

The Bee Line



Newsletter of the Maine State Beekeepers Association | mainebeekeepers.org

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National Honey Bee Health Survey 2018

by Jennifer Lund

Background:

In 2009 the National Honey Bee Health Survey (NHBHS) was started to address the emerging concern about the health of honey bee colonies in the United States. The survey is a joint project between the Bee Informed Partnership (BIP) and the USDA Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS). It is conducted in collaboration with the University of Maryland (UMD), USDA Agricultural Research Service (ARS) and State Apiary Specialists and funded through the Farm Bill. In 2009 only three states participated in sampling. Since then, the survey has expanded to include sampling in 42 states and territories. Maine participated in 2018 for the first time.

The goals of the survey are to:

- 1) detect potentially invasive pests and diseases, including the *Tropilaelaps* mite and the Asian honey bee (*Apis cerana*),
- 2) collect data to add to the honey bee

health surveillance dataset which provides a long-term perspective of colony health, and

- 3) identify factors that can be used to predict colony health and beekeeper success.

Sampling:

In 2018 we collected samples from 24 apiaries across the state of Maine. All apiaries contained at least ten hives, eight of which were sampled. Three types of samples were taken at each apiary:

1. ¼ cup live bees from each hive. These bees were used to test for seven different viruses: Lake Sinai virus-2 (LSV-2), Acute bee paralysis virus (ABPV), Chronic bee paralysis virus (CBPV), Deformed wing virus (DWV), Kashmir bee virus (KBV), Israeli acute paralysis virus (IAPV), and Varroa destructor virus (VDV-1).
2. ¼ cup of bees from each hive preserved in alcohol used for detection of *A. cerana* and analysis of Varroa mites, and *Nosema* spp. loads.

3. Brood Bump test from each hive used for detection of *Tropilaelaps* mite presence.

Along with sampling, we visually inspected each hive for the presence of

other pests or diseases (AFB, EFB, chalkbrood, small hive beetles, wax moths, viral symptoms, etc).

Beekeepers participating in this survey did not pay for any of the testing and received a detailed summary report on the average *Nosema* spp. spore loads, Varroa mite levels, viral detections as well as the presence or absence of *Tropilaelaps* mites and *A. cerana*.

Results:

We did not detect *Tropilaelaps* mites or *A. cerana* in any of the samples collected in Maine. As expected, average Varroa mite levels increased over the season. Nearly half of apiaries sampled in August and September had average mite levels over 3% (Figure 1).

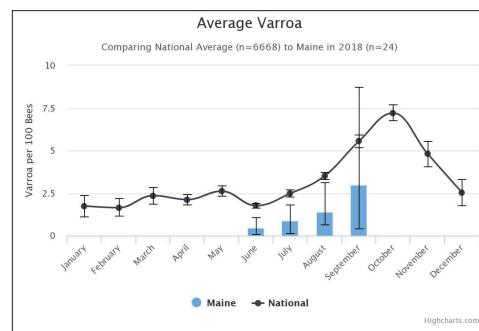


Figure 1: The national monthly average Varroa level (all samples and all years) in the NHBHS charted as a line. The error bars represent the range that 95% of all samples fall within. The columns represent the average Varroa level in samples collected in Maine in 2018. The error bars represent the minimum and maximum Varroa levels. Months without columns had no samples taken during those months.

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MSBA Board

Upcoming Board Meetings: Apr 18 & May 16 (7-9pm)*

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*Open to all MSBA members for discussion with voting to be done by current BOD members only. Meetings generally held at the Viles Arboretum, 153 Hospital Street, Augusta or via conference call. Please contact a board member for details.



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The MSBA website's traffic flow reflects interest from all corners of Maine and beyond. All ads appear in the lower right-hand corner of each page and randomly switch from page to page, visit to visit, refresh to refresh.

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From the desk of the President

With spring just around the corner as we evaluate our overwintering success, we don't have to decide for ourselves what went right and what went wrong. With burgeoning numbers of beekeepers, there are clubs across the state with experienced members willing to mentor and share their knowledge.

