

Washington State Beekeepers Association



Keep the "Bee" in Business

Publication of Washington State Beekeepers Association

www.wasba.org

March 2006

President's Message

The field days have been established for this summer and now we need to work on the agenda for each one. June 10 will be at WSU and July 15 will be at Puyallup. We are planning on WSU being a fairly high level scientific day and a hobbyist/beginners day at Puyallup.

Eric said at the meeting that it would not be long before we have the small hive beetle. What a shame. We haven't figured out the last pest given to us by Florida. We have made it through the current cold spell and I bet all the bees will start building up. Time to watch the honey stores very carefully. Pollen supplement sure won't hurt. I was in Seattle Tuesday and at Everett things were blooming and noticed Pussy Willow blooming here in Spokane today.

There were many lively discussions at the board meeting. Definitely not a timid group, especially when it comes to their bees. There are several major items on our agenda for the year. Reconstituting the Apiary Advisory Committee is a major goal being lead by Eric Olson. This will allow use of the registration fees. The second issue is getting more WSU queens out to beekeepers and WSU has done some things to make that happen. IEBA is going to start a bee yard with all WSU Queens for the association and members to use. They will start a new yard with new equipment. We are hoping to start a WSU bee yard in Area 1 area at the new WSU research center at Mount Vernon. Work still to do on this one. WSU has taken on Doug Johnson, who many of use know as a very good beekeeper, as the Bee Lab Technician. Doug welcome aboard.

Much of the meeting was spent working with Mt Baker

Washington State Updates

Program Calendar for the Association.

FIELD DAYS & CONVENTION 2006:

JUNE 10	Pullman Field Day @ WSU
JULY 15	Puyallup Field Day
OCTOBER 12 to 14	State Convention Best Western Lakeway Inn Bellingham, WA

MEMBERSHIP DUES RENEWAL:

It's a new year and time for membership renewal. In this newsletter, you will find the 2006 application for membership and renewal form. It's also on the web site! If you can't remember if you have already paid your dues for 2006, Call or email the Treasurer, Lisa Knox at:
360-297-6743, treasurer@wasba.org

Beekeepers on the convention and they are off to a very good start. Paul Spinelli and his wife attended our meeting and filled us in on what is going on. Much more info will be forthcoming on the convention in the coming months. They are in full swing on gathering speakers. Bellingham sure is a nice location for the convention.

If you haven't ordered your packages and queens you better hurry and the price of queens is really high this year. I wonder if the price of pollination in California goes down next year the price of packages and queens will go down. Want to take any bets?

Jerry Tate

Mite Control Update

The following are the most recent updates for miticide approvals for Washington State.

Apiguard (25% thymol gel formulation), EPA Reg. No. 79671-1, is registered for distribution in Washington.

EPA has issued a Section 18 (file symbol 06-WA-05) for the use of Bayer's **CheckMite+ Bee Hive Pest Control Strips**. Use under this exemption expires 2/1/07.

For previously announced approvals, please visit the Washington Department of Agriculture's web site at:
<http://agr.wa.gov/PestFert/Pesticides/docs/StatusMiteControlProds.pdf>



Trees 'n Bees, Inc.
Beekeeping Supplies
Queens & Packages
Honey and Gift Items

Saturday 10 - 4
Monday 5 - 8 pm
Thursday Noon - 7 pm

253-939-1149
800-696-8288
info@treesnbees.com

Loren & Carolyn Elliott
34747 162nd Ave SE
Auburn, WA 98092

Pacific Northwest Honey Bee Pollination Survey – 2005

by
Michael Burgett, Professor Emeritus
Department of Horticulture
Oregon State University

Since 1986 the Honey Bee Laboratory at Oregon State University has conducted an annual survey of pollination economics in the Pacific Northwest (PNW). The information from each year of the survey has been made available both regionally and nationally. The information has proved to be valuable to individual beekeepers who generate income from pollination rental.

The use of managed honey bee colonies for commercial crop pollination remains the most important function of the PNW beekeeping industry. The vast and diverse agriculture of the PNW relies on a healthy and strong beekeeping industry to maintain optimum production. An enhanced knowledge of pollination economics is critical to every beekeeper that enters into the world of commercial crop pollination. It is also important for those growers who contract honey bee colonies for managed pollination, to understand current economic conditions of the beekeeping industry.

The pollination requirement for commercial agriculture in the PNW is enormous. Between Washington, Oregon and Idaho there are *ca.* 355,000 acres of crops grown that require or benefit from managed honey bee pollination. The “farm-gate” value of those combined crops is approximately \$1,750,000,000! Nearly half of those acres and 60% of the dollar value is in one crop – apples.

