



LANE COUNTY BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

130 HANSEN LANE, EUGENE, OR 97404

Website: www.lcbaor.org Email: lcbaor@pacinfo.com

President: Mike France 541-232-1610

Vice President: Jim Rundall 541-688-1925

Treasurer: Polly Habliston 541-461-0339

Past President: Pam Leavitt 541-344-4228

Board Members: Kelly Goodwin 541-925-3028

Rebecca Fain 541-997-3792

Paula Mance 541-967-2047

Brian McGinley 541-521-7523

Fonta Molyneaux 541-592-9332

April 2019 NEWSLETTER



President's Message

Mike France, LCBA President

Rain, rain go away and let my bees fly today!

With the first inspections of March over I was eagerly anticipating a rapid April buildup of bees in the hives I tend to. Then the rains came. As a beekeeper I am constantly looking at the ten day weather forecast. Beginning last week and continuing on into the ten day future there is only rain and more rain. What will this do to our hives?

There are several ornamental cherry and pear trees in my neighborhood and I saw the blooms come and go in the near constant rain with almost no sight of the normal bees visiting those beautiful white and pink blossoms. What will this mean for the trees this year?

Being a beekeeper reminds me of what farmers must face as they study the coming weather. With a good deal of concern but also with the feeling of helplessness. Nothing we can do will change the rainy days ahead. The optimist in me says that the weather always turns and the bees will be flying free in the dry and warmer weather again soon. Then come the swarms and all is right with the beekeeping world again.

Have you ordered your packages and nucs yet for this year? Many suppliers have deadlines near so make your plans now to start your beekeeping journey or to replenish those hives you lost this year.

Make sure to come to our next meeting in April to hear the early talk about package bees with Rick Olson. This is important information if you will be picking up your packages soon. In the main session at 7:30 PM Max Kuhn will address Best Practices of Honey Bee Management. Come early and ask any of our club members the questions you have.

GENERAL MEETING:

April 10, 2019

Come early to socialize and share your questions with experienced beekeepers.

Early Educational Class

Topic: Package Bees

Speaker: Rick Olson

Door opens at 6:00 pm

Presentation starts at 6:15 pm

"Fireside Room"

General Meeting

Hall opens at 7:00 pm

Program 7:30 pm

Topic: Best Practices of Honey Bee Management

Speaker: Max Kuhn

Trinity United

Methodist Church

440 Maxwell Road

Turn West off River Road
in Eugene (South of Beltline)

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Upcoming Events & Announcements

April 13, 2019—Save the Bee 5K Run/Walk

Location: Richardson Park
(Fernridge), Eugene, OR

All proceeds go towards "Save the Bee" campaign.

<https://glorybee.com/5k>



April 17th - Linn Benton Beekeeping Assoc. Meeting

Speaker: Andony Melathopoulos from OSU, "How To Keep Your Bees Out Of Trees So They Can Make Honey".

Location: Corvallis Waldorf School, 3855 NE Hwy 20

<http://www.lbba.us>

April 24th - Central Coast Beekeepers Assoc.

Speaker: Judy Scher, "Products of the Hive"

Location: Newport Library, 35 NW Nye St. Newport

<http://www.ccbaor.org/>

April 26th-27th - 45th Annual Bee Weekend

Location: Glory Bee, 29548 B Airport
Rd, Eugene

Time: Friday 9:30 am-4:30 pm; Saturday 9:00AM-4:00pm
Food Carts / Kids Crafts /Honey Tasting/ Presentations &
Live Installation Demos

Bee Pick up: Fri. 9:30am-4:30pm, Sat. 9:00am-2:00pm

<https://glorybee.com/content/bee-weekend-2019>



July 26th - Friday in the Apiary at OSU Bee Apiary

General colony inspections in a hive.

Sign up to get notices at: [https://](https://extension.oregonstate.edu/mb/friday-apiary)

extension.oregonstate.edu/mb/friday-apiary

May 4th - 4th Annual BotanicFest

Location: Elmira Grange, 88764 Sprague St, Elmira, OR

Time: 11:00am to 5:00pm

May 18th—Annual Oregon Honey Festival

[Click here](#) for more information.

