



The Producers



The Newsletter of the Empire State Honey Producers Association

A Statewide Organization to Promote and Protect the Interests of New York State Beekeepers

Spring 2021
Issue 106

President's Message

I would like to talk about the internet and beekeeping. Over the years I have heard plenty of good information come from different Facebook and Internet groups. I will tell you, there is no substitute for a good mentor as well as a reputable group or organization to help a novice beekeeper's education.

Recently I had a man in Florida call me and asked if I could help him extract a couple boxes of honey. His mentor had moved out of state and took the only extractor with him. Me (trying to be helpful), invited this older gentleman to my house to spin the honey from his honeycombs. He brought his frame's, we scratched the cappings and placed the frames into my older Kelly electric extractor. As we waited for the machine to come up to speed, we suddenly heard a "thud". I jumped up and turned the machine off. As I opened it up, I saw the mess. All of the wax inside the frames had come out. The man then explained that he was online and read a post about using fishing line to hold foundation in his combs instead of piano wire. He also used old foundation that was outdated and had no plastic or structural support. Needless to say, we spent a couple hours putting new foundation into his frames so he had combs assembled properly and could place them back into his hives.

The moral of my story is to emphasize how important it is to have a quality mentor that has a thorough understanding of beehives and be able to explain it in a way that's easily understood. Talking with me first could have saved this guy a bunch of time by having the combs correctly built the first time. So please, join a local, state and national beekeeping group. You need to be heard at all levels.

Also, Christina will be discussing the Virtual Meeting we had last month, but I wanted to give a huge shout out to our sponsors; BetterBee, Kutik's Everything Bees and Mann Lake! And a huge thank you to Cornell University for hosting our meeting and for loaning us Emma Walters to help moderate the meeting and get everything setup! We hope to be able to have our Summer Meeting in person this year. We are planning it if things stay open in NY.

Thank you,
Dan Winter – ESHPA President

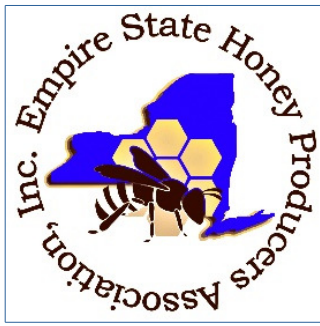


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First Virtual Winter Conference and Business Meeting a Success!

by Christina Wahl
2nd Vice President

As a consequence of the worldwide pandemic, ESHPA was forced to cancel all of our usual annual activities...we had no Summer Picnic, no Honey Shows, no State Fair Booth, and no Fall Meeting.

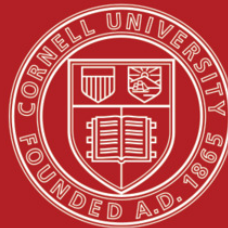
Out of desperation for a way to connect with our members and the public, we were persuaded to venture into the land of Zoom meetings. Cornell University donated the use of their expanded Zoom platform, and with the help of Emma Walters, Cornell's Senior Honeybee Extension Associate, we were able to accommodate up to 500 participants! The meeting was free, but required preregistration. Over 500 folks preregistered...we had a waiting list! Of those that registered, about 260 people actually "turned up" at the meeting. This allowed us to invite all those on the waiting list to sign in at the last minute. Nearly 300 people attended our conference held on February 6.

Topics included the latest work on viruses in the hive and how they interact with the honeybee digestive tract, how individual honeybee anatomy can predict hive mortality, advice from a Cornell Master Beekeeper on how to deal with crystallized honey in combs and stored containers of liquid honey, and information on how to improve honey and hive product marketing by becoming Certified Naturally Grown. The 2.5 hour conference was followed by a one-hour business meeting.

Membership voted to approve the formation of a new 501C3 sister organization to ESHPA, which will be able to apply for grant monies and accept tax-free donations, which ESHPA is unable to do. The sister organization will also engage in support of research and education on behalf of apiculture and pollinators in New York State. The ESHPA board recently named the new organization "*New York State Beekeepers Association*".

