



# Bee-Lines

The Newsletter for The Capital City Beekeepers June 2017

## CCBK Spring Honey Extraction

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Earlier this month, an email went out to CCBK members that Treasurer Jack Kuhn was spearheading a group extraction. Often called an "extraction party", Jack and other members joined together in the lower level the Franklin County Extension Office to extract spring honey from their colonies. For those who may not know, the club has and manages a forty-frame motorized extractor and other accessories needed for extraction. It is a great benefit of being a member of the association and especially if you do not have extracting equipment of your own. Even if you didn't have enough frames to use the large extractor, many members have, bring, and share their smaller extractors also. Some members may even find themselves with a first year harvests and have never extracted and having experienced beekeepers on hand sure helps a lot! Members that didn't have honey were encouraged to be there too, to help and learn. Jack's email to interested members included what to bring to an extraction party. Folks com-



CCBK's forty-frame extractor hummed along at this month's extraction.

ing were instructed that they would need buckets with tight fitting lids to take their honey home. Jack instructed that "each frame can yield about 3 pounds of honey and a five gallon bucket can hold 55 pounds."

He further cautioned to make sure the beekeeper could lift it out of your car and that they should also bring an extra bucket for your wax cappings. Containers were recommend to be food grade or at least white buckets, and if they had held anything other than food products, that they should not be used. A big "no-no", wrote Jack was the use of pickle buckets.

After the extraction, Jack included in his email "to strain your honey/cappings and if there are hives nearby, to place honey-ware outside for the bees to clean up by placing the spun frames ("wet



CCBK member Lindy Crompton opens the cells of a honey frame the knife missed.

frames" some call them) into a super box and stand it upright away from your house and it will be mobbed by several thousand bees. You can also keep these frames in the transport box and return them to the hives in early June. They may put up more honey if we have reasonable

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Nothing is wasted. Honey from the cappings tub is collected.



Jack secures the three frame extractor to its base before use.



Member Jesse Peak cranks the three frame extractor.

## CCBK Spring Honey Extraction, cont.

weather conditions in June (not too hot, not too dry).” Jack added, “Some apiary locations and conditions will be favorable for the bees to put up nectar into July, and there may be several uncapped but partially filled honey frames in the hive.”

Those that attended the extraction not only took home buckets of the golden treasure from the hives., but learned much and enjoyed the time together. A great article by Jack about extracting honey can be found on [page 3](#) of this month’s newsletter.

### May’s Hive Check In the CCBK Apiary

The CCBK apiary continues to be a great tool for learning. May was no exception. In Jack’s absence Wes Henry led the hive inspection and exploration of the honey supers. The east hive had just swarmed at the last inspection in April. We were able to conclude that the queen remaining workers in the hive had made a successful nuptial-flight and returned. We found a good laying pattern of eggs larva and capped brood in the top brood box. As we opened and pulled frames in the bottom box it didn't take long to discover that it was mostly empty of stores, and brood. We used this as an opportunity to instruct “newbees” on flipping or moving the bottom box to the top, by working with the bees propensity to “move up”, we gave the colony room to grow. Two supers top the hive and we found the bees working both. We made the decision to move capped frames and those that had been pulled with nectar to replace frames just being pulled or empty to fill out the bottom super. The west hive was also vibrant and had plenty of stores (honey/pollen) and the bottom super had some capped honey frames as well as frames with open nectar. Members and attendees were able to observe, handle and inspect frames , and have their questions answered. We closed the hives in good order and were encouraged with both hives queen right and healthy, and confident with the current nectar flow that there will be a good amount of honey harvested from the hives.

### Urban Honey Spraying mosquitos, its affects

With the rising concerns about mosquito borne diseases it is reported that spraying for their abatement is at an all time high in urban areas. We know of incidents where spraying has killed colonies. However, how might it affect honey in such areas? The USDA National Science Laboratories is currently doing testing for those pesticides and the chemicals used to enhance there potency in honey from urban hives that are in or near the spray areas. Mary Sheldon, graduate student at EKU is working with the project at the university. Titled “Pesticide Contamination in Urban Hives”. The project is currently targeting the Fayette, Madison and Franklin counties. Mary attended the May CCBK meeting and discussed this project with the club and solicited volunteers who may have hives in such areas. She asked any who would be willing to submit their honey for testing. There is no charge to have their honey tested and “all participants will receive a copy of all lab reports that directly relate to their honey sample/s. Anyone wanting to be a part can contact Mary at [mary\\_Sheldon@mymail.eku.edu](mailto:mary_Sheldon@mymail.eku.edu).



Mary Sheldon, urban beekeeper and EKU grad student.

