

# Clinch Valley Beekeepers Association Newsletter

Next Meeting: Fellowship Picnic Friday, July 15, 2022  
Treadway Fire Hall  
189 Hwy 131  
Treadway, TN 37881

CVBA Newsletter  
Volume 13, Number 6  
July 1, 2022  
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Food: All sides and desserts for the picnic. Hamburgers and hot dogs will be provided by the club.

**Speaker:** Fellowship, Question and Answers

## **Upcoming Events:**

It is time to begin thinking about the festivals upcoming in October. Can you help us with our booth? We usually attend 3: Sneedville (begins first Saturday in October), Rogersville (begins 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday in October), and Morristown (begins the last Saturday in October).

Also, please begin to think about taking an Office in our club. Officers of the club for the October election will be President, Vice-President, Secretary (Candy is not able to take it back.) Treasurer, and Librarian. If you have a nominee, please fill out the form or let a current officer know so they can fill one out for you. A Nomination form and box will be provided beginning with the August meeting.

If you are a web designer or can help with our webpage and volunteer your time and energy, please let us know.

## **Notes from the last meetings:**

Clinch Valley Bee Association met on May 19, 2022, at the Treadway Fire Station. Thirty-six people signed in. The meeting opened with prayer. The minutes of the last meeting were read and approved as read. Visitors were recognized. TAEP was explained and it was noted that all persons who received grants needed to pay their memberships for 2 years. There was no other business to discuss so the meeting dismissed to enjoy the Fellowship meal. After the meal David Winters spoke about Breeding Tennessee Queens. The meeting closed after a question-and-answer session.

Clinch Valley Bee Association met on Jun 16, 2022, at the Treadway Fire Station.

There were 23 signatures with a count 30 individuals.

The minutes of the last meeting were read by David Sams.

He asked a gentleman to pray before the meeting.

Visitors were recognized.

Debra Holman is our TVA person.

Jr. had a meeting elsewhere and Starla filled in for Candy.

No other business was discussed.

Meeting was dismissed to enjoy the Fellowship meal.

After the meal Chris Kuenzer discussed Splitting Colonies into Nukes.

The Meeting closed after a question and answer session.

Minutes by Starla Thompson, member



### *Beekeeper's Calendar:*

July-Brood rearing is usually considerably curtailed during July and August because the normally hot dry conditions result in a dearth of nectar – although pollen may remain plentiful. Big strong hives may be quite aggressive – wear your veil when in the bee yard.

First year beekeepers may need to continue to feed in order to get hives sufficiently built out – especially if you already made splits – but beware of robbing if you are in the vicinity of any other bee hives. Be careful not to spill feed and keep entrances as small as possible – refrain from using honey-bee-healthy or other “feeding stimulants” at this time, because they aggravate robbing. Consider fitting your hives with robber screens.

You may consider moving hives and resources around a bit in order to equalize hive sizes and strengths – this activity can continue until mid-fall, but it is best done in moderate steps.

According to Ed Holcomb – Requeen between July 10 and August 21 if your existing queen has already performed through one or more intensive brood production periods. It is important that your queen is performing at her peak potential during the fall build up. Without a strong hive population going into winter, it will be impossible to build up sufficiently to exploit the short nectar flow that is available in the south.

Some people believe that Queens who are mated after the summer solstice – Around June 22 – perform especially well during fall build up because of the shorting of the days at that time. It may possibly be true.

### *Bee Funny:* (answer on last page)

Why did the honey bee go to the flower shop?

### *Club News:*

Support:

T-shirts are available Small, Medium, Large, XL sizes \$10 and XXL and larger sizes are \$12

Hats are \$8

Cookbooks are \$10.

These can be purchased at any regular bee meeting, they are onsite.

Membership:

CVBA dues: Renewal Dues become payable January 1st of each year. Dues are not pro-rated.

Single membership \$10; Family (one vote per family) \$15; Youth Single (No vote) \$5.

