

BROWN COUNTY BEEKEEPERS NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2025



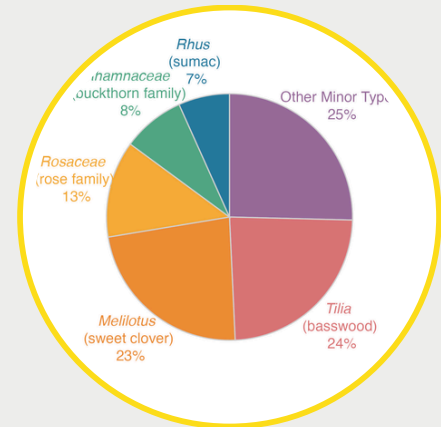
Mission: We are dedicated to promoting sustainable, responsible and healthy beekeeping practices in Northeastern Wisconsin for both experienced and first time beekeepers. We strive to create a fun environment where learning opportunities exist for association members and the public.

www.browncountybeekeepers.com



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Last month we looked inward at our apiary sustainability. This month we will take a look outward for our apiary sustainability. So, how do our hives relate to the environment around them? As beekeepers, we look at this relationship as to the nectar the bees gather throughout the season. Reviewing our honey pollen profile, we can see what the plant species the bees are utilizing for nectar gathering.



Looking at my apiary's profile, almost half (47%) of the source plants are basswood and sweet clover. Within the 3-mile foraging radius of my apiary, most of the farmland is either in corn or hay. Most of hay ground is planted in alfalfa/clover, but this doesn't show up in the profile. Why? Farming practices dictate cutting the alfalfa/clover before the bloom. So, what about the sweet clover. Sweet clover was agricultural planted for hay that escaped into the wild. You see a lot of it in road ditches prior to the road crews mowing the ditches. Human actions can really impact a major source of nectar for my apiary.

Can we as beekeepers do anything to impact the environment in a positive way for nectar sources? Depending on the land under our control, we could control what types of plants we plant or manipulate. A couple of years ago, the land that my apiary is on, had to do a managed timber harvest. Discussions with the forester about what trees not to cut focused on the basswood and black cherry on the property. Also discussed, was a release cut in the area of the property that had black locust to increase those tree numbers. Black locust is not very prevalent in my honey profile – less than 3%, but is a significant nectar source in the environment for bees.

What about during the dearth. Asters and goldenrod account for 2% of the nectar source in my honey profile. Planting fall flowering plants like buckwheat (cultivated), cup plant (native), or prairie dock (native) may help. Every little bit helps.

Sustainability is just as important outside the apiary as inside.

- That's what this month's buzz is about

President: Chris Groth
president@BrownCountyBeekeepers.com

APRIL EDUCATION



5:30PM

INSTALLING BEES



7:00PM

SPRING MANAGEMENT



Installing the Package into the Hive

Recap of a package bees

2-3lbs of worker bees with a newly mated queen not introduced to the colony.

Pros:

Most Economical - Shipper is not supplying frames of comb
Less spread of pests & diseases - no comb in involved
Readily available - earlier than nucs & can be mailed

Cons:

Slower to build up - Queen needs to be accepted, No eggs/brood until queen lays, Need to be feed to drawn comb & more time to install



One package is 3lbs or about 10,000 bees



WAYNE STEIGELMAN
NATHAN FRAILEY

DAVE ELSER

Installing the Nuc

Recap of a Nuc

A "nuc" is short for nucleus colony. This is a colony of bees that is relatively small in comparison to a larger production hive.

Pros:

Faster Build Up - Already an established hive. Laying queen, bees in various stages of development & resources.

Availability - Arrives later in spring.

Installation - Easy

Cons:

Greater chance of pests & diseases - Old comb & equipment. Could carry mites.

Cost - Approximately \$50 more than a package.

Equipment: May not fit your hive.



Online

Join Zoom Meeting

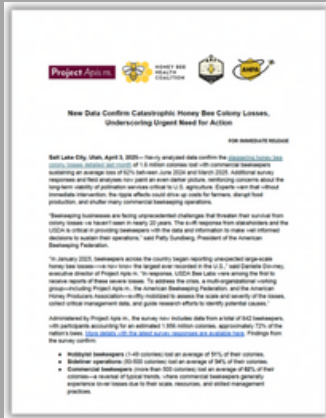
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88233935344?pwd=JlYbwWdostaXeaKU4JntK3GZF7KuOK.1>

Meeting ID: 882 3393 5344

Passcode: 718164



Project Apis m.



2025 Colony Losses Press Release 2

New Data Confirm Catastrophic
Honey bee Colony Losses,
Underscoring Urgent Need For
Action

PDF



PAm Complete Colony Losses Survey Summery April 2025

PDF



Selling Honey in Wisconsin

Few people may realize that “America’s Dairyland” also produces another sweet delight that is in no way related to dairy — honey.