June 23rd - LBBA/LCBA Field Day

Location: OSU Bee Apiary, Corvallis

June 21st - Pollinator Week Event

Location: River Road Parks Eugene

July 12th-14th— Western Apicultural Society Annual Conference

Location: Ashland, OR

www.westernapiculturalsociety.org

Kelly's Beekeeping Website: "Lane County Hiveways"

Follow Kelly as she does her inspections, observations, and other beekeeping activities.

<http://lanecountyhiveways.com/>

Florence Garden Club—visit their Face Book page at

<https://www.facebook.com/FlorenceGardenClub/>

Save the Date LBBA/LCBA Field Day

Date: Sunday, June 23, 2019

Location: OSU Bee Apiary, Corvallis

Time: 10:00 am - 2:30 pm (approx.)

Linn Benton Beekeepers and Lane County Beekeepers have joined together this year for field day. Field Day is a great hands-on learning experience especially for new beekeepers. You will go through a hive with an experienced beekeeper and there will also be some educational presentations.

More information and registration form to be posted next month.

LCBA Upcoming Meeting Topics

Below are some of our upcoming meetings.

May 21st - General Meeting: Botany for Beekeepers
Early Education Class: Hive Evaluation &
Reading Frames

June 18th - General Meeting: Varroa Mites
Early Education Class: Extracting Honey

July 17th - General Meeting: Fall & Winter Management

Volunteers Needed

LCBA will be having informational booths at two upcoming events. We are in need of volunteers to help out.

Bee Weekend: April 26th & 27th

Contact Ken Ograin woodrt@pacinfo.com 541-935-7065

BotanicaFest: May 4th

Contact Nancy Ograin: nancy.ograin@gmail.com

541-935-7065

Welcome New Members

Christina Ketchum	Eugene
Bryon Murray	Eugene
Julie Rossberg	Eugene
Jason Vanderpool	Cottage Grove

March Meeting Highlights

By Pam Leavitt

The general meeting began with Dr. Dewey Caron, Emeritus Professor of Entomology and Wildlife Ecology at the University of Delaware and affiliate Professor at the Department of Horticulture at Oregon State University. Dr. Caron shared valuable statistics that were the results of the 2017-2018 Pacific Northwest Honeybee Survey done from March through April 2018. The highly diverse management variables, such as feeding, sanitation and varroa sampling methods and varroa control were analyzed and presented. This survey has gathered information for the past five years. The results are available for review online: <http://pnwhoneybeesurvey.com/survey-results/>. Dr. Caron emphasized that when reviewing the survey data, beekeepers must keep in mind that you may not be guaranteed the same results. For example, the lowest hive loss occurred to those who fed hard candy to their bees, but that does not mean that if you feed hard card to your bees you will get the same results.



Dr. Caron brought surveys for anyone who wanted to complete the 2018-2019 survey at the meeting as well as passed out cards with the information to provide the individual information online.

The LCBA board urges members to participate in this survey to help gather data which is valuable in learning how beekeepers throughout our state care for their honeybees.

Take the survey at <http://pnwhoneybeesurvey.com/survey/>. It is open till May 1st. If you don't have internet access and need a paper one contact Nancy at 541-935-7065.

Speaker: "Chuck Hunt, Swarms and Hive Management"

Chuck Hunt presented "Swarms and Hive Management". He has had 48 years of beekeeping experience, in Northern Alberta Canada as well as here in the Willamette Valley. He explained the primary threat of swarming occurs in our area from April through May, however they do occur later in the season. Swarming is the bees normal process of reproduction of a new colony. It is awesome to witness, the noise level quite loud, and distressing for the beekeeper (due to the loss of his honey crop). People who are unaware of the docility of bees when they are in a swarm can be quite frightened and nervous. Chuck was able to share personal stories how he interacted with others when his bees swarmed.

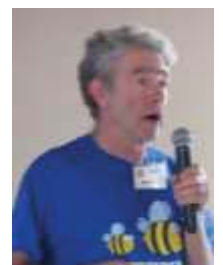


Chuck explained that cutting out queen cells is not a particularly effective way to control swarming. Rather, bees will not swarm if they have either their queen, their field force, or their sealed brood absent or removed. Any one of these can be achieved by splitting the hive. The process of splitting was discussed and described. Splitting was mentioned as the preferred method of controlling swarming.

Early Educational Class - Bait Boxes

At the March meeting we also had an early educational class on bait boxes, given by Morris Ostrofsky. Bait boxes are a good way to increase your bee numbers and genetic diversity, as well as an opportunity to catch feral swarms.