Members at the business meeting also approved revisions to the ESHPA bylaws, which may be read on our website at ESHPA.org, and voted on a slate of candidates to serve on the ESHPA board, replacing members whose terms expired last year. We thank our sponsors who helped to make this meeting possible: Cornell University, Kutik's Everything Bees, Betterbee, and Mann Lake.

If you are interested in watching the conference, a recording is available on our website at ESHPA.org.



Cornell University

2/6/2021 Winter Business Meeting minutes (held in conjunction with the Virtual Bee Conference)

Called to order at 3:30pm by Dan Winters

Dan Winters: Thanked Cornell for hosting the virtual conference

Kim Ess: --using quick books for spreadsheets now

- Citizens bank currently holds the bank account for the club
- 68 pd members
- approx. \$3000 paid out in subscriptions
- any questions? Place them in the chat box
- Christina Wahl motioned to pass treasurers report
- Mark Fiegl 2nd the motioned to approve
- all approved, no denials, motioned passed

Dan: Birds and Bees Legislation -he was contacted by Dan Raichel

- Scott McCart (from Cornell University) updating about seed coat pesticide use
- protected birds and bees
- limit on seed coat pesticide use to keep agriculture healthy and to increase sustainability
- final writing not out yet on the legislation. Stay tuned for more info.
- agriculture sustainability is very important for the bees and the pollinators

Mark Fiegl: --talk about By-Laws and the changes

- highlighted in Yellow means eliminating in updated version
- highlighted in RED means changing the wording to accommodate everyone
- " whom is keeping bees" is being removed
 - it does not matter if you have them or not to be a member
- read through the by-laws and explained everything listed
- voting changing to electronic version
 - to be used when unforeseen circumstances won't allow paper or in meeting voting
- if you're going to be on the board, you MUST attend the meeting or you WILL be dismissed from your board position and replaced
- state fair director is now a 3yr term instead of 2 yr.
- by-laws are to be reviewed and amended if needed every 2yrs
- amendments can be changed after reviewed for 30days
- Mark motioned to pass the by-laws with the revisions, not the amendments
- Tom Shultz 2nd the motion to pass
- all approved, no denials, motion passed

Dan: Talked about forming the 501c3 proposed by a guest at a prior meeting, Michelle Colapy



Kim: --501c3 is a not for profit formation of a sister foundation of ESHPA
--talked about the tax exemption from IRS code
--2011 ESHPA set up as a 501c5 in an agriculture or horticulture nature
--what else is available to us as an organization?
--501c3=all donations are tax deductible, as a 501c5 NO donations are taxable
--each is an independent entity but they work together as one group
--no name yet for the new organization
--not changing our tax code because we will have to give up our tax exemption status
--ESHPA also lobby's with commercial beekeepers and can NOT be a 501c3 with commercial lobbying
--501c3 is more commercial
--501c5 is more legislative
--yes, ESHPA membership dues cover both groups
--2 board of directors with Secretary and Treasurer being part of both clubs
--we need more people to step up and help out with board positions and club duties
--motioned by Rick to create 501c3
--2nd motioned by Christina
--all approved, no denials, motion passed
--any questions contact Dan Winters or Kim Ess
--any name suggestions please send them to any of the board members ASAP

Christina Wahl: --Eliazara is creating a link to the ballot that has current open positions and nominees posted
--if no e-mail rec'd within 3-4 days, contact the board so a new e-mail can be resent and positions voted on

Dan: Bob Deemer Northern District- nominee #2
--Terry Knoeller, Northern District- nominee #2
--know anyone who wants to step up and be a board member? Please e-mail info@ESHPA.org for nominations
--Tom motioned to hold open nominations until midnight Friday February 12th 2021
--Kim 2nd the motion
--all approved, no denials, motioned passed

Tom W: Motioned to adjourn the meeting at 4:32pm
--motioned 2nd by Mark



Science in the News

by Christina Wahl, Ph.D.

The gut microbiome defines social group membership in honey bee colonies

*Cassandra L. Vernier, Iris M. Chin, Boahemaa Adu-Oppong, Joshua J. Krupp,
Joel Levine, Gautam Dantas, Yehuda Ben-Shahar*

Vernier et al., *Sci. Adv.* 2020; 6: eabd3431 14 October 2020

Original peer-reviewed paper summarized by Christina Wahl, Ph.D.