Food safety, grading and labeling laws may seem complicated to beekeepers who are hobbyists or just trying to earn a little extra money. Here are answers to some of the most common questions. Before you set up your facilities, be sure to contact your local town, village, or city and county governments to find out if there are local ordinances you must meet to process and/or sell your honey. Farmer’s markets also may have their own rules.

Your label must include:

- Your name or your business name and address.
- Net weight of contents; you must list the weight in pounds/ounces and in metric measure.
- If not graded, the word “ungraded.”

If graded, include:

Grade

Color of honey if it is Wisconsin No. 1.

You can label your honey by predominant flavor or main source if people in the business could clearly distinguish the flavor or source. You can’t name more than one flavor or source, or name the honey by season.

**For more detailed Wisconsin label requirements,
check out the links below.**

[Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection](#)

[Wisconsin State Legislature HONEY AND MAPLE SYRUP](#)

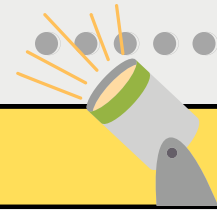
Mark Lehman, R.S.

Food Scientist Advanced – Licensing, Division of Food
and Recreational Safety

Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and
Consumer Protection

Office: 715-404-8987

Mark.Lehman@wisconsin.gov



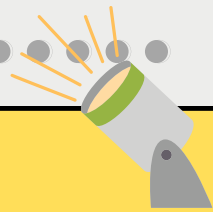
Hello to all my friendly beekeeper friends!

I have been a beekeeper for 7 years. It is a hobby in which I can enjoy the satisfaction of promoting pollinators and reap the benefits of the honey. I usually have 1 – 3 colonies going. I take a laid-back conservative approach to my beekeeping. I love being involved with the Brown County Beekeepers Association and consider this group a valuable resource. I could not have done it without my mentors in the club. My journey started in Illinois with the Introduction to Beekeeping class at the College of Lake County. I was hooked but did not commit until we moved to Green Bay and I joined the BCBA in January of 2018. Steve Hupfer and Julie Mazzolini were my first mentors. I have learned so much and have experienced a multitude of challenges and have celebrated many successes. Some of which include queenless aggressive hives, split hives, swarms, dead outs, and raising queens.



I have nailed down a note keeping system that is working for me. I no longer fumble with notebooks and sticky pens only to find that I have to pour over pages of notes to find an answer. I use my phone and take a picture of the entrance which shows the activity. Then I dig in and anything I need to make a note of, I take a picture or video and dictate my note. When I close up the hive, I take a video and dictate the work I did and what my goal should be on the next visit. Then I take an “after” picture. All this is chronologically filed in my photos. At any time, I can scroll through my photos and see what I did on any given date.





JULIANNE SANDERS

Location is my current challenge. The location of bee hives plays a fundamental role in supporting a thriving bee colony. A well-chosen site can provide bees with ample forage, protection from environmental stressors, safety from predators, and an overall healthier living environment. My first two years were quite challenging because my hives were located 30 minutes from my house where my equipment was stored. So, I had to make sure that I brought everything that I needed for each visit. But as we all know, you can have certain expectations for your hive visit and find that your goals will change when you see what is going on in there.

In February of 2020, my bees did not survive so I searched for a new home for my apiary. Starting with year 3 until presently, my hives are located on land that is only 1 mile from my house. It is on 10 acres of land that is kept natural, the owner does use chemicals. There is a creek, and the hives have a sunny southern exposure. It has been a great improvement and I am happy to have the opportunity to use this land.

This year my bees did not survive. It is a bittersweet situation. I have been wanting to move my bees to our property up north and this is, what I believe, the easiest way for me to make the move. I have ordered 2 packages and will pick them up and install them in their new home. I will move equipment the first weekend of April and set up my apiary so everything is ready for our new tenants.

I spend most of my summer there and will have a place for the equipment and will have ample forage and water for the bees. I will enjoy watching the bees from the kitchen window or from my garden path. I welcome any tips or ideas that will help me make this transition easy and beneficial for the bees.



JULIANNE SANDERS

MEMBER OPPORTUNITIES

BOB MICHIELS



“Bee-ing” a Beekeeping educator

Becoming a beekeeping educator is rewarding as it allows you to share the fascinating world of beekeeping, promote environmental stewardship, and foster a love for nature and science with others.

Look for an opportunity with our club to volunteer and try being a Beekeeping educator. It is very rewarding! There will be opportunities to educate all ranges of ages, from 1st graders to adults, so you can choose. We already have presentations ready to be used for a variety of ages and presentation types.

Here are some reasons why being a beekeeping educator can be a fulfilling and impactful experience!

