriptions or renewals.* The rates shown are effective 1 January 2023 through 31 December 2023.

AMERICAN BEE JOURNAL		Discounted Rates!		Association Member Subscription		
<input type="checkbox"/> New	<input type="checkbox"/> Renewal	Prices good through Dec. 31, 2023 Allow 6-8 weeks for printed version		U.S.	Canada	Foreign
<input type="checkbox"/> 1 Yr. \$27.65	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 Yr. \$47.70	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 Yr. \$57.00				
<input type="checkbox"/> 2 Yr. \$49.75	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 Yr. \$88.50	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 Yr. \$102.00				
<input type="checkbox"/> 3 Yr. \$69.30	Retain yellow copy for your records.					
<input type="checkbox"/> Check or Money Order Must be drawn on a U.S. bank in U.S. funds only.				<input type="checkbox"/> Credit Card Mastercard, Visa, Discover and American Express accepted.		
Return white copy to: American Bee Journal, 51 S. 2nd St., Hamilton, IL 62341						
Customer Number (if available) _____				CARD NUMBER _____ MO/YEAR _____ (CVV) _____		
Subscriber's Name _____				NAME ON CARD _____ SIGNATURE _____		
Address _____				Association _____ PA State Beekeeper's Association		
Address _____				Secretary's Name _____ Regina Rhoa		
City, State, Zip _____				Address _____ 1033 N Grange Ave		
Phone _____				City, State, Zip _____ Collegeville, PA 19426		
Email _____				Phone _____ 610-304-8903		