PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Most Louisiana beekeepers have their first crop off the hives and are in the process of finishing up. I have heard good reports of above average production this year. Honey prices also continue to be strong. It is my hope that we all have a good year.

The 2013 Farm Bill has been derailed again by the House of Representatives. Last year they could not reach a decision and Congress decided to extend the 2008 Farm Bill without funds to back it. I have to admit that I thought it was dead in the water again but there is a chance that the two chambers of Congress will conference their individual bills for a compromise or elect to choose a “nutrition-only” bill.

The House bill version has some additional language to improve our USDA-ARS Bee research facilities and a feasibility report for our industry in the USDA. The Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP), additional research funds, and a standard of identity are also included. We will have to wait until the process plays out, so I remain optimistic.

In response to continual bee losses within our industry nationwide, USDA-ARS has funded an additional $800,000 for 2013 to the Baton Rouge lab, and the Stoneville and Poplarville labs in Mississippi to conduct a collaborative study on pesticides. A stakeholders meeting prioritizing the study to include continual exposure (hazard and exposure) to pesticide residues, fungicide mite treatments and their relation to varroa and nosema, wintering bees (pollen/longevity), and improving pesticide spray times (nighttime applications). Industry representatives in attendance were: Bret Adee, Manley Bigalk, Steven Coy, Harry Fulton, George Hanson, Joe Sanroma, and Rick Smith. Other studies will be added to the priority list in time. It was felt that USDA-ARS research on these issues would enhance our industry’s ability to work with the EPA and the pesticide industry. The Tucson lab also received $200,000 to do a study on pesticides and honey bee nutrition.

The LBA is still in the process of planning the 2013 Field Day in Baton Rouge and the 2013 State Convention in Covington. We have a meeting in August pertaining to both of these events, so additional ideas from our membership on topics and speakers are still welcomed.

Remember you can pre-register for the upcoming Field Day in Baton Rouge by going to our website, labeekeepers.org and pay your fees through PayPal. The Field Day is an exceptional learning experience and is lots of fun. See the information provided in this issue of the Bayou Bee Bulletin on the Field Day agenda.

Joe Sanroma, President
Louisiana Beekeepers Association

Honey Bees and Beekeeping, a Legacy of Service to Louisiana Agriculture.
2013 FARM BILL UPDATE

Overview

Both the U.S. Senate and U.S. House of Representatives have passed farm bills. As expected, differences exist. Some are notable. This post briefly reviews the current farm bill situation and looks at possible paths forward. It examines the farm bill situation from three perspectives: politics, process, and content.

History

The 2008 Farm Bill expired on September 30, 2012. During 2012, the Senate passed a new farm bill. The House of Representative Agriculture Committee passed a bill, but the House did not debate it. Instead, Congress extended for one year 2008 farm bill provisions that had baseline spending. Thirty-seven programs had no baseline, including agricultural disaster assistance, the Wetland Reserve and Grassland Reserve Programs plus three other conservation programs, eight energy programs, and seven programs related to horticulture and organic agriculture. Thus, these 37 programs are not continued. The direct payment, target price, and ACRE programs had baseline and are continued; however, the budget sequester act led to a 8.5% reduction in direct payments and 5.1% reduction in payments by all other programs administered by the Farm Service Agency.

On June 10, 2013, the U.S. Senate passed the Agriculture Reform, Food and Jobs Act of 2013 by a vote of 66-27. Voting for the Bill were 46 Democrats, 18 Republicans, and 2 Independents. On July 11, 2013, the U.S. House passed the Federal Agriculture Reform and Risk Management Act by a vote of 216 to 208. All 196 Democrats voted against the bill. The House had rejected an earlier version of the bill, 195 to 234. Key differences between the accepted and rejected versions are that the version which passed (1) did not contain a food assistance title and (2) replaced permanent farm bill law for farm support programs with the 2013 House farm support programs.

Politics

Recent farm bill debates generally have not been particularly partisan. Key differences were usually more along regional than political party lines. The 2013 House farm bill is partisan. While it is easy to point to the debate over the food assistance title as a partisan issue, a deeper partisan issue is at play: federal spending. Generally, more liberal Democrats favor increased spending while conservative Republicans favor lower spending. Exacerbating this division is the slow growth of the U.S. economy, which means slow growth in government revenue. When considering the current farm bill situation, it is important to note that most legislation is now partisan, especially if it involves spending. It is also worth remembering that partisanship marked the debate during the 1950s and 1960s over high, fixed parity support prices vs. market-oriented, lower parity support prices and the associated debate over mandatory supply controls. As a general rule, Democrats favored high, fixed parity support prices while Republicans favored market-oriented, lower parity support prices. This debate did not begin to end until the Food and Agriculture Act of 1965 was enacted, foreshadowing that the market-oriented, lower price support position would emerge.

