2026 FSBA Annual Conference Program

Florida Beekeeping, Stronger Together

October 23–24, 2026 • Mission Inn Resort & Club, Howey-in-the-Hills, FL

WELCOME FROM THE CONFERENCE CHAIRS

Dear Friends and Fellow Beekeepers,

Welcome to the 2026 FSBA Annual Conference.

We are glad you are part of this year's FSBA Conference. Our theme is **Florida Beekeeping, Stronger Together**. With many different experiences and skills, we are able to make the changes needed for the health of Florida's honey bees. Each of us has learned something worth passing on, whether it is a mite management approach that worked, a lesson from queen rearing, or a way to help colonies through a Florida summer. The 2026 FSBA Conference is an opportunity to share that knowledge and to learn from one another.

Beekeepers across the country are facing many of the same issues we see in Florida, including Varroa management and protecting the quality and value of American honey. Several of this year's presenters are working directly on these issues, and we encourage you to take advantage of their sessions and their time with us.

Thank you to the researchers, inspectors and extension professionals who share their work with our beekeepers, and to our sponsors, vendors and partners whose support makes this year's FSBA Conference possible.

To our many out-of-state guests and presenters, thank you for traveling to be with us. We are grateful for the time we have together and for all you share with Florida's beekeepers.

To our beekeepers, thank you for your dedication, your hard work and the care you give your bees. Your commitment is what has sustained FSBA for 106 years.

FSBA is also asking our members to become more involved in our developing committee programs, including the **FSBA Grant Committee**, the **Outreach Committee** and its **David Miksa Kids' Zone** program, the **Marketing Committee** and the **Conference Committee**, or to become an **FSBA Grant Reviewer**. We would like members from every district of Florida to be represented. Committee members will be available throughout the conference to answer your questions, and we would love to hear from you.

We also want to thank the 2026 FSBA Conference Committee, Chloe Planakis, Matthew Strickland, Bobbie Gebhart, Heather Cherry and FSBA Marketing Chair Molly Ragan, for the time and effort they have given to plan this year's conference.

While you are with us, please take time to meet other beekeepers, ask questions, visit our vendors and enjoy the program. Thank you for being part of the Florida State Beekeepers Association.

With appreciation,

Lisa Fussell

Lisa Fussell
FSBA 2026 Conference Chair

Ally Malay

Ally Malay, Ph.D.
FSBA 2026 Conference Co-Chair

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

Florida Beekeeping, Stronger Together

Our sponsors make this conference possible. Please thank them, visit their booths and support the businesses that support Florida's beekeepers.

LUNCH & LEARN

Crop Disaster Recovery

Hosting both days of our Lunch-and-Learn.

FLORIDA HONEY QUEEN

Barkman Honey

Sponsoring the return of the Florida Honey Queen Program.

FRIDAY FIESTA NIGHT

WSR Insurance Services

Hosting our Friday night celebration.

HONEY SHOW

Fresh From Florida

Celebrating the best of Florida honey at the FSBA Honey Show.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH SILENT AUCTION

Beekeeping Insurance Services

Supporting the auction that funds FSBA outreach.

DAVID MIKSA KIDS' ZONE CLUB TRAINING

Seb-Bees LLC

Providing class materials for the Kids' Zone Club Training.

LOADER RODEO

JBEE Enterprises

Helping power the Loader Rodeo.

LOADER RODEO

UBees

Helping power the Loader Rodeo.

PANELS & DEMONSTRATIONS

Vita Bee Health

Sponsoring our conference panels and demonstrations.

PRODUCT DEMONSTRATIONS

Norroa

Sharing hands-on product demonstrations at the FSBA Apiary.

VISIT OUR VENDORS

Shop, Learn and Connect

Our vendors bring the equipment, supplies, treatments and know-how that keep Florida's hives thriving. Stop by their booths in the vendor foyer between sessions, see what's new for your apiary and thank them for being part of the 2026 FSBA Conference.