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### From the Inbox Members Ask

"Oh no, my bees are swarming in June?"



An example of a colony "Bearding" to cool off.

Fortunately, No. They are "bearding". What happens on a warm day/night, when the air condition breaks at your home. If you're like me, you might eat or at least sit outside more.

That's what the bees are doing, hanging out, cooling off. Sometimes the entire front of the hive will be covered. Interestingly, one hive might "beard" on the front of the hive, and one right next to it will not. Maybe it's the genetics of the bee? Just as some bee colonies may Festoon, or create a long chain of bees, sometimes hanging off the bottom board. -Jack K.

## Feature Article

### EXTRACTING HONEY by JACK KUHN

For many second year bee keepers, the rewards of beekeeping finally comes to fruition when one can extract a little honey from the hive or hives they have managed and have been tending to for the past 14-16 months. The question on the bee keeper's mind as the black locusts bloom in May is, "when can I harvest?"

#### A little biology about the bee's ability to store honey.

As the temperatures warm in the late winter and early spring and the plants begin to bloom, the bees are feverishly working to build pollen and honey stores in the brood boxes as they ramp up bee production. The apex is when the nectar flow begins to peak, the hive is strong, and the weather is conducive for collecting nectar. If the bee population is just right, and there is ample room in the hive, the bees will continue to stock up and store excess honey. Thus, the bee keeper in Kentucky wanting to harvest honey should place the honey supers on the hive in April.

The bees will draw out new comb and rework old comb in the honey supers. As long as there is storage space, space to dry the honey, and nectar available, the bees will continue to collect and store honey through June and beyond. But the primary nectar is May and June.

#### When you harvest the honey and how many times to harvest

It will depend on the number of hives, the location of the hives, the need for honey, and cooperation of the weather. Remember, we only harvest honey from the super boxes we have placed on top of the two brood boxes. The honey in the brood boxes is for the bees. They will need some during the dearth of the summer, and into the winter.

Some bee keepers like to harvest as early as possible, and that can happen in late May. A more reasonable harvest window is early June. The bees must fan the honey with their wings to remove moisture. When the right moisture content is

reached, the bees will cap the honey. The honey is ready when the bees have capped at least ninety five percent of the frame combs. Pulling uncapped honey frames will yield honey with an unacceptable high moisture content and inferior honey product with short storage life.

If you have only one or two hives each with two boxes, inspect the hives in early June. If you don't have at least 8-12 full capped frames total and a lot of uncapped frames, then it may be best to wait until early July when the nectar flow season tapers off. (As the summer temperatures increase, nectar is hard to extract from flowers, and the bees reduce collection considerably.)

#### You are ready to harvest honey

It seems easiest to work the bees in the morning when the temperature is cooler. A sunny day and gentle breeze is best as the foragers will be out working resulting in fewer bees in the hive. Remember, you are robbing honey from the hive and the bees can get a little agitated when you start disturbing their honey frames. So gently smoke the hive entrance, then remove the top cover and crack the inner cover and gently apply a puff or two of smoke. Some people use a fume board and place a bee escape in the inner cover hole, and place the inner cover below the lower super. My experience is this could take 24 hours or more for the bees to make it through two-three supers and out the bee escape. Some people then remove the entire box and tote it off. Be sure to place it onto an extra hive cover or other plastic tray. A top that can be sealed is highly advisable. You must protect these boxes. If left outside, the bees are very tenacious about getting in and can rob your honey in a few hours. Take them directly to the extraction site, or store them indoors for no more than 48 hours. After that, the beetle larvae will start to hatch out and you will be contending with maggots in your honey.

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### Q. Why are the hive bodys that store the surplus honey frames

Answer: Because they are placed "superior" to or atop the brood boxes.

### Honey Labels: What needs to be on them?

As you begin to extract your honey and bottle it, you may have just the purpose to give to friends and family as gifts, but the extra you may want to sell such as at the CCBK farmer's market booth every second Saturday. Did you know there are label requirements?

[KRS for honey labeling](#) can be found on the [Ky Dept. of Agriculture's web-site](#).

## EXTRACTING HONEY

### Cont.

I do use a fume board, place it on the top super, and wait about 15-20 minutes, then remove the top box, placing it on the hive lid. Then place the fume board on the top of the next super. I pull each frame from the box, gently brush off any remaining bees over the top of or in front of the hive. You can also do this without a fume board. I inspect each frame to ensure at least 95 percent capped, and carefully place each one standing upright into a 48 quart cooler, or plastic storage container (I use the black ones with yellow lids, as you can place ten across the bottom). You can also place the frames into an empty super with a sealed bottom and a cover. Frames not completely capped are placed back in a super and placed back onto the hive. Blank spaces are filled in with drawn comb this time of year (bees will generally not draw new comb now). Place the best box of uncapped

frames over the brood box for additional honey storage (if early June). Use smoke very sparingly to remove bees from the frames. Instead, smoke the front of the hive and above the hive. If you have two or more supers to work, the bees might get a little agitated and a few puffs of smoke over the top of the hive and around you will help clear the air.