- **Promoting Environmental Stewardship:** Bees are crucial pollinators, and their decline poses a serious threat to food security and ecosystems. Honeybees are leading indicators to issues that may face other pollinators. Beekeeping educators can raise awareness about the importance of bees and the need for environmental conservation.
- **Inspiring the Next Generation:** Engaging children and young people in beekeeping can foster a love for nature and science, and inspire them to become future environmental stewards.
- **Sharing Knowledge and Skills:** Beekeeping educators can impart valuable knowledge and practical skills to aspiring beekeepers, helping them to successfully manage their own hives.
- **Fostering Community:** Beekeeping can be a social activity, and beekeeping educators can help to build communities of like-minded individuals who share a passion for bees and beekeeping.
- **Personal Growth and Fulfillment:** Teaching and mentoring others can be a deeply rewarding experience, allowing you to share your passion and make a positive impact on the lives of others.
- **Hands-on Learning:** Beekeeping offers a unique opportunity for hands-on learning, allowing students to experience science and nature firsthand.
- **Therapeutic Benefits:** Beekeeping can have therapeutic benefits, offering a sense of calm and connection with nature.
- **Economic Opportunities:** Beekeeping can also provide economic opportunities, whether through selling honey, beeswax products, or pollination services at the educational events.
- **Lifelong Learning:** Beekeeping is a constantly evolving field, and beekeeping educators can stay up-to-date with the latest research and best practices. It's absolutely amazing how many times I was asked questions that I had to look up the answer when I got home. I've learned a lot since I started being a Beekeeping educator!

**PRIZE
ALERT**



Co-Education Outreach Chair:

Professor Bob Michiels

Ask Bob for a secret
blue ticket
for a chance to win a prize!



2025 BCBA Meeting Education Calendar

Reg = Regular Meetings: 3rd Wednesday of every month at 6:30p

MBM = Meeting Before the Meeting: Same Wednesday, starts at 5:45p

Date	Education	Type	Presenter
January 15, 2025	Varroa Mite Management	Reg	Dick Sturm
February 19, 2025	Identifying and Managing Honey Bee Diseases Minnesota Bee Squad	Reg	Jessica Helgen Bee Squad Pgm Director or Jenny Warner Bee Squad Beekeeper
March 19, 2025	Queen Rearing	Reg	Keith Zaidel, Zaidel Wild Apiary
	Honey Decrystalization	MBM	Rance Bennett, This Old Hive
April 16, 2025	Spring Management	Reg	Dave Elsen
	Installing Bees	MBM	Wayne Steigelman Nathan Frailey
May 21, 2025	Girl Next-Door Honey	Reg	Hillary Kearney
June 18, 2025	Dr. Chelsa Cook, Marquette	Reg	Dr. Chelsa Cook, Marquette
August 20, 2025	Fall Management	Reg	Panel
	Honey Extraction	MBM	Nathan Frailey
September 17, 2025	Wax Processing and Products	Reg	Rance Bennett, This Old Hive
October 15, 2025	Discussion Panel	Reg	Wayne Steigelman Facilitates
November 19, 2025	Products of the Hive and Honey Judging Contest	Reg	Stephanie Slater and Club



2025 WISCONSIN BEEKEEPING EVENTS

Chippewa Valley Bee Expo

Intro To Beekeeping
At The Hive

WHPA Summer Meeting

WHPA Fall Convention

April 19, 2025

Northern Wisconsin State
Fairgrounds
Chippewa Falls, WI

Events include honeybee
demonstrations, cooking
with honey, raffles, food
trucks, seminars and youth
programs.

www.chippewavalleybeekeepers.com

May 17th, 2025

NWTC Sustainable
Agriculture Gardens.

8:00am to 10:00am Part 2
of our Introduction to
Beekeeping Class.

Must be pre registered

www.browncountybeekeepers.com

June 14, 2025

DoubleTree by Hilton
150 South Nicolet Road,
Appleton, WI

2025 Summer Meeting
Agenda TBA

www.wihoney.org

November 6-8, 2025

DOUBLETREE BY HILTON in
NEENAH, WI

Keynote Speaker: Bob Binnie,
owner of Blue Ridge Honey Co.
in Lakemont, Georgia.

www.wihoney.org

MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD!

Contact Your Legislator About the Honey Integrity Act!

In March 2025, U.S. Senator Tommy Tuberville (R-AL) introduced the Honey Integrity Act to protect domestic honey producers and commercial beekeepers from being undercut by counterfeit foreign honey imports. Senator Tuberville's legislation builds on his previous efforts to protect our domestic producers and increase healthier food options for consumers.

