



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

Fall 2020
Issue 106

President's Message

As many of our members deal with Covid-19 restrictions, we at ESHPA have chosen to move forward with a virtual conference on Saturday February 6th, 2021. We currently have a few key speakers lined up that will bring something for beekeepers at every level.

-Dr. Jay Evans, Agriculture Research Service (ARS), USDA will discuss viruses and the bee gut

-Anthony Nearman from University of Maryland will show us how a thorough bee autopsy can help predict colony mortality.

-Alice Varon, executive director, Certified Naturally Grown (CNG) will be there encouraging our natural beekeeping practices and showing us the benefits of marketing with the Certified Naturally Grown label

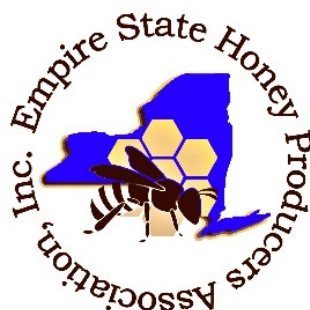
-Dr. Christina Wahl and Emma Walters, Cornell University will present their research on "Residual viruses in brood comb and honey"

Although I will miss the side chats and comradery of all you fellow beekeepers, I am excited as we continue to plan this virtual conference. Along with the other board members, we are hopeful this will provide a way to bring NY Beekeepers together. This year there is no need to travel, come see what ESHPA is about while never leaving the comforts of home. For updates and the schedule of events please check out eshpa.org.

As always during this conference we will conduct our business meeting with board member elections, so I urge all ESHPA members to attend. Please contact any board member if you have a nomination. Don't hesitate to nominate yourself. Hope to see you there!!

Your ESHPA President

Dan Winter



Washington State Department of Agriculture Entomologists Eradicate First Asian Giant Hornet Nest



BLAINE – Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) entomologists successfully eradicated an Asian giant hornet nest by vacuuming the hornets out of the nest Saturday, Oct. 24, just two days after finding the nest in a tree on private property in Blaine, Wash.

In all, the entomologists with WSDA's Pest Program removed 98 worker hornets. During the early morning extraction, 85 hornets were vacuumed out of the nest and collected another 13 live hornets were collected with a net while observing the nest on Friday.

“The eradication went very smoothly, even though our original plan had to be adapted due to the fact that the nest was in a tree, rather than the ground,” managing entomologist Sven Spichiger said. “While this is certainly a morale boost, this is only the start of our work to hopefully prevent the Asian giant hornet from gaining a foothold in the Pacific Northwest. We suspect there may be more nests in Whatcom County.”

Saturday's operation began at about 5:30 a.m. with the team donning protective suits and setting up scaffolding around the tree so they could reach the opening of the nest, which was about ten feet high.

The team stuffed dense foam padding into a crevice above and below the nest entrance and wrapped the tree with cellophane, leaving just a single opening. This is where the team inserted a vacuum hose to remove the hornets from the nest.

The work proceeded slowly at first, with very few hornets emerging. The team members used a wooden board and some smart whacks against the tree to encourage more hornets to leave the nest. This proved successful. When the hornets stopped coming out of the nest, the team pumped carbon dioxide into the tree to kill or anaesthetize any remaining hornets. They then sealed the tree with spray foam, wrapped it again with cellophane, and finally placed traps nearby to catch any potential survivors or hornets who may have been away during the operation and return to the tree. The work was completed by 9 a.m.



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“This weekend’s successful operation is due in large part to the careful planning and hard work of our Pest Program team,” WSDA director Derek Sandison said. “I also want to thank the landowners, all those who have reported Asian giant hornet sightings to us, and the citizen scientists who set traps, as well as staff with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington State University, and the University of Washington who have assisted in these efforts.”

“We congratulate the Washington State Department of Agriculture for eradicating this nest,” said Osama El-Lissy, Deputy Administrator of the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Plant Protection and Quarantine program. “Thanks to their expertise and innovation, this nest is no longer a threat to honey bees in the area. We are also pleased that the radio tags we provided worked so well, allowing state entomologists to tag and track a live Asian giant hornet back to the nest. It’s a strong example of our close cooperation in combating this pest.”