In this study, colony-specific cuticular hydrocarbon profiles were found to be a way that bees identify nestmates. Cuticular hydrocarbons (CHCs) are waxes with long and complex hydrocarbon chains. These very large biomolecules can differ from each other chemically without compromising their function in the bees' cuticle. Interestingly, the CHC profiles of bees are determined by the environment, not genetic variations.

It turns out that the gut microbiome plays a role in determining the bees' CHC profile. The authors tested the hypothesis that the honeybee gut microbiome defines colony integrity and nestmate recognition by contributing to differences in cuticular CHC profiles.

To understand how this works, the concept of "holobionts" must be introduced. All animals have resident microbial communities. A "holobiont" is a new term used to define a host organism together with the community of microorganisms living on its skin and gut. Population-level genetic variation may be a product of variations in the genomes of both animal hosts AND their associated microbes. (This fact has been discussed elsewhere, for instance: V. O. Ezenwa, A. E. Williams, *Microbes and animal olfactory communication: Where do we go from here?* *Bioessays* 36, 847–854 (2014), T. Engl, M. Kaltenpoth, *Influence of microbial symbionts on insect pheromones*. *Nat. Prod. Rep.* 35, 386–397 (2018), and E. Sherwin, S. R. Bordenstein, J. L. Quinn, T. G. Dinan, J. F. Cryan, *Microbiota and the social brain*. *Science* 366, eaar2016 (2019).)

In general, the taxonomic diversity of the honeybee gut is low. Therefore, community level variations may not be enough to develop unique nestmate recognition cues. However, at least one of the microbes found in honeybee guts....

G. apicola....differs among strains in its ability to metabolize various carbohydrates. Because carbohydrate metabolism contributes to the CHC profiles in the bee's cuticle, it is possible that genetic variations in *G. apicola* contributes to variations in cuticular CHC profiles. The authors found that specific strains of *G. apicola* are more genetically similar within the same bee than across different bees from the same colony, and they are even more significantly different from bees belonging to other colonies. This suggests that the genetic relatedness of different strains of resident bacteria is associated with relatedness of the host bees.



The holobiome may explain why the development of nestmate recognition cues follows the rules of a genetically determined trait without relying on actual relatedness among honey bee colony members.

An assessment of gut microbiomes and associated CHC profiles from different colonies showed that although the types of microbes among colonies was the same, the microbes differed in their population profiles....more of some, less of others...between colonies. The authors compared gut microbiomes among bees and their colonies. When they took newborn bees from colonies with different CHC profiles and raised them either in their natal or an unrelated host colony, they found that both source and host related factors contributed to variations in the overall gut microbial community of individual bees. Of the 14 microbial taxa they monitored, 6 were similar between bees that shared the same hive environment during behavioral maturation, regardless of genetic relatedness. They found no microbe taxa that were significantly associated with the source hive environment (the hive where the bees originated). They concluded that posteclosion environment was the most important factor determining a given bee's gut microbial community.

Next, they devised experiments to test whether manipulating the gut biome would be sufficient to drive differences in cuticular CHC profile of individual bees. It has already been shown that the gut microbiome changes when bees are exposed to antibiotics. When newborn bees are raised with older bees from different colonies, significant effects were observed on their gut microbiomes. However, if the older bees were treated with antibiotics, there was no effect, showing that newborn bees cannot acquire their gut microbe profiles from older bees whose own guts have severely reduced numbers of microbes.

When newborn bees were artificially inoculated with different types of microbes commonly found in honeybees, they developed different CHC profiles. The authors state that this evidence is a step towards explaining how a guard bee's chemosensory system can distinguish colony members from "others".

What does this information mean to beekeepers? First, it shows that it is just as important for a honeybee to have a well-balanced gut microbial community as it is for people to have healthy gut biomes. It shows that there are quantitative differences in gut microbes between colonies that contribute to colony recognition cues. Finally, it reminds us that damage to a honeybee's gut microbes impairs not only that specific bee, but also young bees that rely on their older nestmates to help establish their own gut biomes.