Please see Candy Halford, Secretary, to pay your dues at any meeting. Checks should be made payable to CVBA. Please let us know if any of your information has changed. Mailing of checks can be made to:

CVBA Secretary  
188 Davis Road  
Luttrell, TN 37779



## *Bee Insights:*

(adapted from: carolinahoneybees.com)

### **Bottling Honey: How to Process Your Crop**

Oh, that first honey crop, oh heck – even the 20th crop is a time of great excitement in the life of a beekeeper. The bees have done their job – now it’s your turn. Honey processing or bottling is all about the journey your crop makes from the hive to the jar. Jarring up honey produced by your very own bees is a true labor of love. Of course, there are some important steps to take to protect your harvest. Having everything you need ready makes the job much easier.

### **Honey Processing for Backyard Beekeepers**

A good harvest is one of the first “big wins” for a new beekeeper. And nothing will ever taste better than your own bottle of honey.

Beekeeping involves some hard work, and it is not always easy. The time of the harvest -especially the first one- is pure joy.

For many beekeepers, their first harvest comes during the second year of beekeeping. During the first season, a new colony has much work to do to prepare for Winter. Year two is for production.

Of course, it goes without saying that you should never “rob” your hives of too much and leave your bees to starve over winter. You wouldn’t do that -would you? No, surely not.

### **What Kind of Honey do You Have?**

During Spring and Early Summer, our bees collect nectar from various blooming plants. Bees make honey from the plant nectar to use for food during the cold Winter months.

While raw honey does contain some pollen, bees do not use pollen to make honey. Usually, bees collect nectar from many different types of flowers at one time.

This will be a “poly-floral” honey known as Wildflower. No this does not refer to those beautiful, delicate little flowers in the woods. It is a term used in beekeeping. Wildflower honey is made from many nectar sources.

This is why the color of honey can vary so much from year to year. Weather conditions affect the amount of nectar produced by the different plants.

Whether you are keeping it for yourself or planning to sell some of the harvest. It is important to know what you are selling. Don’t mislabel your product – it makes people mad.

### **How Much Honey Will A Beehive Produce?**

In many regions, a colony will produce an average of 60# of excess honey. This weight almost fills a 5-gallon size pail. The amount that any hive will produce varies **greatly** from one region to another. Perhaps your



colonies will make 150# of excess honey or more! No matter where you live, only harvest the excess not needed by the bees.

No matter how good of a beekeeper you are, you will have unproductive years. Every beekeeper can experience a year when there is no crop. And not every hive will produce honey every year.

And it's not just the bees that you have to consider, weather plays a major role in honey production. Too much or too little rain, high winds and late freezes affect nectar availability.

The sad fact is that some years you won't have to worry about honey processing. Not every year is a big crop year.

### **Keeping Your Honey Raw**

How much processing is done to will depend in part on how large your beekeeping operation is. The term processing is a general term, but it often brings to mind the largest packers.

Very large commercial honey companies must go through a more rigorous process of filtering or heating. This is so that their jars of product can look nice on the shelf for months and months without crystallizing.

If you are a small-scale beekeeper, you can do things a bit differently and have your honey in a more raw state. There is no need for ultra-filtration or heating. Let it gravity drip through a strainer to remove large pieces of wax.

### **Harvesting Your Honey Crop**

Imagine a full box weighing 35-50 pounds filled with thousands of stinging insects. We want to remove the surplus honey without harming the bees or ourselves.

The bees don't want to give up what they have worked so hard to make. Can you blame them? A wise beekeeper does not use smoke to drive bees from the boxes. Using smoke during harvest frustrates the bees and can damage your crop.

### **Bee Tight Processing Area**

A honey house is a special dedicated room for processing and bottling honey. Does everyone need one? No, of course not but you do need a clean place that bees cannot get into.

Once you have removed the supers from the hive, get them to a safe inside location – otherwise, the bees will take it back!

