



B-PLUS

BEEKEEPING REPORT FROM MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

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MBA ESTABLISHES ENDOWMENT FUND

The Michigan Beekeepers' Association voted at their winter meeting to start an endowment fund. The Association supplemented a memorial gift to meet a minimum fund limit of \$5,000 set by the Fremont Area Foundation (FAF). The FAF will accept additional funds by beekeepers to add to the nice start provided by the memorial gift. The endowment fund will eventually support beekeeping research and education. The endowment fund needs to reach a minimum level of \$20,000, or more, in order to provide a reasonable grant. The FAF will manage the fund through investments and the interest and capital gains used to initially increase the fund's balance and then to provide directed grants.

An advantage of setting up the endowment fund is that beekeepers can use the contribution as a charitable gift to the Fremont Area Foundation, and still have the fund support beekeeping research and education. The MBA will also be able to indicate where the grants will go. This option was not available with other funds such as the MSU Development Fund. The negative side of using the FAF for the endowment fund is that individuals will not get the double deduction by contributing to a Michigan university. That is, the FAF gift is a charitable gift on the Federal tax form, but does not get the "up-front" deduction on the Michigan Income Tax. Also any research grants will by necessity be delayed until the fund grows to sufficient size. Regardless, I think you should send your contributions to the *Fremont Area Foundation, 108 South Stewart, Fremont, Michigan 49412*. Indicate that the money is for the Beekeeping Memorial Fund.

The MSU Development Fund still could be used as an alternative gift avenue. If you would like to contribute to the MSU Fund for a more immediate research return, and to take advantage of the Michigan tax advantages, then send you checks to Roger Hoopingarner at the address on the front page. Make out the checks to the MSU Development Fund and indicate that the money is for beekeeping research.

UPC CODES FOR HONEY JARS

Universal Product Code is a 10 digit number that uniquely identifies each store item. The first five numbers are the manufacturer's number and the last five are for the specific item. The first five numbers are assigned by the Universal Code Council, Inc., and the last five by the company. Thus, if you wanted, or needed to have, your honey jars labeled with a UPC code these are the steps you need to take.

First, you apply to the UCC for your unique company number. Then you assign a number to each item that you provide. For example, if you had a 12 oz. jar of clover honey and you wanted to identify it separately from a 12 oz. jar of star thistle honey then each would have a different number. The vertical bars on the code allow the scanner to convert it to numbers for a computer. These scanner codes are designed by printing companies, or some laser printers can create them as well. The size and the accuracy of the scanner bars are very important. You then would provide the number codes to any retailer that sells your honey. The retailer can then put these numbers into their computers to help keep track of the honey sold and assist in ordering new stock. They also use the numbers to print out the sales receipt that the customer gets when they check out of the store.

There are several manuals that are available from the UCC on all of the specifics of making the scanner labels, and the best locations for the labels on the product. To get more information you can write to the Uniform Code Council, Inc., 7051 Corporate Way, Suite 201, Dayton, OH 45459. Phone (513) 435-3870.

CHINESE HONEY ANTI-DUMPING PETITION PASSES NEXT HURDLE

On November 10, 1994 the International Trade Commission (ITC) voted 6-0 in support of the beekeepers. Thus the petition reached its next deadline in good shape. The vote was obviously a stronger vote than during the 406 hearing.

Now the petition goes back to the Department of Commerce for the rest of its travels. The DOC could make its preliminary dumping determination as early as March 13, or as late as May 1, 1995. So far so good.

HONEY HOUSE LICENSING

I was recently reminded that it has been some time since the topic of the licensing requirements for selling honey have been covered. The people who keep bees do change, and often they grow from the one colony into many, it is time that we covered some of the basics.

Honey is a food product. As such, the sale of honey comes under the Food Division of the Michigan Department of Agriculture. The specific law is P.A. 328. Under the law anyone that heats or filters the liquid extracted honey after the extraction process does require a license. However, since there are potentially a large number of very small beekeepers, the MDA only requires a license for those beekeepers that sell their honey at retail in some other person's store. Although it probably makes good sense to have a license even if you sell all of your honey out of your house. The license costs \$15 per year. Some people object to this cost, yet many other states have no size exception and the cost is from \$60 to \$350/year. We all want our meat or restaurants to be clean and inspected. So we cannot have it both ways.

What are the requirements for a honey house to get a license? Basically use the rule of clean and sanitary and be constructed such that it can be kept clean. (You can not have your kitchen licensed even if it is perfect.) The honey house needs to be a place (room) that is used *specifically* for this purpose, at least during the extraction and bottling. The walls, floors and ceiling need to be a smooth, impervious surface that is easy to clean. There has to be a clean, hot water supply. The equipment used to store and bottle the honey needs to be stainless steel, or similar contamination-free material. All equipment needs to be covered when not in use to keep dust and other contaminants from entering. All workers need clean clothing and have access to sinks or facilities to keep clean.

All-in-all it is not a difficult task. Good honey house sanitation agrees with the National Honey Board's PRIDE program. You should regard the honey as a food product and take good care of it while it is being processed.

If you have any specific questions or would like information on licensing, direct your inquiry to the Food Division, Michigan Department of Agriculture, P.O. Box 30017, Lansing, MI 48909. The MDA also maintains regional offices. The address or phone number can be gotten from your county extension office or the Lansing office of MDA. Phone 517-373-1060.

AHB STALLED ? IN TEXAS

In the early 1980's Drs. O. R. Taylor and Marla Spivak projected some "best guess" lines for the ultimate limit of the Africanized honey bee (AHB). These lines in Texas took into consideration the average low winter temperature, and other considerations such as topography. In October at the American Bee Research Conference, Dr. Taylor had an overlay of the original lines and then

an overlay of the counties that the AHB have been detected. The match of the two was very close to being perfect. That does not mean the line could not change. However, the advance seems to have stalled a 100+ miles south of Houston on the east side of Texas. For us northerners the news of the limit means that maybe the AHB will not move into Louisiana and further east. These states are where the bulk of our package bees and queens are produced. So any escape for these areas will be to our advantage. It is possible that the AHB could arrive into Florida and other southeastern states by accidental importation via ships. At the moment though the AHB seems to have stopped moving in that direction.

In Arizona they still are moving west and north. California just caught its first swarm moving in from Arizona.