Two weeks prior to swarming, bees will produce whole frames of drone brood. White wax on the top of the frames indicates honey flow. You may also see scout bees in strange locations, looking for new homes. A beard of bees which forms in the front of the hive, especially in the morning, can indicate swarming.



Swarming starts around April 1, peaks in May, and ends in July. The swarms in the early season are more valuable - they are bigger and have the nectar flow to prepare for winter. Set up bait boxes three weeks before swarms start in your area.

The location for a bait box should be away from managed hives and in a shady, secure, and level spot. Make sure to cover the bait box to prevent any moisture & light inside; scout bees like dryness and darkness. A standard Deep-box is preferred (or about 4 cubic feet as a cardboard box), with a 5" opening, and a solid bottom board.

Only put foundation strips in your bait box. Use frames with support wires, because the bees wax will be soft and need support. A drawn frame (previous combed frame with propolis) is very attractive to the bees, so put at least one in the box, on the opposite side from the entrance. XenTari can be used to control wax moths when leaving a drawn frame in a remote location.

March meeting highlights continued

Don't use bare foundation, use foundation starter strips in frames with support wires because the bees wax will be soft and need support. A drawn frame (previous combed frame with propolis) is very attractive to the bees, so put at least one in the box, on the opposite side from the entrance. XenTari can be used to control wax moths when leaving a drawn frame in a remote location.

Check the bait box every three days. Lemongrass essential oil helps to attract the bees. There is also a product available that is formulated to attract swarms: Swarm Commander, available online and at GloryBee. Put one spray on the drawn frame and one spray right next to the entrance, or push in a cotton ball sprayed with it.



April Beekeeping Tips by Chuck Hunt, LCBA Member

1. April is the month for heavy build-up of bees. Look out for swarms and avoid them by giving the bees plenty of room: an extra super may be in order. Other swarm control measures, including splitting hives, may be important at this time. Keep a look out for swarm cells that are positioned at the edges or bottoms of the frames. Make sure that entrance reducers are removed so that bees can fly freely and not have congestion at the entrance to the hive.
2. Monitor mites in your hives using screen bottom boards and sticky boards to see if mite treatment is necessary.
3. Keep an eye on the honey stores of your hive. Bees can starve in bad weather in April and May. Make sure that your bees always have at least 15 pounds of honey (three western or two deep frames of honey). Feed your hives if they are light either using sugar syrup, fondant candy or honey.
4. Check your queens at least once every ten days or two weeks to make sure your hive is queen right. Make sure your hives have eggs in some cells. Requeening may be necessary. Also, pollen coming in the front door is a good indication that your hive is queen right. The heavy demands of spring buildup can cause the queen to fail. Re-queen if necessary.
5. A practice that is helpful to every beekeeper is to keep a diary or notebook. Record the condition of the hive, any special observations that you made as well as any manipulations you used. You might want to include in the diary the weather, including temperature, and the development of the bloom and honey flows. It is sometimes interesting also to note the color of incoming pollen. Keep such a notebook every year and you will not only learn more about beekeeping but also learn a great deal about your local plant life (and the variations from year to year).

Oregon Dept. of Agriculture Apiary Registration

Every person who owns, or is in charge of, five or more colonies of bees located within the state or Oregon, must register their hives with the Oregon Department of Agriculture. If you currently own less than five hives you are not required to register your bees at this time.

The current cost of apiary registration is \$10 with an additional charge of \$0.50 per colony for five or more hives. After July 1, the registration fee will increase to \$20. The fee per hive remains at \$0.50 per colony for five or more hives.

Click below to view Oregon's apiary registration rules and regulations and registration form.

<https://www.oregon.gov/ODA/programs/IPPM/InsectsSpiders/Pages/BeesApiaries.aspx>

Swarm List

The swarm list has been updated. For those signed up for swarms, please check all areas on our website to see if there are errors in your contact numbers or locations.

Go to <http://lcbaor.org/SwarmList.htm> and reload the page to bring up the most current swarm lists.

Let me know if there are any changes.

Thanks, Judy Scher
judyscher@gmail.com or 541-344-2114.



Bumblebee Relocation by Brent Hefley , LCBA Member

April is finally here which means honey bee swarm season, new bee-keeping classes, and the time to install packaged bees have all arrived. It also means that queen bumblebees are out and about looking for their seasonal homes. Don't tell any of my honey bee hives, but Bum-

bles are actually my favorite bees.

