

# Essex County Beekeepers Society, Inc.



Edition: April 2009  
Next Meeting: Tuesday, April 14  
Time: 7:00 PM  
Place: Garibaldi Hall,  
Essex County  
Environmental Center,  
Eagle Rock Ave.,  
Roseland  
Subject: Managing Chemical Free  
Bees  
Speaker: Ross Conrad

## Officers

President: Joseph Lelinho  
973-226-4806  
Klutch.Cargo@verizon.net

1<sup>st</sup> Vice President: PJ Martin  
973-467-3292  
[cappymo@live.com](mailto:cappymo@live.com)

2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President: Al Weber  
973-744-5482  
Alweber5@verizon.net

3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President: Pier Guidi  
purchases3@comcast.net

Treasurer: Joe Lelinho

Corresponding Secretary:  
Joe Treimel  
973-633-9870  
[Sailbeejoe@aol.com](mailto:Sailbeejoe@aol.com)

Recording Secretary:  
Margaret Mainardi  
Mmainardi@shp.org;

Newsletter Editor: Joe Treimel

April is another big month on the beekeeping calendar both for the beekeeper and for ECBS. First, the beekeeper... On or about April 15<sup>th</sup>, weather permitting, those of us who are waiting for nucs can expect a phone call to "Come and get those bees you ordered." It's usually at that time in which the nucs reach critical mass and are in need of more room. For those of you that are receiving nucs for the first time, you'll need to have all your equipment assembled, ready, and set on a hive stand when your bees arrive. As you look into your nuc, you're going to see wall to wall bees which is why your supplier urgently wanted you to get them and place them into their permanent home. To delay will increase the possibilities that your nuc will be so over crowded that they may begin to create swarm cells, and that's the last thing you want to see. So be prepared to drop everything and head to the supplier at the appointed time of day and "Get those Bees!"

Another point to remember is that you're going to need to start feeding your bees immediately. Your bees will have much work before them as they build their waxen streets in their new city. If you're feeding with sugar syrup the measurement is usually 25 lbs. of Granulated Sugar mixed with hot water to make a 5 Gallon Pail of Syrup. Some prefer to use a thicker consistency which will be 50 lbs. of Sugar to make the same 5 Gallon Pail of Syrup. Whatever the consistency you prefer, have it made up a couple of days before your bees come home.

Now, ECBS... First of all, we all welcome our new members that come to us via this year's Short Course. Older members, please introduce yourselves to these new keepers and, new keepers, be sure to introduce yourself to anyone and everyone. You'll see that having bee friends one day will be very important when you need a hand helping move a hive, getting a second opinion, ordering together to save on shipping and so on. We all need bee friends so meet some and be one.

Last, but not least, this month we landed a special program with a very special speaker. Actually, our April Program Director, Elizabeth Nelson, really did a great job and we owe it all to her and thank her for her perseverance.

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We have Ross Conrad visiting us. He's the former president of the Vermont Beekeeper's Association, a regular contributor to Bee Culture - the Magazine of American Beekeeping, and author of Natural Beekeeping: Organic Approaches to Modern Apiculture. Ross has given bee related talks and taught organic beekeeping workshops and classes throughout North America for several years now.

We all know that these days organic food products are very popular. You can see the ever expanding area provided for them at the local supermarket. Along with organics is a growing interest in keeping bees in a more natural and healthy way.

Ross is one of the foremost authors and instructors on this topic and he's going to be sharing his expertise with us at our next meeting. Maybe he'll even have a better idea than using sugar syrup to feed our bees...perhaps someone can ask him.

We're expecting a larger than normal crowd so come a little earlier and get a good seat!

All the Best,  
Joe Lelinho

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## Club News

The NJBA is conducting a survey regarding winter loss of bee colonies. If you would like to participate, please go to the indicated Internet link:

<http://www.njbeekeepers.org/Survey2009.htm>

## Membership

This is being written to both those that have paid their dues for 2009 and those that still haven't. For those of you that have paid, I give you a hearty Thank You!

However we still have many who have not, and unfortunately we have no other choice but to discontinue sending you reminders and the ECBS Newsletter or Meeting Notices. Besides that, the NJBA has already removed you from their membership roles. All paid members are advised being that you are in good standing this has nothing to do with you. These rule changes come into play for those that have not renewed yet and then each of us as we renew in 2010. The State will honor its agreement for 2009.

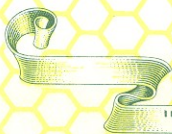
At the State Beekeepers meeting February 14 the dues structure was changed to the following:

Section I: Any boy or girl under the age of 18 who is interested in Apiculture may become a Junior Member. Dues of \$8.00 per year are payable in advance.

Section 2: ): Any individual, or family residing at the same address, may become a member of the Association for \$20 per year, payable in advance. Membership will include one year's newsletter subscription, from both ECBS and NJBA, and one vote in matters put before the membership.

There is no longer an Individual membership for \$15.00. All individual memberships currently paid will be honored through December 31, 2009. When you renew you will need to pay \$20.00. If you have not renewed to date and you held an individual membership please note a membership is now \$20.00 except for a junior membership. Also, as stated earlier, if you have not renewed your membership, you will not get a state newsletter and will be removed from our e-mail and snail-mail distribution list.

All the Best,  
Joe Lelinho, President



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## April Beekeeping

Pollen is coming into the hives already, but there are yet no significant nectar sources available to the bees. Therefore, if you began feeding your bees, continue to do so. As the weather is warmer, you can switch to syrup if you began with candy.

Also, colonies are building up and if they have filled the upper box and you have not yet reversed the two (or three) boxes of the brood chamber, now is the time to do so and move the empty lower box to the top. Do clean off the bottom board if not done already. If treating with Apistan strips for Spring Varroa Mite suppression, remember that the Apistan Strips will need to be removed prior to putting on the honey supers next month.

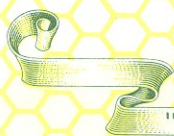
Finally, strong colonies will need extra room to help suppress their desire to swarm, which will be coming near the end of the month. If you have a strong colony which begins to build queen cells in preparation to swarm, you may want to consider making a split from this colony, exchanging hive location with a weak colony in the same yard, or other methods which are too detailed to mention here, but which can be found in many books and periodicals.

## Is it Organic?

Brian Rowe of the NJBA sent me an E-mail about the word "Organic" being used on honey sold in stores. It seems these honeys are of foreign origin and the USDA has no way of assuring that these honeys are truly organic and that they originate from an area where the surroundings to the apiary within a four mile radius are all certified as "organic," meaning that no pesticides or chemical fertilizers are used on any of the land. Some of these brands of honey have gone so far as to use the USDA emblem on their labels, although not certified to use it.

New Jersey has no areas whatsoever which can achieve this labeling, since there are farms, houses with yards, schools, etc. which all have fertilizers and herbicides and insecticides used on these lands. Therefore, the lack of oversight by the USDA on imported honey which labels itself as "organic" is an unfair disadvantage to New Jersey and USA beekeepers. More information will follow in upcoming newsletters.

Joe Treimel, Corresponding Secretary



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