

September 2026

THE BEE HERDER

Published by the Medina County Beekeepers Association



MCBA Monthly Meeting September 21st, 2026

Medina County Library
210 S. Broadway, Medina OH 44256
Rooms A and B

Questions & Answers 6:30-7:00 PM
General Meeting 7:00-8:00 PM

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MCBA September Meeting

Monday, September 21st, 2026

Speaker: Melanie Seal of Blue Sky Bee Supply

Topic: Honeybee Nutrition

We're excited to welcome Melanie Seal of Blue Sky Bee Supply as a featured speaker at our upcoming meeting! Melanie will share her expertise on honeybee nutrition, exploring the vital role that proper nutrition plays in colony health, brood development, honey production, and overwintering success. Drawing on her extensive experience working with beekeepers and bee health products, she will discuss the nutritional needs of honeybees throughout the seasons and offer practical recommendations for supporting strong, productive colonies. Whether you're a new beekeeper or a seasoned apiarist, this presentation promises valuable insights that can help your bees thrive.

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Upcoming Events

October – OSBA Fall Conference Registration [Here](#)

December 9th – Christmas Party

February/March 2027 – Beginner Classes

MCBA October Meeting

Monday, October 19th, 2026

Speaker: Peggy Desantos

Topic: Ventilated vs condensing beehive

Join us in October as experienced beekeeper Peggy DeSantos presents an informative discussion on ventilated versus condensing beehives, a topic that continues to generate interest and debate among beekeepers preparing colonies for winter.

Peggy will explore the science behind moisture management in the hive, compare the advantages and challenges of both approaches, and share practical insights based on real-world beekeeping experience. Whether you favor increased ventilation or are curious about the growing interest in condensing hive concepts, this presentation will provide valuable information to help you make informed decisions for your own apiary.

As temperatures begin to drop, this timely program is sure to spark thoughtful discussion and offer useful takeaways for beekeepers of all experience levels. Don't miss this opportunity to learn from Peggy and connect with fellow beekeepers as we prepare our colonies for the coming winter season.

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MCBA Mission Statement

To promote beekeeping, broaden the knowledge and understanding of honeybees (and all pollinators) and the challenges they face in today's world, and educate by teaching best practices and techniques in apiary management.

President's Corner

By Peggy Garnes

September brings cooler temperatures, robbing, yellow jackets, and shorter days.... Hmm. Cooler temperatures will make our inspections more tolerable!

Are we as beekeepers ready to help our bees get ready for the winter:

- If needed- 2-1 feeding inside is best
- Smaller entrances will help with robbing and yellow jackets
- Mouse guards need to be installed
- Mite treatments are completed for this month and hives have been retested for effectiveness

Our club has been actively providing education for the public at Kelly's Island- Bees and Butterflies, Krabill Lodge- Honey Harvesting Demo, and John's Nursery- Bee Festival- a big thank you to the volunteers that made these events happen. Helping the public understand honey bees and their role in our food supply makes it easier to promote healthy eating and how the public can benefit from protecting the bees.

October brings the OSBA Fall Conference to be held in Ashtabula this year- think about attending and hearing all the latest developments in beekeeping and the great educational programs available. See the link in the newsletter.

As we prepare for fall the club is looking forward to elections in November and asking for volunteer candidates to join leadership positions. Everyone can bring their ideas and be heard in our club - that's why we continue to grow. Please consider running for a club position.

Stay healthy, hug your family, and enjoy your bees! 🐝

Ten Minutes with the Bees — The bee yard in September

By Paul Kosmos (republished September 2019)

September is a quieter month in the bee yard – normally. While a bit less to do, the tasks are very important.

Let's start with the good news. The Goldenrod and Green Cone flowers are everywhere and the spectacular weather is making for a bumper crop of fall honey. Asters are just opening.



Goldenrod - This is the one that smells strong (stinky)!



Wild Green Coneflowers are everywhere!

The trade-off is the nice summer, and fall are making for more swarms than normal. We had 9 reported by Sept 10th! Keep an eye on them as a strong flow can fill a deep box in days.

Many beekeepers leave the fall honey for the bees for winter food. If you have about 60 lbs. of honey going into winter, you will have less feeding. One frame weighs about 7-8 lbs.



The best way to winter successfully – 8-10 frames

Don't forget what we preach every month. Check your hives for mites! We cannot stress how fast they can “appear” once the number of brood drops. Cooler days



and nights in the 50's will cause the bees to greatly reduce the brood – from 6-7 frames to 1-2 frames - which

means the same number of mites but 75% less capped cells to hide in!