Many ESHPA beekeepers have questioned whether "probiotics" for bees could be helpful. They wonder if bees with depleted gut biomes might benefit from ingesting probiotics. Gut microbes differ from species to species, so it is important to understand what "probiotics" actually are with respect to honeybees. Some work has been done, for instance see <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/31679264/>. There is a product on the market called "Superdfm—direct fed microbial formula" available from Betterbee, Dadant, and other major suppliers. They recommend fall and winter feeding to help boost the bees' gut health with supplemental microbes. But we could question why it would be necessary to feed probiotics to bees? The answer is that our bees are under a great deal of environmental stress... not only is overwintering in New York State stressful even for a healthy colony, but virtually all colonies of bees nowadays are harboring pathogenic viruses that can get the upper hand when a colony is weakened by stressors including (but not limited to) dearths, pesticides, herbicides, fungicides, mites, limited forage, and winter. If, like many other New York beekeepers, your bees failed to overwinter this year and you face the discouraging sight of a beeyard full of empty hives, you might consider whether feeding supplements next fall are worth a try.

Empowering Veterans Through Beekeeping



Hives for Heroes is a national military veteran non-profit organization focusing on honey bee conservation, suicide prevention, and a healthy transition from service. Through the national network of beekeepers and veterans we provide purpose, education, and healthy relationships fostering a lifelong hobby in beekeeping.

NewBEE veterans and Mentors enjoy the therapeutic process of beekeeping and build healthy relationships in communities across America. Beekeeping is unique, allowing a beekeeper to suit up, overcome fear, accomplish a goal through process oriented techniques, and walk away with a sense of accomplishment. This practice can easily translate to their personal and professional lives when dealing with PTS and other traumas from service. While there is often a fear associated with bees, when you are careful and respect them, they will continue with their work.

After military service, many veterans often fall into depression, unhealthy relationships and addictive behaviors which leads to feeling alone, isolated, or become suicidal. Hives for Heroes strives to connect with veterans to provide a family friendly community.

A veteran Mentor in Houston struggled in all of these areas, turned to alcohol to cope, then attempted to take his life in 2017. With a newfound outlook on life, the passion to serve others, and connect with veterans going through similar situations motivates him to be involved.

A veteran NewBEE in Texas joined Hives for Heroes because of their love for science, bees, and learning. Their desire and passion to acquire knowledge has motivated them to deeply connect with mentors in advanced beekeeping activities like queen rearing. Through the nationwide network of beekeepers, Hives for Heroes is able to connect and empower veterans in their pursuit of purpose and joy.

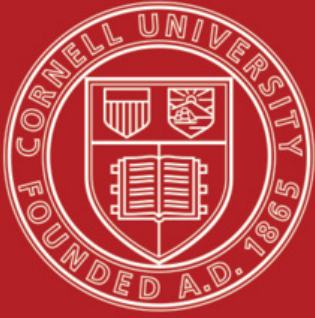
Hives for Heroes wants to connect people. By bettering the lives of individuals there is a positive impact on their community and ultimately the world. Through honey bee conservation, there is a common goal for NewBEEs, Mentors, and Volunteers to work towards.

Please check out our website, www.hivesforheroes.com, for ways to get involved and support Hives for Heroes through donations, merchandise sales from our shop, and/or volunteering!

Veterans interested in beekeeping as a NewBEE and Mentors willing to connect and teach veterans can apply online at www.hivesforheroes.com/the-hive. Hives for Heroes is officially in all 50 states and is constantly searching for accomplished beekeeping mentors who have at least 3 years of experience.

Check us out @hivesforheroes on social media and use our hashtags #saveBEEssaveVETS #BEEaHero





Cornell University



Informed Education for New York State Beekeepers:

If you haven't found it yet, this website posted by Cornell's Dyce Laboratory on pollinators is worth a visit. <https://pollinator.cals.cornell.edu>

At this site, you can find valuable resources such as “Removing your Swarms”, “Managing Honey Bee Pests and Diseases”, “Planting Pollinator Habitat”, “Business Resources for Beekeepers”, and more. Ongoing classes and information about bee diseases are also available. The best part? The Dyce Laboratory website is dedicated to NEW YORK BEEKEEPERS. Information on beekeeping technique posted there is specific to our state. In contrast, beekeeping advice found in books or online is often not appropriate to our climate and geology. As stated in a popular beekeeper maxim: “All beekeeping is local”. The Cornell Dyce Laboratory is local for beekeepers who keep their bees year-around in New York State.