As the new President of the MSBA, I intend to travel across the state this year visiting various chapters while seeking information and asking the questions: "What do you need, what can the MSBA do to make you better and how can we be of assistance?" Beekeeping in Maine can be difficult at times. Each year we battle the cold temperatures, short growing seasons and finally put the bees away for the winter hoping for the best. In previous years we struggled with American Foul Brood and now we are in the midst of a fight against mites and the viruses that are wreaking havoc in our apiaries. AFB lost its grip with the help of Tony Jadcak, former state apiarist, and with sharing of knowledge and support across the state. Now our current state apiarist, Jennifer Lund and many leaders in the beekeeping community are working with other beekeepers across the state to address the mite issue and how we might accomplish this by working together.

The Bee Line, like the MSBA, is undergoing some changes and I have been asked to write a President's message for each issue. I will do my best to make the column informative, educational, and possibly even a bit amusing. I doubt it will contain a sugar coated message because that is not the way I am. Expect to see changes to our website, social media, and how we conduct business. Times are changing and the MSBA needs to change with the times to meet our membership's needs and wants.

I am a little biased when I say that the Knox-Lincoln County Beekeepers have one of the most active programs in the state as I am the current Past President. They are on the move with solid educational, outreach and mentorship programs under Jane Dunstan's leadership. It would be great to see solid programming which meets the needs of local beekeepers through our vast network on a state level. Is your chapter ready to take it to the next level if it hasn't already? Do you need assistance with program development or possibly even meeting facilitation? Send your chapter representative to monthly MSBA meetings to get things moving. We are here to help and assist you, not take over your program as we recognize each chapter is different, which makes us all unique.

Have you ever been to a meeting where people have a difference of opinion? Absolutely. Did they make it known? Most likely. We all seem to think our opinion is the "right" one and that others are misguided. I hate to

use the term "wrong" but I'm sure some feel this way whether they actually state it or not. Most of us keep bees and are successful at it to varying degrees, yet we do it with many different methodologies. Success is like good wine; it gets better with time. What's my point? There are many different ways to keep bees successfully and just as many or more opinions. Pick a method that works for you and your life style and get good at it. Address the mite issue and enjoy the bees for what they are; one of the most fascinating creatures on this earth.

Become a mentor and share your knowledge even if it's just showing up to a local meeting and adding input. Beekeeping is a partnership activity. We all learned from someone or many "someones" and this was the momentum and support which developed our beekeeping style and success today. I learned from Dick and Jean Vose, Pete Lammert, Bill Truesdell, Tony Jadzak, Dave Smith, and Rick Cooper. I've identified these people, whether active or passive in my education, as those individuals who have impacted me the most in developing my beekeeping ability. These people furnished me with building blocks and may even be surprised to see their name, but helped me more than they could ever know. The benefit of being able to ask questions of an experienced beekeeper and have them answer in a respectful manner is priceless. Get involved. The system works if we all participate.

Dave

continued from page 1

Eleven apiaries tested positive for *Nosema* spp. during 2018. All positive samples were below the injury threshold level of 1 million spores per bee (Figure 2).

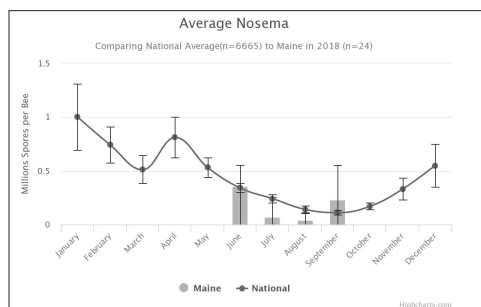


Figure 2: The national monthly average varroa level (all samples and all years) in the NHBHS charted as a line. The error bars represent the range that 95% of all samples fall within. The columns represent the average *Nosema* spp. level in samples collected in Maine in 2018. The error bars represent the minimum and maximum *Nosema* spp. levels. Months without columns had no samples taken during those months.