Alonso Apiaries LLC

Apimaye Insulated Beehives

Apimon

Apis Tactical

APIX Biosciences

Barkman Honey

Bee Ready 4 Anything LLC

Beekeeping Insurance Services

Complete Bee

Crop Disaster Recovery

EZPZ Beekeeping Equipment

Fresh From Florida

HillCO, LLC

HiveAlive

Local Hive Honey

Mann Lake

Norroa

Smartbeeapp

Sue-Bee

Swampland Bees and Company

Tampa Bee Supply and Wholesale LLC

Véto-Pharma

Vita Bee Health

WSR Insurance Services

SUPPORTER SPONSORS • $500

Thank you to these generous businesses for supporting Florida's beekeepers and the 2026 FSBA Conference.

Apis Tactical

Bee Fussy Apiary

Bee-Haven Honey Farm, Inc.

Nucs & Singles Apiary, Inc.

Remember you can get some great deals by being a member of the FSBA

You have now access to your membership card online with in-person pickup discounts at Bee Supply Houses and beekeeping education. See our website for more information:

https://flstatebeekeepers.org/fsba-discounts

Or visit our membership portal to print your membership card, lookup back issues of the FSBA Newsletters, correct your address and more.

A SPECIAL THANK YOU

To Our National, State & University Partners

The 2026 FSBA Conference is stronger because these organizations chose to be part of it. All year long they work on behalf of America's beekeepers: advocating for honey producers, funding and conducting research, protecting Florida's colonies and connecting beekeepers across the country. Thank you for traveling, sharing your expertise and standing with Florida's beekeepers.

NATIONAL PARTNER

American Honey Producers Association

A national voice for commercial beekeepers and honey producers, protecting the quality and value of American honey.

NATIONAL PARTNER

American Beekeeping Federation

Serving beekeepers of every size, from backyard hobbyists to commercial operations, since 1943.

NATIONAL RESEARCH PARTNER

Project Apis m. / Bee Health Collective

Celebrating 20 years of funding research to improve honey bee health and pollination.

STATE PARTNER

Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

Apiary inspections and the Honey Bee Diagnostics Laboratory protect the health of Florida's honey bees.

RESEARCH & EXTENSION PARTNER

UF/IFAS Honey Bee Research and Extension Laboratory

Florida's home for honey bee research and education, including the UF Master Beekeeper Program and UF Bee Colleges.

RESEARCH PARTNER

Auburn University Bee Center

Honey bee health and Varroa research, and home of the annual US Beekeeping Survey of colony losses.

MEET OUR NATIONAL LEADERS

Come say hello to Debbie, Steve and Jan!

They traveled a long way to be with us. Catch their sessions, find them in the vendor foyer and at Friday Fiesta Night, and make them feel at home in Florida.



Debbie Seib

President, American Beekeeping Federation

SATURDAY • 11:30 AM • EL MORO A

American Beekeeping Federation Overview



Steven Coy

President, American Honey Producers Association

FRIDAY • 11:30 AM • LA PALOMA

The Fight Against Economically Motivated Adulteration in the American Honey Market



Jan Lohman

Development Chairperson, Project Apis m. / Bee Health Collective

FRIDAY • 11:30 AM • EL MORO B

20 Years of Bees, Research and Innovation

And be sure to thank everyone sharing their work with us this weekend: the FDACS team, **Erin Jenkins, James C. Fulton, Ph.D., Md Moniruzzaman, Ph.D., Kiley Epperson and Bianca Forsyth**; the UF/IFAS Honey Bee Lab team, **Cameron Jack, Ph.D., Amy Vu and their graduate students**; and **Agostina Giacobino, Ph.D.** of the Auburn University Bee Center.

(863) 659-1335

We Keep Farmers in Business.

Crop Disaster Recovery .com

Hosted by Crop Disaster Recovery

Lunch is served right in the Main Room both days, so you can enjoy a good meal while hearing about some of the most interesting work happening in beekeeping today.

FRIDAY • 12:20–1:20 PM • MAIN ROOM

Pulled Pork BBQ and the Next Generation of Bee Science

Grab a pulled pork sandwich and meet the graduate students of the UF/IFAS Honey Bee Research and Extension Laboratory. Alexis Masnjak, Louise Petit, Julia St. Amant, Marie Yanchak and Pierce Barron will share their research on Varroa control, honey bee pathogens and chalkbrood.

