

# THE BEELINE

Official Newsletter of the Central Iowa Beekeepers Association



## ISSUE: Winter 2023

Editor: Laura Miller

### CIBA MEMBER MEETING

**Saturday, January 21** 1:00 p.m.

**Northridge Baptist Church**

**3700 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Des Moines**

**Topic:** *Bee Stings & Annual Business Meeting*

We'll elect directors and officers, enjoy a few treats and then hear from Iowa State University professor Amy Toth about a common concern among beekeepers. More on **page 3**.

### CIBA WINTER SEMINAR

**Saturday, March 18** 8:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

**Iowa Arboretum & Gardens**

**1875 Peach Avenue, Madrid, Iowa**

A jam-packed day of presentations, fellowship and food is planned. You must pre-register this popular event so sign up soon! More on **page 3**.

**Questions?** Call Program Chair Dr. Don Sievers, (515) 460-6004

### CIBA SPRING AUCTION

**Saturday, April 15** 7 a.m. unload; bids start 10 a.m.

**Washington Township School**

**18930 210 Street, Minburn, Iowa**

Sign up to sell items today! More on **pages. 6-7**.

### DEADLINE FOR NEXT NEWSLETTER:

**February 10, 2023**

**Email submissions and comments to:**

Laura Miller, [Beeline\\_editor@yahoo.com](mailto:Beeline_editor@yahoo.com)

We encourage you to receive the newsletter via email; however, we understand if electronic delivery is not for you! You may update your subscription by contacting Linn Wilbur, [lwilbur50201@gmail.com](mailto:lwilbur50201@gmail.com)

## FROM THE PRESIDENT, JAMIE BEYER

CIBA has been one of the most active and largest bee groups in Iowa. We provide a local connection to other beekeepers, unlike national and state organizations that are critical to connecting beekeepers on a larger scale.

CIBA exists with 100% volunteers. No one is paid, so all dollars donated, received in memberships and otherwise brought in are used to disseminate information about the best ways to keep our bees.

I've been thinking a lot lately about our leadership and the need to foster new ideas and create new directions for our club. This is accomplished with new leadership. Without the infusion of those new ideas, an organization with the same leaders for years becomes stagnant.

I have served as your president for three years, and before that I was the VP for a couple years. I recently had a health scare that made me realize I need to take a different role in CIBA. Linn Wilbur has served in many capacities since 2015. He has been a director, VP and now our secretary/treasurer. We all know his extraordinary capabilities. Other leaders such as Val Just (currently a director and webmaster, and formerly our treasurer) and Laura Miller (our most talented editor) also have been dedicated to CIBA. This is just a sampling of those who serve—many others who deserve recognition and thanks.

My point of this discussion is to challenge you to think about what you can do for CIBA. Our membership deserves a change in leadership. Maybe you are the one who could be the next officer, director, committee chair, committee member or wherever you feel comfortable. I guarantee there will be a change in our leadership over the next one to two years, and I hope others are willing to step up. It's interesting that all of the former CIBA leaders have continued to assist your current leadership – and that will still be the case in the future.

As a final note, you should have received membership renewal information in the mail. Please update the form and renew your membership! On that form you can indicate your interest in serving in a leadership role. You can be proud of what CIBA is accomplishing and what we can do in the future – together!! Here's to the new year, 2023!!

Thanks for being a member. -- Jamie

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### Editor's Document Navigation Tips

**Table of Contents:** Hover over any section of the Table of Contents, then press the CTRL button on your keyboard to create a pointing finger image. Press the left mouse button on any section of the Table of Contents to go directly to that section.

**Document navigation:** No matter where you are in this document, if you press the CTRL + Home buttons on your keyboard concurrently, you will go to the top of the BEELINE.

## CIBA Club Meetings/Communications

CIBA meets 6 times annually, the third Saturday every other month. During active beekeeping season (May and September), they are late afternoon or early evening; in off-season (November and January) they are early afternoon. The March winter seminar and July field day are full-day events.

The official CIBA newsletter, the **BEELINE**, is published four times a year on the first day of January (Winter, beginning in 2023); March (Spring); May (Summer) and September (Fall). A special Student Edition is published each January for people enrolled in central Iowa beekeeping classes.

CIBA members also receive the **CIBA Newscast** email from the president on months when the BEELINE is not published (not available for members who choose to receive CIBA info only via USPS).

**CIBA Bee Bits**, an email newsletter with helpful hints about beekeeping, comes out the 15th of each month (not posted on the CIBA website and available only for CIBA members who receive CIBA info electronically).