In the coming week, the WSDA Pest Program intends to cut the tree down and open it to see how big the nest was. The entomologists also want to determine whether the nest had begun to produce new queens or not.

WSDA will continue setting traps through at least November in hopes of catching any more Asian giant hornets still in Whatcom County and potentially locating any other active nests.



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The public still has an important role to play in detecting Asian giant hornets in Washington. The nest removed Saturday was found thanks to a report made by a member of the public in September. Every report of an Asian giant hornet leads the agency closer to finding a nest. It remains critical for the public to report every hornet they see each time they see one. Reports of sightings in Washington state can be made online at agr.wa.gov/hornets, via email at hornets@agr.wa.gov, or by calling 1-800-443-6684.

WSDA has been actively searching for Asian giant hornet nests since the first hornets were caught earlier this year. The first confirmed detection of an Asian giant hornet in Washington was made in December 2019 and the first hornet trapped in July of this year. Several more were subsequently caught, all in Whatcom County.

Using a network of traps, some set by WSDA staff and hundreds more placed by citizen scientists and other cooperators throughout the state, the entomologists have been diligently tracking sightings of the Asian giant hornet in an ongoing effort to find nests and eliminate them.

Asian giant hornets, an invasive pest not native to the U.S., are the world's largest hornet and a predator of honey bees and other insects. A small group of Asian giant hornets can kill an entire honey bee hive in a matter of hours.

Visit agr.wa.gov/hornets to learn more about Asian giant hornets and the state's trapping and eradication project.





**United States
Department of
Agriculture**

Enrollment Begins for Agriculture Risk Coverage and Price Loss Coverage Programs for 2021

More than \$5 Billion in Payments Now Issuing to Producers Enrolled for 2019

WASHINGTON, Oct. 14, 2020 – Agricultural producers can now make elections and enroll in the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs for the 2021 crop year. The signup period opened Tuesday, Oct. 13. These key U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) safety-net programs help producers weather fluctuations in either revenue or price for certain crops, and more than \$5 billion in payments are in the process of going out to producers who signed up for the 2019 crop year.

“Although commodity prices are starting to show a glimmer of improvement, recent depressed prices and drops in revenue compounded by the effects of the pandemic have seriously impacted the bottom line for most agricultural operations,” said Richard Fordyce, Administrator of USDA’s Farm Service Agency (FSA). “Through safety-net programs like ARC and PLC, we can help producers mitigate these financial stressors and keep the ag industry moving forward. Make time over the next few months to evaluate your program elections and enroll for the 2021 crop year.”

Enrollment for the 2021 crop year closes March 15, 2021.

ARC provides income support payments on historical base acres when actual crop revenue declines below a specified guaranteed level. PLC provides income support payments on historical base acres when the effective price for a covered commodity falls below its reference price.

Covered commodities include barley, canola, large and small chickpeas, corn, crambe, flaxseed, grain sorghum, lentils, mustard seed, oats, peanuts, dry peas, rapeseed, long grain rice, medium and short grain rice, safflower seed, seed cotton, sesame, soybeans, sunflower seed and wheat.

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2021 Elections and Enrollment

Producers can elect coverage and enroll in crop-by-crop ARC-County or PLC, or ARC-Individual for the entire farm, for the 2021 crop year. Although election changes for 2021 are optional, enrollment (signed contract) is required for each year of the program. If a producer has a multi-year contract on the farm and makes an election change for 2021, it will be necessary to sign a new contract.

If an election is not submitted by the deadline of March 15, 2021, the election defaults to the current election for crops on the farm from the prior crop year.

For crop years 2022 and 2023, producers will have an opportunity to make new elections during those signups. Farm owners cannot enroll in either program unless they have a share interest in the farm.