Process

While the lack of a food assistance title in the House farm bill has garnered considerable attention, food assistance has been tied to the farm bill more closely recently than historically. The Food Stamp program was initiated by legislation outside a farm bill, the Food Stamp and farm support programs have been extended for different periods of time by the same farm bill, and major changes in the Food Stamp program have occurred outside the farm bill. Moreover, even if its authorization expires, Congress can continue the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP - previously called the Food Stamp program), by appropriating money for it. Thus, both history and the current situation suggest it is possible to write a farm bill without a food assistance title, although farm bills since the 1970s have included food assistance. Hence, from the perspective of process, like any difference between House and Senate bills, a Conference Committee will be impaneled to try to bridge the difference.
Key date for passing a farm bill is not September 30, 2013, but December 31, 2013. The farm bill was extended for the 2013 crop year, meaning current crop programs continue until a crop’s 2013 crop year ends. For example, the corn and soybean 2013 crop year ends August 31, 2014. December 31, 2013 is critical because the current U.S. dairy price support program ends on this date. The dairy price support program would then revert to permanent law provisions. Permanent law provisions are primarily in the Agriculture Adjustment Act of 1938 and Agricultural Act of 1949. Under permanent law, the dairy support price is likely to exceed $35 per 100 pounds (cwt.), compared with a $9.90/cwt. support price in the 2008 farm bill and a May 2013 all-milk market price of $19.70/cwt. Congress demonstrated in its 1-year extension of the 2008 farm bill that it will not allow the dairy support price to revert to permanent law. For more details on the 1-year extension of the 2008 farm bill and permanent law, see Congressional Research Service Report, “Expiration and Extension of the 2008 Farm Bill,” by Jim Monke, Megan Stubbs, and Randy Alison Aussenberg, January 15, 2013.

Content Differences
Besides the food assistance title, major differences in the 2013 House and Senate farm bills include:

1. replacement of permanent legislation - The House Bill replaces the 1938 and 1949 farm legislation with the farm commodity title in the 2013 House farm bill. Thus, the House farm bill proposes that the House farm commodity support programs would exist forever until Congress decided to reconsider them. The Senate continues permanent legislation. Its commodity title is an amendment to the permanent laws and expires at a specified date in the future. For example, commodity programs for field crops expire after the 2018 crop year. Thus, the Senate farm bill requires that commodity programs be reconsidered. Reverting to permanent law has been an impetus for continuing dialogue on the farm safety net. The House version reduces and perhaps negates the need to pass farm safety net legislation in the future, thus likely making it harder to change the farm safety net.

2. type of multiple-year program - Multiple-year assistance in the Senate bill centers on a revenue program, whose guarantees can drop and increase over time. In contrast, the House bill contains a more traditional fixed target price program. Generally, the House Bill makes larger payments to rice and peanuts than does the Senate Bill.

3. type of dairy program - the Senate bill contains a supply management program; the House bill does not contain a supply management program.

These differences involve important philosophical questions: how often should Congress debate the farm safety net and how market oriented should farm safety net programs be. In addition, concern exists among southern crop producers that the distribution of payments from crop insurance differs notably for peanuts and rice from the distribution of direct payments and target price deficiency payments.

The broader point is that, even if the food assistance title was not an issue, it is not clear that a Conference Committee can bridge the differences that exist on farm safety net programs.

For a more detailed discussion of some of these issues, see the May 9, 2013 farmdoc post titled, "Payments by U.S. Farm Safety Net Program: Differences by Crop," by Carl Zulauf and Gary Schnitkey (available [here](http://www.farmdoc.illinois.edu/farmdoc/2013/05/2013-safety-net-comparison.html)); the May 23, 2013 farmdoc post titled, "Comparison of Approaches to Price Supports for the 2013 Farm Bill," by Nick Paulson (available [here](http://www.farmdoc.illinois.edu/farmdoc/2013/05/2013-price-support-comparison.html)); and the June 7, 2013 farmdoc post titled, "Market Distortion and Farm Program Design: A Case Examination of the Proposed Farm Price Support Programs," by Carl Zulauf (available [here](http://www.farmdoc.illinois.edu/farmdoc/2013/06/2013-market-distortion-farm-program-design.html)).

