



APRIL 2013

NEWSLETTER OF THE ALAMANCE COUNTY BEEKEEPERS

Remember...

Meeting April 18th @ 7:00

What's Blooming?

Dandelion	<i>Taraxacum officinale</i>	15-Mar	60	14-May
Sumac	<i>Rhus spp.</i>	3-Apr	151	1-Sep
Alsike Clover	<i>Trifolium hybridum</i>	4-Apr	102	15-Jul
Blackberry	<i>Rubus spp.</i>	10-Apr	20	30-Apr

Alamance County Beekeepers

This month's meeting...at the agriculture meeting at 7:00

pm. Mike Ross will be speaking about Swarms and Swarm Control.

I don't know about you, but we have had one hive to swarm(Sunday morning). The "girls" were not too considerate either because they chose a tree limb about 30 feet up in a Cedar tree. Well, we got them back, because with a beekeeper, where there is a tall ladder and a will, there is a way.

Next month's meeting will be a covered dish at the Ag Building. Danny Jaynes and his wife, Mary, will be speaking about how to set up a booth at the State Fair for honey. Next month's meeting will be at 6:00 on May 16th.

BuzzKill with Dan Rather

A sobering Report From The Almonds

For those who haven't been able to see it yet, this is a rather sobering story about this spring...here's the link:

Dan Rather Reports - "Buzzkill"

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oJ5riRX1_3w

EU gets Chemical Company Action Plan

It's not their fault, but they'll help anyway...

"Banning these products would not save a single hive and it is time that everyone focused on addressing the real causes of declining bee populations. The plan is based on our confidence in the safety of our products and on our historical commitment to improving the environment for bees."

"Even though all the evidence points to various parasites and diseases being the true cause of poor bee health, we are keen to do everything in our power to give consumers confidence in our products."

"The significant lack of agreement between the European Commission and the Member States needs a bold plan so that farmers in Europe can continue to produce the high quality affordable food, in a way that promotes the health of bees and other pollinators. We believe that such a plan as this can be delivered."

Syngenta and Bayer CropScience, quoted in *Western Farm Press*

Research to date on neonicotinoids "supports the notion that the products are safe and are not contributing in any measurable way to pollinator health concerns," the president of CropLife America, Jay Vroom, said Wednesday. The group represents more than 90 pesticide producers.

He said the group nevertheless supported further research. "We stand with science and will let science take the regulation of our products in whatever direction science will guide it," Mr. Vroom said.

Quoted in *NY Times*

Syngenta and Bayer CropScience have proposed an action plan to help unlock the EU stalemate on bee health.

This follows the failure of the European Commission to reach agreement with Member States on an appropriate response to EFSA's report on the theoretical risk to bee health from neonicotinoid pesticides.

John Atkin, Syngenta's Chief Operating Officer, said: "This comprehensive plan will bring valuable insights into the area of bee health, whereas a ban on neonicotinoids would simply close the door to understanding the problem.

"Banning these products would not save a single hive and it is time that everyone focused on addressing the real causes of declining bee populations. The plan is based on our confidence in the safety of our products and on our historical commitment to improving the environment for bees."

Dr. Rüdiger Scheitza, Member of the Board of Management of Bayer CropScience and Head of Strategy & [Business Management](#), said: "Even though all the evidence points to various parasites and diseases being the true cause of poor bee health, we are keen to do everything in our power to give consumers confidence in our products.

"The significant lack of agreement between the European Commission and the Member States needs a bold plan so that farmers in Europe can continue to produce the high quality affordable food, in a way that promotes the health of bees and other pollinators. We believe that such a plan as this can be delivered."

The key features of the action plan are: (top of next column)

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1. Significantly scale up the creation of pollen rich, flowering field margins across the EU to provide essential habitat and nutrition for bees.
2. Support for the establishment of a comprehensive field [monitoring program](#) for bee health including the detection of neonicotinoid crop protection products - particularly in corn, oilseed rape, sunflower and cotton.
3. Mandatory implementation of strict measures to mitigate the exposure risk to bees; these are currently already recommended by the manufacturers and effectively applied by most farmers as good agricultural practice.
4. Investment in and implementation, at the earliest opportunity, of new technologies which further reduce dust emissions from the planting of seed treated with neonicotinoid crop protection products.
5. Further investment in the research and development of new solutions for the main factors impacting bee health, which include parasites and viruses, and establishment of area-wide long-term pilot studies which demonstrate their effectiveness.

. In further detail, the key features of the action plan are:

Significantly scale up the provision of pollen rich flowering field margins across the EU to be sown alongside bee attractive crops treated with neonicotinoids to provide habitat and nutrition

- This would build on Syngenta's 10-year Operation Pollinator program which has demonstrated that these margins dramatically increase pollinator populations, including honey bees.

- This would address one of the main factors identified by the European Commission in the decline in bee health.

Support for the establishment of a comprehensive field [monitoring program](#) for bee health including the detection of crop protection chemicals.

- A comprehensive program, following the guidelines for surveillance projects by the EU Reference Laboratory for honey bee health, shall be established.

- The current monitoring work of the EU reference laboratories on bee health, supported by national bee institutes, should be reinforced and extended.

- Within this new scope the detection of chemicals from crop protection, particularly neonicotinoids, and veterinary products should be included.

April Newsletter cont.

Mandatory implementation of strict measures to mitigate the exposure risk to bees.

- High quality treatment of seed to take place only in certified production sites which participate in a Quality Assurance Scheme.
- Strict rules governing the use of treated seed, such as the mandatory use of deflectors in planting machinery, [application](#) only by professional and certified users, and improved information exchange between farmers and beekeepers.
- Bayer Crop Science recently developed "SweepAir", a new air-cleaning technology for maize sowing equipment offering a significant improvement in comparison to standard technology; first field tests with the prototype indicate a dust reduction

Invest in and roll out new technologies which further reduce the dust emissions from the planting of seed treated with neonicotinoid crop protection chemicals.

- Bayer CropScience and Syngenta are both working on new solutions to further improve the coating of seeds treated with crop protection chemicals and the way they are planted to ensure that dust emissions are minimized.
- Some of these solutions are ready to be deployed and we commit to continuing our investment in the research and development of these risk mitigation measures.

Further invest in the research and development of new solutions for the main factors impacting bee health.

- The European Commission identifies disease and viruses such as Varroa destructor, American foulbrood, European foulbrood, Nosema spp., and honey bee viruses as the main cause of the decline in bee health.
- Bayer CropScience and Syngenta have both invested in the research and development of new solutions to these parasites, diseases and viruses and commit to stepping up our activities in this area.
- Bayer CropScience and Syngenta commit to supporting area-wide long-term pilot studies which demonstrate their effectiveness.

Back in the U.S., Brett Adee, co-owner of Adee Honey Farms, running approximately 100,000 colonies this year, but losing about 55% of them this fall and winter was quoted:

“Soybean fields or canola fields or sunflower fields, they all have this systemic [insecticide](#),” Mr. Adee said. “If you have one shot of whiskey on Thanksgiving and one on the Fourth of July, it’s

not going to make any difference. But if you have whiskey every night, 365 days a year, your liver's gone. It's the same thing."

There just ain't no safe place to go.