SATURDAY • 12:30–1:30 PM • MAIN ROOM

Burgers, USDA Updates and Stories from the Lab

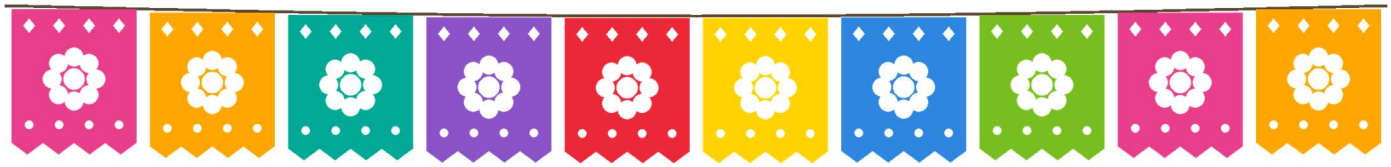
Enjoy a sirloin burger with special guest Ally Malay, Ph.D., of USDA-ARS, followed by James C. Fulton, Ph.D., Md Moniruzzaman, Ph.D., Kiley Epperson and Bianca Forsyth of the FDACS Honey Bee Diagnostics Laboratory with Short Lab Stories, including how to mail samples to the lab.



Kimberly & David Lott

Thank You, Crop Disaster Recovery

Crop Disaster Recovery, founded by seventh-generation Florida cattle ranchers Kimberly and David Lott and based in Lake Placid, is a national firm representing farmers and beekeepers in more than 30 states. CDR guides producers through USDA disaster programs such as ELAP (Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honey Bees and Farm-Raised Fish), ERP and LIP, managing claims from strategy through audit defense and representing clients in appeals when claims are denied. Their mission is simple: bringing fairness to the farmer. Thank you for feeding both our appetites and our minds! Be sure to catch Kimberly and David's USDA and RMA Updates on Saturday at 10:30 AM in El Moro A.



Friday, October 23 • Social Hour 5:30 PM • Fiesta Dinner 6:30–8:30 PM

Hang up your veil. It's time to celebrate!

After a full day of sessions, Friday night is our time to relax, laugh and enjoy each other's company. Fiesta Night is the social highlight of the conference: a chance to catch up with old friends, meet beekeepers from every corner of Florida and swap the stories you won't hear in any classroom.

5:30 PM • Social Hour. The cash bar opens in the vendor foyer. Toast the day, stop by the vendor booths and find a table with someone you've been wanting to meet.

6:30 PM • Fiesta Dinner. The party moves into the Main Room for a build-your-own taco fiesta with seasoned beef, warm tortillas, Spanish rice and refried beans, and all the fixings: cheese, salsa, sour cream, pico de gallo, lettuce, onions and cilantro.

Bring your appetite, your best stories and your fiesta spirit. Wear bright colors or your favorite bee-themed attire!

W·S·R

Fiesta Night is proudly hosted by WSR Insurance Services

Thank you, WSR, for bringing Florida's beekeepers together for a night of good food, good friends and great celebration.





KEYNOTE SPEAKER

David R. Tarpy, Ph.D.

NCSBA Distinguished Professor of Apiculture; University Research Scholar Professor of Applied Ecology, North Carolina State University

FRIDAY KEYNOTE • 9:30 AM • MAIN ROOM

Effects of Urban- and Agro-Ecosystems on Bees

A relatively new and increasingly important area of David's lab's research: how honey bees and native bees interact with each other, how their surrounding environment affects their health, and how they collectively serve to pollinate natural and agricultural systems, including pesticide exposure.

SATURDAY • 1:40 PM • MAIN ROOM

The Quality of Commercial Queens

Diminished queen quality and reduced longevity is a major problem experienced by beekeepers. This presentation explores the good news and the bad news when it comes to buying queens in the apiculture industry, directly relevant to Florida's commercial queen and package bee industry.