Dance of the beekeepers

# CIBA Program Updates

## Bee Stings & Annual Business Meeting

**Date:** Saturday, January 21

**Time:** 1:00 p.m.

**Where:** Northridge Baptist Church, 3700 Sixth Avenue, Des Moines (map and directions on CIBA website)

**Schedule:** We'll have our annual business meeting with our election of officers and directors, updates on many activities happening in CIBA, enjoy a few treats and hear from Iowa State University professor Amy Toth



Dr. Toth's topic is a common concern among beekeepers: "Am I at Risk for a Bee Sting Allergy? What Science Has to Say About It." As time allows, she also will discuss some of her current research.

She is a professor in two ISU departments: Ecology, Evolution and Organismal Biology and Entomology. She teaches courses in animal behavior and bee biology and operates the Toth Laboratory of Integrative Insect Sociobiology (<https://www.tothlab.org/>). As a researcher, she is interested in the mechanisms and evolution of insect sociality, using paper wasps and honey bees as model systems. Current projects include sequencing paper wasp genomes and the influences of nutrition and viruses on honey bee behavior and health. She received her B.A. from Bard College in New York, her PhD at the University of Illinois, and did postdoctoral work at Pennsylvania State University.

## Winter Seminar Registration Is Open: Sign Up Today!

**Date:** Saturday, March 18

**Time:** 8:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (check-in starts at 8:20 a.m.).

**Where:** Iowa Arboretum & Gardens, 1875 Peach Avenue, Madrid, Iowa

**Schedule:** Doors open at 8:20 a.m. with the first of seven speakers to begin at 8:45 a.m.

**All attendees must register here:** <https://www.centraliowabeekeepersassoc.org/>

You will NOT want to miss this program, one of CIBA's most popular events of the year! You'll get research results and practical information on multiple topics, all designed to help you become a better beekeeper. Topics include how to get bees through a REAL winter, tools for battling varroa, tips on making comb honey and beeswax products, and state law changes in labeling and licensing standards.

Registration for CIBA members is only \$30, nonmembers \$35, and \$20 for students (college and K-12), which covers a luncheon catered by Smokin' Big Dawg BBQ and all snacks during the day.

More details and registration on the CIBA website: <https://www.centraliowabeekeepersassoc.org/>

CIBA members: Be sure to look for the flier, agenda and registration form included in the distribution of this newsletter for more information.

This is a well-attended event and we have space for only 160 people so register early. You'll love the new venue at the beautiful Iowa Arboretum! Questions? Contact program committee chair Dr. Don Sievers, (515) 460-6004 or [dwsievers4@gmail.com](mailto:dwsievers4@gmail.com).



One speaker in our 2023 seminar will join remotely but others will be in-person. (Photo at right is from the 2022 seminar.)





## Call to Action

### Time to Pay Membership Dues!

It's that time of year again – time to pay your CIBA membership dues!! You should have received a packet of information via snail mail in December. The packet included a letter from President Jamie Beyer, a membership form to update, and a return envelope for submitting your payment (also instructions for doing everything online).

Membership in CIBA runs on a calendar year, January 1 to December 31, so please renew your 2023 membership and pay dues as soon as possible! If you've already renewed, thanks! As this goes to press, more than 40 percent of our members already have renewed.

As a reminder, you must be a current member to participate in the election of officers and directors which will take place at our January 21 meeting (note change in date).

If you cannot find the December mailing, don't worry. You can download a membership form on the CIBA website (<https://www.centraliowabeekeepersassoc.org/membership>).



### Looking for Something New? CIBA Needs You

One of the most rewarding CIBA activities is getting to know the young people who serve as Queen or Ambassador in the CIBA Royalty Program. In one short year, these young people grow, develop leadership skills, and share their passion.

CIBA has strongly supported this program throughout the years. Our honey queens (plus one ambassador, in 2021) have raised awareness about the importance of honey bees, encouraged youth and adults to become beekeepers, and shared CIBA's mission. We have had CIBA honey queens become the Iowa Honey Queen; a few have gone on to become the American Honey Queen and American Honey Princess.

Susan Kelly, the CIBA member who managed this program with enthusiasm, died last year and since that time CIBA has been searching for a new chair of the CIBA Royalty Program Committee. Susan updated the program's current guidelines and selection process. As chair, she actively sought candidates, made sure each young person had educational materials, and served as liaison to schedule events and appearances. Susan's committee also planned and operated the Queen's Café at CIBA's annual spring auction to raise funds for program expenses.