2019 Crop Year ARC and PLC Payments

FSA began processing payments last week for 2019 ARC-County (ARC-CO) and PLC on covered commodities that met payment triggers on farms enrolled for the 2019 crop year. In addition to the \$5 billion now in process, FSA anticipates it will issue additional payments by the end of November for 2019 commodities covered under ARC-Individual (ARC-IC) and additional commodities that trigger PLC and ARC-CO payments for which rates have not yet been published.

Producers who had 2019 covered commodities enrolled in ARC-CO can visit the ARC and PLC webpage for payment rates applicable to their county and each covered commodity. For farms and covered commodities enrolled in 2019 PLC, the following crops met payment triggers: barley, canola, chickpeas (small and large), corn, dry peas, grain sorghum, lentils, peanuts, seed cotton and wheat.

Oats and soybeans did not meet 2019 PLC payment triggers.

2019 PLC payment rates for the following covered commodities have not been determined: crambe, flaxseed, long and medium grain rice, mustard seed, rapeseed, safflower, sesame seed, sunflower seed and temperate Japonica rice. Payment rates for these commodities will be announced at a later date.

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Web-Based Decision Tools

In partnership with USDA, the University of Illinois and Texas A&M University offer web-based decision tools to assist producers in making informed, educated decisions using crop data specific to their respective farming operations. Tools include:

[Gardner-farmdoc Payment Calculator](#), the University of Illinois tool that offers farmers the ability to run payment estimate modeling for their farms and counties for ARC-County and PLC.

[ARC and PLC Decision Tool](#), the Texas A&M tool allows producers to analyze payment yield updates and expected payments for 2021. Producers who have used the tool in the past should see their username and much of their farm data already available in the system.

More Information

For more information on ARC and PLC, including two online decision tools that assist producers in making enrollment and election decisions specific to their operations, visit the [ARC and PLC webpage](#).

For additional questions and assistance, contact your local USDA service center. To locate your local FSA office, visit farmers.gov/service-center-locator.

All USDA Service Centers are open for business, including some that are open to visitors to conduct business in person by appointment only. All Service Center visitors wishing to conduct business with the FSA, Natural Resources Conservation Service, or any other Service Center agency should call ahead and schedule an appointment. Service Centers that are open for appointments will pre-screen visitors based on health concerns or recent travel, and visitors must adhere to social distancing guidelines. Visitors are required to wear a face covering during their appointment. Field work will continue with appropriate social distancing. Our program delivery staff will be in the office, and they will be working with our producers in office, by phone, and using online tools. More information can be found at farmers.gov/coronavirus.



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HONEY & APPLE FLATBREAD

YIELD: Makes 1 serving

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 T - honey
- 1/4 cup - mascarpone or cream cheese, softened
- 1 - whole-wheat flatbread, pre-cooked
- 1 - Honeycrisp apple (any varietal of apple will suffice), thinly sliced
- 1/4 cup - pecan pieces
- 1 T - pumpkin seeds
- 2 tsp. - cinnamon



DIRECTIONS: Mix honey together with cheese until combined. Spread a thin layer on the flatbread and top with apple slices, pecan pieces, pumpkin seeds, cinnamon and an extra drizzle of honey, if desired.

Recipe courtesy of registered dietitian Maggie Michalczyk, made for the National Honey Board

Honeybee Science News

By Christina Wahl, Ph.D.

Review and summary:

**“Glyphosate, but not its metabolite AMPA, alters the honeybee gut microbiota”
by Blot, Eillat, Rouze, and Delatte. Plos One, April 16, 2019.**

<https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0215466>

Glyphosate, a broad spectrum herbicide and the active ingredient in “Roundup”, is the most widely used weed control chemical in the world. It works to block plant growth via a metabolic pathway that is found in plants, bacteria, and fungi...but not metazoans (the rest of the living world). Since the marketing of Genetically Engineered Herbicide-Tolerant (GE-HT) crops, worldwide use of glyphosate has increased. Glyphosate leaves a metabolic byproduct called “aminomethylphosphonic acid” (AMPA) in the soil and in groundwater. Because honeybees come in frequent contact with glyphosate and AMPA, and because bacteria are important to the gut health of honeybees, glyphosate and AMPA were tested for their effect on honeybee gut microbes.