The USDA National Agriculture Statistical Service estimates that there are 200,000 production honey bee colonies in the PNW. And with these numbers there are some interesting hypothetical calculations that can be made. If all growers were to rent 2 colonies for each acre of blooming crop (355,000 acres) the resulting pollination requirement would utilize 710,000 colony rentals. If we multiple this by the 2005 average colony rental fee (\$51³⁰) it results in a potential pollination rental income of more than 36 million dollars. If we add to that the estimated almond pollination income (ten million dollars) we end up with a gross

(Continued on page 4)

Classified Ads

Mountain River Lodge Retreat & Conference Center

The Mountain River Lodge is centrally located and serves as an affordable site for conferences, board meetings, planning sessions, seminars, the list goes on.

Currently taking reservations for
August 1, 2006 through August 1, 2008.

Call Bill or Kathy Bishop at 1-877-605-6343, or visit us at
www.mtriverlodge.com.

3303 Cabin Creek Rd. Easton, WA
Email: info@mtriverlodge.com

WSBA “Proudly Produced in Washington” gold labels for sale.

Rolls of 500 are \$ 7⁰⁰ each. To order, Call 360-297-6743 or email treasurer@wasba.org.



406-883-2918
1-800-548-8440
FAX 406-883-4336
www.westernbee.com



Dick Molenda
President/General Manager

P.O. Box 190

**WESTERN BEE
SUPPLIES, INC.**
**BEE WARE
&
WOOD PELLETS**

5 9th Avenue East
Polson, Montana 59860

Dadant

*Everything
for the Beekeeper*

Call our branch offices: Pat in Fresno or John in Chico
for fast courteous service. *Free Full Color Catalog*

PO Box 2837
2765 South Golden
State Blvd.
Fresno, CA 93745
Phone (559) 495-0230
Fax (559) 495-0232
Toll Free 1-877-432-3268



15 C Valley Court
Chico, CA 95973
Phone (530) 893-0921
Fax (530) 893-0922
Toll Free 1-877-332-3268

Website:
www.dadant.com



E-mail: ruhlbeesupply@yahoo.com

RUHL BEE SUPPLY

Beekeeping Supplies - Honey - Bees

17845 SE 82nd Drive
Gladstone, OR 97027

The Johnson Family
(503) 657-5399

Buckfast & All – American Queens • Package Bees

www.rweaver.com

The R Weaver Apiaries, Inc.

16495 C.R. 319 Navasota, TX 77868

Phone: 936-825-2333 Fax: 936-825-3642

E-MAIL: rweaver@tca.net

Master Beekeeper News

Louis A. Matej of Pierce County Beekeepers Association continues his pursuit of Master Beekeeper Level (Master Beekeeper Certification Course) by submitting to the Master Beekeeper Committee his Category #5; Enemies of Honeybees, and Category #9; Preparation and scoring (judging) honey, wax, mead, products cooked using honey, Assoc. exhibits and innovations (includes gadgets).

Louis previously submitted (and subsequently published in this newsletter) Category #7; Honey composition, sources and marketable forms, and Category #8; Pollen and Pollination. We look forward to seeing more from Louis as he pursues his certification.

Check out the draft version of the newly updated web site at:

<http://www.janebedinger.com/wasba/index.htm>

The web site will be easier to access to help you profit from the beekeeping information you need.

Our Assembled Kits Are Ready When You Are !



**ONLY
\$72.95!**

WW-730 Assembled 9 5/8"
Complete Hive Kit

- 1 Assembled 9 5/8" Hive Body
- 10 Assembled 9 1/8" Frames
- 10 Waxed Rite-Cell® Foundation
- 1 Telescoping Cover with Inner
- 1 Bottom Board with Reducer



**Complete!
\$39.95**

WW-825 Assembled 9 5/8"
Hive Body Kit

- 1 Assembled 9 5/8" Hive Body
- 10 Assembled 9 1/8" Frames
- 10 Waxed Rite-Cell® Foundation



800-880-7694



**Assembled!
\$35.95**

WW-830 Assembled 6 5/8"
Super Kit

- 1 Assembled 6 5/8" Super
- 10 Assembled 6 1/4" Frames
- 10 Waxed Rite-Cell® Foundation

Call for your free copy of
our full color catalog!



beekeeper@mannlakeltd.com
www.mannlakeltd.com

Prices subject to change without notice.
Shipping charges not included.

Mann Lake Ltd.
501 S. 1st Street
Hackensack, MN 56452-2001

Pacific Northwest Honey Bee Pollination Survey – 2005, Continued

(Continued from page 2)

pollination income of 46 million dollars for PNW commercial beekeepers. Another way to look at this is how much pollination income should be produced from one commercial honey bee colony in one year? That figure is approximately \$230.

Comparing the hypothetical PNW rental income (36 million \$) to the farm-gate value of the crops pollinated in the PNW (1.75 billion \$) shows that the money spent by growers to insure adequate pollination is 2% of the value of total crop production. This is another impressive illustration of what a remarkable value pollination rental is to the commercial agricultural industry of the PNW.

