

HEARTLAND BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION of SE KANSAS

GENERAL MEETING NOTES

JUNE 7, 2018

Ron called meeting to order at 6:30pm. Eighteen in attendance. Wayne gave treasurer's report - same as last month plus \$15.00 in checking. Motion to approve by Lyn and seconded by Pat. May meeting notes were read by Pat with motion to approve by Kelly and seconded by Lyn.

New Business:

Ron doesn't use inner cover on his hives. He often has trouble with propolis building up making top cover difficult to remove. He has been trying out using a cloth barrier and brought in a sample of what he has been using. The cloth has a reflective side to it. So far he is happy with the results.

There was a question about mites - Ron talked about testing for them by using of alcohol in a jar and adding about 300 bees (1/2 cup full) and shaking. The mites will be at the bottom of the jar. You'll lose the 300 or so bees but have an accurate idea if treatment is needed. Ron uses oxylic acid to treat his hives.

Linda encouraged us to go to our website (www.hbasek.org) and click on "University of Guelph" under Favorite Links. There are several good videos to view from the Honey Bee Research Centre at this Ontario Agricultural College.

We talked about splits and when to make the splits.

- Splits are often done early in the season to prevent swarming.
- Ron prefers to do splits right after the honey flow. That way he still reaps honey from the original hive and will give the hives time to build up before winter.
- Nucs can be overwintered also.
- A nuc generally accepts a queen in about 1-1/2 days. Four days works best for a queenless hive, especially on an aggressive one. For hot days, you can use duct tape to cover the candy on the outside of the queen cage. That way the queen and workers can still consume the candy but the hive bees won't have access and break through the candy before the queen has had time to be accepted.

Ron talked about Martha's extremely busy hive. I had trouble keeping track of all the swarms and splits, but it has swarmed at least three times this year. Her beeyard has grown from one hive to seven now, plus two nucs!! Ron called her up to the front of the meeting to give her a little award for being the *Swarm Queen*.

Ron led a talk on swarm management, which is crucial in the springtime.

- Feed your bees 1:1 syrup to stimulate laying in the spring if you want to split your hive.
- Use patties in a starving situation to maintain your bees if you are not wanting to split your hive.
- Don't feed just because it's spring. Don't feed too much. Feed only when necessary. Understand why you are feeding.
- In the fall Ron weighs his hives - has a target weight of about 95 lbs for over-wintering a two-box hive. If underweight he will feed in the fall, but his own rule is never more than three times.

Ron asked Linda and Lyn (aka Teri) to come up to the front and gave each of them a special recognition award - Linda for starting our club and being the backbone of it. Lyn for being so very friendly to everyone, making the best progress and being our nuc queen.

Linda is going to have t-shirts made for our club. A sign-up sheet was passed around.

Ron talked about summer management of hives.

- Evaluate your queen.
 - Check pattern of brood on frames.
 - Honey crop good?
 - Aggressive hive?

Sometimes bees will create supersedure queen cells on their own when the queen is failing. Sometimes a beekeeper will kill their failing queen in hopes of prompting the hive to raise another. However, this doesn't work about 20% of the time, so if they haven't got another queen started within six days, they're not going to do so.

If you decide to requeen keep in mind -

- During a drought is not a good time to requeen.
- A young vigorous queen is much better over the winter than a second year queen.

Ron is rearing queens this year for his hives and to sell. He plans to continue this into October.

Ron makes nucs during the summer, generally in July after the honey crop, to grow before winter. Bees usually don't really like to make comb during the summer, but bees in a nuc of frames without comb, will draw comb because they don't have a choice. If the nuc does not grow enough for a full size box by fall, they can overwinter in the nuc. Having nucs on hand during the spring can help you to strengthen weak hives.

Pests start in the summer. Moths, small hive beetles and varroa mites all increase while the bees begin to decrease. (Note that you can check for varroa mites by getting into drone larvae cells since that is where they are more likely to be.)

Question was posed about adding honey supers all at once or one box at a time. Ron recommends adding one first, waiting until about 3/4 full before adding another.

Coming this summer:

1. A Fun Day at Linda's farm. Plan to see a summer hive split.
2. Harvest honey at Ron's. Learn how to pull, extract and bottle.
3. Come to Ron's place anytime (almost) to see what needs to be done. Not meant as a group invitation. Just call Ron to check on availability and come up with a good time.

Meeting adjourned at 8:45pm.