Researchers are particularly concerned about “sublethal effects” of environmental contaminants. “Sublethal effects” are difficult to fully assess, because they do not outright kill bees. Sublethal agents impair colony fitness, decrease production, and affect brain function in bees, leading to memory loss and aberrant behaviors. Previous studies have shown that glyphosate exposure reduces honeybee learning performance, reduces short-term memory in bees, and disturbs navigation by bees.

The adult honeybee gut is populated by communities of bacteria (“microbiome”), including a “core” of five common types. The researchers compared abundance of different bacteria in bee guts before and after exposure to glyphosate and AMPA. They also isolated bacteria from the bee gut, and tested whether bacterial growth was sensitive to glyphosate and AMPA.

The experiments, conducted in France, were done on Buckfast bees (Paul Jungels strain). Workers were separated into groups of 50 and fed either sugar syrup or sugar syrup laced with glyphosate and/or AMPA. For detailed dosage information, refer to the original article, available for free at the link given above.

They were surprised to find a strong effect of glyphosate on the bees’ gut microbes following the initial series of trials, so they repeated the experiment with summer bees. Researchers explained that the dosages they used would equate to an “unusually persistent exposure” to glyphosate.

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Passing over the detailed analysis (you can use the link given above to the free article, and read them for yourself), results showed that glyphosate and AMPA were not lethal, did not increase mortality among exposed bees, and did not alter overall food consumption by bees. However, glyphosate (not AMPA) did alter the abundance of gut microbes in a manner that was not seasonal (overwintering versus summer bees) and not due to *Nosema*. When they then tested the growth of honeybee gut microbes in the presence of glyphosate in a petri dish experiment, they learned that three of the bacteria types were negatively affected by the herbicide. They conclude that glyphosate is the causal agent altering gut microbe composition.

Results of this study concur with those of Motta et al, who also demonstrated that glyphosate alters the abundance and composition of honeybee gut microbes. Both studies found that this happened because growth in three of the five tested strains was impaired, allowing the others to increase in abundance.

Quote: “Interestingly glyphosate may alter the growth of bacterial pathogens. *Paenibacillus larvae* and *Melissococcus plutonius*, the etiological agents of the American foulbrood (AFB) and European foulbrood (EFB) respectively, are bacteria that proliferate within the gut of honeybee larvae and their EPSs belong to the glyphosate-sensitive Class I and to the glyphosate-resistant Class II respectively. Such differential sensitivity could lead to the odd hypothesis that *M. plutonius* could benefit from an imbalanced gut flora, favoring EFB, and in contrast, that glyphosate could reduce the development of the AFB. Future *in vivo* experiments could tell if glyphosate alters, in one way or another, the virulence of those gut pathogens.”

In conclusion, this study showed that glyphosate alters the honeybee gut microbiome. More work will be needed to determine how glyphosate exposure alters the colony’s ability to withstand other stressors, including infections of EFB and AFB.



Honeybee Science News

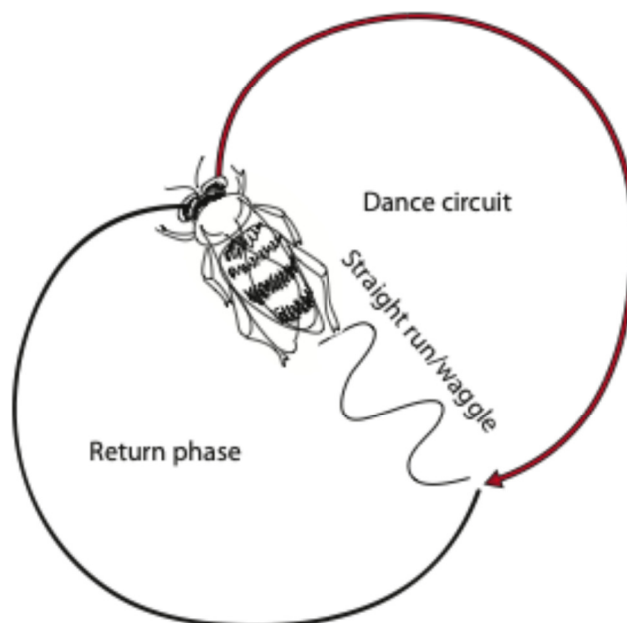
By Christina Wahl, Ph.D.