Additional great resources you can find there include:

Find a beekeeping club in your county -

<https://pollinator.cals.cornell.edu/resources/beekeeping-clubs-nys/>

Beekeeping calendar for the Northeast -

<https://pollinator.cals.cornell.edu/sites/pollinator.cals.cornell.edu/files/shared/documents/Beekeeping%20Calendar%20for%20the%20Northeast.pdf>

Find nuc and queen producers in New York State -

<https://pollinator.cals.cornell.edu/resources/general-beekeeping-resources/find-nuc-and-queen-producers-new-york-state/>

The Cornell University Master Beekeeping Program:

<https://www.ecornell.com/certificates/beekeeping/master-beekeeping/>

Meet our Master Beekeepers. If you are looking for a Master Beekeeper to give a presentation at a bee club or local event, you can find a directory of folks who are enthusiastic about presenting here:

<https://pollinator.cals.cornell.edu/master-beekeeper-program/meet-our-master-beekeepers/>

Science, Polling Support Renewed NY Bill to Save Bees

by Dan Raichel

New York Senator Brad Hoylman introduced new language today (3/3/21) for the Birds and Bees Protection Act (S699A), a bill that would make the state a national leader in safeguarding its bees, birds, water, and people from widespread neonicotinoid or “neonic” pesticide contamination.

The Act’s focus on eliminating low-to-no benefit neonic uses—which account for the vast bulk of the harmful pesticides entering the state’s environment—finds strong support in the conclusions of a recent groundbreaking Cornell University report. It also finds support from an overwhelming number of New Yorkers who want to see neonic pesticides reined in.

Recent polling commissioned by NRDC (National Resources Defense Council) and Friends of the Earth shows that a broad majority of New Yorkers support increased protection of bees, birds, and other pollinators as well as dramatic decreases in the neonic pesticides driving massive pollinator declines and vast contamination of New York soil and water.

Since the mid-1990s, neonics have made U.S. agriculture 48-times more harmful to insects and been linked with massive losses of bees. New York beekeepers now typically lose an astounding 40% or more of their hives every year—likely “canaries in the coalmine” for New York’s 400+ species of wild bees, which undergird ecosystems and are also important crop pollinators. Further losses pose big risks to the state’s environment and an estimated \$439 million worth of pollination services to top crops like apples, squash, blueberries, and cherries.

Neonics are also all over New York water (including nearly a third Long Island groundwater samples) at levels linked to losses of birds, the collapse of fisheries, and birth defects in white-tailed deer.

According to the poll, 66% of New Yorkers support stronger state regulations of neonics (37% strong support) when first asked. Even after hearing arguments in opposition to tougher regulations, total support for regulation actually increased to 75% (26% strong), a dramatic 3-1 split. Support increased even further when respondents heard positive messaging after the negative messaging—to an overwhelming 80% (40% strong).

The poll also showed increasing concern over the pesticides’ impact to human health. While 53% of New Yorkers felt information on neonics’ impact on bee populations is very convincing, 51% felt the same regarding information on neonics and human health. Those potential impacts have been highlighted in recent studies linking neonics to developmental harms in people and a range of harms in other mammals (see health expert Jen Sass’s wrap up of all that science [here](#)). Because recent CDC monitoring shows half of Americans are regularly exposed to neonics, any possible neonic harms could be widespread.



As the Cornell report highlights, the vast majority of neonics going into New York's environment either: (1) provide little-to-no benefits to users; or (2) are easily replaced with safer alternatives. That means the heart of New York's neonic problem can be addressed by restricting these needless uses, likely saving users money without resulting in a switch to more harmful pesticides.