Summary Observations
Many paths forward exist, with these four likely spanning the possible outcomes:

1. The Conference Committee reaches an agreement that is enacted into law.

2. The Conference Committee does not reach agreement and the current 2008 farm bill extension is extended for another year. As an aside, a 2-year extension could occur if Congress wants to avoid a farm bill debate in a Congressional election year.
3. The Conference Committee does not reach agreement and the 2008 farm bill is extended again but in a different version. For example, some observers have discussed reducing direct payments if another extension occurs.

4. The Conference Committee does not reach agreement and permanent law is repealed, ending farm commodity support programs. This outcome seems unlikely but we do not think its probability is zero. Should this outcome occur, the farm safety net becomes the insurance program, meaning multiple-year losses would not be covered by the farm safety net.

The interplay of politics, process, and content will determine in part which of these paths or if an entirely different path is taken. Senate leadership and President Obama have both indicated they will not accept a farm bill without a food assistance title. A farm bill with a food assistance title would require a very different coalition in the House than the coalition that passed its farm bill. Specifically, the support of a large number of Democrats would be needed. Is such a coalition attainable?

Weather and price/revenue trends matter in a farm bill, if for no other reason, than farm program payments are based on production, price, and revenue. A decline in price/revenue will increase the budget baseline of the ACRE program and the target price programs in the 2008 farm bill. On the one hand, this consideration could enhance the likelihood of another extension since a higher budget baseline for a 2014 farm bill increases the ability to address legislative concerns. On the other hand, farm groups may wish to lock in the higher target prices of the 2013 House farm bill. Groups concerned with Federal spending will not favor this outcome.

The later paragraph highlights one of the key divisions at play in this farm bill debate: the desire on the part of those concerned with the level of federal spending vs. traditional farm bill supporters. What makes this division even more interesting is that many members of Congress who are most concerned about federal spending are representatives from rural America, an area that traditionally has backed the farm safety net. Thus, which of these divisions win out could well go a long way to deciding how the 2013 farm bill debate is resolved.

The preceding discussion has noted that there is no necessary reason for a farm bill to contain a food assistance title. However, not including a food assistance title in a 2013 Farm bill could potentially alter the dynamics of future farm bill debates. Conventional wisdom is that farm safety net programs are easier to enact when the farm bill includes a food assistance title because more constituencies have a stake in the bill. Thus, an important decision that all farm safety net supporters will need to consider is the strategic, long term consequences of having or not having a food assistance title in a 2013 farm bill.

A parallel discussion exists for inclusion of the reversion to the 1938 and 1949 permanent laws. Reversion to permanent law means that farm commodity programs will need to be considered in the future. Thus, it acts as a catalyst for the entire farm bill. Many actors that support the farm bill have interest other than commodity programs. In addition, knowing that the farm bill will be reconsidered in the future probably encourages compromise since policy actors know that the possibility exist that their concerns will be revisited in the not-too-distant future. Thus, an important decision that all farm safety net supporters will need to consider is the strategic, long term consequences of having the ability to modify farm safety net programs at a known time in the future and the value that this known revision date has to bringing policy actors with other concerns into the farm bill portfolio.

As mentioned in earlier farmdoc posts, the U.S. is currently engaged in a debate about the safety net provided to Americans, a debate that commenced with the extension of medical care to all Americans. It looks like the farm bill will be the next major confrontation in this broader debate. The outcome is uncertain but may have importance beyond traditional farm bill concerns.

This publication is also available at http://aede.osu.edu/publications.

*Issued by Carl Zulauf, Department of Agricultural, Environmental and Development Economics, Ohio State University and Gary Schnitkey, Department of Agricultural and Consumer Economics, University of Illinois.
17th Annual Beekeepers Field Day Pre-Registration Form

The USDA Honey Bee Breeding, Genetics and Physiology Laboratory and the Louisiana Beekeepers Association will hold the 17th Annual Field Day on Saturday, October 19, 2013. The event will be held at the laboratory at 1157 Ben Hur Rd, located near the intersection of Nicholson Drive (Hwy 30) and Brightside Dr., about two miles south of the LSU football stadium.

Gates will open at 9:30 a.m. Activities are scheduled from 10:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. A nonrefundable pre-registration fee of $25.00, due by October 1st, is required for attendees 12 years of age and above. After Oct. 1st the fee will be $30.00 per person. The fee covers the expenses for coffee, soft drinks, pastries and a very good catered lunch (*see menu at the bottom of the page)!