Review and Summary:

"Adaptive evolution of honeybee dance dialects." Kohl, Patrick L., et al. Proceedings of the Royal Society B 287.1922 (2020): 20200190.

These researchers studied “distance dialects” within the honeybee waggle dance among different species of the genus *Apis*, including *Apis ceranae*, *Apis florea*, and *Apis dorsata*.

Back in the 1940s, Karl von Frisch discovered that foraging honeybees use the waggle dance to communicate the spatial locations of resources to sister foragers. This “waggle” is composed of a figure-eight movement including two-way alternating dance circuits that include a waggle phase, a straight run with abdomen-wagging that contains the direction and distance information of the goal, and the return phase (see diagram). The direction of flight is indicated by the body orientation of the dancer with respect to gravity, and the distance to the goal is signaled by the duration of the straight run. Research on this dance has been conducted with the Western honeybee *Apis mellifera*, but less is known of the dance behaviors of the other *Apis* species, that mostly live in tropical and eastern Asia. These other honeybees have a great diversity of colony size, body size, and geographical distribution, which likely influence the bees’ foraging ecologies. Since all honeybees share the same methods of dance communication, these researchers wanted to see what variations were encountered among the different *Apis* species.



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The distance code is experimentally determined by setting up artificial feeders, and watching the dance of bees that return to the hive to alert sisters to the food source. Video analysis in earlier studies consisted of measuring the duration of dance circuits (duration of the waggle phase plus return phase). Unless the return phase durations are similar between species, however, this method might not be sensitive to dialect differences. Another challenge in comparing species is that honeybees are known to estimate distance by the amount of image motion perceived during flight, a feature known as “visual flow”. Depending on the features of the terrain through which they fly, visual flow information may vary between *Apis* species.

Work was done in Bangalore, India, during the dry season in 2017 and 2018. Wild colonies of *A. ceranae*, *A. floreae*, and *A. dorsata* all inhabit this region. Because these species have different nesting habits, special observation techniques were employed. *A. cerana* build multiple comb nests in cavities and workers dance on vertical comb faces, much like *A. mellifera*. *A. cerana* colonies were therefore housed in observation hives set up for video observation. *A. dorsata* and *A. floreae* build exposed single-comb nests attached to twigs, branches, or buildings which they protect with a curtain of bees. In these species, workers dance at the nest peripheries in the open. Dances were recorded from above with a downward-facing camera fixed to a tripod. Data were recorded from four colonies of each species. Bees were trained to feeding stations at different distances, and the features of the terrain were the same, as all testing was done in the UAS Botanical Garden. They obtained 43 dances of *A. cerana*, 43 dances of *A. floreae*, and 30 dances of *A. dorsata*. Waggle dance duration was determined as the time lapse between the first still image in which a focal bee had clearly moved its abdomen laterally or dorsoventrally, and the next still image in which the bee had stopped wagging. This method allowed a temporal resolution of about 0.02 seconds. They averaged three to six consecutive waggle phases in each dance to obtain the “mean waggle phase duration”. They inferred the return phase durations by subtracting the waggle duration from circuit duration.

They found strong interspecific differences in the waggle duration-flight distance relationship, indicating that the different *Apis* species do have dance dialects. *A. cerana* had the dialect with the steepest slope (5.4 s of wagging per kilometer of flight distance), *A. floreae* was intermediate (5.4 s wagging per km), and *A. dorsata* had the lowest slope in its dialect (2.1 s wagging per km). If they did not isolate the wagging phase, but included the return phase as in previous studies, then these differences were less pronounced, and dances appeared to be more similar. Interestingly, *A. ceranae* (the smallest bee) had the smallest foraging distance, with 50% of observed dances advertising food within 94 meters of the hive (mean 145 m +/- 165m), and *A. dorsata* (the largest bee) had the largest foraging range (mean distance 374 meters +/- 516 m). Results show that the slope of the dance dialect varies proportionally with average foraging distance...steeper slopes (more accuracy) in the species with shortest foraging range, and shallower slopes in the species whose range is larger.