"Honey is one of nature's greatest antioxidants, providing many wonderful health benefits," said Senator Tuberville. "America's beekeepers and honey producers work tirelessly to ensure that we have access to pure, quality honey. But sadly, the lack of uniform standards is creating loopholes that foreign honey producers are increasingly exploiting. Our honey producers deserve a level playing field, and Americans deserve to know exactly what they're putting in their bodies. I'm proud to introduce this legislation to secure our nation's honey industry, support our domestic beekeepers and increase food transparency for Americans."

What to do:

Click on the link below to Wisconsin Honey Producers for more detailed information and please send a simple letter to your Representative and Senators in Washington D.C.



**Make Your Voice Heard! Contact Your
Legislator About the Honey Integrity Act!**

For questions about the Honey Integrity Act, please
contact Doug Koltermann, WHPA Legislative...

 Wisconsin Honey Producers Association / Mar 16

April Management

Here is what to expect in and around the hive in April.

In the hive

- On cold days, the bees are still clustered, but on warm sunny days, they should be bringing in lots of pollen and nectar. If their flights are limited by cold or inclement weather, they may still be at risk of starvation. The colony, if big enough, begins to rear drones in greater numbers.

Seasonal Conditions

- In Green Bay Wisconsin, in April, the average minimum and maximum temperatures are 34°F and 54°F, with 3" of snowfall and 2.5" of additional precipitation.

Inspection

- On the warmest days, you can quickly inspect a colony's brood pattern and food stores, taking care not to chill the brood. If the bottom brood chamber is empty, move it to the top of the brood nest. Doing so before a day or two of warm temperatures will help brood survive the move. After installing a new package or nuc, allow two weeks for the colony to establish before an inspection.

Nutrition

- The colony should have at least 3-4 combs full of honey. Feed them if the colony is light or the stores obviously empty. Feed them if the hive is light or the stores obviously empty, or if the bees are visible through the inner cover at the very top of the hive. Use dry sugar or a candy board, or replace empty combs with combs of capped honey. Sugar syrup is also an option: feed a 1:1 mix in a feeder that holds enough syrup that it doesn't need refilling every day, but not so much that it gets moldy before the bees finish it. If the bees are reliant on this food, you will likely need to continue to feed until nectar and pollen are accessible outside.
- The location/proximity of the bees to their food stores is key. If the cluster is far to one side of the food stores, you can carefully move it closer, keeping it together while you do so, or move frames of honey closer to it.
- You might consider feeding pollen substitute or supplement to support or further stimulate egg laying. If you do so, be sure to use clean pollen.
- Feed package bees or nucs upon their arrival.
- If you plan to rear queens this year, lavishly feed the cell finisher colony chosen in the fall lavishly (carbohydrates and protein) for early spring buildup.

For more April management info, visit our month by month education on the BCBA website.



**FACEBOOK SITES
MANAGED BY BCBA**

Brown County Beekeepers
updates on club happenings

Northeast WI Beekeepers
beekeepers helping beekeepers

Brown County Beekeeping Association

Member Benefits

Club Sponsor – Hansen Honey Farm, Rhinelander, WI

- \$5 off each package or nuc of bees until May 2024 (Min purchase required)
- 5% discount for all BCBA members for ongoing purchase
- For online discount code, contact secretary@browncountybeekeepers.com
- When purchasing in-store only, let them know you are a member of the BCBA.

Club Sponsor – Let It Bee, Inc., Greenville, WI

- 5% discount for all BCBA member purchases, except nucs. In-store only.
- When purchasing in-store only, let them know you are a member of the BCBA.

[Click here for the Club Sponsor Website Page](#)

Club Equipment Rental

Perks of being a member! [Click here for the full rental list.](#)

American Bee Journal Subscriptions

(Contact Club Treasurer for Discount form)

Club Education Reimbursement Opportunity

Club members are eligible for up to \$25/ calendar year for continuing education

Eligibility Guidelines:

- Must be a current member for at least 12 consecutive months.
- Member must submit their request to the Leadership Team prior to the event including details on how it aligns to the Club's Mission.
- Note: BCBA sponsored events, books or magazines not eligible for reimbursements.
- Club Expectations of Members Receiving Education Reimbursement
- Overview of the education to the club or an education session.
- Write-up with photos and/or video for club publication.

2025 Club Officers

President: Chris Groth

president@browncountybeekeepers.com

Vice President: Nathan C. Frailey, Sr.

vicepresident@browncountybeekeepers.com

Website Chair: Carl Fisher

info@browncountybeekeepers.com

Social Media: Wayne Steigelman

Club Education CoChairs: Mimi Gerner and Dave Elsen

Treasurer: Chad Ford

treasurer@browncountybeekeepers.com

Secretary: Edmund Poillion

secretary@browncountybeekeepers.com

Education Outreach Chair: Julie Mazzoleni

Board Member at Large: Dick Sturm