

# ILLINOIS STATE BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

## *BULLETIN*

March/April 2010 • Volume 92 Number 2

### ISBA Legislation Moves to the Floor for a Vote

Mike Sabo

The Illinois State Beekeepers Association has been working with a number of legislators to pass favorable legislation on behalf of its membership. The Spring Session is well underway and we now have two bills to focus on shepherding through the process. SB-2959 and HB-6132 have identical language and will exempt individuals who bottle non-commercial quantities of honey for sale from food processing regulations. This is intended to support the small-scale beekeeper who sells locally, especially at farmers' markets. The legislation will change the definition of raw agricultural commodity to include honey that hasn't been adulterated by adding such things as flavorings and colorings.

**Call your  
legislator  
today!**

Now that the bills have been introduced, we must remain diligent while they make their way through the committee process and onto the floor for a full vote. I'm making regular updates to the ISBA Yahoo Group and these are being reflected in the News and Events section of the ISBA website. Many of the ISBA affiliate groups are keeping to own updates or linking through to the ISBA website.

The past two weeks have been quite busy for ISBA members involved. Our bills have been passed out of committee in both the House and the Senate without a single "nay" vote. That does not mean that there is no opposition. The Illinois Department of Health and the Illinois Council on Food and Agricultural Research has gone on record at every committee hearing as opposed to our bills. One Senator voted "present" rather than "yea" or "nay" because of constituents in his district contacting him in opposition to our bills. On a positive note, The Illinois Farm Bureau has signed on in favor of our bills.

Now is not the time to rest on our laurels. There are still floor votes remaining in both the House and Senate. We need to pass these votes without any amendments being added by the opposition in order to get the legislation to the Governor's desk for signing.

I ask that all members take just a few minutes to call your local Representative and Senator and ask for their support and sponsorship of the bills, and to request that they bring them to the floor for a vote as soon as possible. They will ask for the numbers, so be sure to have them handy. (House Bill 6132 and Senate Bill 2959.) To find your state senator and state representative contact information you can contact your Clerk of the Court at your county seat or you can enter your zip code on the Illinois Elections website:

<http://www.elections.il.gov/DistrictLocator/SelectSearchType.aspx>

Generally speaking, most of your efforts should be directed at your own local Senator and Representative. Set up a good line of communication with them and their staff. Don't become a "one-note Johnny". Call them back and thank them when you find out that they signed on as a bill sponsor. When you know that the bill has moved to the floor, call and let their staff know. There are thousands of bills up in Springfield and we don't want ours to stray from their radar screens.

Thanks for each of your individual efforts. Together we can make this happen.

# APIARY INSPECTION SUPERVISOR'S REPORT

*Steve Chard, Illinois Department of Agriculture*

Greetings! As I write this article, the sun is shining brightly and the temperature may reach into the high 30s or low 40s. Definitely a step in the right direction with the cold and snowy winter we have experienced! Hope your bee survival rate is high from this trying winter period.

In my last article, I provided information on **Mite-Away Quick Strips**, a new product manufactured by NOD Apiary Products in Canada. Nod Apiary Products claims that this product represents a new generation of varroa control that works by not only killing varroa on the bees, but also targets the next generation of mites before they emerge. They also claim that the product is highly successful, killing over 95% of varroa under the cap. There is a lot of interest by the apiary industry in this product as a new means of effective varroa mite control.

The Department has been working diligently with NOD Apiary Products and USEPA to obtain approval for use of this product in Illinois under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act. Unfortunately, we have found this approval process to be very slow. NOD had hoped that all North American states interested in the product could gain the needed approval by January 2010 and obviously that didn't happen. It's our understanding that USEPA is in the process of deciding whether to grant this product a full registration or an emergency use registration. The full registration would mean that the Department would not have to file an emergency use registration request each year. Regardless, we are as anxious as you to obtain approval quickly for use of the product in Illinois. Please note that even though the product is shown in the 2010 Dadant catalogue, it doesn't mean that beekeepers in Illinois can purchase the product at this point. The description in the catalogue also mentions the need for federal approval in order for this product to be sold to beekeepers. The Department will continue to encourage USEPA to act on this matter as soon as possible.