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Federal Programs that can help you

Bee Keeping (apiculture) is a diverse and exciting vocation or hobby. But like all things we do today we need to try and minimize the risk to ourselves and to our pocket. The US Department of Agriculture does recognize the importance of Apiculture in today agriculture and has setup programs to help you. Navigating the many options is a job within itself, so let us explore some.

- 1) **Price** As Beekeepers you are producing a commodity (honey) and as with most commodities the price fluctuates during the season. Being able to use CCC loan program lets you hold your product to sell at a better time while giving you the dollars you need to operate. There is also Loan Deficiency Payments that work similarly but CCC does not hold the commodity as collateral.
- 2) **Weather** We all are affected by the swings in weather and its adverse effect on production. Here is where you can participate in the Rainfall Index program through USDA's Risk Management Agency (RMA) and administered by Approved Insurance Providers represented by your local crop insurance agent. So let's explore this option closer.
 - **You only insure what you have** - This program allows the beekeeper to insure only the hives they want.
 - **Defraying the cost** RMA pays 50% of the premium and the beekeeper is responsible for the rest plus a \$30 administrative fee (all crop insurance policies pay this fee). The cost per hive can be a little as \$2.50 and as much as \$8.75 per hive depending on coverage and the grid the bees are located on and the percentage of productivity coverage selected.
 - **How it works** RMA has been measuring the rainfall for almost 100 years across the country. This gives them a good base to go from in setting what is a normal rainfall for an area. What they insure is that normal rainfall number on a 12 mile by 12 mile grid. Now you as a beekeeper can select and percentage of that normal rainfall between 70%-90%.
 - **Does it Pay?** If past performance is what we can measure from then the answer is a resounding YES. Let us explore an example. Say you live near Fulton, NY and have 15 hives of bees, and you insure 10 of those hives at 90-100 level for the last 10 years. It would have cost you \$4.80 per hive per year to insure for a total of \$480. You would have received \$672 in payments or a return of **140%**. Let's move that coverage to 90-150 your cost would be \$7.30 per hive per year or \$730 total and it would have paid you \$1011.00 or a return of **138%**

For more on how this program might work for you in your grid please contact me at dmggiafl@wny.twcbc.com or 315-946-6022

Submitted by David Mc Intyre AFIS

David was raised on and managed a 2000+ acre farm in Wayne county NY and has been a Licensed Crop insurance agent for the past 20 years specializing in Agricultural Insurance.



The Comb Honey Adventure

by Mark Fiegl



I am a comb honey producer, mostly Cut Comb Honey, but I've had the opportunity to make Basswood Sections and Ross Rounds. There is also the Hogg Half Section which looks interesting but I have not used them. I started with Basswood Sections in the eighties but converted over to Cut Comb simply because they were easier for me to market back then and still are easier to market for me today. The Ross Rounds and the Hogg half Comb are sort of pre-packaged, not a lot of labor or fuss cutting them out like the Cut Comb Honey.

Why Comb Honey?

Comb honey is unique in several ways. First, when you extract honey you tend to end up with a blend of honey from a variety of floral sources. Several different frames are placed in the extractor, and might not even be from the same super. It's drained into a pail or pumped into a settling tank and mixed with several types of honey from different floral sources. On the other hand, comb honey is quite often from one floral source on the whole frame or perhaps a distinct separation of honey is visible on each frame. Most times when you cut a piece of comb honey off you are going to get honey from a single floral source. Savoring honey cell by cell allows you to truly enjoy the different flavors, colors, and aromas of different floral sources. This is much harder to do with extracted honey.

