



OCTOBER 2008

NEWSLETTER OF THE ALAMANCE COUNTY BEEKEEPERS

*Remember...*

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The North Carolina State Fair runs from Oct. 17 – 26 at the State Fairgrounds in Raleigh.

*Alamance County Beekeepers*

## This month's meeting...

will be of particular interest to gardeners (and what beekeeper isn't also a gardener, at least to some extent?!). Our speaker is Debbie Roos, Agriculture Extension Agent for Chatham County, NC. She will talk to us about planting for bees. The meeting will be at the Agriculture Building on Graham Hopedale Road at 7:30 pm Thursday, October 16. Debbie is a very interesting speaker, and will be bringing us all some valuable information. Don't miss this meeting!



## Urban Beekeeping

Some of you may have read the article Joe Eiden sent out about Urban Beekeeping. I found this article very informative, and saw in it a way to get more people interested in keeping bees as a hobby. It would be very easy to hold mini-workshops for people in the neighborhood once you have the bees there and accessible. Add some plants that will attract the bees (see the meeting note above!) and you have an instant ongoing classroom.

If you would like a copy of the article, let me know. But here are a few points I took from it:

- North Carolina has the largest beekeeper's association in the US, and most of those beekeepers are hobbyists.
- Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD) has brought the plight of the honeybee to more people in the US, and many of them are interested in saving the bees. This may make them more receptive to starting a new hobby in beekeeping.
- More people are interested in keeping bees – so much so that some state beekeeping schools/courses are not able to accommodate all the people that want to take the course.
- Beekeeping is an activity that can be enjoyed by the whole family, and is a legacy that can be handed down to the next generations.

# Fall Management

As the fields turn yellow with the bloom of goldenrod trimmed with the white lace of aster, so begins the fall honey flow. This presents the final opportunity for hive manipulation such as requeening. During this time, brood rearing is increased making it easy to check the efficiency of the queen. If the queen is not laying properly, as indicated by a good brood pattern, she will not make it through the winter or will fail in the spring. It is better to requeen in the fall because queens are not available until late spring and by this time the hive will be lacking in population. Old bees die rapidly in the spring and if not replaced with young workers, the hive population will be rapidly reduced. For this early spring buildup, it is necessary for the bees to have enough honey in the hive in the fall not only for over-wintering, but also to feed the spring brood. If too little honey is left, the bees may survive the winter, but will not start the spring buildup until the red maple blooms. This will leave the hive at a disadvantage. The honey that is left in the hive **MUST** be arranged properly or the bees will not survive the winter. The honey should be arranged in a tight pattern surrounding the brood nest. There should be no empty frames of honey. If there are supers on the hive that are only partially filled, the cappings should be removed; this will encourage the bees to rearrange the honey in the hive.

Weak colonies with low honey stores should be fed in the early fall to increase population and winter stores. The hive should have a large population of young workers by the end of fall because the bees will not only live through the winter months but also feed the brood in the spring.

Ventilation must be provided. This can be accomplished in many ways, i.e. auger holes, notched inner covers, and spacers under the inner cover. All give adequate ventilation. This must be checked in the fall and rechecked in early winter because the bees will fill them with propolis, thus making them ineffective. They may also place propolis at the hive entrance to reduce its size, but this is better done by the beekeeper with an entrance reducer; this will prevent mice from entering the hive while the bees are clustered and defenseless. A mouse that discovers a hive without an entrance reducer will have a winter supply of food, a new home and a playground; mice love to destroy cold empty honeycomb.

If these items have been accomplished the bees will be ready for winter and prepared for the next year's spring flow.

*Thanks to Ken Gonzalez for this month's article. Good info!*

## State Fair Honey Sale

Don't forget the honey sale at this year's state fair. If you have not already signed up to bottle and label, help sell, or work the booth, talk to Don Hopkins to get set up.

Email him:

[Don.Hopkins@ncmail.com](mailto:Don.Hopkins@ncmail.com)

Call him: 336-376-8250



## Officers Needed

If you are willing to serve as an officer for Alamance County Beekeepers for 2009, contact Joe Eiden to get involved. If you aren't sure what it takes to be an officer, contact any of the current officers to get more information.

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## Future Beekeeper?

*Thanks to Happi Overton for the photo.*

## Beehive Cookies

- Makes 4 dozen -



### Ingredients

- 3 cups flour
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 3/4 cup (6 oz.) butter, lightly chilled, cut in bits
- 1/2 cup light brown sugar, packed
- 1/2 cup whipped honey or crème
- 1 Tablespoon (about 2 lemons) lemon zest
- 1 egg
- Coarse sugar, optional, as needed

### Directions

Cream butter, brown sugar, honey and lemon zest until smooth; beat in egg. Add dry ingredients in thirds, mixing well with each addition. Scrape dough onto plastic wrap; shape it into a log about 12 inches long. Chill an hour or so until firm, or up to 24 hours. Heat oven to 350°F. Thoroughly mix dry ingredients; reserve. Cut log into 1/4-inch slices; place 1 inch apart on a parchment-lined baking sheet. Sprinkle with coarse sugar, if desired, lightly pressing sugar into dough. Bake until edges are lightly browned, about 10 minutes. Cool 5 minutes on baking sheet, then transfer to a rack. Cool completely. Decorate with jack-o-lantern faces for a great Halloween treat!

*– Recipe courtesy of National Honey Board*



November Article: Donna Devanney/Fred Harris

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