

From the Central Iowa Beekeepers Association (CIBA) President

We had an awesome presentation by Andy Joseph and Ginny Mitchell last Saturday evening on how to enter and present honey products at the state fair. This was an Iowa Honey Producers Association (IHPA) presentation that was hosted by CIBA.

I know it was a beautiful Saturday evening on a holiday weekend and to spend time indoors participating in a zoom presentation was difficult. So, for those of you that missed the meeting (understandable) it was recorded by our IHPA Queen, Abigail Kelly. It will be available in a week or two from Linn Wilbur and he will email everyone with the particulars on how to get it. I know he will offer it to everyone in at least a couple different ways.

This presentation can be saved and referred to in future years when thinking about entering items at the Iowa State Fair. It is a great time to participate in beekeeping in a different way by showcasing your bees' honey. I have entered my Ross round (RR) comb honey and extracted honey in the past and I really enjoyed the experience. My RR won a blue ribbon but my extracted honey did very poorly for a variety of reasons. Since hearing this presentation I now know what I did wrong with my extracted honey.

On to the subject of bees swarming this year. I had thought that last year was a swarmy year because of the mild winter we had. Well, this year is even more swarmy -- at least out of my own hives. Even though I had done my splits and stole babies from them, they are still swarming. And even though I did my splits as early as I could, they are still swarming.

Why? It was a tough winter from the standpoint of severe cold for an extended period of time so..... This subject is a tough one for me that I cannot explain -- even well known experts have a tough time explaining why this year.

Swarming is a natural instinct and what goes into the process of what drives a hive to swarm is an interesting but not well understood subject. Is it a good nectar flow? Is it that the hives are extremely healthy? Is it a good pollen year?

Anyway it has been a challenge for me. Hopefully, you have done a better job of managing your hives.

No meeting for us in June but remember our field day on July 17th in the Ankeny area. Place it on your calendar. This will be our first in-person meeting in a year and a half.

Thanks for being a member. Your President Jamie

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