Comb honey tends to maintain its flavor and aroma, and does not crystallize at the same rate as extracted honey. I guess you can say it has a "longer shelf life". One reason for this is that it is not exposed to air; the honey is, for the most part, sealed in pure beeswax. When you extract honey, air is added and dirt, wax and other materials get mixed in. Most can be settled out but any impurities in honey will accelerate crystallization. If comb honey is frozen it will not crystallize I have had comb honey that was never frozen and was at least two years old. Its bouquet, and flavor with no crystallization was as if it just was harvested from a hive. Most liquid honey would have been degraded by that time, having lost its aroma and most of its unique flavors. Yes, it would still be sweet.

What about the Wad of Wax!

Everyone asks the same question. What do I do with the wax? Answer; eat it. But here is the real problem. The only reason comb honey has a wad of wax is because it's made with a whole sheet of foundation. So, don't make comb honey with foundation. I use a starter strip of thin surplus, $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch wide to get the bees working in the right direction. They will build the rest of the comb extremely thin. This will prevent you from getting that "wad" of wax that you will get with comb honey made with foundation. It's so thin, if you were to eat the comb honey with anything like a cracker, muffin, or toast, you will not know there was any wax. This brings me to my last point. Eat comb honey with something. Next opportunity to eat a piece of comb honey, try it with your favorite cheese on a cracker. You'll be amazed at how the comb honey will bring out the flavor of the cheese.

Honey on Tap

Jon Kielty is the Head Brewer and Production Manager for Big aLICE Brewing, a licensed New York State Farm Brewery, in New York City. Jon oversees all brewing operations at their brewery in Queens, as well as all barrel aging operations at the brewery's Barrel Room in Brooklyn. Jon also volunteers with Master Beekeeper Wilk Apiary, where the brewery sponsors a hive on a rooftop urban farm garden 2 blocks from the brewery in Queens.



In 2013 New York State passed legislation introducing the "Farm Brewery License". It was introduced to boost agriculture in the state as well as provide benefits to breweries, cideries, wineries, and distilleries who chose to make the commitment to sourcing locally grown NY State ingredients. Big aLICE Brewing was one of the earliest breweries to operate under the new law and has been a Farm Brewery since its inception.

We are focused on crafting innovative, locally sourced beer. In doing so we work with NY State Farmers, Maltsters, Hop Growers, Beekeepers, Coffee Roasters, and More. Our commitment to sourcing ingredients from here in NY has helped us develop long lasting meaningful relationships and a better understanding and appreciation for where our ingredients come from. One local ingredient we have always had a love for brewing with and showcasing is Honey.

We have been working with master beekeeper Tom Wilk of Wilk Apiary since shortly after the brewery opened. While most of the honey in our beer comes from the Finger Lakes region, we also sponsor a rooftop hive here in NYC just two blocks from our brewery in Queens where occasionally I will join Tom in helping with the honeybees. The honey harvested from our sponsored hive here in the city is used for exclusive small batch special release beers, and most recently incorporated into our "Between the Barrels" events at our Barrel Room in Industry City Brooklyn where I lead a small intimate group through a tasting of some of our barrel aged offerings accompanied by curated meat and cheese pairings with one of our in house Cicerones.



Over the last few years we have brewed quite a few beers that feature honey as a prominent ingredient. Most notably among those beers is our Honey Wit; a belgian style witbier with orange peel, coriander, and NY state honey. It is a beer that has recently awarded a gold medal in last year's National Honey Board Honey Beer Competition as well as a silver medal in the 2018 New York State Craft Beer Competition. We have used honey in both light and dark beers ranging from witbiers, IPA's, tripels, porters, and stouts. Honey is a versatile ingredient for us as we are able to manipulate it do different things depending on when it is added to the brewing process. When we add the honey early in the boiling process it allows us to increase the amount of fermentable sugars, resulting in a higher alcohol by volume in the final product. Honey added in the boil will also help us to attain a drier finish when desired. When honey is added at the end of the boil or during fermentation, we get more sweetness and flavor from the honey. We will do this when we are trying to showcase the honey and make that a center point on the palate of the beer.