No ABPV or KBV were detected in Maine in 2018. All other virus prevalence in Maine tracks closely with national percent viral prevalence (Figure 3). More detailed information about the survey results can be found here: <https://beeinformed.org/aphis/>

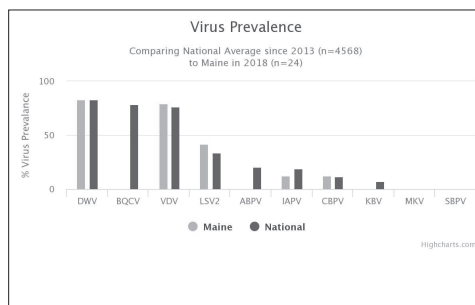


Figure 3: The percentage of samples that tested positive for each virus. Note: BQCV, MKV, and SBPV were not tested in 2018.

Maine will be participating in the NHBHS again in 2019!!! If you are a beekeeper with eight or more hives in one apiary and would like to participate in the survey, please send an email to Jennifer.lund@maine.gov or call 287-7562 to sign up!

Citation:

Title: National Honey Bee Survey State Report (year: 2018 and state: Maine)

Web address:

https://bip2.beeinformed.org/reports/state_reports/state_report/?year=2018&state=ME

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Remember to register your apiaries by June 15th!

It is a requirement under the Title 7 MSRA, section 2701 to register your apiary with the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry (DACF).



Registration is valid for a twelve-month period expiring in mid June. If you previously registered your apiaries, you will receive a renewal form by mail. If you have not previously registered your hives, forms can be downloaded from the DACF apiary website

(<http://www.maine.gov/dacf/php/apiary/index.shtml>). Besides being the law, it is important for beekeepers to register their apiaries with the State of Maine for several reasons:

Disease Management: American Foulbrood is extremely long-lived and contagious. It can spread from hive to hive very fast. If a positive case is found in the state, all the surrounding registered beekeepers are notified. A notification alerts a beekeeper to be extra vigilant about checking their hives for signs of the disease and allows them to request an inspection by a trained inspector. If your apiary is not registered, you will not be contacted.

Pesticide Applications: There are rare occasions when pesticides must be

applied aerially to control mosquitoes or other public health pests. The Maine State plan for public health emergencies includes consideration for pollinators and contains language that directs the applicator to contact beekeepers in the area so they can take the proper precautions to protect hives. If you are not registered, you may not be contacted.

Inspections: If your hives are registered with the DACF you can request an inspection of your apiary by a trained apiary inspector.

Outreach and Education: Registered beekeepers who provide their email address will be included on important updates regarding pests/diseases and educational opportunities.

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Spring...What's That?

by Rick Cooper

Today actually feels like the coldest day of this winter. I know it is not but the winds are howling fiercely and it really does sound cold.

This has been a very long winter and I know everyone reading this article wants to be back in their bees. Me too. Spring inspections are always hard. Like all of you, I want to see what the inside of my bee hive looks like and I probably want to do it sooner than I should. Truthfully, I have opened hives when the temperatures were below the minimum to do so. I have lost a colony or two by being too eager in the spring. My magic number is 55 degrees. It should be at least 55 degrees when I open the hive and it should be 55 degrees when I am closing it up again. It is hard on the bees to regenerate all that heat lost so be patient my friends.

This will be my 39th year of keeping honey bees and every one of those 39 springs has been different. I try to associate bad winters like this one with weak colonies in middle of April but it just isn't so. This year I expect losses to be about the same as they were last year and if there is a sadder sight than a dead bee colony in April, I am not sure what it is. I cherish those springs when I opened hives on April 15th and found six or seven frames of bustling bees inside. I loathe those years when I

opened the hive and found two frames of bees struggling to keep warm. When you open your hive this spring I hope you find a goodly number of healthy bees just itching to get out there and do their job. Now I do have this theory that I don't actually tear a hive apart until the last Saturday in April. When I do actually get into the hive I want to see those five to seven frames of bees going about their business. Should this be the case, you need to understand that there is likely to be only four frames that actually have brood on them. The bottom box of a ten frame deep will most likely be empty or just have a few bees walking around on the comb. If you set the upper box aside and start looking at the frames in the bottom box you are going to find cells of pollen and perhaps some honey. The frames in this box could be moldy. The mold is nothing to worry about as the bees will clean it up as they need space.

The bottom board will usually have a great number of dead and decaying bees on it. This is your winter loss and will more often than not represent more than half the bees you began winter with. This is the time I like to install a new or refreshed bottom board because the one you are using is soaked with the moisture of the dead bees on top of it. Scrape the bees off this bottom board, dry it out and repaint it during the summer.