### Keep the supers on

Clover is still coming into the hive, as is Chestnut, English ivy, buckwheat, and other wildflowers through June and the bees will continue to work these frames. Some apiary locations and conditions will be favorable for the bees to put up nectar into July, and there may be several uncapped but partially filled honey frames in the hive. We will discuss in July's newsletter how to manage these hives with uncapped super frames and prepare for Varroa mite treatment.



June 10th was the second Saturday *Farmer's Market Booth for The Capital City Bee keepers*. From left to right President Ken Daniels, Members Brant Ratliff and Treasurer Jack Kuhn are seen here manning the booth. Reports are that those selling all but sold out again. Kids always enjoy us coming to the Market getting their free honey stick.



## Heartland Apiculture Society July 13-17, 2017, Evansville, Indiana

You may not know it but, our very own Dr. Tom Webster (Assoc. Professor, Dept. of Entomology, KSU) was part of a three man team that founded the Heartland Apiculture Society in 2001. With a mission "to promote beekeeping by educational conferences held on a yearly basis", the first conference was in Goshen, Indiana. Since it has been held in Tennessee, Illinois, West Virginia, Michigan, Missouri, and right here in Kentucky, including right here in Frankfort at Kentucky State University in 2007. Dr. Webster still Chairs the Society and this year promises to be a wealth of opportunity to beekeepers on such topics as queen rearing, seasonal management, planting, Q&A with Jerry Hayes and much more. Registration is still open and more information can be found on [the HAS](#)

[Website](#).

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### Dates To Remember:

Next CCBK Meeting-  
June 27th, 2017,  
6 p.m., [Franklin County Extension](#), 101 Lakeview Dr., Frankfort, KY

[CCBK Saturday Farmer's Market Booth](#)  
July 8th, 7:30-12

HAS Evansville, IN July 13-15  
[Click for registration.](#)

[Franklin County Fair](#),  
July 18th-22nd  
[Kentucky State Fair](#),  
August 17-22nd

## CCBK Minutes May 23rd, 2017

### Program

Members gathered in the club's Apiary for the monthly hive inspection. Both Hives doing well and are capping honey in top super. Inspection led by Wes Henry.

Mary Sheldon grad student at Eastern Kentucky University introduced the details of a program to investigate contaminants, especially chemicals contained in spraying for mosquitos, in urban/ sub-urban honey for Franklin, Madison, and Fayette Counties.

Participants who are willing to donate a pound of honey for testing can do so free of charge and should bring to next meeting.

Ken also explained he has info to send off honey for testing to Texas A&M to determine source. Attention then turned to extracting honey.

Ken ask who was extracting and reported he and Dan Ramey had extracted for the second time, 40 lbs. last week.

He reported that they had sold out at last Farmer's Market.

Ken spoke on labeling honey for sale.

A refractometer was passed around to demonstrate how to test honey for moister content.

It was explained that honey should be under 17% water or less, but no less than 14% for judging at the fair.

Mike Swatzyna asked if members needed to fill out application to sell honey at Farmers Market. The answer was no, the club does that. Members just come, pay seller's fee of 10.00 to sell.

### Business Meeting

President Ken Daniels opened the meeting.

**Minutes** were presented for approval, Wayne Parrish made motion to approve, Dan Ramey Second, motion carried.

**Treasures Report** was presented:

Opening balance 2798.29

Total receipts 209.00

Total expenditures 669.00

Ending balance 2338.29

Motion made by Mike Swatzyna to approve, George Fowler Second, motion carried.

Ken reported Dadants donated all cost for hive for auction due to help from club members with package bee days.

Farmer's Market report: 199 kids (Kids Day) and club distributed all 150 hone sticks to kids. Next sell day 6/10.

**State Fair** entry sheets were distributed.

Entry deadline is 7/1/17. Wes Henry explained if a blue ribbon is received at county fair, that person has a berth into the state fair even after deadline.

KSBA to sell honey again, and club is to participate in selling on Senior Day.

Ken to report when we will be there and selling.

Upcoming events discussed: **KSBA Spring meet** 6/3 at Kelly's Beekeeping, and **Heartland Conference** 7/13-15.

Meeting adjourned and next meeting announced for 6/27/17.