The Field day consists of three different levels of beekeeping to choose from:
1. A beginner’s course, including live beehive inspections.
2. An intermediate course for beekeepers with moderate amounts of experience ready to take it to the next level.
3. Workshops geared to the more experienced beekeeper, i.e. queen rearing, instrumental insemination.

* Please check the course of your choice when filling out this form.

Please fill out the pre-registration form and mail it with your payment to:
David Ferguson
P.O. Box 716
Brusly, La 70719
(make your check payable to the Louisiana Beekeepers Association)

(If you would prefer to register on line, go to the Louisiana Beekeepers Association’s website: www.labeekeepers.org).

Name: ___________________________  Parish: ___________________________

Street Address: __________________________________________________________

City: ___________________________  State: ___________  Zip: _________________

Phone: _________________________  E-mail address: _________________________

[ ] Beginner’s Course  [ ] Intermediate Course  [ ] Workshops

(Please use the back of this form if you are pre-registering more than 4 people).

Name: ___________________________  [ ] Beginner’s Course  [ ] Intermediate Course  [ ] Workshops

Name: ___________________________  [ ] Beginner’s Course  [ ] Intermediate Course  [ ] Workshops

Name: ___________________________  [ ] Beginner’s Course  [ ] Intermediate Course  [ ] Workshops

Name: ___________________________  [ ] Beginner’s Course  [ ] Intermediate Course  [ ] Workshops

Total amount enclosed $_____________

*Menu: Bar B Q Chicken Leg Quarters, Smoked Sausage, Jambalaya (Chicken, Pork, & Sausage), Red Beans and Ham over White Rice, Garden Salad with choice of 4 Dressings, Fresh Baked Honey Wheat Rolls, Mixed Emotions Pudding and Coke Products.

For more information contact Beth Holloway (225-767-9288) or Sandra Hineman (225-767-9280)
17th Annual Beekeeper’s Field Day Agenda
Saturday, October 19, 2013
Louisiana Beekeepers Association
USDA, ARS, Honey Bee Breeding, Genetics & Physiology Lab
1157 Ben Hur Road
Baton Rouge, LA 70820

9:30  Gates open
9:30 – 10:00  Registration, coffee and snacks
10:00 – 10:10  Welcome and introduction  Joe Sanroma and Tom Rinderer
10:10 – 10:30  Research at the Honey Bee Lab  Tom Rinderer
10:45 – 11:45  Participants divide into groups
A) Beginning Beekeeping  Bob Danka and HBB Staff, and LBA
B) Intermediate Beekeeping  LBA and Jose Villa
C) Workshops (Session 1)  HBB Staff
12:00 – 1:15  Lunch
1:30 – 3:30  Participants return to groups
A) Beginning Beekeeping  Bob Danka and HBB Staff, and LBA
B) Intermediate Beekeeping  LBA and Jose Villa
C) Workshops - Sessions 2 & 3  HBB Staff
2013 LOUISIANA BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION ANNUAL CONVENTION

The 52nd Louisiana Beekeepers Association’s (LBA) Convention will be held Friday, December 6th and Saturday, December 7th at the Clarion Inn & Suites Conference Center, 501 N. Hwy 190, Covington, LA 70433. Take Interstate 12 Exit 63B for US 190W toward Covington. All individuals interested in learning more about honey bees and beekeeping are invited to join us for the latest on beekeeping basics, honey bee research, pest management, etc. There will be something for the beginner to the lifetime beekeeper, plus several beekeeping supply companies will display and offer for sale a large selection of their products.

A $12.00 registration fee per person applies for all who pre-register by the cut-off date of November 13, 2013; $20.00 per person for those registering after the cut-off date or on-site. A convention pre-registration form will be provided in our September issue of our newsletter and will be posted on our website. Online payments may be made through PayPal using your credit card.

Mention that you are attending the Louisiana Beekeepers Association Convention for a room rate of $85.00 per night (Thursday and Friday nights), plus applicable taxes. Make your hotel reservations by calling the Clarion Inn & Suites Conference Center, Covington, LA at 985-893-3580.

Hotel Amenities: WOW Restaurant located in hotel; complimentary hot plated breakfast each morning of stay for registered hotel guests; Wi-Fi Internet access, microwave, and refrigerator in room; handicapped-accessible and non-smoking rooms are available; two full size beds in room or king size beds available; fitness center; indoor pool.

Other Restaurants Near Hotel: There are several fine restaurants near the hotel, including Copelands, Outback, Applebee’s, I-Hop, etc.

Additional information will follow as arrangements are finalized. Please check for any LBA Convention updates at labeekeepers.org and in future Bayou Bee Bulletins.

