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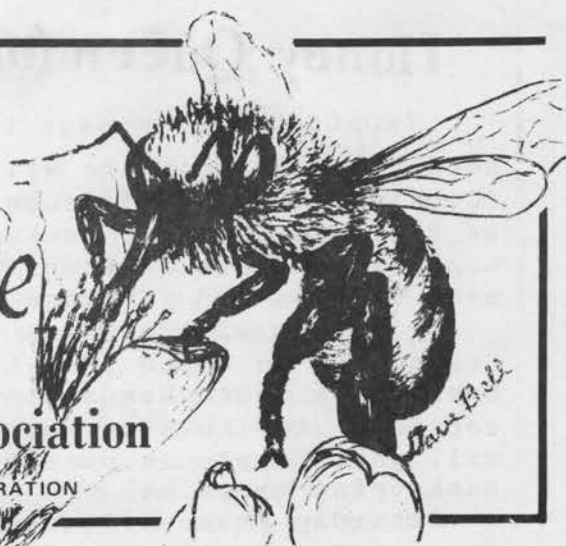
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Vol. No. 8
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The Bee Line

Oregon State Beekeepers Association

AFFILIATED WITH AMERICAN BEEKEEPING FEDERATION



Honey Queen

Information

The 1980 American Honey Queen, Francis Bean will arrive in Oregon on August 24. She is 20 years old and is from Austin, Texas.

She is currently employed by a commercial beekeeper in Austin and is involved in all aspects of the beekeeping industry at a commercial apiary.

Monday morning August 25 she has an interview with Barbara Durbin, food editor for the Oregon Journal. Following this she will go down to Salem to the State Fair.

Wednesday, Frances has an interview with KXL at 10:30 am. Arrangements are being made for a couple of hours of giving out her honey recipes in a local store.

Thursday, Frances, along with some local beekeepers will be in the audience at the AM Northwest television program. In the after-

(continued on page 2)

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Advance news on Fall Conference--
Plan NOW to attend..... p.2
- More on HONEY QUEEN..... p.2
- Last minute State Fair details..p.2
- Pollination and Agriculture in
Oregon by Dr. Burgett OSU...p.3



Honey Queen (more)

(continued from page 1)

noon from 2-5 pm there will be "Cooking with Honey" demonstrations at Ruhl Bee Supply. Beekeepers and honey lovers are invited to come and meet Frances and sample some goodies.

Friday it will be back to the State Fair to spend some time at the beekeepers booth handing out her recipes. In the afternoon she will participate in presenting the beekeeping trophies.

Saturday Frances leaves Oregon for other promotions and state fairs.

State Fair ...

There is still time to enter the state fair. Entries should be mailed to the state fair office by August 15. Application forms and instructions are at your local bee supply house or write or call the state fair office.

Bring your entries to the fair between 9 am and 5 pm on August 21. The booth will be set up on Aug. 20 and 21. If you would like to help set up the booth call George Hansen at 982-9826.

We still have lots of people to sign up for manning the booth. If you wish to man the booth for half a day, morning or evening, (free entry pass for two) call Diana at 327-3609 for available days. Call evenings before 9:30 pm.

Please send in those entries on time. We want this fair to be the best yet and we need your help.



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FALL CONFERENCE ADVANCE NEWS

Plan now to come to the OSBA Fall Conference! Dr. Michael Burgett has chosen an interesting and informative program.

The dates are November 7 and 8. It will be held at Oregon State University in Corvallis.

Some of the speakers and their topics are as follows. Richard Nunnamaker from the University of Wyoming, USDA Bee Pesticides Disease Lab will talk on the identification of Africanized bees.

Professor Steven Taber III, USDA retired, from Vaccaville, California will talk on the application of science to the breeding of queen bees.

Richard Port of Port's Bees and Supplies in Milwaukie will report on the first year results of the ethylene oxide fumigator.

Dr. Carl Johansen, Washington State University Professor of Apiculture will speak on the effect of Mt. St. Helens on bees in Washington.

Dr. Michael Burgett, OSU, will speak on honey and infant botulism.

There will be a banquet Friday night. After the banquet an auction will be conducted to raise money for OSBA. This year the organization purchased two glass display cases for the state fair. They will be used to display honey at the fair and can be used during the year to display honey and other bee products at shopping centers, etc. where a local group wants to promote honey.

The cabinets were expensive and the auction is to be used to help defray that expense. We would like a large range of items to be donated and auctioned; honey pots to equipment. For further information or to make a donation please contact the secretary. More information will follow in the next newsletter.

Pollination & Agriculture in Oregon

by Michael Burgett
Associate Professor
Entomology Department
Oregon State University

Beekeeping is vital to the health and growth of the American farming community. The interdependence between the pollination activity of the honey bee and our current life style is not as well understood or appreciated as it should be.

Because of the world's reliance upon wind pollinated grains as dietary mainstays it is estimated by some that, superficially, insect pollinated foods may provide as little as one percent of the total world food supply. This is a gross oversimplification. When one considers crops dependent, partially dependent and covertly dependent upon insect pollination, such as animal protein produced from plant protein which was derived from a seed that required an insect pollinator, that segment of agriculture benefiting from bees increases. It is suggested that as much as one-third of the total world's diet relies upon insect pollinated plants.