There are around 30 species of *Bombus* in Oregon. Ten of these are either species of conservation concern or rare species. The other twenty are fairly common with the yellow-faced bumblebee (*Bombus vosnesenskii*) being the most prolific. The Pacific Northwest bumblebee Atlas has a great printable pdf of our regional species:

<https://www.pnwbumblebeeatlas.org/species-illustrations.html>

Bumblebees are very important for the pollination of many native plant species in our area. They are active at lower temperatures than honey bees and in rainier weather because they can generate heat and regulate their body temperature.

Bumblebees are social bees like honey bees living in a hive containing between 50 - 500 members. Most of the colonies I've worked with have less than 100 bees.

One of the significant differences between honey bees and bumblebees is that bumblebee colonies have a seasonal lifecycle similar to solitary bees. Bumblebee queens hibernate (diapause) through the winter, emerging about the same time as yellow jacket and wasp queens do in the springtime. The fall mated queen then proceeds to locate a new nest site, forage for food and resources to build her nest, and begins laying eggs. It is usually late May or June when the colony reaches a size and activity level where a homeowner notices and becomes concerned.

Removal

I get a number of calls each summer, usually starting in June about bumblebee removal. Most often I can convince the caller to keep the bumblebees. Once the person learns that these bees are not inclined to sting, that they are important pollinators, and that the nest will only be there for one year they are usually inclined to let them be. However, there are some situations when they do need to be relocated.

Removing a bumblebee hive is much simpler than doing a honeybee removal. A bumblebee nest is usually between six and twelve inches in diameter and as noted above probably holds around 100 bees. I do removals in the evening once it is virtually dark to make sure all of the workers are back from their last foraging trip of the day. The part of the removal, which can be difficult, is dislocating and moving the nest intact while keeping it level. Bumblebees keep their small supply of nectar in bulbous pots which are open on the top. To keep from spilling their food supply and creating a sticky mess inside the nest, you have to move it very carefully.

If the bumblebees are in an old birdhouse, employing some netting or cloth to contain the bees usually works well. Finding an elegant way to detach the birdhouse and keep it level while climbing down the ladder can sometimes be tricky.

The ground and compost nests can be a bit more of a challenge, especially since you can't always tell where the bulk of the hive is in relation to the entrance. I plan for a fairly wide buffer around the hive entrance, after estimating the general size of the nest. It's always a compromise between a bigger safety zone for the bees and how much you (or you and a helper) can lift and move safely. For compost pile removals I find a pitchfork or ensilage fork works well to loosen and lift the nest. A garden shovel works better for below ground nests.

Bumblebees will come out to defend their nest, so be prepared with proper safety gear. Working in the evening you will need light. A headlamp is great for this, but be sure you have one with a red light setting, otherwise, your head becomes the main target for the defending bees, trust me on this one!

Once the nest is ready to be lifted out of the ground or compost pile, I will set a sturdy cardboard box on the ground next to the nest. Being careful to keep it level I lift the nest, place it in the box and, seal it for transport.



Bumblebees continued As a result of the nest movement, there may be some bees that will be bumbling around in the dark trying to get back to the original nest location. These bees need to be captured by hand and either added to the box with the nest or transported in a separate container to the new site.

Relocation

My main concern is maintaining a similar location, aspect, and environment to the one the queen initially chose. I consider the depth or height where the hive was located. For me this has varied from; below ground, in a compost pile two to three feet above the ground, to abandoned birdhouses seven to ten feet off the ground. I also try to match the aspect of the hive entrance (e.g., keeping a south facing entrance south facing) to the original. Finally, I try to consider the overall environment of the hive, did it get morning sun or afternoon sun, was it in a black compost bin which held a lot of heat or was it heavily shaded by foliage, etc. I don't know how much this truly matters for the hive's continuity, but I like to err on the side of caution.

I find working with bumblebees very rewarding. Perhaps it is because I don't expect anything back from them or maybe it's their steadfast dedication to a seemingly random flight pattern. In any case, it's vitally important that we all do what we can to protect Bumblebees as part of our ecosystem. If you find yourself presented with a bumblebee dilemma and have questions or need help, I can be reached at:

rescue@plan-bees.com.