As you know, ISBA has been working very hard in preparing an official resolution and associated legislation to facilitate the sale of honey in Illinois. This relates to the Illinois Department of Public Health's food processing regulations that are affecting the sale of honey at farmer's markets, etc. around Illinois. From my perspective, your ISBA leaders and other members who have actively participated in this initiative have done your organization proud. I attended the first Senate Agriculture and Conservation Committee Hearing at the state capitol where one of the pieces of legislation was addressed. The testimony presented by ISBA was excellent, and compelling as each of the Senators asked questions and made comments. I thought the overall tone of the hearing was very positive toward the bill. While this bill and others have a long way to go to gain full passage, things are sure off to a great start! You as members of ISBA have been very well represented by your organization in this matter and will continue to be as this legislative process goes forward.

While the State of Illinois continues to experience major financial difficulties, we anticipate that the Department's Apiary Inspection Program will be in good shape this year. Like last year, the annual process to gain approval to rehire our contractual inspectors may take a little longer than normal, but we anticipate we will be able to provide at least the same level of service that you have come to expect in the past. We'll keep you posted on the availability of our inspectors for this upcoming inspection season.

We continue to receive calls from the media and beekeepers about Colony Collapse Disorder. It's good to see the continued high level of interest in this topic. Nothing new that we are aware of from a research standpoint on the cause(s) of CCD and a possible cure.

Roughly 500 beekeepers have signed up to be part of our statewide swarm collector's list as you completed your annual registration renewal. Thanks for the excellent response. We plan to place the swarm collector's list on the Department's web site soon for all to access. *Also, for those of you who received a second registration renewal notice from our office and haven't completed and returned it, please do so as soon as possible.* For those of you who have returned the completed form, thank you. β

# What Are Beekeepers Looking For In A Queen

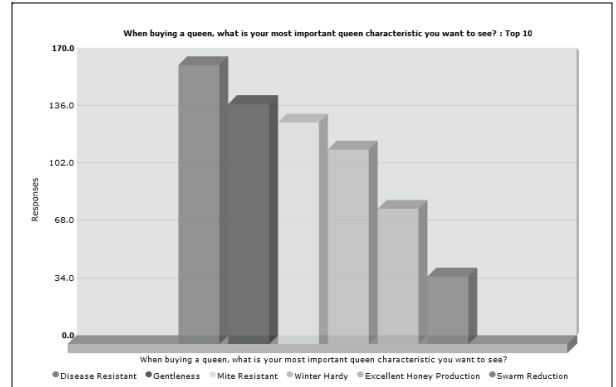
David Burns  
Long Lane Honey Bee Farms

The Illinois Queen Initiative will once again march on forward through another bee season with high hopes of making new strides and continued progress. Each year we learn more, have more successes and produce more Illinois queens.

The goal of the Illinois Queen Initiative is to produce local Midwest queens that are more accustomed to our climate, possess hygienic behavior (more disease and mite resistant), are winter hardy and are good honey producers. More and more states have such programs, turning to the queen to conquer all pests and diseases in the hive. This is placing huge demands on breeders to present a queen that will bring a new sense of hope to beekeeping. But just what are beekeepers looking for in a queen?

As Illinois beekeepers we have high expectations for our queens. Even when we have neglected or mismanaged our hives we blame the problem on the queen. If the hive fails to make a large honey crop we blame it on a poor queen, even though the weather was the worst in 30 years. If the bees die in the winter we blame the queen and the queen producer who sold us the queen. So, I wanted to find out firsthand what are beekeepers wanting in a queen. What are the top six characteristic that Illinois queens must have?

I recently placed a survey on our website to find out what beekeepers want in a queen. I was very surprised at the results of this simple survey. Again, this is a simple survey I placed on my blog but 673 people responded to the question: "When buying a queen, what is the most important queen characteristic you want to see?" Each participant had to pick one of the following six characteristics:



- Honey Production
- Gentleness
- Winter Hardiness
- Disease Resistant
- Swarm Reduction
- Mite Resistant

I was certain that the beekeeper's number one characteristic would be gentleness. After all, this seems to be the first trait beekeepers talk about when referring to their hives. And who doesn't talk about

*(Continued on page 4)*

## A last minute note from Steve Chard of the Department of Agriculture

FYI... Important information regarding Mite-Away Quick Strips. The bottom line-USEPA's current position is that no Section 18 emergency use exemptions for the product will be issued at this time to any states. However, we understand that NOD is simultaneously working with USEPA to gain a Section 3 permanent registration with USEPA. That would negate the need for a Section 18. Perhaps this fall...