Finally, do a check to make sure you have what you need to winterize your hive. Think about wraps, insulation, inserts, mouse guards and your particular needs for winter. The rumor is true.... **Winter is Coming!**

Why won't my bees draw out foundation?

By Clint Allen

A Fall Look at a Spring Problem. As the beekeeping season begins to wind down, many of us are already thinking about next spring. We are imagining strong colonies, blooming flowers, and honey supers filling with fresh nectar. But there is one common problem that catches many beekeepers off guard every year. The bees simply refuse to draw out the wax on new honey super frames with plastic foundation.

Few things are more frustrating than opening a hive during a good nectar flow and finding a honey super that looks almost untouched. The bees may be walking across the frames, but they are not building comb. In some cases, they may even be storing honey in the brood nest while leaving the honey super nearly empty.

The good news is that this problem is usually easy to prevent once you understand why it happens. Fall is the perfect time to think ahead and prepare for a better honey crop next year.

Bees Don't Like Extra Work. Bees are incredibly efficient. They always look for the easiest path to accomplish their goals. If there is already drawn comb available, they will almost always use it before building new comb.

Drawing comb requires a significant amount of energy. Worker bees must consume large amounts of nectar or honey to produce wax. Some estimates suggest bees may use several pounds of honey to create just one pound of wax. Because of this, colonies naturally avoid building comb unless they truly need it.

When a beekeeper places a box of brand-new plastic foundation on a hive, the bees see a lot of work ahead of them. If the colony has other options, they may ignore those frames completely.

This is one reason experienced beekeepers often say that drawn comb is more valuable than honey. Once comb is built, bees can immediately begin storing nectar without spending energy producing wax.

Weak Colonies Rarely Build Comb. Another common reason bees ignore foundation is that the colony simply is not strong enough.

Drawing comb is usually done by young worker bees. If the hive population is small, there may not be enough workers available to take on this task.

Many newer beekeepers are excited to add honey supers early in the season. Unfortunately, if the bees have not fully occupied the brood boxes below, they may not move up into the supers.

A good rule of thumb is to make sure the colony is strong and crowded before adding additional space. Bees are much more likely to build comb when they feel a need for that extra room.

As you look ahead to next spring, focus on helping your colonies enter winter healthy and well populated. Strong overwintered colonies are the most likely to rapidly expand and draw foundation when nectar begins flowing.

Nectar Flow Drives Comb Building. Bees are far more willing to build comb during a strong nectar flow.

When nectar is pouring into the hive, workers become motivated to create additional storage space. Wax production increases, and new comb can appear surprisingly fast.

However, when nectar is scarce, comb building often slows or stops completely.

This creates a situation many beekeepers encounter. A super is added during what appears to be a good time,

but the major nectar flow ends shortly afterward. The bees no longer see a reason to build comb, and the foundation remains untouched.

The lesson is simple. Timing matters.

Next spring, try to have your supers ready before the main nectar flow begins. Waiting until the flow is nearly over may result in very little comb being built.

Bees Prefer Wax-Coated Foundation. Not all plastic foundation is created equal.

Many frames come with a thin factory-applied wax coating. Unfortunately, some coatings are very light and may not be attractive enough to encourage rapid comb building.

If bees seem reluctant to work on plastic foundation, adding an additional coating of beeswax can make a major difference.

Many beekeepers melt clean beeswax and apply a thin layer using a small paint roller or foam brush. This creates a more natural surface and often encourages bees to begin drawing comb much sooner.

If you have frames sitting in storage this winter, consider inspecting them. A fresh wax coating before spring can save weeks of frustration during honey season.

Placement Matters. Where foundation is placed within the hive can also affect success.

Bees generally prefer to expand from existing drawn comb. If a box contains all new foundation, they may be slow to use it.

Some beekeepers alternate drawn frames with undrawn frames to encourage comb building. Others place a few frames of drawn comb in the center of a super to attract bees upward.

Once bees start working in an area, they are much more likely to continue building on neighboring frames.

Think of drawn comb as an invitation. It gives the colony a reason to move into the new box.

Feeding Can Help. While feeding syrup is generally not done during a honey flow, it can be useful at other times when the goal is comb production.

Package bees, nucleus colonies, and newly established colonies often benefit from supplemental feeding. The extra food encourages wax production and helps the colony build comb faster.

Many successful beekeepers spend the first season focused less on honey production and more on creating drawn comb. The investment often pays off in future years with larger harvests.