This is a great time to do a check of your old frames in this box. Pull them out and give them a good looking at. Questions to ask yourself: Is this frame

mostly worker sized cells or did the bees repair a large section with drone comb. (Excuse me if assume you can tell the difference. I don't intend to be mean but I have known "beekeepers" that could not tell the difference). Old dark combs have smaller cell sizes than fresh combs and tend to harbor more problems in the wax such as pesticides and miticides. A planned rotation of these old combs is enhanced by dating the frames with the year the comb was installed. Five to seven year old combs should be replaced with fresh foundation or new frames and any frame showing more than 50% drone comb should be replaced. It comes naturally that over a few years of keeping bees you will just seem to find yourself replacing three or four frames every year. It is simply good beekeeping practice.

There must be as many ideas on staging the replacement frames as there are beekeepers. Here is my plan. I want those new frames right in the center of the top box all crowded together. My reasoning behind this is that most of the heat rises right up through those frames and if you are feeding sugar water it will be directly above those frames. The sugar syrup will stimulate wax building and the bees will draw out the combs rapidly. The second reason for this placement is that there is a small chance that it will slow egg laying down just enough in early May that swarming, if not prevented, will surely be delayed.

I hope you have a great spring and summer.



The 46th Apimondia International Apicultural Congress will be held in Montreal, Canada on September 8-12. The theme of our Congress is **Working Together in Agriculture** which highlights the important partnership between farmers and beekeepers. The Scientific program is fascinating and encompasses a wide array of topics which will be of interest to the hobbyist, the researcher and the commercial beekeeper alike. Delegates will have the opportunity to attend keynote presentations each morning of the Congress and then choose from

several presentations offered throughout the daily sessions. A list of round table discussions and training workshops on hot bee topics are now available to choose from. In addition to all these activities, our Scientific program is hosting two symposia of the World Organization of Animal Health (OIE) on topics relating to bee diseases and pests along with worldwide movement of bees.


To register for Apimondia Montreal 2019, go to <http://www.apimondia2019.com/> and follow the instructions. The cost to attend the Scientific program and ApiExpo from September 8 to 12, 2019 is \$375 CDN. Competitive prices have been negotiated for accommodations near the Palais des Congrès de

Montréal with 3- to 5-star hotels available. Montreal is a popular tourist city and several thousand delegates are anticipated, so do not hesitate to make your hotel reservations to ensure your desired choices will be available (go to the "Accommodation" tab).

Follow Apimondia Montreal 2019 on our facebook page
<https://fr-ca.facebook.com/apimondia2019/>.



Apimondia is a biannual event. This is a rare opportunity to attend as the last Congresses held in North America were Vancouver in 1999 and Maryland in 1967.

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MSBA BIP/SAP Program in 2018

by Andrew Dewey

It was an experiment. Would the members of the MSBA be interested in data about Varroa and Nosema counts? Could the MSBA find experienced beekeepers who would agree to monitor their colonies and collect monthly samples? How could a program be made to work?

The MSBA recruited beekeepers to participate in The Bee Informed Partnership's (BIP) Sentinel Apiary Program (SAP) for the 2018 bee season. These beekeepers shared their collected data in the Bee Line. Funding was obtained so that participating in the program would not be a financial burden to the beekeepers.

Three beekeepers from around the state were selected to participate in the program. They included former MSBA Secretary Lynn Lamb, Master Beekeeper Chris Rogers and an accomplished back yard beekeeper, Janet Anker. Master Beekeeper Andrew Dewey was already participating in the Sentinel Apiary program, and agreed to share his data with the MSBA.

The MSBA gave the participants estimated funds needed to purchase a

hive scale, paid the testing fees to the Bee Informed Partnership, and promised a stipend at season's end of collecting the samples and sharing the resultant information with The Bee Line.

A half cup or about 300 bees were collected monthly from each of four hives in the apiary, following the same instructions as if the bees were being collected for an alcohol wash. These were placed in containers of salt water and mailed to the Bee Informed Partnership for analysis. Results were sent in a PDF file via e-mail in two to three weeks' time.