If you enjoy working with young people, please consider being chair or a member of the CIBA Royalty Committee. Contact CIBA President Jamie Beyer (515.433-0194 or [beyersbog@aol.com](mailto:beyersbog@aol.com)), who has been serving as interim chair.

And if royalty is not your thing, CIBA has plenty of other opportunities! There are committees for the annual auction, food, bylaws, bee yard, marketing, newsletter/website, programs, and youth scholarship. If anything piques your interest, contact any director or officer. CIBA needs you!

At our annual business meeting on January 21, we will elect a CIBA president, vice president, secretary, treasurer and two 3-year directors. If you are interested in running for any of these positions, contact Dr. Don Sievers, (515) 460-6004 or [dwsievers4@gmail.com](mailto:dwsievers4@gmail.com), Nominating Committee chair.



Young people develop many skills as queen or ambassador for local bee clubs, like these young women who gathered at the State Capitol on Iowa Honey Bee Day in 2022. CIBA Queen Olivia Moody is in the back row on the left.

## Other CIBA Business

### Proposed Revisions to CIBA Bylaws: Time to Vote

With the November President's Newscast, all CIBA members received a draft of revisions to the CIBA Bylaws, which were later discussed at the November 19 membership meeting. No other changes to the bylaws were brought up at that meeting. In general, these revisions were a cleanup of the bylaws based on issues the CIBA Board has experienced over the last few years.

The revisions:

- Added nonprofit status
- Added "science" to purposes
- Clarified beginning beekeeper criteria for free membership
- Provided option for the board to set the annual business meeting in January or March (to avoid having the annual business meeting at the Winter Seminar)
- Give latitude to the board in setting meeting dates as exceptions
- Provided a range for number of directors
- Increased meeting options for board meetings
- Stated which officers were responsible for state and federal filings
- Increased spending authority for treasurer and president (inflation adjustment)
- Multiple minor changes in language to incorporate above items
- Clarified language and changed order in multiple places

The proposed bylaws revisions were included as an attachment to the CIBA president's November Newscast. Approval of bylaw revisions is on the agenda of CIBA's annual business meeting on Saturday, January 21. A copy of the finalized draft was included as a separate document to the BEELINE. Approval requires two-thirds affirmative vote by CIBA membership attending the annual business meeting.

### Minutes from the November 19, 2022 Business Meeting

*Submitted by Jim Crandall, CIBA Assistant Secretary and CIBA Director*

President Jamie Beyer opened the meeting at 1:14 p.m. Jim Crandall moved to accept minutes; seconded by Tony Christiansen. CIBA has 139 memberships and 185 members.

Susan Kelly Memorial Youth Scholarship: Julie Sander said she had a hive, equipment and recipient, and that she would be willing to work on the program to get it started, with \$500 from the scholarship committee.

There was a proposal to move the annual election of officers and board members from the March meeting to January (to avoid the winter seminar). Moved by Lynn Hammel, seconded by Olivia Moody, passed.

Proposed Revisions to CIBA Bylaws: Jamie led a discussion, with membership to vote on the changes at the January business meeting.

Program Committee: The January 21, 2023 meeting speaker will be Amy Toth from Iowa State University who will talk about bee stinging behavior. The Winter Seminar will be March 18, 2023 at the Iowa Arboretum. Advance registration required.

Royalty Committee: We have one applicant.

Iowa Honey Bee Day will be March 16, 2023, beginning at 7 a.m. Interested beekeepers can meet in the State Capitol Rotunda (which opens at 6:30 a.m.).

Jim Crandall moved to adjourn at 1:40 p.m.

## Minutes from the September 17, 2022 Business Meeting

*Submitted by Jim Crandall, CIBA Assistant Secretary and CIBA Director*

President Jamie Beyer opened the meeting at 5:05 p.m. CIBA's nonprofit status was revoked due to a technical problem, and we have reapplied with no lapse of coverage. (Editor's note: CIBA's nonprofit status was reinstated in September, effective back to the date of suspension.)

Membership: We gained 3 members since July. Our next meeting will be Saturday, November 19, and the January 21 meeting speaker will be Amy Toth from Iowa State University.

Newsletter: Laura Miller (editor) reported that new beekeepers enrolled in central Iowa beekeeping classes will receive a complimentary CIBA newsletter. Deadline for the next (winter) newsletter is December 10,

Tony Christiansen moved and Arvin Foell seconded that CIBA establish a youth scholarship in Susan Kelly's name. Approved. Since it is getting late in the year to plan for a new hive in 2023, Laura Miller moved, and Ray Knapp seconded, that CIBA approve a potential candidate (to be vetted by Mike and Julie Sander who agreed to be her mentor) to receive the first Susan Kelly Memorial Youth Scholarship. Approved.