Most beekeepers prepare a "honey house" in a building near their home that is not used for other family activities. A small portable wooden building If you do not plan to sell products, you may decide to use your garage or kitchen. However, processing and bottling in the home provides a chance of contamination from other food items. And, oh my goodness, it is messy. Very messy!



A word of caution, it is illegal to process honey for sale in a private home in some states. Check the processing rules and regulations pertaining to your area.

If you have a large harvest to bottle, ask for help. Invite friends or neighbors over so they can learn more about the production process. It might help them understand why you may not want to give it all away for free.

It teaches an appreciation for all the hard work that is involved. And the extra helpers come in handy.

### **Check Local Honey Packing Regulations**

Before we go any farther into the operation of packaging or bottling honey- let's get clear on the legal stuff. If you are selling products, you will be subject to stricter regulations.

Yes, even if you are selling a small amount to the neighborhood market. Check your state and local laws before going down this path. Each state has different laws regarding the bottling of honey that is intended for sale to the public.

Do you care where and how your beekeeper chooses to bottle honey? You should care a great deal. Honey is a food product. I care very much about the cleanliness of any area that is bottling something I will purchase to consume.

### **The Extraction Process**

Most boxes(supers) contain 9-10 frames. Once the boxes are safely inside, we remove the wax capping from each cell of comb with a knife or cappings scratcher.

Later, these wax cappings are cleaned and melted. Many lovely wax items can be created from the cleaned beeswax cappings.

After uncapping, frames are placed inside a machine called an extractor. The extractor will spin causing the liquid to be expelled from the comb. Check out my tips on how to extract honey for detailed information.

Beekeepers with only 1 or 2 hives may use a small extractor or share one with friends. The fresh honey will flow out of the gate and drop through a coarse strainer into the bucket below. The strainer removes any large pieces of wax. This process repeats for each super box.

### **Processing Without An Extractor**

Some beekeepers do not have an extractor or choose to not use one. That's okay. Use a knife to cut the comb from the wooden frames into a large pan. The comb is then crushed.

This breaks open the wax cells and allows the liquid to drip through a piece of cheesecloth or other straining material.



This is a proper method of processing that has been used for thousands of years. It does not require expensive equipment, but it does take longer and requires a warm room to allow the honey to drain from the comb.

You will have more excess wax to use for project such as candles, etc – but your bees have to build out new comb for next year.

### **Bulk Honey Storage Before Bottling**

Use food grade buckets to capture the liquid dripping from your extractor or filter bag of comb. A tight-fitting lid placed on the full bucket to prevent moisture absorption.

Honey will absorb moisture from humid air. You must keep it tightly covered and you may choose a special easy to remove lid.

These full buckets are heavy and weigh around 65 pounds each. Because honey does not spoil, it is stored until needed. I marked each bucket with the month and year of the harvest.

### **Quality Control During Bottling**

It goes without saying that cleanliness is important during this process. Your utensils, jars and your hands should be washed clean and dried.

Letting water get into your honey can result in fermentation. I'm sure you do not want to spoil your crop.

Remember, you are working with a food product. Take care to keep things clean. Tie back your hair or wear a net. And yea, if you want to lick your fingers while bottling – I won't tell on you if the bottle is for yourself. But, remember to be extra hygienic when jarring for others.

### **Bottling Honey at Home**

Many beekeepers are anxious to jar up their crop soon after extracting. And you should be excited to see those lovely bottles of golden jars.

### **Settle Before Bottling for Fewer Air Bubbles**

Even if you plan to bottle right away, let it sit in a warm location for a few days. Allowing your buckets to settle for 24-48 hours results in fewer air bubbles in the jar.

It is normal to see some bubbles inside a freshly bottled jar. They will come to the top in a day or two. Don't be alarmed if you see some foam on top-in the bucket. It is only small pieces of wax – etc. Just skim it off.

