

# Essex County Beekeepers Society, Inc.



Edition: July 2012  
Next Meeting: Tuesday, Sept. 11  
Time: 7:00 PM  
Place: Garibaldi Hall, Essex  
County Environmental Center,  
621 Eagle Rock Ave., Roseland  
Subject: Wine & Mead Making

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From the Desk of the President

No meetings scheduled for July and August!!!!

Keep in mind that "All absolutes are false!"

There has been a potpourri of varied bee and honey experience so far this year. Whatever you have experienced, I can generalize that it is nothing short of hot now. From my perspective the honey flow is kaput!

Be advised that I opine that mid July thru August is the prime time for mite controls. This message is for the very few who do not take mite controls seriously or view them with a jaundiced eye. I do know that we have some mite counters out there as well.

If I ever get low in mites, then you mite counters will be the ones I will seek out to replenish my stocks.

The backyard beekeeper should harvest honey when it is ready. Historical maxims do not apply for the organic treatment practitioners. Many have heard the comment from a beekeeper that they don't like ApiGuard. I don't really like it either. But please, do not equate that statement to mean that we do not use it! Thymol occurs naturally, is considered organic and is minimally biologically active on adult bees or brood when used properly. It kills mites. It is best used in hot weather and it dissipates quickly.

I use one ApiGuard treatment at a minimum, even on a first year nuc or pkg. I have been known to vary the dose accordingly however. It is recommended to use a 2<sup>nd</sup> dose 14 days later on established hives. To all the naturalists out there: There is nothing natural about Asian mites on European bees. The Chestnut and Elm were left to their own plight that became blights. Currently, now it is the Ash and Hemlock trees fighting parasites.

Mite-Away II strips are OK for use, too. This treatment is more sensitive to the bees in very hot weather, yet it can be applied during



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a honey flow. I have used both methods and will continue to use either. There is no strategy behind this other than time of year (i.e. temperature & nectar flow). Both treatments work by burning the exposed mites.

Some of you enjoy a fall honey flow. You know who you are. This message is for those who are unsure. Black and white choice: your bees keep it for certain or there is more honey for you, maybe?

I would be remiss if I did not warn the Newbees about the Wax Moth. This is not a random concern. Your hives harbor their larvae. Any supers removed and left alone will fall prey to this proficient and prolific creature. We all learn the hard way. In fact, this is a good topic for the next newsletter. By then, you may be more experienced with them.

Bee well,  
*Mike Frey*

## Upcoming Events

August 3 through August 12, 2012: [Sussex County Fair](#). (Sussex County Farm and Horse Show) Annual Honey Show judging on August 3, 2012. Bee information booth with bee products, observation hive and bee cage. Honey show entries due at Sussex Fairgrounds by 10:00 a.m., Friday, August 3, 2012.

September 11, "Making mead and wine, a live demonstration" by Joe T and Mike.

October 14, Sunday; "Venison Roast Picnic" by Mike

**Extracting tips;** Do it now! Don't wait until August, as you need to get the honey off so you can apply Mite Treatments early enough for them to be effective and give the queen time to lay a few brood cycles before winter sets in.

Take your honey off by any method mentioned in the Beginners Course: Bee Brush each frame if only a few boxes of honey, or use a bee escape or a fume board. Plan to cover the honey supers upon removal from the hives until you arrive at home.

If you want to borrow any equipment, ask Joe Treimel for a loan. You just need to pick it up and return it in a timely fashion. Call and ask questions of one of the club members if doing this the first time and you are unsure of procedures.

To extract the honey (unless you are doing Cut-Comb), do it soon after removing it from the hives, as wax moths will begin doing their dirty work within a week or two of you taking the supers off your hive. Don't believe me? Try it!

Get your equipment together, and plan on a couple of hours for a few boxes of honey and longer if you have a lot. Be sure you have something to strain the honey and to store it. Storage buckets hold 60 pounds of honey, but that may be too heavy for some of us. You may want to use air-tight, large food storage containers. Large Rubbermaid containers hold about 12 pounds each. One more thing, extract your honey indoors, unless you want every bee in your neighborhood visiting for a picnic! And yes, I did this once!

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## *Extracting, Continued*

To clean out the supers after extracting and to prevent wax moth damage; return supers to the hives and place them between the inner and outer covers. Use entrance reducers for a day or two to minimize robbing. If possible, return the honey supers to the hives in the evening to also minimize robbing. Tape holes and cracks with Masking Tape to keep out robbers. Supers can be left on the hive until there is a hard frost in the Autumn. Once you take them off, leave them all outside, and covered top and bottom to keep out chipmunks, mice and other critters. You may return the supers below the inner cover after Mite Treatment if you anticipate a fall nectar flow.

*Joe Treimel*

## **Sticky Extracting Equipment?**

One easy method to clean up your sticky extracting equipment and your wax cappings is to just put it all out in your yard for a couple of days. The local bees will do a great job of cleaning every drop of honey off the equipment, and cappings will be dry and ready for processing. This method may not be approved by all ECBS Board Members. *JT*

**Mite Treatment.** This is done following removal of the honey supers from the hive. Now is the time to start, as it will knock down the mite population and give the queen time to lay a few brood cycles of uninfected workers before the winter.

I happen to favor Apiguard, as I find it easy to use. You tear open the foil tray and place it on the topmost box of the brood nest, leave it there two weeks, then do it again. MiteAway (Formic Acid Gel Pads) may be used, but requires Nitrile Gloves to put them on and you must be careful to not inhale the fumes. However, a single treatment of seven days is all that is needed and if you are getting a late start on treatments, this is your better choice. Apistan Strips remain available, but seem to have lost their effectiveness in this area as the mites have become resistant to it. Do put the bottom inserts into your hives during treatment if you have screened bottom boards.

No matter what treatment, follow the directions. Do NOT experiment. If the directions say Two Treatments (two weeks each), so do it. If using Apiguard, you can use an empty super over the Apiguard trays as a spacer, but if you don't have any, make spacers. MiteAway and Apistan do not require spacers.

Making spacers is easy. Buy a 6' piece of 1" X 1" stock wood for each spacer you want. When you get it home, measure its dimensions. It may actually be 3/4" X 3/4" and you will need to adjust accordingly. If 1" stock, cut two 20" pieces and two 14 1/4" pieces (**two 14 3/4" pieces if they measure 3/4"**). Put them together with the shorter pieces inside the ends of the long pieces and use two or three 1 1/2" or 2" nails to connect them. You may want to lay them out on top of a hive body before nailing to assure you have them right. That's it!

*Joe Treimel*



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