And that's exactly what the new Birds and Bees Protection Act does, specifically by:

*Banning neonic-treated corn, soybean, and wheat seeds, which account for about three-quarters of the neonics used in New York agriculture. According to Cornell, these treated seeds pose "substantial" risks to bees, but provide "no overall net income benefits" to farmers;

*Banning ornamental and turf (AKA, "cosmetic") neonic uses commonplace on lawns, golf courses, and manicured corporate gardens across the state. The Cornell report finds that these uses pose some of the highest risks to pollinators, yet are largely unneeded or replaceable with safer alternatives;

*Requiring the state take a hard look at other neonic uses and, where appropriate, designate them as "restricted use pesticides" with any necessary restrictions for protection of New York's bee and bird populations.

All and all, the new Birds and Bees Protection Act responds to the desires of New Yorkers to rein in bee-killing neonic uses while doing so in a targeted, science-driven manner. While not as broad as neonics bans advanced in the European Union or Canada, the bill is expertly tailored to address New York's problematic neonic uses in a way that benefits the state's birds, fish, farmers, residents, and—of course—bees.

NRDC strongly supports the bill and you can too. If you live in New York, you can [take action](#) to make the Empire State a national leader in pollinator protection.



"Bee versus bird" by Matt From London

The business of bees

The economic value of insect pollination services is much higher than previously thought in the U.S., new research finds

UNIVERSITY PARK, Pa. — The economic value of insect pollinators was \$34 billion in the U.S. in 2012, much higher than previously thought, according to researchers at the University of Pittsburgh and Penn State. The team also found that areas that are economically most reliant on insect pollinators are the same areas where pollinator habitat and forage quality are poor.

“Pollinators like bees play an extremely important role in agriculture,” explained senior author Vikas Khanna, Wellington C. Carl Faculty Fellow and associate professor of civil and environmental engineering at Pitt’s Swanson School of Engineering. “The insects that pollinate farmers’ crops underpin our ecosystem biodiversity and function, human nutrition, and even economic welfare.”

But some of those busy little bees are headed for crisis — one-third of managed honey bee colonies die each winter in the U.S., and populations of many wild pollinator species are showing declines as well.

Using publicly available price and production data and existing pollination field studies, the team determined economic dependence of U.S. crops on insect pollination services at the county level, as well as areas where the habitat for wild pollinators has been reduced. One key finding is that the economic value that is dependent on insect pollination totaled \$34 billion in 2012, much higher than previously thought. The team looked at 2012 because it was the most recent year for which data were available.

“The value of insects as part of our economy is apparent when you look at the well-established connection between farming and beekeeping. Farmers sometimes will buy or rent bee colonies to help pollinate their crops when there aren’t enough wild bees in the area,” said Khanna. “We’ve found that some of the areas that are economically most reliant on insect pollinators are the same areas where pollinator habitat and forage quality are poor.”

The researchers found that 20% of U.S. counties produce 80% of total economic value that can be attributed to wild and managed pollinators. Their findings will inform conservation efforts and ensure sustainable production of key crops.

They also identified the key areas that produce economically and nutritionally valuable crops and are highly dependent on pollinators — areas that are at risk if wild pollinator populations continue to decline. By overlaying maps of predicted wild bee abundance, the researchers could identify areas where there was high economic dependence on pollinators but low predicted abundance of pollinators.

The research suggests a need for farmers to mitigate the shrinking bee populations by providing a more suitable habitat for the insects to thrive.

“Our study showcases the increasing importance of pollinators to supporting U.S. agricultural systems, particularly for the foods that are vital for healthy diets, like fruits, vegetables and nuts,” says Christina Grozinger, Publius Vergilius Maro Professor of Entomology and director of the Center for Pollinator Research at Penn State.

“This detailed map of pollination needs and pollinator deficits helps identify regions where resources could be provided to improve pollinator habitat, as well as other regions where local land-use practices are supporting both agriculture and healthy pollinator populations. Those places could serve as models for sustainable agriculture and pollinator conservation practices.”

The paper, “Economic Dependence and Vulnerability of United States Agricultural Sector on Insect-Mediated Pollination Service,” was published in the journal *Environmental Science & Technology*.