LBA Honey Baked Contest: Don’t forget to enter our annual Honey Baked Contest. Honey baked delicacies are enjoyed at our Conventions thanks to LBA members. Contest winners receive 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place ribbons. Your participation in this annual contest is encouraged.

LBA Honey Contest: We will have another LBA Honey Contest for member participation at the 2013 convention. Details for the contest will be listed in the September issue of the Bayou Bee Bulletin and will be posted on our LBA website (labeekeepers.org). Save your best honey and enter the contest. Only one sample per class per family will be allowed. Ribbons will be awarded!

LBA Convention Auctions: Our annual after dinner auction has become a major fund raiser at our Annual Convention. LBA members have been very generous and creative with their auction donations in the past and are encouraged to donate something for the event. Many hand crafted items have been great auction items and have brought large bids. Past donations have included barbeque pits/grills, mead/honey wine, beekeeping woodenware, bread boards, quilts, etc.

In addition, there will be a separate silent auction again this year for some of the smaller donated items. The LBA is grateful for all donations and hopes this will not discourage member donations. We simply want to help expedite the auction process.

Host Club: The Tangi-Tamington Beekeepers Association has been around since the late 1980’s and they have agreed to be our host club in 2013. They have gone to a lot of effort to provide a nice place for our members and guests to stay while in Covington. They will continue to provide assistance once our Convention begins. Please take the time to thank them by making every effort to attend this year’s Louisiana Beekeepers Association Convention. The Officers and Board of Directors of the Louisiana Beekeepers Association certainly appreciates their assistance.
ATTENTION ON VARROA

Researchers throughout the world still consider *Varroa destructor* to be one of the most important stresses on honey bee colonies around the world. It continues to have its biology examined by researchers from many places. The following is information on *Varroa* from four different laboratories.

The first study, by researchers in USDA ARS, dealt with the question of whether honey bee stocks that had undergone strong, human-induced selection pressure could still compete in crop pollination with commercial Italian bees (CT) that had been treated twice for mites or (CU) that had not been treated. The highly selected stocks were Russian bees (RB) and outcrossed (50 percent, genetically) stocks of Varroa Sensitive Hygiene (VSH) bees. Coming through the first winter, 57 percent of the VSH stock, 56 percent of the CT stock, 39 percent of the RBs and 34 percent of the untreated Italian colonies (CU) were eight frames of bees or larger, which is recommended for almond pollination. By apple pollination time, all the colonies had built up to acceptable size. Mite counts showed that the treated Italian colonies continued to have the lowest mite populations. Mite population levels in the Russian and VSH colonies were lower than in the Italian colonies that had not been treated at all. Review the study on the Internet at: DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.1603/EC11286.

Researchers in Canada have been studying indoor wintering of honey bee colonies for a long time. Two important considerations are temperature and buildup of carbon dioxide. The researchers then wondered if those parameters could be adjusted to the detriment of varroa mites, without harming the bees. Clusters of approximately 300 infested adult honey bees were placed in self-contained glass chambers and incubated at 25 and 10 degrees Centigrade (77 and 50 degrees Fahrenheit, respectively) and with low, medium, and high ventilation. The air in the chambers started at 1-2 percent CO2. With high ventilation, it remained the same. Ventilation rate did not affect bee mortality at either temperature. There did appear to be an effect on the mites. At the cooler temperature, mite mortality was greatest with the highest ventilation. Medium and low ventilation, losses were about equal. At the warmer temperature, mite mortality was greatest under low ventilation conditions. The authors concluded that holding groups of bees at 25 degrees C and letting CO2 build up, might clear them of mites. However, indoor wintering usually is done at 4 degrees C (40 degrees F), so the mites are not too apt to be removed by increased CO2 levels in winter storage. For further information refer to: DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.1603/EC08278.

Due to the development of resistance to Apistan® strips (10 percent fluvalinate), researchers in Iran wished to determine how well Apivar®, Bayvarol®, and CheckMite+® controlled *Varroa destructor* in their hives. Each of these products is formulated as a plastic strips with 500 mg amitraz, 0.06 percent flumethrin, and 10 percent coumaphos, respectively.