This year's survey provides data that continue to show a number of trends, one of which is the dependence of PNW commercial beekeepers on the income generated from colony rentals. For 2005 the average commercial beekeeper reported receiving 70% of his or her annual operating gross from pollination rentals. This percentage is higher than previous years. This increase is largely due to the very dramatic increase in the almond pollination rental fee for the 2005 pollinating season. In 2005 almond growers responded to a potential shortage of colonies by dramatically increasing the price they paid for pollination. Many commercial beekeepers in the PNW and elsewhere, observed serious autumn and early winter colony losses in 2004. This created a situation where a potential colony shortage was perceived by both beekeepers and almond growers for a crop with more than 550,000 bearing acres. The average almond pollination fee for 2005 was \$79⁴⁰! This is a 63% increase from the 2004 average (\$48⁷⁰).

For 2005 the average pollination rental fee, computed from commercial colony rentals on all crops reported (including almonds), was \$51³⁰. This is an increase of almost 33% above the average pollination fee of 2004 (\$38⁶⁵) (see Tables 1 and 2). This dramatic escalation is due to the large increase in the average almond pollination rental fee but most crops pollinated within the PNW also experienced rental fee increases. With the exception of cucumbers, all reported crops saw significant increases in the average pollination fee received in 2005 compared to 2004 rental prices (see Table 2). Excluding almonds, the average rental increase for PNW crops in 2005 was 23.7%. The average increase for PNW tree fruit pollination was 21.7%. Was this a "shirt-tail" effect from the dramatic almond increase? At this time it is difficult to say, but should these prices remain stable or even increase in future pollination seasons, it would be safe to say that almond pollination fees have indeed influenced a price increase for the majority of PNW crops.

For a commercial beekeeper the gross amount of income generated from pollination rental leveled off in 1997 and 1998, but increased in 1999 (\$183,780). For 2005 this figure was calculated to be \$231,865. The increase results from a trend of increasing the size of individual operations and an increase in per colony pollination income. During the past ten years the average rental fee has increased from \$29⁶⁰ (1995) to \$51³⁰ (2005). It needs to be stressed that honey bee colony rental has for many decades been an underpaid service to the agricultural industry. It is really only within the past ten years that rental fees have begun to more accurately reflect the enormous value-added service of managed pollination. This is shown by the 180% increase in the average pollination fee during the last sixteen years; 1990 = \$18⁴⁰ to 2005 = \$51³⁰.

(Continued on page 8)

Tate's Honey Farm

E. 8900 Maringo Drive
Spokane, WA 99212

Wes Tate Rita Tate Jerry Tate

Beekeeping Supplies	Honey, Comb Honey
Pollination Service	Pollen
Package Bees, Queens	Candle Making
Bulk Bees Wax	Extracting Equipment

509-924-6669

tacon105@icehouse.net

www.tateshoneyfarm.com

GLORYBEE BEEKEEPING SUPPLIES

Serving Northwest Beekeepers for over 25 years



Complete Hives
Live Bees
Bee Tools
Bee Feed & Medicine
Clothing
Honey Bottling
and much more...

Shop Online at
www.GloryBeeFoods.com

GloryBee Foods Inc. | Eugene, OR | (800) 456-7923 | www.GloryBeeFoods.com

Steamboat Lil's Bee Supply



MARION B. JUHL
LILLA M. JUHL

6425 41st Ave. NW
Olympia, WA 98502

(360) 866-9257

Executive Board Meeting Minutes

February 18, 2006

President Jerry Tate called the meeting to order.

The **minutes** of the last meeting were accepted as published in the newsletter.

Lisa Knox, the treasurer, presented a summary of the accounts. In the checking and savings accounts is \$6,053.44. The PR fund savings account balance is \$2,228.92. Carl Van Wechel Research Fund currently has \$969.94, which will be transferred to a CD. The Alvina Timmons Scholarship Fund has \$27,974.48 and the Roy Thurber Scholarship Fund has \$31,003.27. The two Certificates of Deposit total \$12,362.85. The **Membership Report** showed 107 total members but 80 have not yet renewed. The 2005 total associate memberships were 430. The **Treasurer's report** was accepted as read.

Scholarship Committee Report - John Timmons was unable to make the meeting but did leave a message that he had nothing to report.

The Master Beekeepers Committee Report - Paul Lundy said certificates have been sent to WSU. There was discussion on encouraging testing at every WSBA meeting. The Master Beekeepers have \$3,262.51. Paul requested a motion for \$986.77 for certificates and apprentice books and postage. The motion was accepted and passed for the Master Beekeepers to spend the money.

Newsletter - Paul Lundy has everything ready to be published and asked that minutes be timely. President Tate suggested that the people responsible for the next convention put information in the newsletter regarding the convention. This will be a good way for people to get a "heads up" Paul Lundy will find out about other software for publishing the newsletter and he will get back to the group.

Report on website- Lisa said the website is pretty much done. Master beekeeper stuff on site is much better. New pictures of beekeeping activities are needed for posting on the website. President Tate was very impressed with the site. When Lisa and Paul think the website is satisfactory, then it will be considered completed and Lisa will tell the web developer to publish it.

Area Rep. Report:

Area 1, Tim Bueler – It was a miserable honey year but prices were up. And so far, the losses are not as much as last year.