The more drawn comb you can provide next spring, the faster the bees can collect nectar and store honey.

Start Preparing Now for Spring Success. September is a great time to evaluate your equipment and make a plan.

Look at your stored supers. Identify which frames already have drawn comb and which contain untouched foundation. Repair damaged equipment. Replace broken frames. Consider adding extra beeswax to plastic foundation during the winter months.

Most importantly, focus on helping your colonies enter winter strong and healthy. A large population of young bees, adequate food stores, effective mite control, and a healthy queen will do more to improve spring comb building than almost anything else.

When the maples bloom and the dandelions appear next year, strong colonies will be eager to expand. If the bees have plenty of workers, a good nectar flow, and attractive wax-coated foundation waiting for them, they will be far more likely to draw out those supers quickly.

The beekeepers who enjoy the biggest honey harvests in spring are often the ones who began preparing the previous fall. Comb building is one of those areas where a little planning can make a huge difference. Spend some

time this autumn getting your equipment and colonies ready, and your bees will thank you when spring arrives. Better yet, they may reward you with a honey crop that fills every frame in the super.

MCBA in Action

Club members in action, sharing beekeeping knowledge with others.





Club Meeting Minutes

August was the club picnic, and no meeting was officially held. Below is the 2027 Meeting Schedule for meeting at the Medina County Library.

- January 18
- February 15
- March 15
- April 19
- May 17
- June 21
- July 19 – Fair Booth Cleanup (no official meeting)
- August 16 – Club Picnic (no official meeting)
- September 20
- October 18
- November 15
- December - Club Holiday Party (no official meeting)

From Around the Web

WHO KEEPS THE BEES?

<https://beeculture.com/who-keeps-the-bees/>

Shutting Down Federal Bee Labs Threatens Bees, Beekeepers and the US Food System

<https://beeculture.com/shutting-down-federal-bee-labs-threatens-bees-beekeepers-and-the-us-food-system/>

Survival of the Wildest

<https://beeculture.com/survival-of-the-wildest/>

Functionality of Honey: Solving Formulation Challenges Across Food and Beverage

<https://event.on24.com/wcc/r/5339184/44AEAA6B1A27F27AA94C7B64E08F8D59?partnerref=web/newsletter&fbclid=IwY2xjawT6RvlwZG9mBWV4dG4DYWVtAjEwAG>



[JyaWQRMXBiUjd2bUJkekFqVzBub3pzcRjBmFwcF9pZBAyMjIwMzIxNzg4MjAwODkyAAEe0jiTUsvLQ0JaeJPYa5kEQajtPymPuljFpR9uhKajrdq3-g-V6S0PVw8QmCw aem ujzkl8oYHbEXEcD NJw](https://www.southcarolinapublicradio.org/sc-news/2026-09-08/invasive-yellow-legged-hornets-from-asia-butcher-bees-in-the-lowcountry?utm_source=npr_newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_content=20260909&utm_term=10951981&utm_campaign=news&utm_id=75038837&orgid=727&unique=3ZGhRWRVM0QMYGckZhrMjw&utm_att1=)

Invasive yellow-legged hornets from Asia butcher bees in the Lowcountry

https://www.southcarolinapublicradio.org/sc-news/2026-09-08/invasive-yellow-legged-hornets-from-asia-butcher-bees-in-the-lowcountry?utm_source=npr_newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_content=20260909&utm_term=10951981&utm_campaign=news&utm_id=75038837&orgid=727&unique=3ZGhRWRVM0QMYGckZhrMjw&utm_att1=

The Smoke Between Us: What's Really Happening When You Smoke the Colony

<https://beekeeping365.com/2026/09/09/the-smoke-between-us-whats-really-happening-when-you-smoke-the-colony/>

Medina County Soil and Water Newsletters

<https://medinaswcd.org/community-programs/#newsletter>

Ideas & Suggestions

This newsletter is for you, our members. If you have any ideas for content, format, corrections, or anything else, please, don't hesitate to reach out to me, Clint Allen via email.

Citations & References

The information provided in this newsletter is for educational purposes only and is not intended to guarantee your success as a beekeeper. While MCBA strives to offer accurate and up-to-date advice, beekeeping involves various factors beyond our control. Therefore, MCBA cannot be held responsible for any outcomes resulting from the application of the information provided. By using the advice and tips shared in this newsletter, you agree to hold harmless the MCBA, authors, publishers, and any affiliated parties from any liability, loss, or damage that may occur.