Scientists conducted a 43-day field trial in the fall of 2009 on 20 colonies containing about 10 frames of bees. Groups of five colonies were treated as follows: 1) two strips of Apivar in brood nest for 6 weeks; 2) four strips of Bayvarol in brood nest for 6 weeks; two strips of CheckMite+ in brood nest for 6 weeks; and 4) untreated control. Pre- and post-treatment percentages of mite infestations were: Apivar – 8.43 and 0.28; Bayvarol – 8.48 and 0.29; CheckMite+ - 9.64 and 0.14; control – 8.98 and 14.61. It is interesting to see how effective chemicals can be for *Varroa* control, when the mites first encounter them. The paper is: The efficacy of Apivar® and Bayvarol® and CheckMite+® in the Control of *Varroa destructor* in Iran, by Reza Shahrouzi. 2009. It can be accessed at: http://www.apiservices.com/articles/us/efficacy_of_bayvarol.pdf.

Finally, from Arabia, researchers studied the effects of Apistan® (fluvalinate), Bayvarol® (flumethrin), Perizin® (amitraz), and “Bee Strips” [CheckMite+®] (coumaphos) for controlling *Varroa* in their colonies in 2003, 2004 and 2005. In 2003 two strips of Apistan left in the hives for 60 days were compared with four strips of Bayvarol for 45 days, two strips of Bayvarol for 45 days, and two strips of Apivar for 42 days. Controls were untreated. In 2004, most treatments were the same, except that the milder Bayvarol treatment was replaced with a Perizin® 50 ml emulsion treatment. The third season, the Apistan and Bayvarol treatments remained the same. This time, two Bee Strips were applied instead of Perizin and left in place for 45 days. Sticky boards were left in the hives throughout the treatment periods. Mites were counted periodically and at the end of the experiments, using either Perizin or Apivar for knockdown.
The first season, four strips of Bayvarol knocked down the highest percentage of mites (96). Apivar (95 percent), two strips of Bayvarol (89 percent) and Apistan (85 percent) followed the leader. Only 25 percent of the control mites fell. The second season Apivar did best (95 percent) with Perizin (94 percent), Bayvarol (80 percent) and Apistan (80 percent) way ahead of the controls (18 percent). In year three, the newcomer, Bee Strips (95 percent), was most effective while Apivar (92 percent), Bayvarol (70 percent), and Apistan (60 percent) followed. Natural mortality this time was 11 percent. Throughout the study, the efficacy of Apistan was dropping. Bayvarol was showing the same trend. Ambient temperatures outside the hives did not impact the results in this study.

At the time of these studies Apivar was very consistent in its effects on varroa mites. Where Apivar has been used in Europe for a long period of time, it still seems highly effective. Let’s hope that holds true for Apivar in the United States. This article is titled “Evaluation of the relative efficacy of different acaricides against Varroa destructor in Apis mellifera carnica” by Ahmad A. Al-Ghamdi. A PDF of this publication may be reviewed at: http://faculty.ksu.edu.sa/alkhazim/Documents/papers/2t.pdf.

NEW DISEASE FOUND, HELPS PREDICT COLONY DEATH  Bee Culture’s, Catch the Buzz, March 4, 2013*

A new long-term study of honey bee health has found that a little-understood disease study authors are calling “idiopathic brood disease syndrome” (IBDS), which kills off bee larvae, is the largest risk factor for predicting the death of a bee colony.

“Historically, we’ve seen symptoms similar to IBDS associated with viruses spread by large-scale infestations of parasitic mites,” says Dr. David Tarpy, associate professor of entomology at North Carolina State University and co-author of a paper describing the study. “But now we’re seeing these symptoms – a high percentage of larvae deaths – in colonies that have relatively few of these mites. That suggests that IBDS is present even in colonies with low mite loads, which is not what we expected.” The study was conducted by researchers from NC State, University of Maryland, Pennsylvania State University, and the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture (USDA).

The study evaluated the health of 80 commercial colonies of honey bees (Apis mellifera) in the eastern United States on an almost monthly basis over the course of 10 months – which is a full working “season” for commercial bee colonies. The goal of the study was to track changes in bee colony health and, for those colonies that died off, to determine what factors earlier in the year may have contributed to colony death. Fifty-six percent of the colonies died during the study.

“We found that colonies affected by IBDS had a risk factor of 3.2,” says Dr. Dennis vanEnglesdorp of the University of Maryland, who was lead author on the paper. That means that colonies with IBDS were 3.2 times more likely to die than the other colonies over the course of the study.

While the study found that IBDS was the greatest risk factor, a close runner-up was the occurrence of a so-called “queen event.”

Honey bee colonies have only one queen. When a colony perceives something wrong with its queen, the workers eliminate that queen and try to replace her. This process is not always smooth or successful. The occurrence of a queen event had a risk factor of 3.1.