(Continued from page 3)

how much honey their hive produced? But much to my surprise, the number one characteristic that beekeepers want to see in their queens is *disease resistance*. 165 beekeepers chose disease resistance to be most important.

The second most important characteristic is gentleness, with 142 beekeepers weighing in. The third most important characteristic, with 131 beekeepers voting, is mite resistant queens. Coming in fourth was Winter hardy queens winning the hearts of 115 beekeepers. Fifth place was honey production with 80 votes. Last place was swarm reduction at 40 votes.

In summary, this survey tells us that beekeepers are willing to forgo honey production and gentleness if it means raising queens that can fight off diseases. As much damage that mites have done, the survey shows that beekeepers must be coping with mites to a manageable degree because they would rather have gentle bees than mite resistant bees.

Maybe our expectations for our queens are too high, or are they? As we continue to look for that silver bullet to solve all our beekeeping woes just maybe the solution to our problem is that single bee in the hive with that little dot on her back. If so, those of us raising and selling queens, need to listen to what the beekeepers are saying and continue to work toward queens which are resistant toward diseases, gentle, mite resistant, winter hardy, produces good honey and do not swarm, in that order. β

## First World Conference in Organic Beekeeping

Dear beekeepers and bee friends,

The World Federation of Beekeepers' Associations Apimondia is glad to invite you to the First World Conference on Organic Beekeeping. It is going to take place near the ancient city of Nessebar on the Bulgarian Black Sea coast.

The deterioration of the ecological conditions on our earth is preoccupying the people and also the beekeepers all over the world. Ecological beekeeping is a relatively new beekeeping practice. Therefore there is a big need to summarise the present knowledge and experience in the field. The aim of this first conference is to discuss all important issues of organic beekeeping and to help beekeepers towards an efficient and satisfactory ecological beekeeping practice.

The conference language is English. All topics concerning organic beekeeping will be discussed, specifically divided into six parts:

- \* Sustainable beekeeping and beekeeping in developing countries
- \* Beekeeping management
- \* Disease control
- \* Beekeeping environment
- \* Bee products and apitherapy
- \* Regulation and certification

More information at  
<http://www.bee-hexagon.net/en/organic.htm>

β

## Apimondia

Dear Beekeepers and Bee Friends,

On behalf of our Turkish Member Association MIAAYB we are pleased to invite you to attend the 2nd International Mugla Beekeeping and Pine Honey Congress in Mugla, Turkey, from 5 to 8 October 2010.

This important international event which is held under the aegis of Apimondia, is organised by the Union of Beekeepers of the Mugla province and the Apiculture and Sericulture Research and Implementation Centre of the Mugla University.

Over 90% of the world's pine honey is produced in Turkey and the Mugla province alone provides 75% of it. Ever since beekeeping has been introduced to Turkey, Mugla has been playing a leading role in this sector. The Mugla province hosts 8% of all beehives and contributes with 20% to the total national honey production of Turkey.

We are enclosing herewith the first announcement where you will be able to find all pertinent information on the congress in PDF format.

For any further details you may require on this event visit the following websites:

[www.muglacongress.org](http://www.muglacongress.org)  
[www.apimondia.org](http://www.apimondia.org)

Looking forward to welcoming you to Mugla, we remain,

Yours sincerely,

Riccardo Jannoni-Sebastianini  
Apimondia Secretary-General  
[apimondia@mclink.it](mailto:apimondia@mclink.it) β

## Bees take flight to the city after fall in rural hive numbers

From *The Independent*, London, England

The buzzing of bees, part of the essence of rural life, may soon become a city sound. A new army of urban beekeepers is being recruited as part of an ambitious project to halt the worrying decline in British honeybees.

The plan is to site hives in city gardens and allotments across the UK, and even on the roofs of buildings, to help rebuild honeybee numbers, which are believed to have halved in Britain between 1985 and 2005, and more recently to have declined even more steeply in some areas.

The reasons are not clear, but it may be a combination of pesticide use, warmer winters because of climate change and infections such as that caused by the varroa mite. Honeybees in Britain produce 5,000 tonnes of honey a year and their pollination of fruit trees and other crops are estimated to be worth £165m annually.

The buzzing of bees, part of the essence of rural life, may soon become a city sound.