Queen Report: Olivia Moody gave an excellent talk about Susan Kelly. Tony Christiansen was nominated and elected to fulfill Susan Kelly's three-year term on the CIBA Board of Directors.

Bylaw revisions are coming. Tony Christiansen moved, and Olivia Moody seconded, a motion to adjourn..

## How to Join January and February CIBA Board Meetings

CIBA officers and directors have regularly scheduled CIBA Board meetings the second Monday of each month starting at 7:00 p.m. The Zoom link opens at 6:30 p.m. Here are the Zoom links for connecting via the internet:

January 9, 2023:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87185108794?pwd=MTdtWmlzZDdjNTFQUStHRVhYOVlJQT09>

Meeting ID: 871 8510 8794 Passcode: 729780

February 13, 2023:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87385429289?pwd=TINFUmIESk9jTTlماكFKM0RDTy9Jdz09>

Meeting ID: 873 8542 9289 Passcode: 101726

To connect via phone, find a local number at [https://us02web.zoom.us/u/kbVlb3xQwM](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87385429289?pwd=TINFUmIESk9jTTlماكFKM0RDTy9Jdz09) or use Chicago number (312) 626-6799 and then the meeting ID and passcode for that month's meeting.

## Here's to Spring and CIBA Auction

*Submitted by Mark Moberly, CIBA Director and Auction Chair*

It's only January but it's time again to think about spring – and CIBA's annual auction, a sale BY beekeepers and FOR beekeepers.

This year's CIBA auction will be Saturday, April 15 in the same location – at the Washington Township School, 18930 210th Street near Minburn. Bidding will start at 10:00 a.m.

Here's how to start getting ready: Look through your bee equipment. What will you need this spring? What haven't you used (and want to get rid of)? The CIBA Auction is where you may find everything!



Washington Township School

(AUCTION: continued on page 7)

(**AUCTION:** continued from page 6)

We have begun to receive items from some beekeepers already. I know we will have at least one extractor at the auction as well as bottles for packaging your honey. I have seen a display rack, too.

Sellers should register on the CIBA website as soon as possible (a consignment form was included with distribution of this newsletter). Lots will be assigned based on registration date and time. At 7 a.m. on the day of the sale, we will start unloading items to lots.

Buyers should register online early, too, so we can have an idea on how many attendees to expect. This helps as we prepare the parking area as well as for food, which will be available for sale inside the building at the Royalty Café (a fundraiser for the CIBA Royalty program). The inside area has tables and chairs.

All bidding will take place outdoors so dress for the weather. If you would like to sit down, bring your own chair. Sign-in will be inside the building, where you will receive your bidder number. Payment for purchases will be made at the same location.

Be ready for a full day of fun and fellowship!!attend!



We cannot guarantee the weather but we know there will be a lot of items to sell!

## **It's Official: CIBA Has Federal Nonprofit Status**

All donations to CIBA are tax-deductible – that includes equipment donated at our annual auction, as well as financial contributions made any other time of the year. CIBA had been a nonprofit corporation in Iowa since 2019 and was approved in 2021 at the federal level as a 501(c)(3) educational public charity.

You can find confirmation of CIBA's federal deductible status using CIBA's EIN number 42-1231358 in the search at this website:

<https://www.irs.gov/charities-non-profits/tax-exempt-organization-search>

CIBA is an organization of beekeepers - novice to advanced. We are one of the oldest beekeeping clubs in Iowa, promoting honeybees since 1947. Our mission is two-fold; to advance the art and science of beekeeping and honey production, and to promote close coordination, cooperation and fellowship amongst members of the organization. Donations give us the ability to meet our club's mission, which includes educational opportunities and resources to beekeepers at every stage of his/her journey.

Please consider CIBA for your charitable giving. You have several options for use of your donations:

- General CIBA program fund, which assists with our beekeeping educational and resource mission,
- CIBA Royalty program, which supports our queens and ambassadors or
- Susan Kelly Memorial Youth Scholarship Program, which sponsors youth who want to be beekeepers

The CIBA membership form includes options to donate when you join or renew. If you want to donate beekeeping items at the CIBA annual auction, you can indicate on the consignment form how you want your donation used. All donations valued at more than \$50 will receive an acknowledgment letter in January of the following year that can be used as evidence of donation as you do your taxes.

Along with our federal nonprofit status, we also will qualify for reduced rates on insurance (a big plus for development of a community bee yard) and rental/availability of some facilities.