Area 2, Robert Smith- There has been a spotty honey report. There have been 85 packages ordered for 51 beekeepers. A large beekeeper has 250 hives and has ordered 150 packages!

The meetings have been growing because of a heavy local media blitz. The February meeting had 60 people because a free seminar for beekeeping was advertised. Half of the people had never been seen before. Robert said 3 Russian queens with no medication for 3 years are still with him.

Area 3 (Lower Valley), Arlene Massey – They have some real nice raspberry honey. The raspberry starts in July and blooms until frost. The raspberry variety is from Brazil. They got some Australian queens in the fall and Arlene said they really like them. She was asked if she "found them down under in the box"? That got a great round of laughter!

Area 4, Miriam Bishop – 8 degrees in Winthrop today and still has snow. 3 out of 4 hives did not have enough honey to extract.

Area 5, John Pettigrew – Lousy honey crop. Probably worst ever had. Lost 90% of the bees this year. He suspects Varroa and trachea.

Area 6, Bob Arnold – The latest beginning beekeepers class has around 50 people. Also there is also a class in Coeur d'Alene, ID and it has around 30 people. Many local beekeepers have no hives left because of last year's weather. It has been a challenging winter because of such a wet spring and now freezing weather. Honey is selling. The IEBA is setting up a bee yard with WSU queens and is making a yard available for instruction.

Area 3 (Upper Valley), Jim Bach - Eric Johansen of WSDA sent a reminder about registered products to control or suppress small hive beetles, tracheal mites and/or Varroa mites in honey-bee hives.

Coumaphos strip is available in CheckMite+ Bee Hive Pest Control Strip

Fluvalinate strip is available in Apistan

Menthol (crystals) is available in Mite-a-thol

Sucrose octanoate esters is available in Sucroside


Thymol+eucalyptus oil is available in Api Life VAR

Oxalic acid status: WSDA not approved it at this point. It is not illegal but it is not to be used as a pesticide.

Jim said that one cannot ship or transport New Zealand / Australian bees through Canada. They must be shipped direct. The only thing you can buy from Canada is Canadian hives and they have to be inspected no more than 10 days prior to shipment. Of New Zealand queens, 60% were gone within weeks. He reminded us that the small hive beetle was introduced into Yakima last year.

Paul Hosticka – Mites out of control in Columbia/Garfield County.

(Continued on page 7)



**HEITKAMS'
HONEY
BEES**

PAT, RUSSELL & CRAIG HEITKAM
4700 FIRST AVENUE • ORLAND, CA 95963
BUS. 530-865-9562 • FAX 530-865-7839
Email: heitkamsbees@sisna.com

Queens, Bees, Honey & Pollination

AGRICULTURE: 'Organic' honey? USDA rules say 'no way'

By Kelly Stone, Agweek Staff Writer

When you think of honey, you probably think of words such as "healthy," "pure" or "natural." But you might be surprised to hear that, currently, it's impossible for U.S. honey producers to get their product certified as organic.

Dr. Marla Spivak, a University of Minnesota entomologist, said while Europe and Canada have standards in place for certifying organic honey, there are no such standards yet in the United States.

Spivak said under existing USDA guidelines, it may be difficult, if not impossible, to create honey certification standards.

Bees as livestock

Right now, USDA classifies bees as livestock.

To certify livestock as organic, producers must prove that the animals have not come into contact with certain chemicals or genetically modified material.

While cattle ranchers can confine their herd with fences, bees fly freely miles from their hive in search of pollen and nectar. Spivak said it's unrealistic to expect beekeepers to control so much surrounding farmland.

"Instead of using the template they use for all other livestock, they need to think outside the box," Spivak said.

She believes it may be necessary to combine some certification rules, creating unique standards that make sense for the honey industry.

For instance, rather than looking at an individual bee as an animal, it might be better to classify the colony as an organism. Under that standard, most beekeepers could accurately certify that the colony's home had not been exposed to chemicals or pollutants. Yet Spivak has some concerns about the certification process itself.

WSBA Beekeeper Classified Ads

Classified ads are \$5 per insertion, for a maximum of 30 words. (**FREE for WSBA Members**).

To place an ad, please mail your ad, with payment, made out to:

Washington State Beekeepers Association
c/o Newsletter Editor
P.O. Box 1331
Kingston, WA 98346-9301
Fax: (425) 527-4251

Please **CLEARLY PRINT** your ad. Don't forget to include your contact information (phone, fax, e-mail).

Your ad will run in the next printing of the Newsletter when received by the 15th of the month prior to publication. **The ad will run for two (2) newsletters.** (You may email your submission to editor@wasba.org and mail your payment to the P.O. Box.)

"It opens the gates for fraud," she said, "because producers can still falsify documents."

Residue testing

Another option is residue testing, where the product itself is screened for contaminants.

Spivak said, "I've been told that will never happen (with honey), because as testing equipment improves, it will always find something."