This spring, the Co-operative Group is trying to draw 300 new people to urban beekeeping in Manchester, London and Inverness, and the great attraction for the newcomers will probably be the free training and equipment – from gloves and overalls to a hive – provided.

In the Co-op's initial trial of its urban apiary idea in Manchester last year, some 60 of the 100 people who took courses in the city's parkland went on to become beekeepers. "Most people don't realise you can readily keep bees in an urban area," said the Co-op's Environment Manager, Chris Shearlock. "They can find flowers in city parks and gardens, and they are away from some of the pesticides that are threatening them

on farmland. It's a misconception to think that they won't thrive in cities and towns. I've heard of honey being sold from apiaries around King's Cross station in London."

The Co-op is offering several days of training, first in theory, on subjects such as how bees are kept, hygiene, and how hives are constructed; and then in practical work with bees. At the end of the course those who want to continue will be given their own hive and beekeeping outfit, and put in touch with a network of other beekeepers for advice. The courses will start later in the spring when bees become active.

In trying to set up environmental projects, the Co-op has found that beekeeping strikes a ready chord with people who might not otherwise want to become practically engaged.

"People are interested in bees," Chris Shearlock said. "If you talk to people about the lack of diversity in the oceans, say, they respond: 'What do you want me to do about it?' But when you talk about bees, people can do it in their own homes and their own lives."

The project is part of the Co-op's Plan Bee campaign, launched last year with the aim of raising awareness of honeybee decline, funding research and encouraging people to help bees and plant bee-friendly wild flowers.

The Plan Bee campaign has also sponsored an investigation into the population status of Britain's native version of the honeybee, the black bee, which was replaced in many hives by the Victorians with an Italian bee strain, on the grounds that the native insect was too aggressive and did not produce enough honey. But it is possible that the black bee may be able to survive conditions in the 21st century better. β



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Keep up on the ISBA legislation on the Association website—  
ISBA.US.

Senate Bill 2959 and House Bill 6132

## Two great new book

Elizabeth Capaldi Evans and Carol A. Butler

### Why Do Bees Buzz?



### Why Do Bees Buzz?

You are a beekeeper so you are asked all the usual questions like “Don’t you get stung?” However being that expert you also need to explain how bees hear and how their eyes work. Do bees sleep? How do they make honey? And the list goes on. You give them the answer

you have heard many times and then wonder.... Hum... is that really true.? This book is for you. Now you can get the truth from an expert, Dr. Elizabeth Capaldi Evans.

You may remember Dr. Capaldi Evans from her time at the University of Illinois. Now at Bucknell University she has teamed up with Carol Butler to produce an exciting new book.

*Why Do Bees Buzz?* has 200 pages of questions and answers. More than just answers, the authors give citations to support their answers. It is well indexed making it an excellent reference book as well as a pleasure to read.

This is the book your beekeeping association should donate to the local library to promote an understanding of the honey bee to the local public. Beyond the layman, this book is an interesting and authoritative read for the beekeeper—experienced or not. *Why Do Bees Buzz?* serves the bee people of the world well. It’s alluring style calls the uninitiated readers to keeping bees of their own. It is hard to put down.

Looking for a good read. Here it is. β

LK

### The Quest for the Perfect Hive

Skeps and gums, glass bell jar supers and leaf hives. The search for the ultimate bee abode has preoccupied many men. It was the quest for the perfect hive.

These attempts to accommodate our bees are chronicled by Gene Kritsky in his new book, *The Quest for the Perfect Hive*. We learn to appreciate where we are by knowing from where we came. Kritsky does this well.

Man’s husbandry with bees goes back into the dim reaches of history. Exactly when man progressed from robbing honey from bee trees to keeping bees in man-made structures is not known, but each era has tried to improve on the hive.

The year 1851 divides beekeeping into the old and the new. Rev. L. L. Langstroth discovered the bee space and the Langstroth hive was born. But... was that the perfect hive?