Thanks to the CIBA Board for sticking with the process!



## The Queen's Corner: Thank You!

*Submitted by 2022 CIBA Honey Queen Olivia Moody*

While I would like to report that I have been very active with presentations and events, unfortunately the cold has made people less inclined to learn about honeybees. Instead, I would like to express my gratitude to all the CIBA members that have supported me this past year.

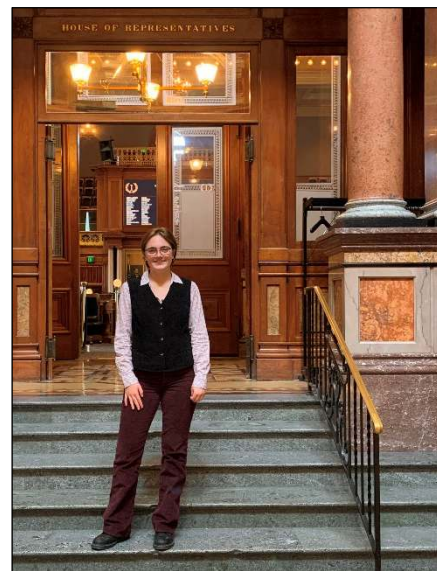
While my reign as honey queen is almost over, I know that I will carry the lessons I learned for the rest of my life. Because of this opportunity I have become a better speaker, a better presenter and more educated in beekeeping.

Most importantly, I have become connected with the most generous group of people I have ever encountered. I have been greeted with nothing but smiles and warm regards by CIBA members and all beekeepers in Iowa.

Because of CIBA I have met senators, representatives, lobbyists and beekeeping activists. These interactions have given me the opportunity to become a legislative page for the Iowa House of Representatives at the State Capitol this year. I know for a fact that if it were not for Jamie Beyer and CIBA I would not have been able to achieve this. This legislative session I hope to take a new role for CIBA by advocating for pollinators in any way that I can during my time at the Capitol.

Thank you all again for granting me the best opportunity that I have been given. I have enjoyed being your 2022 CIBA Honey Queen more than I expected, and it has changed me in more ways than I probably know.

I hope to see you all at the Iowa Honeybee Day at the Capitol!



## Meet Your Newest CIBA Director: Tony Christiansen

**How long have you been a beekeeper? What got you interested in keeping bees?**

I have been beekeeping for 22+ years. I had a garden and fruit trees and saw an advertisement for a live hive. I thought beekeeping was a logical step.

**How many hives do you have and where are they located?**

We have 11 hives, all in central Iowa.

**When did you join CIBA and what drew you to this organization?**

I don't remember when I joined CIBA, but I did want to join a local bee club.

**What do you hope to contribute to CIBA as a board member?**

As a board member I would like to see a job description for the elected positions and the board members. I think this would remove some of the reluctance to serve.

**What's your biggest challenge in beekeeping? What do you most enjoy about beekeeping?**

Getting my beekeeping chores done in a timely manner always is a challenge. I really enjoy mentoring new beekeepers.

**What's your advice to new beekeepers?**

Join a bee club and ASK QUESTIONS!

**Tell us a little bit about your family.**

My wife and I have four children and eight grandchildren. Seven of the eight grandchildren have worn the bee suit and helped me open hives. And two 11-year-old grandsons have hives of their own.





# Susan Kelly Memorial Youth Scholarship

Submitted by Julie Sander, CIBA member

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** At the November CIBA meeting, members approved a youth scholarship to honor beloved CIBA member Susan Kelly. Similar to the Iowa Honey Producers Association program, the recipient receives a hive and supplies to raise honey bees with the help of a mentor. CIBA member Julie Sander explains why this is a great way to honor Susan. The first recipient will be recognized at the January 21 CIBA meeting.

As I reflect on my time with Susan, I remember her and I talking about how kids need to be trained, practice doing the right things and given the opportunity to learn, so having a youth scholarship under her name's sake for training, practicing and learning beekeeping is a perfect fit.

This year Mike and I have had the privilege of adding a couple new families to our beekeeping backyards. There is one which was a bit out of our driving radius over by Redfield but felt we needed to go there. It was quickly obvious why. One of the daughters of the family comes bouncing out to the hives each time we come to do chores, she wants to help and learn. If you have ever met any of Susan's girls this young lady is just as helpful, respectful, and inquisitive. We quickly encouraged her to pursue the IHPA scholarship as Mike and I believe in the program and have served as mentors with it. Her and her family began the process of applying.