Other authors on the paper include Alex Jordan, graduate student, University of Pittsburgh, and Harland Patch, assistant research professor, Penn State.

The National Science Foundation funded this research.

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Fun things to do with wax and honey in the wintertime.

By Christina Wahl, ESHPA 2nd Vice President

For some of us, winter is the only time of the year when we aren't too busy to engage in our favorite hobbies. Without gardens and bees to tend, some of us ice fish, snowmobile, or go skiing. Some leave town and head south. Others read books. Or, if you are like me, you are attracted to various bee-related crafts that you can do indoors near your fireplace! My kitchen has a wood stove that also faces the living room, and I love to hang out near it during the cold days of January and February. On the kitchen side, I have collected numerous honey recipes over the years. Some are found in books....one of my favorites is "Old Favorite Honey Recipes" published by Historical Images. This book is a collection of recipes from the American Honey Institute and the Iowa Honey Producers Association. I also have a large number of family recipes using honey. Since I'm a fourth generation beekeeper, many women in my family have cooked with honey over the last 150 years. I'll share one of these recipes with you...it's a family favorite. When we bake these rolls, we always run out of them immediately. I've baked 4 batches at once and STILL had none left after a family picnic.

Oma's Rolls

(recipe by Rhoda Frost Wahl of the Thousand Islands Apiaries, dating back to 1930's)

These luscious rolls are excellent for picnics and sandwiches. Slip a grilled burger into one and you will think you've "died and gone to heaven".

1 package dry yeast
½ cup warm water
1 teaspoon honey
½ cup oil
1/3 cup honey
1 egg, beaten
2 cups warm milk (microwave mik for 1 ½ minutes)
2 teaspoons salt
1/8 teaspoon mace (if you don't have this you can do without, but it does "up the flavor")
6 cups (approximately) of bread flour

Mix the yeast, warm water, and 1 tsp honey together in a small bowl. Let sit while you mix together the other "wet" ingredients.

Add the yeast mixture to the oil/honey/milk/egg/salt/mace mixture.

Gradually add flour until you have a soft dough. Knead on a floured surface, or use the kneading paddle on your stand mixer, until dough meets the "windowpane" test. To do the windowpane test, hold dough up to a light and stretch it. It should form a thin membrane of dough without holes, through which light shines. Form dough into a ball, place in a bowl, spray or dribble oil on it and make sure the entire dough ball has a thin layer of oil. Cover with a towel and let rise in a warm place until it doubles in size. This can take up to two hours. Form rolls, and place on pans either oiled or lined with silicone baking sheets. You may also sprinkle corn meal on the pans under the rolls. Let the rolls rise again until doubled in size, up to an hour. Bake at 400 degrees Fahrenheit for about 12-13 minutes.

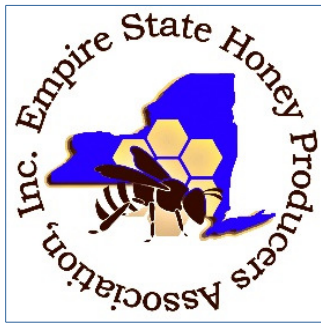
On the living room side of my woodstove, I always have a cake of beeswax handy in my sewing basket. It is great for strengthening sewing threads and darning my handmade socks....and, people, handmade socks ROCK. You can't get more comfortable feet than you feel wearing homemade socks.

Beeswax is useful in many homemade products. You can use it in furniture polish, as a sealant for cast iron pans, a lubricant for old wooden drawers to make them slide in and out better, and of course...CANDLES! But probably my favorite use for beeswax is as a resist for making Easter eggs in the Ukrainian style. Masters of this craft produce unbelievably spectacular art. I am not that good, but I enjoy what I can make! Here are two photos of some of my egg art:



I will be teaching a class on making these eggs, called "Pysanky Eggs" on March 20 at the Thousand Islands Arts Center in Clayton, NY (find them on FaceBook). But if you can't join us for that, check out YouTube! There are many innovative pysanky artists there to learn from.

Winter is a time to enjoy creativity! I wish you all the pleasure of cultivating your own creativity this year.



Empire State Honey Producers Association 2021 Officers

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