“This is the first time anyone has done an epidemiological study to repeatedly evaluate the health of the same commercial honey bee colonies over the course of a season,” Tarpy says. “It shows that IBDS is a significant problem that we don’t understand very well. It also highlights that we need to learn more about what causes colonies to reject their queens. These are areas we are actively researching. Hopefully, this will give us insights into other health problems, including colony collapse disorder.”

The paper, “Idiopathic brood disease syndrome and queen events as precursors of colony mortality in migratory beekeeping operations in the eastern United States,” is published in the February issue of Preventive Veterinary Medicine. Co-authors of the study include Dr. Eugene Lengerich of Penn State and Dr. Jeffery Pettis of USDA. The work was supported by USDA and the National Honey Board.
The study abstract follows:

“Idiopathic brood disease syndrome and queen events as precursors of colony mortality in migratory beekeeping operations in the eastern United States”

Authors: Dennis vanEnglesdorp, University of Maryland; David R. Tarpy, North Carolina State University; Eugene J. Lengerich, Pennsylvania State University; and Jeffery S. Pettis, USDA-ARS Bee Research Laboratory

Published: February 2013, Preventive Veterinary Medicine

Abstract: Using standard epidemiological methods, this study set out to quantify the risk associated with exposure to easily diagnosed factors on colony mortality and morbidity in three migratory beekeeping operations. Fifty-six percent of all colonies monitored during the 10-month period died. The relative risk (RR) that a colony would die over the short term (≤50 days) was appreciably increased in colonies diagnosed with Idiopathic Brood Disease Syndrome (IBDS), a condition where brood of different ages appear molten on the bottom of cells (RR = 3.2), or with a “queen event” (e.g., evidence of queen replacement or failure; RR = 3.1). We also found that several risk factors—including the incidence of a poor brood pattern, chalkbrood (CB), deformed wing virus (DWV), sacbrood virus (SBV), and exceeding the threshold of 5 Varroa mites per 100 bees—were differentially expressed in different beekeeping operations. Further, we found that a diagnosis of several factors were significantly more or less likely to be associated with a simultaneous diagnosis of another risk factor. These findings support the growing consensus that the causes of colony mortality are multiple and interrelated.

*This article was written by Matt Shipman and was brought to you by, “Bee Culture, The Magazine of American Beekeeping,” published by the A.I. Root Company.

SAVE THE HONEY BEE LICENSE PLATE

July 2013 Update

Last fall members of the Louisiana Beekeepers Association and others were allowed to sign up for the new “Save The Honey Bee” license plate, selecting from a list of numbers available up to 200. The plates were made available through the joint efforts of Ms. Kim Hastings, North Live Oak Elementary School in Watson, Louisiana, the Louisiana Beekeepers Association, and the Department of Motor Vehicle (DMV). To date, of the 125 plate numbers that were reserved, only 62 were actually purchased. I must inform those who had reserved certain plate numbers that those numbers may no longer be available to you due to the length of time that has passed. If you are still interested please contact the DMV to see if your reserved number is still available and purchase your licenses plate.

The cost is $25.00 per year, plus all applicable fees that would normally apply for any Louisiana plate. In addition, for the first year there would be a onetime cost of an $8.00 handling fee and a $3.50 administration cost. Remember, when you purchase this plate it is a two year plate, so the cost will be $50.00.

NEW BEEKEEPING CLUB IN RUSTON

The first meeting of the Ruston/Lincoln Parish Beekeepers was held on Tuesday, July 16th at 7:00 PM at the LSU Ag Center building, 201 N. Vienna Street, Downtown Ruston across from the Dixie Theater. Those in attendance decided that there was enough interest in form a beekeeping club and will meet the 4th Tuesday of each month in the Community Room at Community Trust Bank, 1511 N. Trenton, Ruston, LA at 7:00 PM. In November they will consider election of officers for the new club for 2014. For more information please call the Ag Center at 318-251-5134 or Tom Faber at 318-251-2319.

ANOTHER NEW BEEKEEPING CLUB UNDER CONSIDERATION

The first meeting of the CENLA Beekeepers will be Thursday, August 1, 2013 at 5:00 PM at LSU-A, 300 Grady Britt Drive, Alexandria, LA 71302. The meeting will determine if there is interest in forming a beekeeping club and how they will proceed. A PowerPoint presentation on “Seasonal Hive Management” will be provided by Tim Haley. For more information call LSU_A at 318-767-3968 or Tim Haley at 318-419-7270.
PLEASE RENEW YOUR LBA MEMBERSHIP!