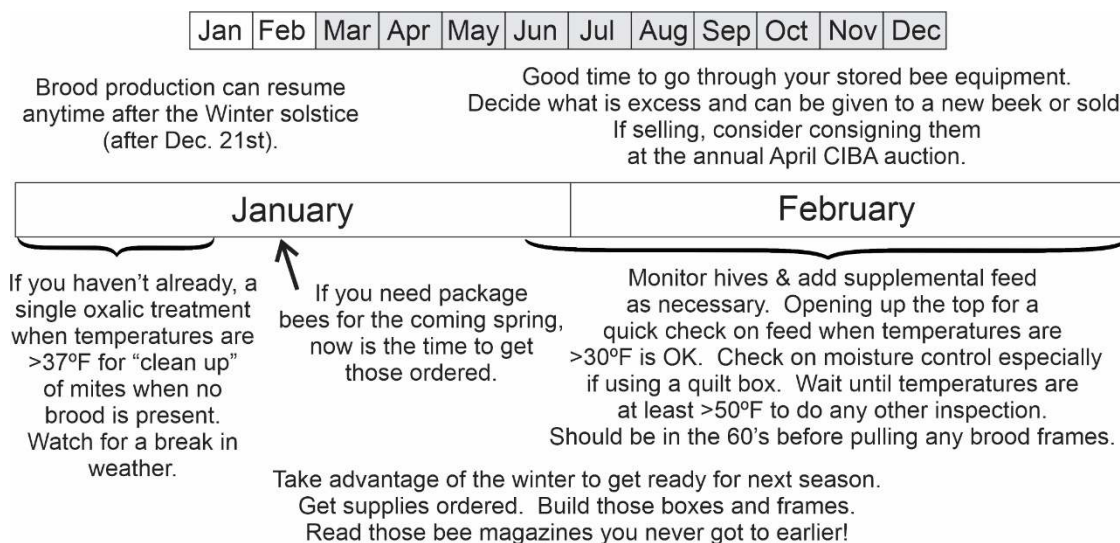


Here's Julie Sander with another eager helper!

Then when the CIBA membership decided to do the Susan Kelly Memorial Youth Scholarship, I knew I needed to nominate Morgan. She is someone Susan would have been excited to see start down the beekeeping journey, and she exudes the qualities Susan developed in her own children. Mike and I will be mentoring her with her own hives this coming spring and are excited to encourage her and see her learn the beekeeping practice.

This scholarship will be an ongoing program and needs you to be part of the committee or contribute funds for the future recipients. Please reach out to committee chair Tony Christiansen (515-240-4957 or [antchristensen@yahoo.com](mailto:antchristensen@yahoo.com)), or any other board members if you are interested.

## Central Iowa Timeline of Beekeeping Tasks



Dates are average--adjust for early or late season

**Note:** This framework was developed by CIBA member Linn Wilbur and reviewed by CIBA directors prior to publication here. It covers the months until the next BEELINE is published to give members a better idea for planning time and tasks related to their bee operation, based on average temperatures in central Iowa. Copyright 2023 Central Iowa Beekeepers Association

# Update on Selling Honey with Added Ingredients

*Submitted by Linn Wilbur, CIBA Secretary/Treasurer*

Recall that at this year's May CIBA meeting we had a presentation by Sara Todd, Holton Homestead, that included an overview of the restrictions on selling honey with added ingredients. These would be products like infused/spiced honeys and creamed honey. There have been changes for the better since then on this type of honey product.

Last year's Iowa General Assembly passed and the Iowa governor signed House File 241 ([www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=hf2431](http://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ba=hf2431)), a revision of home-based businesses, including food establishments and home food processing establishments. Included in those revisions are changes to how honey with added ingredients can be prepared and marketed. The Iowa Department of Inspections & Appeals ([dia.iowa.gov](http://dia.iowa.gov)) issued revised rules and regulations on July 1, 2022 implementing these changes.

Briefly, these changes significantly increased to us as beekeepers our ability to legitimately sell honey with added ingredients directly as "cottage foods" and opened a new and less restrictive method to sell in retail establishments by creating a home-based (Home Food Processing Establishment, HFPE) license. Previously the Iowa Dept. of Inspections & Appeals rules restricted sale of these products to those produced in a licensed, commercial kitchen.

Foods prepared in a residence as cottage foods are not subject to licensing or inspection and may be sold directly to the consumer. They must meet ALL of the following criteria:

- The food is prepared in a private residence;
- The food does not require temperature control (hot or cold) to ensure safety;
- The food is sold directly from the producer to the consumer; and
- The food is properly labeled.