About David

David Tarpy is a Professor of Applied Ecology and the NC Extension Specialist in honey bees. Among other extension initiatives, his program runs the Queen and Disease Clinic and the Beekeeper Education and Engagement System (or BEES). His research interests focus on the biology and behavior of honey bee queens in order to better improve the overall health of queens and their colonies. His lab focuses on the reproductive potential of commercially produced queens, testing their genetic diversity and mating success in an effort to improve queen quality. He has served on the boards of the NC State Beekeepers, the Eastern Apiculture Society, and the Bee Informed Partnership, and on the editorial boards of the top two scientific journals on apiculture. He is a highly sought-after speaker for clubs around the country and is in high demand to talk about the research coming out of his lab.



KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Krispn Given

Senior Apiculture Specialist and Honey Bee Breeder, Purdue University

SATURDAY KEYNOTE • 9:30 AM • MAIN ROOM

Helping Bees Help Themselves: Prospects for Breeding Solutions to the Varroa Problem

This talk offers practical insights for breeders and beekeepers seeking sustainable, long term solutions to apiary health. The Varroa mite remains the number one factor associated with honey bee colony mortality worldwide. Krispn will give a comprehensive overview of the hierarchical selection process used to breed behavioral resistance to Varroa, drawing on nearly two decades of progress with the Indiana Mite-Biter strain. Grooming and mite mutilation are highly heritable traits with measurable benefits, including significantly lower winter mortality and a proven two fold increase in overwintering survival. He will cover the program's current milestone of a sustained 50% mite biting rate, driven by discovery of key behavioral genes such as Neurexin-1, and look ahead to how genomic selection paired with phenotypic selection could lock in these traits faster and support a chemical free future for the industry.

About Krispn

Krispn Given is an internationally recognized authority in the field of instrumental insemination and honey bee breeding. For three decades, he has conducted advanced research to improve honey bee health, directing Purdue University's honey bee breeding program and managing up to 300 colonies. He spearheaded the development of the Indiana Mite-Biter strain, demonstrating that selective breeding can successfully enhance behavioral resistance to the Varroa mite. An educator and author, he teaches advanced courses in queen rearing and instrumental insemination that attract students and researchers worldwide. His research has yielded numerous scientific publications and led to the co-founding of Apis Engineering, where he co-designs innovative, American made instrumental insemination devices used in laboratories globally. He is the recipient of the prestigious 2023 international Roger A. Morse Outstanding Teaching, Extension, and Regulatory Award, and is a past president of the Heartland Honey Bee Breeders Cooperative.

PRESENTERS

Times and rooms are listed to help you plan. Please check the official conference schedule for the latest times and any room changes.



Christopher & Iris Alonso

Alonso Apiaries LLC, Clewiston, FL

FRIDAY • 2:30 PM • LA PALOMA

Beyond the Jar: Hands-On Crafting of Beeswax Lip Balms and Salves

Transform your hive's beeswax into high-value, artisanal body care products in this practical, hands-on workshop. Attendees will learn essential ratio math, oil infusion techniques, and proper pouring protocols for creating smooth lip balms and soothing body salves. Leave with clear recipes, safety standards, and the confidence to expand your apiary's product line beyond raw honey.

SATURDAY • 11:30 AM • LA PALOMA

From Hive to Booth: Vendor Strategies, Product Diversity, and Market Do's and Don'ts

Learn how to build a successful market presence by turning raw honey and beeswax into a diverse range of market-ready goods. Drawing from years of real-world experience at farmers markets and festivals, this session covers professional booth layout, product presentation, pricing strategies, and essential market do's and don'ts. Discover how to showcase your harvest effectively and turn market visitors into lifelong apiary customers.

About

Christopher and Iris Alonso are the founders and operators of Alonso Apiaries LLC, a family-run apiary business based in Clewiston, Florida. Drawing on Christopher's experience as a former state apiary inspector alongside Iris's passion for artisan craft, the duo manages hives across South Florida to produce raw honey and value-added hive products. Since launching at local markets in 2019, they have built a thriving brand specializing in handcrafted beeswax lip balms, body salves, soaps, and specialty infused honeys. Through hands-on workshops and market experience, Christopher and Iris are dedicated to helping fellow beekeepers unlock the full potential of their hives and build sustainable, hive-to-market small businesses.



