



Alamance County Beekeepers

September 2021 Newsletter

Message from Ira



Greetings fellow Beekeepers,

We have experienced some of the hottest temperatures this Summer during August. Too hot for me to work my bees !! But they need some TLC now that the weather is cooperating some.

Thinking back several years, I believe I have been President of Alamance County Beekeepers since 2014. I have had fun and we have experienced growth in areas that were not even in my future planning. WE are now a 501C3 non profit organization!! Thanks for many on your Board for following through on that GOAL. We offered a Virtual Beginning Beekeeping Class in 2021, again, something that wasn't on my radar, but Sheyenne and Caitlin made it happen with the help of several of our Board Members. I believe it is time for the next wave of leaders to assume this responsibility.

It has been difficult for some of our Members to handle our Zoom Meetings since we cannot meet in person due to the COVID virus. I had hoped that we could meet IN PERSON beginning this month, but due to the surge in the Delta variant, we will have to continue to meet via Zoom through November. I hope the Club will continue to educate the people of Alamance County in the future. To do this though, we are going to need VOLUNTEERS! I will not be running for re-election in November. This means the Club will need to provide names to run our Organization for 2022 and beyond. Sheyenne will not be Recording Secretary in 2022 (As well as Beginning Beekeeping Class Coordinator and NC State Fair Coordinator). Plus, we will need to elect a 3 Year Director and a Program Chair.

If you are interested in serving in one of these capacities, please let me know no later than October 1, 2021. We will need to send a ballot to our Membership.

It has been a learning experience being President of this great Club. Thank you for all of your help in OUR projects over the past years. I will be around, but not holding a position of leadership for a couple of years.

I wish everyone the BEST and please stay safe !!

-Ira

September Meeting Info - September 16th 7pm [link](#)



At our Zoom meeting this month, Debbie Roos will discuss the importance of floral diversity and the plants that we can grow to help our honey bees.

About Debbie Roos

Since 1999 Debbie Roos has been an Agriculture Agent for the North Carolina Cooperative Extension of Chatham County where she is responsible for programming in the areas of commercial vegetable production, organic production, pollinator conservation, alternative agricultural enterprises, forestry, and beekeeping. Debbie worked for three years as an Agroforestry Extension Agent and technical trainer for the Peace Corps in Senegal, West Africa, and later completed graduate degrees in applied anthropology and horticulture at the University of Florida. Debbie delivers educational programming to growers through regular workshops and her award-winning Growing Small Farms website. Debbie created the Pollinator Paradise Demonstration Garden in Pittsboro 11 years ago and has been teaching about pollinator gardening throughout the state and southern region ever since. Visit her pollinator website.

Read more at: <https://growingsmallfarms.ces.ncsu.edu/2019/04/spring-2019-pollinator-workshops/>

Click above link to join or, Meeting ID: 879 3068 4984

Passcode: 908314. Past meetings can be found in the members section of our website. Can't log in? Find your local dial in number here: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87930684984>

Notes from the August Meeting

Our August meeting was our annual Ice Cream Social - it was great to be able to get together and enjoy a treat with each other!

Don't forget - as a member of Alamance County Beekeepers, you have access to past zoom recordings! The members only section of our website can be accessed [here](#), and the password is in the email sent to members with this newsletter.

As always, if there's something you would like to see in the newsletter, or you have photos, articles, accomplishments, questions, etc, you'd like to add - email us! We can always be reached at alamancecountybeekeepers@gmail.com or now at newsletter@alamancebeekeepers.org



STATE FAIR UPDATE



While we maintain that Alamance County is consistently an award-winning booth producer, the officers have decided at their recent meeting that a club booth is not going to be possible this year. While many factors were involved in this decision, in the end the officers feel that it is the best decision for the club.

However, we would LOVE to support those that still want to participate on the individual level. Entry registrations are due by 11:59pm on September 15th, and registration information (as well as category information) can be found [here](#). For those of you that want to enter but can't physically take entries to the fairgrounds in time for competition, please contact [Caitlin](#).

Additional Volunteer Opportunity NC State Fair Bees & Honey Volunteer Info Booth

If you have an interest in communicating to the fair public about basic honeybee information and answering related bee questions this may be for you. Please consider volunteering for one or more of the 4 hour time slots. We're looking for positive and breezy answers to Frequently asked questions. Stay away from controversy and refer prickly or difficult questions to an Apiary Inspector.

Admission to the fair will be provided. Parking is always a challenge but we will be communicating the best spots as time draws nearer.

Please give your full mailing address as we may be mailing your gate passes to you. A good email that you check frequently so we can keep you updated as the Fair draws near is needed.

Feel free to share the sign up link with anyone who wishes to volunteer for this task. Have fun and enjoy talking about our beloved honeybees.

Link-- <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30E0C4BAEAF2DA3F85-state4>

Opinion - Fall Mite Treatment

To treat, or not to treat? That is the question. While many will say a “responsible beekeeper” is constantly checking mite levels and treating accordingly, for many that just seems to be a task that slips away. After working hard during spring build up and monitoring the hives throughout the summer, IF a beekeeper has the opportunity to harvest honey, often times we find ourselves exhausted and ready for a break in the action. This is not the time to get lazy with monitoring hive health! The dreaded Varroa Mite, arch nemesis of the beekeeper, is alive and well. Often times thriving if treatments haven’t been taking place yet. So we find ourselves asking “What treatment should I use?”