These must be "shelf stable" and there are some restrictions on certain types of foods (milk, meat or poultry products) but none of these restricted products are honey products. Examples of "direct to the consumer" include direct sale without any intermediary, farmers markets and bazaars. This does not include retail or wholesale sale.

For retail or wholesale sale a HFPE license process is needed. As this is written there are less than a clear and defined process for obtaining this licensure from the overseeing department. In discussion with an Iowa Dept. of Inspections & Appeals official, he outlined the process:

- Application process including a \$50/year reoccurring fee
- Submit to Iowa State University 3 unique batches of 1 product for testing (seemed to be moisture testing and about \$25 per batch)—all subsequent or different products would be considered approved without additional testing
- Appears to be some online training needed
- Requires record-keeping
- Establishment of recipes and processes
- Maintain batch records

There are questions that need clarification. The production of honey with additional ingredients in a licensed, commercial kitchen is still an option.

## Want more information?

Come to our Winter Seminar on March 18! Kurt Rueber from the Iowa Department of Inspections & Appeals will be one of the speakers. His talk should clarify the new rules and allow you to ask questions



# How Observation Hives Engage Audiences

*Submitted by Olivia Moody, 2022 Central Iowa Honey Queen*

Over the summer I would say that I did around 15 presentations, and while I would like to say that it was my speech that was keeping all the kids engaged, it was definitely my observation hive.

I was lucky enough to receive an observation hive during the annual equipment auction this past year, and I do not know what I would have done without it as honey queen. I did not think that I would use it often, but I quickly found that I relied on it completely during the summer.

My dad and I had never really seen an observation hive before, so we had a very big learning curve to overcome initially. We were overwhelmed with advice on what to do, so we took matters into our own hands. We found that putting in a frame was easiest at night or right in the morning because the bees were less active. This also made it easier to get enough bees into the hive. Unfortunately, my hive does not have a built-in sugar feeder so I had to put in a super of capped-over honey for the bees to feed on during the day.

My dad and I had been told that it was best to have a nuc box that you exclusively used for the observation hive, especially if you use it frequently. However, we have 11 hives and found that it made more sense to alternate what hives we take the frames from, and we learned which hives took to it better, and had the most interesting frames.

When looking for a frame, I usually make sure that it had uncapped and capped brood as well as nectar, and possibly capped-over honey. Ticking off all these boxes lends itself to more questions from onlookers and can sometimes turn into a mini-lesson.

While I sometimes felt that the observation hive was a pain, my favorite part of having a presentation was always when the kids, or adults, saw the bees for the first time. My words did not make them want to be a beekeeper, the bees did. By using the hive I can teach more hands-on in a very visual way. I've been able to help teach the difference between worker and drone bees, what larvae look like, and even have a queen cell to show off.

I strongly recommend the use of an observation hive for any presentation, but especially presentations with kids. You can find used observation hives at local club auctions and new ones from outfitters such as Mann Lake and Dadant. Some beekeepers build their own observation hive, but I do not know very much about that process.

I would also like to apologize to my dad. He learned what the bees really thought of this little show-and-tell. Every time we moved frames from the observation hive back to our bees' rightful home, my dad was the one who got stung!



Left, see how the kids respond to this observation hive. Above photo shows how the hive is set up for presentations.



## Beekeeper Tips: Keep It Handy

*Submitted by Eric Kenoyer, CIBA member*

Over the years beekeepers would ask me, “What all do I carry or need in a bee bag when I go to my apiary?”

Well, it depends on what type of beekeeper you are. A hobbyist (which is the case for most people) may only have one or two hive tools, whether it’s the regular style or the J-hook-and-scraper type. In time you may want both, then add the mini hive tool or the EZ Pry, whichever you prefer and works best for your purpose.

Other items to carry could be duct tape and a permanent marker. Use the marker to write notes on your hives. The duct tape comes in handy to seal off areas where angry bees might wander into, but should not be going, such as holes in jeans or up a pant leg!

Other items could be a 9-frame spacing tool for the honey supers, an extra entrance reducer, a queen catcher, some smoker starters, a lighter to start your smoker, and a frame grip to pull up frames (useful for wood or plastic frames).