### **Using a Gated Bucket**

Let's face it, most of us do not want to have to dip honey out of a 5-gallon bucket. We enjoy having it in a more manageable size.



And, if you plan to sell honey, smaller jars make nicer gifts and mean more profit for the bee. Most small scale beekeepers bottle from a gated bucket. This is a plastic bucket with a spout or “honey gate” on it. These allow for easy filling of our small jars.

Another technique I have often used is to pour the honey up into quart jars from the gated bucket. Then, I later pour some of those into smaller containers for gifts or to sell.

Quart jars are easy to work with if they crystallize. They are also not as heavy to move around as a full 5-gallon bucket.

If you have a lot of jars and want to store in them long term, you can always build a honey warming cabinet too!

### **Don’t Forget to Label Your Jars**

Be sure to affix a legal label to your jars. Check with the department of agriculture in your state to determine the rules for labeling honey. But I have shared some basics.

Your jars deserve the respect of a nice label. It does not have to be a fancy label – though you can purchase designer labels if you wish. Labels are important to help anyone who receives it to remember where it came from!

### **Honey Process is a Pleasure**

Bottling is a peaceful task. The end product is removed from the bee yard, so you have no fear of stings. It is the culmination of a season’s work for the beekeeper and the bees.

However, never forget that many bees have worked hard to produce this bounty. Use a proper method for storing and it will be good to the last drop.

**Honey processing and bottling** is the final step in bringing in a great harvest – it is cause for celebration.

Master Beekeeper, Charlotte Anderson shares her love of all things honeybee. She helps others become better beekeepers and teaches new beekeepers how to get started. Her mission is spreading awareness of the importance of honey bees. She is a former Beekeeper of the Year in South Carolina.

Have a Blessed 4<sup>th</sup> of July



## *Recipe of the month:*

### Cool Summer Drinks

#### Easy Honey Lemonade

1 cup lemon juice (fresh is always best)  
½ cup honey +/- per your taste  
3 cups water  
1 cup ice

Mix in a blender on puree. Or crush ice and add jars shake and combine and shake. Honey should be dissolved when mixing is done.

#### Agua Fresca

3 cups fresh fruit (like watermelon, cantaloupe, honeydew, pineapple), peeled and chopped  
2 cups water or 1 cup water if using watermelon  
1 tablespoon honey (sugar or sugar substitute)  
1 lime, juiced

Mix in blender until smooth. Can use a mesh strainer to get pulp out if desired. Serve immediately over ice.

#### Honey Syrup to make various drinks with:

1 cup honey and 1 cup water. Heat to dissolve honey only. Cool.

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Limeade with Strawberries and Basil  
Lemonade with Strawberries and Mint  
Lemonade with Strawberries or  
Limeade with Strawberries

Make the honey syrup recipe above and add 3 zests of limes after dissolving honey. Stir. Cool. Squeeze limes to make 1 cup juice (10-12 medium limes)

Put syrup and juice in a pitcher.

Cut up Strawberries in chunks add to pitcher. Add Basil leaves, torn. Mix. Let stand 2 hours in refrigerator.

Pour add garnishes of strawberries, basil leaf, and/or limes.

This recipe can be adapted to Strawberry, Mint, Lemonade as well. Use Lemons for limes and mint for basil.

And of course, you can leave out the basil or mint for Strawberry limeade or Strawberry lemonade.



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CVBA encourages each person to further their education by reading books, checking out various websites, and watching the videos that are available on bees and beekeeping. We also encourage everyone to have a mentor, especially if you are new to beekeeping. If you need a mentor, please let Jr. Snelson or David Sams know at the next meeting and they will try to find one.

Remember all apiaries must be registered with the State of TN. Forms are available at the meeting or they can be downloaded from the internet. <https://www.tn.gov/agriculture/businesses/bees/forms.html>



Answer to Bee Funny- Because her honey required it!