In my opinion, one of the best tools available can be found at this link: <https://honeybeehealthcoalition.org/varroatool/>. It walks us through the important factors when considering a treatment and provides guidelines such as, is there brood present? Do you have honey supers on? Or the temperature requirements for treatment to be safe and effective. Being fairly new to beekeeping, I’ve only personally used Formic Pro and Mite Away Quick Strips. Another popular option is Apiguard. Some also use Oxalic Acid as a drip or fumigant.

Of course there are pros and cons to all treatment options and I faced quite the obstacle after I decided on going with Formic Pro yet again this year. Formic will cause some bees to die and can result in queen loss, especially when used in high temperatures. I checked the 10 day forecast and saw a window with low 80s as the highs for the first 5-6 days of my treatment window. Well, the day I wanted to apply my treatment, I got caught up at work and the garden needed tending to. And it was a weekend we would be out of town. So I found myself waiting another two weeks. Here we are, early September, when the bees are already a season ahead, preparing for winter, and I have not treated for mites since..... LAST FALL (Insert scared emoji). So September 7th I had to make a call. 5 days of high 70’s low 80’s. It was my only hope to get the treatment on in time!

But I have a confession to make: I didn’t check my mite level before applying my treatment. A lot of beekeepers won’t like this but, I (or my bees) live and die by thinking there are ALWAYS mites. (As you can tell by the picture/[video](#), there were definitely mites.) Sugar shake, alcohol wash... “I only had 1 mite”. Yeah, this week... I am by no means an expert, and my treatment regimen exposes me as a novice. But a fall treatment is always a good idea. Having healthy bees going into winter is probably the most important factor in survival. If your bees are infested with mites and have high viral loads, even unlimited amounts of pollen patties and sugar syrup won’t pull them through. I’m hoping I haven’t done too much harm by applying the treatment while temps were high, but it was a risk I had to take. Maybe next year I’ll look into a treatment that doesn’t have stringent temperature range requirements. I guess I’ll know in February if my decision was the right one or not! Maybe even sooner than that...

I think we can all agree – we cannot afford to let the Varroa Mite go unchecked and untreated and still hope to have success. Check out the options! Make an informed decision. Ask other beekeepers what their plans are! Of course, you will ask ten beekeepers and get 11 different answers, but bouncing ideas off other people is what makes us better and helps us grow our craft! Here’s to a strong fall flow and crushing Varroa Mites into oblivion.

Thank you Louis Sullivan for sending this in! Louis is a 4th year beekeeper with the following track record: 2018 - no treatment lost both hives, 2019 - formic 100% survival, 2020 - MAQS 70% survival, 2021 - guess we will find out! Don’t forget to check out his creepy crawly video [here!](#)

Beekeeping in the News

<https://wonderfuleengineering.com/offices-in-new-york-are-enticing-workers-with-live-beehives-to-bring-them-back/>

<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/in-hive-sensors-could-help-ailing-bee-colonies/>

<https://www.statesman.com/story/news/2021/09/05/new-braunfels-beekeeper-charlie-agar-removes-bees/5702310001/>

<https://patch.com/colorado/denver/university-colorado-denver-researchers-abuzz-bee-health>

<https://krdo.com/news/2021/09/08/2021-brings-boom-in-beekeeping/>

<https://blockclubchicago.org/2021/09/08/rogers-parker-finds-wonder-community-in-backyard-beekeeping-this-is-the-coolest-hobby/>

<https://www.insidehook.com/article/food-and-drink/help-support-bee-population-hot-honey-recipe>

This Month in the Bee Yard

- Continue measures for pest control. **Varroa control should be completed by end of month!!**
- May feed thin (1:1 or more diluted) sugar syrup for 2-3 weeks to stimulate queen laying---builds up winter population---but by last week of September, begin feeding thicker (2:1) syrup for winter stores, although thicker syrup may not be necessary if >3 supers of honey left on hive and/or heavy fall nectar flow.
- Consider assessment for *Nosema* parasites.
Combine colonies later in the month if weak and/or have failing queens.
Should have brood in bottom box; if not, may need to rearrange things.

<https://www.ncbeekeepers.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/CALENDAR-FOR-BEEKEEPING-IN-CENTRAL-NORTH-CAROLINA2020.pdf>

2022 Open Officer Positions

Thank you so much to the out going officers for their time, service, and commitment to the club and our community!! Those who are interested in running for a position next year, please let [Ira](#) know by October 1st.

The out-going officers:

Ira Poston - President “ I hope the Club will continue to educate the people of Alamance County in the future.”	Sheyenne Price - Recording Secretary “Now is your opportunity to join the officers of the ACB! Bring your new ideas and help make an impact in your community.”
Jeff Telander - Program Chair	Johnny Mills - Director “It’s a great group of people to work with. The benefits you learn from the group you will carry on the rest of your life”

Bee Equipment available!

Contact [Ira](#) if you’re looking for wooden bee boxes or float feeders. Also back issues of Bee Culture magazine.

Friend of the club Jessie Louque is selling bee equipment at this weekend’s Sunflower Trail at the Francisco FarmFest. Info on the event here: <https://www.facebook.com/texjessup>



Officers for 2021

President : Ira Poston
Vice President : Mike Ross
Recording Secretary : Sheyenne Price
Treasurer : Sarah Stevens
Program Chair : Jeff Telander
One-year Director : Johnny Mills
Two-year Director : Paul Jollay
Three-year Director : Zivon Price
Webmaster : Jay Rimmer
Newsletter : Caitlin Vatikiotis-Bateson