Last Summer I was personally invited by the National Honey Board to attend their Honey Beer Summit in St Louis. Over the course of 3 days we learned about the different types of honey and the regions they come from, the life cycles of honeybees, and among other things the importance of supporting local beekeepers ending with a visit to a local apiary. It was a great opportunity that reiterated the importance of the work that we we have been doing in brewing with honey and supporting our local beekeeper.

Our commitment to supporting local is in our identity and we take a lot of pride in being an advocate for other local producers here in New York. In the same way we visit a hop farm or barley field to see where our ingredients come from, volunteering with Wilk Apiary has been such a great experience to learn more about how much time and energy honeybees put into making honey and how important their work is for our environment. As I continue to learn more and spend more time among active hives, I continue to develop a deeper respect for their hard work; which has translated into a moral responsibility to treat this ingredient with the utmost respect in how we use it here at the brewery.

Cheers,
Jon Kielty
Head Brewer
Big aLICE Brewing

Update - Since this article was written, Jon and his team at Big aLICE were awarded two more medals for honey beers in a major national competition. Biere De Fierte, a lemongrass ginger belgian tripel brewed with NY honey won Silver in the Belgian-Style Ales category. And Queens Farmhouse, a 100% NYS farmhouse ale brewed with NY honey, fermented with yeast cultivated from figs in Queens, and aged in white wine barrels won Bronze in the Barrel Aged category.



CHEWY HONEY OATMEAL COOKIES



YIELD: Makes 24 cookies

INGREDIENTS:

1/2 cup - butter or margarine, softened
1/2 cup - granulated sugar
1/2 cup - honey
1 large - egg
1 tsp. - vanilla extract
1 1/2 cups - quick cooking rolled oats
1 cup - whole wheat flour
1/4 tsp. - salt
1 tsp. - ground cinnamon
1/2 tsp. - baking soda
1 cup - raisins, chocolate or butterscotch chips

DIRECTIONS:

In medium bowl, beat butter with sugar until thoroughly blended. Blend in honey. Blend in egg and vanilla, mixing until smooth.

In separate bowl, mix together oats, flour, salt, cinnamon and baking soda; blend into honey mixture. Blend in raisins or chips.

Drop dough by rounded tablespoonfuls onto greased baking sheet. Bake at 350°F for 12 to 14 minutes until cookies are golden brown.

Remove from oven and allow cookies to cool 2 to 3 minutes before removing from baking sheet.

Cool completely then store in an airtight container.

TIP:

High altitude adjustment: Increase oats to 2 cups and decrease whole wheat flour to 3/4 cup.

Used with permission from the National Honey Board website; www.honey.com

Honey Cocktail Hour with Jena Lane Ellenwood

Fuddy Duddy

Originally created for my friend's wedding, the groom is still a total Fuddy Duddy according to his wife.

2 Dashes Angostura Bitters
1/4 oz Spiced Honey Syrup*
1/2 oz NY Distilling Rock & Rye
1 1/2 oz Ragtime Rye

Build in a ROCKS glass, add ice and STIR.
Garnish with a clove studded orange twist.

*Spiced Honey Syrup: bring 1/2 cup water to a boil, remove from heat and add 2 cinnamon sticks, 1/2 tsp cloves, 1 star anise, and 2 orange twists. Steep 10 minutes. Remove spices and stir in 3/4 cup honey (I used Wilk Apiary Queens). Store in fridge.

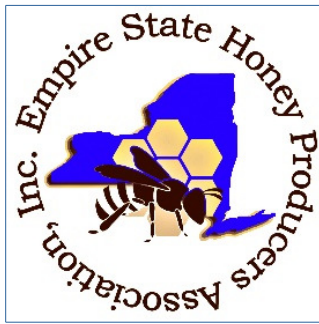


WANTED: Newsworthy Articles

As with any organization, we are only as good as our members allow us to be. I am always looking for local NYS beekeeping news and tidbits for our quarterly newsletter and also for our smaller monthly Buzz Blast!

If you have something that would be a good fit for this group, please do not hesitate to email me: newsletter@eshpa.org

Thank you!
Eliazara



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