There was great significance in evaluating the collected data. The short explanation is that the varroa mite is a parasite of honey bees out of balance with its host; the consequence being that most colonies left with mites without some type of intervention will most likely die within a year or two. There are two basic methods of handling Varroa: one that looks to science and another that relies on evolution. Both methods have as their goal, identifying and/or developing a bee that deals with Varroa on its own. BIP's view is that this type of testing is fundamental to increasing our knowledge of Varroa behavior.

BIP sent the participants a white tub, a measuring cup and a funnel with which to collect the monthly samples. BIP also requested information regarding general colony information, ie., was the colony queen right or how many frames of brood were there. BIP also wanted to

know if the colony had been treated (if so, with what), fed (with what) and whether the colony had been moved.

Dewey's sampling technique was to first go queen hunting, isolating the queen in a cage or moving her on a frame to a "Quiet Box." Following that, a sample was taken from the brood nest, at which time he would utilize the opportunity to inspect the remainder of the colony.

Initially, Lamb had a hard time killing bees for collection and evaluation by BIP. She noted that she had to "toughen up." She is grateful to State Apiarist Jennifer Lund for helping her get the roll technique down.

Roger's technique (performed with a mentee under supervision while gathering the samples) was to evaluate the hive while looking for a frame of open brood to take the sample from. Approximately 50% of the time they saw the queen; other times they looked for evidence that she was there but not among the bees the sample was taken from.

BIP has a map of sampling locations (<https://bip2.beeinformed.org/hive-scales/config/public>) which made it easy to see where in the state the various measurements and samples were taken.

The hive scale data (most systems also record internal hive temperature and relative humidity) was not published. Quite a few of the participants had problems with their scales initially and



had to have them replaced. Lamb and Rogers selected Solution Bee scales, Anker chose a Brood Minder and Dewey used an Arnica system. All participants thought the hive scale data was interesting but that the real meat of the program was counting Varroa.

They also observed that Varroa infestation in a particular colony could not be predicted. A colony could measure zero mites for two consecutive months and then go to seven mites. That was likely a sign that the colony had been robbing, and brought home mites along with their other booty.

Most of the participants followed a mixture of mite treatment protocols. Both Dewey and Rogers, for example,

treat all their colonies just before winter bees are raised. Additional spot treatments, mostly Integrated Pest Management strategies, were used when indicated by test results.

Rogers aims to test all his colonies for Varroa infestation on a monthly basis. He (as do most of the participants) uses a variety of miticides, dependent upon climatic conditions and whether a honey flow is occurring or is soon to be expected.

The data for Varroa and Nosema spore counts was published in The Bee Line. Rogers notes he never had much of a problem with Nosema. He used package bees in at least one hive he tested that had “a touch of Nosema” but the bees “cleaned it right up.”

Anker also used several packages in the program and had consistently high Nosema counts in those. “They should all be dead.”

Dewey will continue with BIP/SAP this year, Lamb is probable, Anker is maybe, while Rogers will not continue with the program, at least for this year.

The MSBA is in the process of evaluating member benefits, and will consider continuing the program in future years. The Board will decide if the experiment is worth repeating.

“Healthy Honey Bees, Healthy Planet”

Mark your calendars for the 2019 Eastern Apicultural Society Short Course & Conference, July 15-19 at the Greenville Convention Center in Greenville, South Carolina.

The week long educational event offers opportunities to learn from top researchers and practitioners in the field of apiculture. Featured speakers include Dr. Dewey Caron, Dr. Kirsten Traynor, Dr. Geoff Williams, Dr. Meghan Milbrath, Jennifer Berry, and Dr. Jay Evans. Join your fellow beekeepers and learn the most up-to-date information about honey bees and beekeeping. Highlights of the week include:

- 2 day short course with multiple learning tracks
- Master Beekeeper certification
- Vendor area with major beekeeping suppliers and artisans
- Special evening events
- Honey show
- On-site apiary for hands-on training

Visit the EAS website for more information:
easternapiculture.org







location is different every year, so you get a bit of traveling in too. For more information about this, please visit <http://www.easternapiculture.org/master-beekeepers/certification.html>

My objective in becoming a Master Beekeeper was to have educated answers to those coming into our bee shop. I realized that for most aspiring beekeepers I was their first contact for any beekeeping advice. I also wanted to be a better beekeeper and test my knowledge in general, so I could feel confident in my skills; what I was doing and why I was doing it.