If certain tolerance levels are set, the question becomes, who will set them? European producers test their honey for residues, which works well for chemical exposure, but doesn't detect contact with genetically modified plants.

Northern Plains beekeepers have another unique factor to consider. Most ship their colonies south for winter, protecting them from the cold and putting them to work pollinating fruit crops for out-of-state growers. This makes it even more difficult for beekeepers to control exposure and maintain accurate records.

Regional impact

While the actual number of commercial beekeepers in the Upper Midwest is fairly small, the honey industry is big business in the region. North Dakota is the nation's leading producer of honey. Combined with Minnesota, Montana and South Dakota, the four states account for one-third of the honey produced in the United States.

While no one knows for sure if there will be U.S. organic certification standards for honey, it's certainly an issue that's generating a lot of talk. Spivak said there was heated discus-

(Continued on page 7)

PACIFIC NW BRED "SMART" QUEENS

WILD CAUCASIAN / SMR / RUSSIAN SURVIVOR STOCK

Hardy. Work @ Cooler Temperatures

HYGIENIC MITE RESISTANT

Abundant Drones
Isolated Mating Yards

OLYMPIC WILDERNESS APIARY

Available Summer & Fall only

866.204.3426 (toll free)

harbees@olympen.com www.owa.cc



Organic Honey, Continued

(Continued from page 6)

sion about it at a conference she recently attended in Louisville, Ky. A professor at Penn State is working on some proposed guidelines for the USDA to consider. "Organic standards would be nice," Spivak said, "but my concern is that they would follow those set for other industries. Bees are unique in so many ways."

Reprinted from Agweek magazine.

Executive Board Meeting, continued

(Continued from page 5)

Jill Mueller and Pete Spinelli from Mt. Baker Beekeepers Association gave an update on the **2006 fall conference in Bellingham**. It will be at the Best Western Lakeway Inn in Bellingham, Oct 12-14. Mt. Baker Beekeepers Association are developing a website and that should be available in March. A motion was passed for Lisa Knox and Jerry Tate to approve a minimum of \$200 for the project when requested. **Field Days** - Dr. Sheppard will determine the dates for Pullman in June. The dates for Puyallup will be determined by the Field Days committee. For Puyallup, July 22nd was a date mentioned and second choice the 15th but it will be determined later. What areas of discussion and support do we want from WSU? A motion was passed for Bob Arnold, Ted Swenson, Jerry Tate, and Steve Sheppard to work up something and present it to the rest. The association will be looking for volunteers in the IEBA association for the Pullman Field Day. They will also be looking for help with the Puyallup Field Day.

Many members want to work on an agenda with Steve Sheppard for WSU. We need to share information. President Tate suggests writing down what beekeepers do and how they did it. What is needed to be done? This will help determine research goals for WSU to continue.

Dr. Sheppard will give 2 or 3 queens of each genetic line to WSBA by WSU for bee yards that are set up.

A motion was passed to have the 2007 convention at Sun Mountain Lodge in Winthrop. Miriam Bishop is looking for Mid October. \$1000.00 was requested for a deposit. A motion was passed to give \$1000 for a deposit at Sun Mountain. Eric Olson and Jerry Tate will continue to work on the reconstitution of the Apiary Board. They will help with the Department of Agriculture to reconstitute and review to can lay down ground rules to utilize the money already collected. It was proposed for John Timmons, Eric Olson and Jim Bach to address the WSDA committee.

Dr. Steve Sheppard announced some changes at WSU. Doug Johnson is coming on as the beekeeper. Ben Horwath, a grad student working on his masters proposal. Ben is using WSU stock in commercial settings.

The meeting was adjourned.

WSBA Officers & Exec. Committee

President:

Jerry Tate, E. 8900 Maringo Dr, Spokane, WA 98212
509-924-6669, President@wasba.org

Vice President:

Eric Olson, 93 Camfield Rd., Yakima, WA 98908
509-966-2867

Secretary:

Linda Carney, 4511 S. Freya, Spokane, WA 99223
509-448-0417, Secretary@wasba.org

Treasurer:

Lisa Knox, P.O. Box 1331, Kingston, WA 98346
360-297-6743, Treasurer@wasba.org

Area #1 Representative:

Tim Bueler (2007), 7914 69th Ave. SE, Snohomish, WA 98290, 425-334-9684, Area1@wasba.org

Area #1b Representative:

Van Sherod (2007), 2429 2nd Ave. W, Seattle, WA 98119
206-284-1520

Area #2 Representative:

Robert Smith (2008), 15525 Castle SE, Yelm, WA 98597
360-894-2159, Area2@wasba.org

Area #3 Upper Valley Representative:

James Bach, 21 N. 1st Ave. Suite 236, Yakima, WA 98902
Area3a@wasba.org

Area #3 Lower Valley Representative:

Arlene Massey (2006), 2781 Hornby Rd, Grandview, WA 98930, 509-882-4601

Area #4 Representative:

