



Honey Bees in Northern Climates

2007-2008 FACT SHEET

Program Description

The University of Minnesota has maintained an internationally recognized research and extension program on honey bees since 1918. Since 1992, the Department of Entomology has supported the only bee research and extension program within five contiguous states (MN, WI, ND, SD, IA), and has developed a unique, regional extension program that receives strong support from professional and hobby beekeeping associations in these states. Minnesota is the fifth largest honey producing state in the nation and North and South Dakota are the second and fourth. The recent emergence of honey bee pests (parasitic mites) threatens the economic vitality and profitability of the U.S. honey bee industry. Today more than ever, there is an increased need for effective research and outreach on honey bees.

Audience

- Hobby Beekeepers
- Commercial Honey Producers
- Master Gardeners
- Commercial Fruit & Vegetable Growers
- K-12 Science Teachers
- Medical Professionals

Specific Goals

- To increase the number of honeybees in the state through research-based education on beekeeping topics such as wintering bees in cold northern climates, bee diversity and biology, bee diseases and parasites, honey production and marketing, and equipment needs.
- To breed bees for resistance to diseases and parasitic mites, to give beekeepers sustainable control options that do not facilitate the development of diseases and mites that are resistant to treatments, and do not contaminate the honey
- To increase the understanding of the public of the roles and value of honeybees in the economy and quality of life in Minnesota including the creation of a working bee lab and education program in the new Bell Museum

Team Members

- Marla Spivak, Program Coordinator [info]
- Gary Reuter, Bee Specialist

Partners

- Department of Entomology, U of M
- Bell Museum, U of M
- Minnesota Honey Producers Association
- Minnesota Department of Agriculture
- University of Nebraska
- Ohio State University
- Food and Drug Administration
- University of Wisconsin Extension Service
- MN Honey Producers Association
- MN Hobby Beekeepers Association
- WI Honey Producers Association
- ND Beekeeping Association
- SD Beekeeping Association
- Iowa Honey Producers association

What we do...

- The Bee Lab website:
www.extension.umn.edu/honeybees
- Beekeeping in Northern Climates Manual (68 pp)
- Honey Bee Diseases & Pests: A companion manual to Beekeeping in Northern Climates
- Beekeeping in Northern Climates: 40-minute VHS Tape
- Successful Queen Rearing Manual
- Ent 4021: Honey Bees and Insect Societies, 3 credit, open to public
- Ent 4022: Bee Management, 1 credit, open to public
- Beekeeper's Management Short Course
- Queen Rearing Short Course
- MidWest Master Beekeeping Workshop
- Advanced Beekeeping Topics Workshop