Once I decided to take the certification exams, I began preparing by reading lots of books, bee magazines and watching YouTube videos. Luckily, I had plenty of experience with bee equipment and how to use it thanks to the time spent in our shop, so I felt reasonably confident in that area. I

spent a lot of time in the apiary with my husband who is also an EAS Master Beekeeper. I immersed myself in honey bees, so I felt I should absorb knowledge quickly and easily. I thought I knew lots of things, and it turns out I did not. Upon taking the tests, I discovered what areas I needed to gain more experience.

It took me three years to pass all four exams. At EAS in New Jersey I succeeded in passing the field test in a torrential downpour! It was very exciting and my smoker stayed lit! The next year in Newark, Delaware I passed my written and oral exams much to my surprise. Virginia 2018, I completed my last test, the lab, which was my favorite.

I didn't fail the prior exams because of bad study habits. I just needed, as someone told me, "to finish cooking." I know by being persistent, I was able to

achieve my goal. The journey was stressful and humbling but after it was done, well worth the effort. Becoming a new Master Beekeeper is at first a feeling of happiness for reaching a goal and then you realize it is a gateway to learning more and passing on what you learn to others.

I had the opportunity to meet a great group of people that were genuinely rooting for my success even when I had self-doubt. The Master Beekeepers and volunteers administering the exams work very hard behind the scenes to make sure candidates have everything they need to be safe and successful — they are a knowledgeable and supportive bunch.

I owe much of my success to others like my supportive husband Chris Rogers who never says no to a new venture and Carol Cottrill, my travel partner, friend, and therapist.

Seeking Nominations

EAS is seeking nominations for the 2019 Divelbiss Award. This award is presented to the person or couple who has, over the years, reached out to the non-beekeeping public to explain the value of honey bees in our lives. Nominations and letters of support should be emailed to: Secretary@easternapiculture.org. Deadline: April 30, 2019.



The Mann Lake EAS Master Beekeeper Scholarship is awarded each year to a worthy young individual between the ages of 18 and 25 (or veterans up to the age of 30) with an interest in honey bees and beekeeping. The scholarship covers registration for both the short course and main conference and provides financial assistance to offset conference expenses. Deadline: April 30, 2019.

For more information and scholarship application please visit the EAS website: easternapiculture.org

Maine Honey and Wine Dinner

by John Hildreth

The 2019 Maine Honey and Wine Dinner was held at the Good Table Restaurant in Cape Elizabeth on a cold Sunday evening in January. The fabulous six course dinner was prepared by Lisa Kostopoulos with honey as a main ingredient and paired with some tasty wines from the SOPO Wine Company.

This is the fourth year it has been held and the staff at the Good Table never cease to amaze the taste buds and palates of all those that attend.

Samples of the honeys used in the meals were available for tasting to pique your interest in the varieties that local bees are producing and amazingly, how different a town line or border crossing makes in flavor. You were greeted at your table with a honey mandarin thyme soda pop made with "Beecher Spring Honey" to start the evening. Lisa, the owner of Good Table Restaurant, came to each table as the meals were being presented to explain what the course was, how it was prepared, and where the honeys used in the dish were from.

The first course came out as prosciutto gorgonzola stuffed date with honey cherry port sauce made with "Beecher Fall Honey" paired with a beautiful rose Spanish cava sparkling wine. The

next course was the honey blueberry salad with arugula, blues, Maine cheese curds, Bermuda onion, and honeyed almonds made with "Oaxaca Mexican Honey" that John Eide brought back from his trip to Mexico.

Next on the menu was a scrumptious confit chicken drum and cathead



Photo by Steve Colby

biscuit with honey butter, sausage gremolata, and hot honey from "Cousin's Island" "Honungsbi" and "Beecher Fall." A trifecta of tastes paired with Domaine de Pouy Cotes de Gascogne, a light crisp wine with citrus and green apple notes, when served chilled, was exquisite.