Miriam Bishop (2006), 14 Shangri Lane, Twisp, WA 98856
509-997-9699, Area4@wasba.org

Area #5 Representative:

John Pettigrew (2007), 2616 N. Rd. 60, Pasco, WA 99301
509-545-1501, Area5@wasba.org

Area #6 Representative:

Robert Arnold (2007), 42615 N. Division Rd., Deer Park, WA 98006, 509-276-2399, Area6@wasba.org

For more information,
please visit us at:

www.wasba.org

Pacific Northwest Honey Bee Pollination Survey – 2005, Continued

(Continued from page 4)

Within the PNW, tree fruits are the dominant crops for pollination income (see Table 2). In 2005 the combination of pears, sweet cherries and apples accounted for 58% of all reported rentals and 42% of all reported pollination income. Paradoxically, the single most important crop for PNW beekeepers is grown in California, *i.e.*, almonds. Almonds were responsible for 33% of all rentals and 51% of all rental income in the 2005 survey. Almonds consistently have produced a high average pollination fee; for 2005 the average was \$79⁴⁰. Based on beekeeper reports for contracted pollination for 2006, almond rental prices are expected to remain at a level greatly elevated from the average prices of the previous decade.

In 2005 the combination of California almonds and PNW tree fruit accounted for 91% of all rentals and 93% of pollination income, which illustrates the dominance and importance of these crops for a commercial PNW beekeeper. All other PNW cropping systems that utilize honey bee pollination contributed only 7% of a beekeeper's gross pollination income in 2005.

In 2005, for crops pollinated in the PNW, squash & pumpkin seed provided the highest average fee at \$47¹⁰ per colony rental. In terms of acreage, apples are the largest crop grown in the PNW and this is reflected by the large number of reported rentals (58% of all rentals and 42% of the total reported rental income.)

Berry crops (blackberries, raspberries and blueberries), are late spring to early summer bloomers and copious nectar producers (blackberries and raspberries). The 2005 average pollination fee for all combined berry crops was \$30²⁰, a lower price than the average fee because beekeepers have an expectation that a honey crop will also be produced.

The average PNW commercial honey bee colony was rented 2.2 times in 2005 and this includes California almonds. This is a slight increase from the past several years. This statistic had been dropping since 1999 when the average number of rentals per colony was 2.8. Does this actually reflect the real world situation? Are commercial beekeepers concentrating on almonds and PNW tree fruit (which historically provide the major sources of pollination income) and reducing the number of colonies involved in minor crop pollination? At this time our data are not able to provide a reasonable answer to this question.

For the 2005 pollination season an average rental fee of \$51³⁰, combined with an average of 2.2 pollination sets per colony, results in an annual per colony pollination income of \$112⁸⁵, which is up significantly from that of the past few years. With the "average" commercial operation running 2,055 colonies, a hypothetical 2005 gross pollination income for the "average" commercial beekeeper was \$231,906.

The combined colony numbers from those commercial beekeepers who responded to the 2005 survey, (23,285 hives), represent about 20% of the USDA's estimate of colony numbers in Oregon and Washington. Therefore, if we multiply the total reported pollination income (\$2,684,713) by a factor of 5, we have a ball park estimate of the pollination income generated by commercial beekeeping in the PNW, *i.e.*, a regional pollination income of approximately \$13,000,000. This is far more than the normal "estimates" assigned to the bee industry by agricultural economists, who, for reasons unexplained, usually do not even include pollination rental income in their estimates of the beekeeping industry economic status. Pollination income in the PNW far exceeds the value of honey and wax sales for our regional beekeeping industry. Pollination rental income is frequently three to four times greater than honey and wax sales in any given year.

The 2005 survey asked commercial beekeepers to report the total number of full-time or part-time employees working for their operations. The figure for the "average" commercial beekeeping operation in 2004 was 2.9 full-time employees; for 2005 it is 3.4 employees. Another interesting way to look at this is to ask the question "what is the 'colony equivalent'", meaning what is the number of colonies necessary to hire one full-time employee? That figure is very close to 1,500 colonies/employee in both the years 2004 and 2005.

(Continued on page 9)

Pacific Northwest Honey Bee Pollination Survey – 2005, Continued

(Continued from page 8)

While colony income from pollination rental is a critical statistic, so therefore is the annual cost to maintain a healthy hive of honey bees. Responses to this question on the survey have varied widely, often from a misunderstanding of what was being asked. However, numerous commercial beekeepers, who have over the years maintained good cost accounting records, have responded with numbers that are very reasonable relative to today's economy. The average annual hive maintenance cost was \$117 per colony for the year 2005 (highest reported per colony maintenance cost = \$155; lowest = \$75). This wide range suggests that beekeepers should try to be more precise in calculating their operational costs. If you can't answer the question of your operating cost on a *per colony basis* you should seriously re-evaluate your operational strategy.

It is important to recognize that the average colony maintenance cost is higher than the average per colony pollination income. From the 2005 survey pollination income was \$112⁸⁵/colony and the colony maintenance cost was \$117; a difference of \$4¹⁵ per colony. This illustrates that net operational profit is generated by sources of income outside of pollination rental, most importantly, honey production.