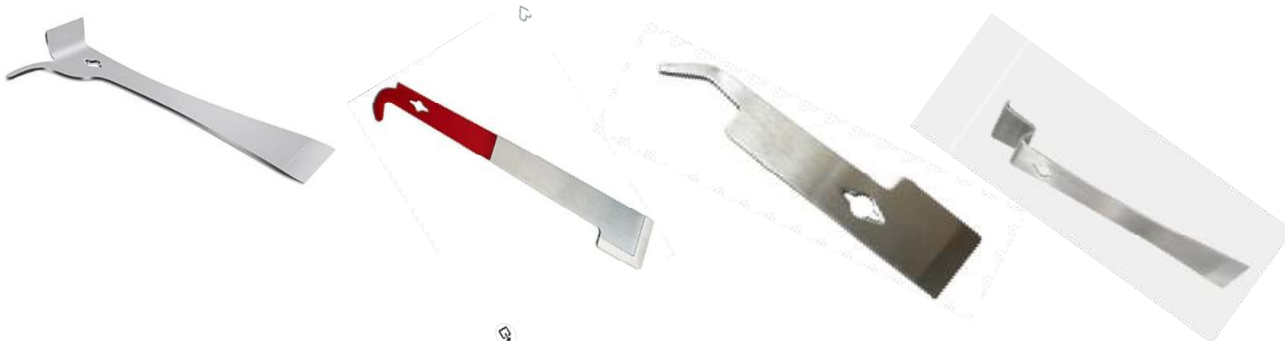
I carry a few extra items that most won’t need but are nice to have. These include a small amount of rubbing alcohol to help with the smoker or just to rinse off my hive tool before I use it in another apiary. Other items might be an Epi-pen for those allergic to bees, lemon grass oil for my swarm traps or other purposes.

This may seem like a lot of items, but when you need something you don’t want to spend time looking for it when you can be working the hives instead. Stay safe, my fellow beekeepers!



Eric led a session at our July field day and he brought his bee bag.

Types of hive tools (from left): standard, J-hook, mini, and EZ Pry



## Keeping Bees in CRP

*Submitted by Randall Cass, ISU Extension Bee Specialist*

The Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) offered through the USDA offers a promising mitigation strategy related to establishing more nesting and foraging habitat for bees.

CRP provides 10-15 year contracts to farmers and landowners to implement conservation practices on their land, such as establishing vegetative cover, riparian buffers, and grass waterways. CRP funds are also offered specifically to establish diverse pollinator habitat through the CP42 designation. The CP42 initiative encourages the planting of forage habitat, such as wildflowers and flowering legumes, with an emphasis on native species and plants that flower throughout the growing season.

To read the full article and get links for more information, go to the ISU Bee Program web site:

<https://crops.extension.iastate.edu/cropnews/2020/04/keeping-bees-crp>

## From the Editor: Happiness Is ...

By *BEELINE* Editor Laura Miller

In the 1970s a cute little cartoon gave us something to be happy for every day. Some of you probably remember these ditties or have yellowed clips stuck away somewhere. With a nod to that cartoonist whose name I cannot recall, I'd like to offer a few of the many things that bring me happiness.

- **Happiness is seeing your bees fly on a nice winter day.**

I took a break from editing this newsletter to check on our bees. It was the first warm day after a brutal cold spell that had wind chill ratings like I've never seen. All three of our hives had bees flying. They looked happy (that is, if a bee can fly happily). I know we're not through the most dangerous period yet, but it's always a relief to see bees in the air on a nice winter day.

- **Happiness is trying something new with your bees.**

At our September meeting one of the long-time experts talked about mountain camp, a method of providing food for the bees during winter. When it's too cold to feed sugar water and when you put the hive "to bed" in the fall, some beekeepers make a pile (mountain) of white, granulated sugar on top of the frames (put down a sheet of newspaper first). The sugar is an emergency source of food for the bees. Sugar also can help control moisture inside the hive when the temperatures change. I tried it this year. The bees in one of our hives seem to like it – almost half was gone when I checked. I learn something at every CIBA meeting so if you're not a member yet, join! You can't learn if you don't come to our meetings!

- **Happiness is gifting your honey and getting rave reviews.**

It's fun to offer gifts of your bees' sweet honey. Enough said.

- **Happiness is ... getting a ventilated bee suit for Christmas.**

I've wanted one of these suits for a long time. My husband insisted this year that we order one, just in time for Christmas. The suit is made with a lightweight material that's much cooler than suits of white canvas. It seems like we always need to get into our hives on the hottest days of the year. I can hardly wait to wear it!

- **Happiness is ... raising honey bees.**

I like most things about bees. Yes, they're a lot of work but it's so satisfying to hear the quiet hum of a busy hive, bees going about their business. Sometimes a few bees are just looking for trouble and they get upset after we harvest their summer's work, but overall being a beekeeper has many joys and I think most of you will agree with me. That's why we do it!

Happy Beekeeping!



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