Salted with anecdotes and facts, Kritsky weaves an excellent chronicle of man’s time with the bees. Here is a great read for the beekeeper as well as the curious historian. β

LK



## Bee Class in Champaign

Mark your calendar for Saturday March 27th. This advance course is only for those who have kept bees for a minimum of one year. We will deal with more advanced issues such as making splits, identifying disease and pests, swarm control methods, various hive types such as nucs, 8 frame hives and Top Bar Beekeeping, queen castles and more. We will also look into queen rearing, and advanced overwintering techniques. This class will be held at our Honey Bee Farm unless registration is too large, then we will hold the class near us in a larger facility near Champaign Illinois. This class is limited to 32 students. Registration is \$79 prior to March 1st. Cost of registration after March 1 is \$99. Lunch is included. Time is 9am - 3:30pm Central Time. β



## Happy Birthday, Lorenzo

Two hundred years after his birth in 1810, Rev. Lorenzo Lorraine Langstroth, known as the “Father of American Beekeeping,” will be honored. Langstroth’s discovery of “bee space” and his invention of the movable-frame beehive will be celebrated with a national network of exhibits, workshops and seminars and perhaps—a commemorative U.S. postage stamp as well.

Langstroth started with “two stocks of bees in common box hives” while serving as a minister in Andover, Mass. in the 1830s. Before long he was studying beekeeping in depth. He observed his bees and sought to understand their ways in order to build hive boxes which would allow him to better combat the destructive wax moths and collect surplus honey without harming the bees or damaging their wonderful honey comb.

This is the essence of the scientific method. Those who might think that Langstroth was an unlikely scientist would be misunderstanding the role of science in our lives. The scientific method involves experiencing the world in which we live, responding to the curiosity that naturally resides inside us, devising a method of observing and recording, testing and confirming our expectations, and evaluating the results we achieve. It is available and important to each and every one of us, just as it was to Langstroth.

Langstroth’s efforts gave us a way to raise large quantities of bees, keep them healthy and collect their honey in a truly sustainable way, without destroying their home. We all owe him thanks and, the year 2010, his 200th birthday year is a great time for people across the country to celebrate him in ways that benefit us all.

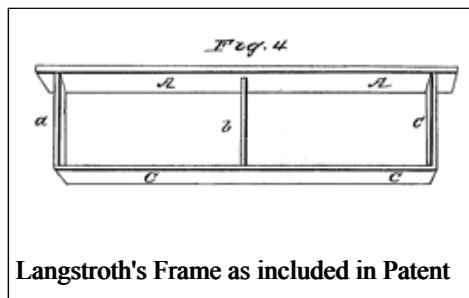
Our effort to honor Langstroth will include the study and appreciation of his efforts and what they have yielded. Throughout the year 2010, the Down to Earth Program, and initiative of the non-profit Science Friday Initiative (SFI), will be developing and coordinating a national network of workshops, exhibits and gatherings to teach and learn about the considerable science connected with the honey bee. β



Excerpted from the Science Friday website—[sciencefriday.com](http://sciencefriday.com)

### Patent #9300

**On October 5, 1852 Lorenzo L. Langstroth was granted U.S. Patent #9300, forever changing the way people raise honey bees.**



## June Meeting Location Changed

The ISBA spring meeting is now scheduled for June 18 with a new location—The Belli farm in Wadsworth, Illinois. More information available on the website as it becomes available and in the May issue of the Bulletin. β

**ISBA Executive Board 2009**

Membership in the Illinois State Beekeepers Association is open to all persons interested in bees and beekeeping. Beekeepers are urged to join through their local associations. Dues for 2009 are \$10 for the calendar year January 1 through December 31 only. Dues include a subscription to this newsletter, the ISBA Bulletin. Beekeeping journals are available at about 25% discount to members as listed below; rates are subject to change without prior notice. Make checks payable to: Illinois State Beekeepers Association and mail to: Rita Taylor, Secretary, 4274 Taylor Homestead Road, Pleasant Plains, IL 62677-4024

Please indicate new or renewal subscription when ordering journals.

Address Changes: Send old and new address six weeks prior to date of change when practical to the association secretary.

Reduced Journal Rates for 2009 (*members only*)

	1 yr	2 yr	3 yr
American Bee Journal	19.50	37.00	52.15
Bee Culture	21.00	38.00	N/A
The Speedy Bee	13.25	25.25	34.00

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**ILLINOIS STATE BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION**

Rita Taylor, Secretary  
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Contact your legislator today!

- ⇒ ISBA legislative initiative
- ⇒ What do you want in a queen?
- ⇒ IDOA apiary report
- ⇒ Bees in the city
- ⇒ Apimondia