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A palate cleansing spiced honey sorbetto (my favorite... I wonder why) made with "Hildreth Family Honey" was served between courses.

The next course was the sesame honey salmon made with grilled honey chili sweet potatoes and scallions using "John Eide Fall Honey" paired with a fabulous Elana Walch Schiava, a light Japanese knotweed color wine with a fabulous bouquet which when we tried to get a bottle at the table for label photos they only brought an empty one...rats.



Photo by Steve Colby

My next favorite dish was the pollen braised short rib made by rubbing the

beef with fresh pollen and marinating in a honey bourbon bbq sauce with smoked gouda polenta and honey smoked carrots using "Red Brook Honey" and "Jen's Cape Gold" and pairing with a Butterfield Station cabernet from California.

The final course called "tea and honey" was superbly presented in a martini glass of honey panna cotta, with an English scone on the side, filled with honeyed clotted cream and jam made with honeys from "Api d'Oro" "Glen View Farm" and topped with "John Eide's crystalized honey comb."



Photo by Steve Colby

The evening was a great success for all who attended as we got a chance to see old friends, meet new beekeepers, and Good Table patrons. My thanks to those who contributed honey and look forward to many more different floral sources for next year's event.

Maine Honey and Wine Dinner contributors included:

John Eide-Oaxaca Mexican and crystalized comb honey, Maxine Beecher-Beecher Spring and Fall Honey, Craig Whitten-Honungsbi Honeys, Geoff MacLean-Red Brook Honey, Jennifer Gray-Jen's Cape Gold, Peggy & Richard McLaughlin-API d'Oro Honey, Michael Sinnett-Glen View Farm Honey and Sarah Subak-Krah-Cousin's Island Honey.

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Varroa Management Decision Tool

by Jane Dunstan

The Honey Bee Health Coalition has developed and recently released (January 2019) a new tool which is available to all beekeepers. **The Varroa Management Decision Tool** is an easy to use algorithm which assists in evaluating decisions which are needed to make concerning treatment of varroa mites.

The tool poses several questions to the reader and based on the responses, directs the reader to a screen where varroa mite control options are listed.

If there are questions concerning terminology which is used, for instance, thresholds, colony phases, synthetic vs organic treatments, etc., several tutorials are available with a simple click which offer excellent explanations.

The algorithm begins with a question: Do varroa mite levels in your hive exceed thresholds, which are based on colony phases: dormant, population increase, population peak and population decrease. If the response is NO, the reader is directed to review IPM strategies which may be implemented. If the response is YES, the participant is then asked whether he/she will consider synthetic and organic treatments or just organic treatments. Based on the response, the participant continues down the

algorithm addressing whether brood is present, whether honey supers are on followed by identification of the colony phase at that time.

The algorithm ends with the identification of mite treatments which are available for use based on the responses throughout the algorithm. As a participant, you are able to click upon each of the synthetic and organic medications listed and discover a wealth of information concerning them: mode of action, treatment time, time of year, conditions for use, restrictions, considerations, advantages and disadvantages. There are additional links available to view videos which illustrate how to use each and every product referred to.



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I have used this tool to teach new beekeepers who are relatively unfamiliar with alcohol washes used to determine thresholds and miticides available for use in treatment of varroa mites. They have found the tool to be instructional, the algorithm easy to follow and extremely helpful as they begin to understand the “how, why, and when” of varroa treatment.

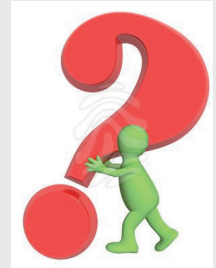
Be sure to take a moment to visit this website:

<https://honeybeehealthcoalition.org/varroa>



Fill Out the 2019 Maine Beekeeper Survey!!!

The annual Maine beekeeper survey of losses and management practices is now live and ready for your input! Gathering this type of data is important for seeing trends, recognizing when and how losses occur, and determining where to focus education/outreach activities in the future. A summary report of the survey will be presented at the Maine State Beekeepers annual meeting in October and available online.



A link to the survey can be found at the top of the DAF apiary website (<http://www.maine.gov/dacf/php/apiary/index.shtml>).

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