Remember that the data presented here represent the pollination rental situation of a hypothetical "average" commercial beekeeper in the Pacific Northwest. For individual beekeepers the survey results are most useful as benchmarks against which they should compare their individual operations. Please let me stress again that all of these "projections" are only as accurate as the data provided by responding beekeepers. The projections also assume that the participating beekeepers collectively represent the mainstream of commercial beekeeping in the Pacific Northwest. And as a further cautionary note for this 2005 report, total colony numbers (hence number of rentals) reported were only about half of those reported in recent years. Fewer larger scale beekeepers in Oregon and Washington participated in the 2005 survey. However, averages generated from a collective 52,000 rentals in 2005 are not insignificant.

I wish to again thank all those beekeepers in Oregon and Washington who took the time to participate in the survey, which over the past 19 years, has generated the most accurate assessment of commercial pollination known in the U.S.

(Continued on page 10)

Summary Information - 2005

Total number of participating commercial beekeepers = **14**

Total number of colonies in the survey = **23,285**

Total colony rentals = **52,339**

The average per colony pollination rental fee (for all beekeepers, for all crops including California almonds) was: **\$51³⁰**

The average commercial colony was placed in **2.2** pollination sets in 2005, for an average per hive rental income of **\$112⁸⁵**

The average commercial bee operation maintained 2,055 colonies and grossed **\$231,906** in pollination rental income for 2005.

Table 1. Average Pollination Fee 1994-2005

<u>1994</u>	<u>1995</u>	<u>1996</u>	<u>1997</u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>
28.10	29.60	31.55	31.05	29.65	32.25	32.85	33.65	36.40	36.45	38.65	51.30

Pacific Northwest Honey Bee Pollination Survey – 2005, Continued

Table 2. 2005 Average pollination fees by crop as reported by 14 PNW commercial beekeeping operations.

Crop	No. Rentals	Avg. Fee	Fee +/- ¹	Income (\$)
Pears	1,582	\$38 ⁴⁰	22.6%	56,912
Cherries	6,254	\$37 ⁷⁰	12.0%	235,912
Apples	22,658	\$36 ⁹⁰	30.6%	835,314
Berries ²	634	\$30 ²⁰	31.8%	19,126
Blueberries	860	\$37 ³⁵	17.3%	32,128
Cranberries	56	\$30 ⁰⁰	25.0%	1,680
Vegetable Seed	1,308	\$44 ⁹⁰	18.3%	58,712
Clover seed ³	243	\$37 ⁷⁰	15.6%	9,160
Crimson clover seed				
	86	\$24 ⁸⁰	n/a	2,130
Radish seed	123	\$33 ²⁰	37.7%	4,081
Cucumbers	430	\$38 ³⁰	(21.9%)	16,470
Squash & Pumpkin Seed				
	383	\$47 ¹⁰	48.1%	18,030
Watermelon	60	\$42 ⁰⁰	21.6%	2,520
Meadow foam	330	\$36 ⁵⁵	n/a	12,060
Misc. ⁴	88	\$37 ⁴⁵	n/a	3,296
Almonds	17,244	\$79⁴⁰	63.9%	1,377,182
SUM=	52,399 rentals generating			\$2,684,713
Average Pollination Fee = \$51³⁰				

¹% change from 2004
²Includes blackberries, raspberries, Marion berries, & Logan berries.
³Includes red & white clover as grown for seed.
⁴Plums & sour cherries

Table 3. Average colony numbers, average rental fee per hive, and average annual rental income per hive for a commercial beekeeping operation in the Pacific Northwest 1992-2005.

Year	Average No. Colonies	Average Rental Fee	Average Annual Rental Income per Colony
1992	765	\$19 ²⁵	\$49 ⁷⁰
1993	990	\$22 ⁵⁰	\$62 ²⁵
1994	1,225	\$28 ¹⁰	\$78 ⁷⁰
1995	1,348	\$29 ⁶⁰	\$78 ¹⁵
1996	1,350	\$31 ⁵⁵	\$97 ⁵⁰
1997	1,504	\$31 ⁰⁵	\$92 ²⁰
1998	1,153	\$29 ⁶⁵	\$83 ⁰⁰
1999	2,058	\$32 ²⁵	\$89 ³⁰
2000	2,055	\$32 ⁸⁵	\$77 ⁴⁰
2001	3,168	\$33 ⁶⁵	\$64 ⁶⁰
2002	4,255	\$36 ⁴⁰	\$63 ⁷⁵
2003	2,612	\$36 ⁴⁵	\$86 ⁴⁰
2004	3,555	\$38 ⁶⁵	\$74 ⁶⁰
2005	2,055	\$51³⁰	\$112⁸⁵

SAVE THE DATE!

THIS YEAR THE 2006 CONVENTION IS IN BELLINGHAM WASHINGTON AND IS SPONSORED BY THE MOUNT BAKER BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION.