Agriculture is the second largest industry in Oregon, surpassed only by the wood products industry. In 1979 the total gross farm sales of the 75 leading agricultural commodities was one and one-half billion dollars. The three leading commodities in order of importance were cattle, wheat and dairy products. They accounted for nearly one-half of all farm sales. Of the 75 farm commodities, 18 are directly dependent upon bee pollination. These crops accounted for 145 million dollars. Another ten crops, primarily vegetables, required seed produced by bee pollination, and collectively they added another 30 million dollars to farm sales. These directly and indirectly bee dependent crops contributed 165 million dollars to Oregon's farm economy in 1979.

It is interesting to examine in more detail those farm commodities that require bee pollination in given agricultural areas. Oregon serves as well if not better than any state in its diversity of crops and the relationship that exists between the honey bee and agriculture as a whole.

POME FRUITS

Pears are the leading bee pollinated crop in Oregon in terms of farm sales. In 1979 they generated nearly 40 million dollars in agricultural sales. The major production areas are southwestern Oregon, followed by northern Oregon's Columbia River basin. Oregon is the nation's second largest producer of pears, surpassed only by California. Apples ranked as the 19th largest farm product in Oregon in 1979. Oregon's northern sister state, Washington, leads the nation in apple production.

STONE FRUITS

Sweet cherries are Oregon's second largest bee pollinated crop and they are ranked as the state's 16th largest agricultural commodity in 1979. The major production areas are the Willamette Valley and the Columbia River basin. Other stone fruits grown in Oregon include plums and prunes, where Oregon is the nation's second largest producer.

LEGUME SEED

Alfalfa seed is pollinated by two commercially managed wild bee species; the alfalfa leafcutting bee (Megachile rotundata) and the alkali bee (Nomia melanderi). Because of the efficiency of these bee pollinators, Oregon alfalfa growers lead the nation in seed produced per acre. Yields of one ton per acre have been attained. The other legume seeds produced are pollinated by honey bees. These include the clovers; red, alsike, white, arrowleaf and crimson. Oregon produces over 90 per cent of all the crimson clover seed in the United States. It is also second, nationally, in the production of red clover seed. Other states, primarily in the midwest, devote many more acres to red clover seed production than Oregon, but because of Oregon's high yields per acre, it is a leader in total seed produced.

CANE BERRIES

Blackberries, red and black raspberries, Bosenberries, Youngberries and Loganberries added 19 million dollars to Oregon farm sales in 1979. Oregon and Washington are the major producers of commercial caneberries in the United States. Blackberry and raspberry honey are an added benefit for the beekeeper who pollinates these crops. These speciality honeys are in great demand and rarely do they leave the local market. The major production area is northern Oregon along the Columbia River east of Portland and the Willamette Valley.

SPECIALITY SEED CROPS

Many vegetable seed crops are produced in the Pacific Northwest. These include; parsley, radish, onion, carrot, cabbage, kale, parsnip, kohlrabi and others. Because of the consistently high seed yields per acre, for example, 1500 lbs./acre for parsley, it does not take many acres in production to produce the necessary seed to plant American gardens. Few home gardeners give much thought to where and how the seeds they plant came into being.

VEGETABLE CROPS

Squash, pumpkins, watermelons, cucumbers and other vine crops require bee pollination for the development of marketable produce. The Oregon wholesale farm value of these commodities was over four million dollars last year. Additionally, such crops as cabbage, broccoli and cauliflower, which generated another seven million dollars, were planted from seed produced by bee pollination.

To this point the discussion has centered on the segment of agriculture serviced by beekeeping. What about the bee industry itself, which is numerically small, but a crucial link in crop production? The beekeeping industry in Oregon did not even rank in the top 75 commodity groups which were evaluated for total production in 1979.

Statistically 1979 was a good year for beekeepers in Oregon. Over 55,000 colonies of honey bees were registered with the State Department of Agriculture. There were 24 individuals or concerns registered as commercial bee operators according to U.S.D.A. definitions. The average number of colonies owned by a commercial beekeeper was slightly over 600. The number of commercial operations was almost double that of 1974. The commercial beekeepers accounted for over 14,000 colonies of bees. Another 11,000 colonies were operated by 90 sideline beekeepers, who, again by U.S.D.A. definition, operate between 25 and 300 colonies. Adding these two groups together, Oregon possessed approximately 25,000 bee colonies that were accessible to the agricultural sector.

THE HONEY BEE

If you were to divide the 165 million dollars of farm commodities benefiting from bee pollination by the number of commercially available colonies, the pollination value of an individual hive would be 6,600 dollars for the year 1979. Realistically, not all the colonies available to agriculture were utilized for pollination service, which only increases the value of those colonies used by growers.

The phenomenal rise in honey prices that occurred in the early 1970's was not paralleled by pollination rental fees. The price received in Oregon for the majority of pollination situations is from 12 to 15 dollars per colony. There exists a great inequality between the fees paid versus the service rendered when bees are rented for pollination.

Western Oregon is not a good area for commercial honey production. The average yield of honey from a honey bee colony in Oregon fluctuates between 35 and 50 pounds per year. If you were to compare Oregon's average colony honey yield with other states such as California, Florida, the Dakota's or Montana, to name some of the major honey producing states, one would quickly realize the absence of a substantial honey flora in most of Oregon. However, the pollinator importance of bees makes them an agricultural necessity in a state such as Oregon where seed, vegetable and fruit production combine to contribute so much to the economic well-being of farming. It is hoped that an increased enlightenment will come about which can improve the economics of beekeeping when conducted from a pollination standpoint.



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