Bumblebee resources:

<https://www.bumblebeewatch.org>

<https://www.pnwbumblebeeatlas.org>

<https://www.oregonbeeproject.org>

<https://xerces.org>



match the aspect of the hive





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Tool Use

by Dr. Dewey M. Caron

Pacific Northwest Honey Bee Survey – There is still time to use a citizen science tool; i.e. send in information to <http://pnw.honeybeesurvey.com/> about your overwintering successes and colony management last season. Surveys are open to end of April. Thanks to the several LCBA members who have already sent in results. Early numbers

point to higher than normal winter losses.

As beekeepers we employ a variety of tools such as smoker, hive tool, frame holders, etc. When I prepared the Honey Bee Health Coalition guide on managing varroa, we called the publication a tool – an educational aid to combat our most serious bee pest. We utilize many tools, some essential, others less so, to keep bees

Just a few decades ago, tool use was among the traits we believed “made us human”, different from other organisms. It turns out tool use isn’t so unique. Tools are sometimes used by other animals, not just by our closest relatives. Consider this: On a cold night a year ago in February, a striped skunk wandered into a suburban Colorado Springs backyard carrying a stone in one paw. The skunk climbed onto a water bowl and using the stone like a hammer, banged a hole in its frozen surface. Suzanne Dickerson (twitter [@CameraTrapSue](https://twitter.com/CameraTrapSue)) thusly captured the first documented occurrence of a skunk using a tool. [“Observation of tool use in striped skunks: how community science and social media help document rare natural phenomena.”](#) *Ecosphere*, 2018.

Beekeepers may be familiar with descriptions of the chimpanzees of Jane Goodell at Gombe or those of Gabon using sticks on underground bee nests to secure honey and bee brood to eat; <https://theconversation.com/chimpanzees-hunting-for-honey-are-cleverer-than-we-thought-74379>. Bonobos, gorillas, baboons and even orangutans also have behaviors that include tool use. All use a stick similar to chimpanzees, to obtain honey and brood from bee nests. Tool use has previously been described in several birds (crows, ravens, woodpeckers), fish that use shellfish to help with nest construction and octopi who construct coconut shell hideouts. And at least one skunk.

The tool (rock) using skunk was not the discovery of a scientist, but by a citizen using a tool (motion activated camera) in her backyard. This activity is often labelled citizen science. Beekeepers have been invited to participate in data collection using their own bees in their backyard as natural scientists at work.

In our managing of hives and harvesting of honey, tool use abounds. Three essential tools are veil, smoker and hive tool. We light the smoker to change bee behavior as we manipulate the hive tool to crack open the supers to “steal” their stores. Correct and efficient use of both smoker and hive tool take practice to perfect – how many smokers did you have to start before learning the “secret”? You start the fire with plenty of oxygen using highly combustible fuel source from below before adding a less combustible fuel above to produce the cool, good volume smoke.

Hive tools are basic to opening the hive and getting the heavy honey-filled super frames out. Newbees use them as primitive pry bars but they work better when the physics of the tool are utilized. The curve (traditional design) and J-hook are there for a purpose. Let the tool do the work, not you with heavy pushing and pulling. A chisel or screwdriver is not the right tool.

And the tools we use to extract? They can be expensive because we like to have our very own over sharing. If you do prefer your own extractor it is an investment. Treat the extractor kindly and you will find they retain their value if you decide to get out of bees and need to sell them to another beekeeper. Most of the year they will be in storage. When needed they are ready in a jiffy and adding knife, filters and buckets you will be all set to extract and clarify (filtering and letting stand) that delicious honey.

Kim Flottum in December 2018 *Bee Culture* discussed tools (mostly gardening tools). He concluded his editorial *The Right Tool* (page 18-19) “For whatever reason, using the wrong tool costs you more than replacing it with the right tool.Smokers too small so you have to stop and refill, dull hive tool....Bee suit with hole in it, extractor too small so you have to stop too many times to load and unload When you don’t have the right tool, everything that can go wrong will go wrong, sooner or later. Sound familiar.

Tools -- they come in handy in beekeeping.

Classified Ads

Bee-related classified ads cost \$5.00/month for non-members and are free to members. Classified ads run for three issues and may be renewed by contacting the editor. Bee-related business ads start at \$35 a year.

To place an ad, contact Nancy Ograin by the 1st of the month. 541-935-7065 or via e-mail nancy.ograin@gmail.com.

Swarms for Sale

Will have honeybee swarms for sale, \$40. Call and get on my waiting list, if you would like one.