Thursday, Oct. 12, **2006**, Friday, Oct. 13, 2006 and Saturday, Oct. 14, 2006

FOR ALL YOU FORWARD THINKERS.....

OH BOY, ANOTHER DATE!

THE 2007 CONVENTION IS AT SUN MOUNTAIN LODGE IN WINTHROP WASHINGTON.

Thursday, Oct. 18, **2007**, Friday, Oct. 19, 2007 and Saturday, Oct. 20, 2007

DON'T FORGET!

WASHINGTON STATE BEEKEEPER/BROKER REGRISTRATION FOR 2006 IS DUE BY APRIL 1, 2006.

A COPY OF THE WSDA FORM IS INCLUDED IN THIS NEWSLETTER.



BEEKEEPER/ BROKER
REGISTRATION- 2006

CASHIER USE ONLY

8110

Notice: Each person owning one or more hives with bees, brokers of hives, and beekeepers resident in other states who operate hives in Washington shall register with the Department of Agriculture on or before April 1 each year.

TO REGISTER as an apiarist and/or broker, please complete this form and return it with your personal check to:

Washington State Department of Agriculture - Plant Protection Division
PO Box 42591 - Olympia WA 98504-2591

Application Information: (make corrections as needed)

Form fields for Apiarist ID No., UBI No., County, and Telephone.

I will not own or operate any colonies of bees in Washington state in 2006. Please sign below and return this form so we can remove your name from our database.

I am a Washington state resident. Yes No

I will own and/or operate (number) colonies of bees in 2006. Will these bees be used for pollination? Yes No

Registration fees assessed are based on the number of colonies you will own or operate in Washington in the year 2006. Funds due by April 1, 2006.

Table with 3 columns: A. Beekeeper: Own Only, B. Broker & Beekeeper: Own & Operate, C. Broker Only. Lists colony counts and fees.

Registration Fee Due, Late Fees, Total Fees / Amount Enclosed

If you will operate bees other than your own during this year, please list the sources of the colonies on the back side of this form giving name(s), address(es), phone number(s), and number of colonies rented from each.

I certify that the above registration information is true and correct. Signed

If you have any questions, please contact Brad White at bwhite@agr.wa.gov or (360) 902-2071, or Eloise Rudolph at erudolph@agr.wa.gov or (360) 902-2070.

Note: Registrations received after April 1 may be subject to a late fee of 1 1/2% per month on the amount owed.

Checks returned by the bank will be charged a handling fee of \$25.00.



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
PLANT PROTECTION DIVISION

P.O. Box 42560 • Olympia, Washington 98504-2560 • Phone (360) 902-1908 • FAX (360) 902-2094

January 18, 2006

Dear Apiarists and Brokers:

Enclosed is your 2006 Apiarist/ Broker registration form. Under RCW 15.60.021, you will need to register the number of colonies you will own and/or operate in Washington State in 2006. Registration funds are due by April 1, 2006.

If you do not need to register with the Department, please check the appropriate statement on the registration form, sign and return as soon as possible. We can then remove your name from the registry and avoid sending you unnecessary follow-up mailings.

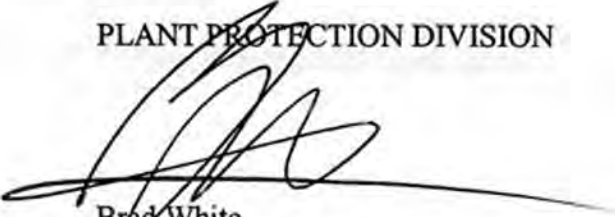
The registry allows the Department to notify beekeepers of important information such as renewal of the Section 18 Emergency Exemption for coumaphos. The request has been sent to EPA for coumaphos and thymol + eucalyptus oil on bee hives.

In addition, a summary of the status of pesticides used in honey bee colonies in Washington will be updated when approval is received from EPA at the following link
<http://agr.wa.gov/PestFert/Pesticides/docs/StatusMiteControlProds.pdf>

Please contact me at (360) 902-2071 or at bwhite@agr.wa.gov if you have questions about your registration.

Sincerely,

PLANT PROTECTION DIVISION



Brad White
Pest Program Manager





HONEYBEE INVESTIGATIONS

P.O. Box 163
45289 Rd. Q NE
Hartline, WA 99135
rjbkdorm@televar.com

Diagnostic Laboratory for Apiaries

(509) 639-2577

Jan Dormaier
Microbiologist

Tracheal test \$ 25/100 bees and Nosema \$ 10/test

**DON'T
FORGET!**

**RENEW YOUR
DUES!**



GARDNER GARDENS™

Try our beeswax skin cream for dry itchy skin. Contains almond and coconut oils, beeswax, vitamin E and propolis.

Call 509-996-2522
or e-mail sabold@methownet.com
www.gardnergardens.com

P. Lundy
Washington State Beekeepers Association
Newsletter Editor
P.O. Box 1331
Kingston, WA 98346-1331