LBA memberships have almost doubled over the last two years. The LBA is excited about this growth and sincerely appreciates your membership support. If you have not completed and submitted your membership renewal for 2013, please use the membership application at the end of this newsletter and send your renewal to our treasurer as soon as possible. The January issue of our newsletter was your last issue if you allowed your membership to expire. Please don’t delay any longer and renew your LBA membership today.

Please feel free to make additional copies of this Bulletin and provide them to others interested in beekeeping and our organization. Reading the information provided below by our membership chairman will help you join us in our recruiting efforts by participating in our “Member Get A Member Campaign.” Prizes are awarded to the top three recruiters annually! The current campaign begins November 1st, 2012 and ends October 31st, 2013.

There are many challenges facing beekeepers. Our organization provides a voice to Louisiana beekeepers and lets state government know that we are an important part of Louisiana’s agricultural industry. There is strength in numbers, so help us help you through your membership support!

“MEMBER GET A MEMBER CAMPAIGN”

Membership in the Louisiana Beekeepers Association (LBA) is a privilege, but more importantly, an obligation. Louisiana beekeepers can only help themselves and their industry by participating in the dialogue that sets our state’s beekeeping policies. Anchored in a rich tradition of service, the LBA has always promoted a healthy, productive beekeeping industry. This can only be accomplished through a strong state beekeeping organization. To accomplish this we need the help of more beekeepers. Our current membership is growing but still consists of less than 50% of the state’s beekeepers. We have to continue to mobilize if we are to remain an effective voice for all Louisiana beekeepers.

You can help us and help yourself by joining the LBA today. Equally importantly you can recruit other beekeepers to join the LBA! To help increase our membership we are continuing our “MEMBER GET A MEMBER CAMPAIGN.” Simply talk to fellow beekeepers about their participation in their state beekeeping association through membership. In addition, ask their assistance and support in recruiting other LBA members. There is strength in numbers and if the LBA is to be the beekeepers voice we need a large membership.

Our membership application contains a referral blank to be used to list the member that recruited the new member to join the LBA. An award awaits three individuals (1st, 2nd, and 3rd place) that enlist the most new members in 2013. The award will be presented at our annual convention, which will be held in the St. Tammany Parish area the first weekend in December 2013. Please feel free to contact any officer or board member if you need more information on promoting membership in the LBA.

Thank you for your support,

Robert G. Taylor Sr.
LBA Membership Chairman

Rules for the "Member Get A Member Campaign"

1. Each year the contest start date is November 1st, continuing through the next calendar year to the contest end date of October 31st.

2. 1st place: Plaque and $50.00 check. 2nd place: Ribbon and $25.00 check. 3rd place: Ribbon and $10.00 check. The local club in which the first place winner is a member will win a one year associate membership valued at $25.00.

3. The winners will be contacted before the convention by the "Member Get A Member Campaign” chairman in order to see if they will be attending the convention. If they will not be attending, for whatever reason, their award will be sent home with a person of their choice. It is up to the winners to make these arrangements.

4. LBA officers and board members can participate in the contest, but cannot win the contest.
Commercial Business Ads

The Louisiana Beekeepers Association would like to thank all of our sponsors who have placed business advertisements with our organization. We encourage our membership and visitors to our website to consider the fine products and services they offer when selecting a vendor to fulfill their business and/or personal needs.

For all others who would like to advertise in the Bayou Bee Bulletin please submit an annual fee of $25.00 by check payable to the Louisiana Beekeepers Association. Upon receipt your business ad will be included in six issues of our newsletter annually and on our website. Post your fee to LBA Treasurer, Mr. David Ferguson, P. O. Box 716, Brusly, LA 70719.

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E-Mail Address:
Tomcat357@juno.com

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ACENSION PARISH
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St. Amant, LA 70774-3942
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221 Westwind Church Road
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Ph. 225/235-5235

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Springfield, LA 70464
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Don’t Delay!

Join Today!
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Thank you for your support,

David Ferguson
LBA Membership Chairman

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LOUISIANA BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION, INC.
2013 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION
“MEMBER GET A MEMBER CAMPAIGN”

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Street Address: _________________________________________________________________

City: ____________________________ State: _______ Zip: ____________________________

Phone: ___________________________ E-mail address: _________________________________

If you are a member of a local club please list here: _____________________________________

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Please send your check or money order payable to the Louisiana Beekeepers Association Inc.
C/o David Ferguson, P. O. Box 716, Brusly, La. 70719 Ph. 225/726-1664
*Membership Expires December 31st*

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Referred by: ____________________________ Date: ______________