Julie-541-937-2577. (land phone/no text)

"Bee Funny" T-Shirts

100% of the proceeds to the OSU Bee Research Lab, Ramesh Sagali.

Support Bee Research!

<https://www.beetanical-apiary.com/bee-funny-shop>



For Sale Warré Beehives

I sell complete kits for Warré top-bar beehives and also fully assembled hives.

See the details at www.beeologique.com (under products)

I also offer free guidance in Warré top-bar beekeeping.

Bill Wood ~ (541) 687-8211 ~ beeologique@gmail.com

"Free Assistance for New Beekeepers"

If you need help or advice in the construction of your wooden ware, LCBA member Lee Yamada is offering his wood-working knowledge free of charge.

Contact Info: **LEE YAMADA**
lkyboletes@gmail.com,
541-844-1206

For discounts on American Bee Journal subscriptions contact Nancy Ograin for discount form.

2019 LCBA New/Renewal Memberships

\$25 per year per household or family
Please remit payment to:

LCBA Treasurer, Polly Habliston
1258 Dalton Dr., Eugene, OR 97404
polly@uoregon.edu

Membership forms for new members and renewals are available on the LCBA website. [Click here](#) to access.

NEWSLETTER CONTACT INFORMATION

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Editor: Nancy Ograin
541-935-7065, nancy.ograin@gmail.com

2019 Officers and Directors

President: Mike France	541-232-1610	michaelj62@gmail.com
Vice-President: Jim Rundall	541-688-1925	fjrundall@comcast.net
Treasurer: Polly Habliston	541-461-0339	polly@uoregon.edu
Directors:		
Kelly Goodwin	541-925-3028	kgoodwinus@yahoo.com
Rebecca Fain	541-997-8792	rfain18@gmail.com
Paula Mance	541-967-2047	hopeclay@gmail.com
Brian McGinley	541-521-7523	56magoo@gmail.com
Fonta Molyneaux	541-592-9332	wildeverlastingfarm@gmail.com
Past-President: Pam Leavitt	541-344-4228	pamseaver2000@yahoo.com
Committees:		
Library - Anita & Arthur Jones	541-937-2244	beesherenow@gmail.com
LCBA Sales - Mike Harrington	541-913-6059	beekeeper@comcast.net
Bee School - Ken Ograin	541-935-7065	woodrt@pacinfo.com
Website - Judy Scher	541-344-2114	judyscher@gmail.com
Newsletter Editor - Nancy Ograin	541-935-7065	nancy.ograin@gmail.com
Facilities Coordinator - Jim Rundall	541-688-1925	fjrundall@comcast.net
LCBA Scholarships - Katharine Hunt	541-607-0106	keehunt@gmail.com
Oregon Master Beekeeper Coordinator - Rita Ostrofsky	541-685-2875	ostrofsky@pacinfo.com
Regional Representative - Rick Olson	541-997-3792	rolson2@attglobal.net

Links



<http://www.lcbaor.org/>



Bee Informed
Partnership

<https://beeinformed.org/>

Oregon
Master
Beekeeper
Program



[https://
extension.oregonstate.edu/mb](https://extension.oregonstate.edu/mb)

Friday in the Apiary

[https://extension.oregonstate.edu/
mb/friday-apiary](https://extension.oregonstate.edu/mb/friday-apiary)



<https://orsba.org/>



[Honey Bee Lab](#)

[Pollinator Health](#)

[Oregon Bee Project](#)

[PolliNation Podcast](#)

[Bee Diagnostics](#)



Honey Bee Health
Coalition

Tools for Varroa Management
& Supporting Videos

<https://honeybeehealthcoalition.org/varroa/>

Best Management Practices for Bee Health

[https://honeybeehealthcoalition.org/
hivehealthbmps](https://honeybeehealthcoalition.org/hivehealthbmps)

Varroa Management Decision Tool

<https://honeybeehealthcoalition.org/varrootool/>



<https://www.honey.com/>

Beltsville Bee Lab

[How To Send A Sample To Beltsville, MD for Diagnosis](#)

The go to for American foulbrood.

**Residential Beekeeping: Best Practices for Nuisance
Free Beekeeping in Oregon**

<https://catalog.extension.oregonstate.edu/em9186>



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[https://articles.extension.org/
bee_health](https://articles.extension.org/bee_health)