Celena Bennett

Red Phoenix Queen Bees LLC • Florida Commercial Beekeeper and Florida Certified Queen Breeder

FRIDAY • 10:30 AM • LA PALOMA

The Art of Queen Rearing

Learn how to select and manage breeder queens, set up a cell builder, graft larvae, and care for queen cells, plus the importance of drones.

SATURDAY • 11:30 AM • OUTDOOR APIARY

The Art of Managing Cell Builders

Learn how to set up and maintain cell builders and queen banks.

About

Celena Bennett's beekeeping journey began in 2013 in Alabama. She served as president of the West Alabama Beekeepers Association while completing the ABA Master Beekeeper program. She then served a full term on the board of the Alabama State Beekeepers Association, helped people across the state with structural bee removals, and began learning the art of rearing queens.

In 2023, Celena moved to Florida to work for a commercial operation, which took her beekeeping skills to a new level. Queen rearing quickly became her main focus. After advancing her skills in instrumentally inseminating queen bees, she launched her own queen breeding program. Today she operates Red Phoenix Queen Bees LLC, where her primary focus is breeding mite-resistant Cordovan honeybees.



Steven Coy

Coy Bee Company / President, American Honey Producers Association

FRIDAY • 11:30 AM • LA PALOMA

The Fight Against Economically Motivated Adulteration in the American Honey Market

What is Economically Motivated Adulteration (EMA), and who is involved in it? Where does the honey come from, and how is the price gap putting pressure on American beekeepers? What has the bee industry done over the past 20 years to address this issue, and what new options could help stop it?

About

Steven Coy is a third-generation beekeeper, longtime AHPA Executive Committee member, and president of the American Honey Producers Association. A native of Brookland, Arkansas, he lives in Wiggins, Mississippi, where he owns Coy Bee Company, a 1,800-colony queen, nuc, and honey operation. Steven has supported commercial beekeeping through leadership, research, education, and public policy. He has led the Russian Honey Bee Breeders Association and Mississippi Beekeepers Association and helped found the Pollinator Stewardship Council. He also represented U.S. beekeepers on the EPA's Pesticide Program Dialogue Committee, contributing to national pesticide policy and pollinator protection. He co-authored Russian Honey Bees and has shared his practical knowledge of breeding, selection, and management at numerous meetings. Steven earned bachelor's and master's degrees in plant science and entomology from Arkansas State University.







Md Moniruzzaman, Ph.D.

James C. Fulton, Ph.D., Md Moniruzzaman, Ph.D., Kiley Epperson & Bianca Forsyth

Honey Bee Diagnostics Laboratory, Division of Plant Industry, Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS)

FRIDAY • 3:30 PM • MAIN ROOM

Amitraz Resistance: An Emerging Challenge to Beekeeping Operations

This session covers the causes and signs of amitraz resistance in Varroa destructor populations, at least three integrated pest management (IPM) strategies to slow resistance development and maintain effective mite control, and an overview of current research on the topic in Florida and nationally.

Presented by James C. Fulton, Ph.D., Kiley Epperson and Bianca Forsyth.

SATURDAY LUNCH & LEARN • 12:30 PM • MAIN ROOM

Short Lab Stories from the Honey Bee Diagnostics Lab

A collection of short stories from the lab bench, including how to properly collect and mail samples for diagnosis. Sponsored by Crop Disaster Recovery.

About

Dr. James C. Fulton: James is a Research Scientist with the Division of Plant Industry at the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. He strives to support the apiary industry through accurate and timely diagnosis, relevant research, and engaging outreach. James started the Honey Bee Diagnostics Laboratory (HBDL) in 2023, which applies traditional and molecular diagnostic tools to identify bacterial, fungal, and viral pathogens as well as arthropod pests of Apidae (i.e., bees), conducts research to improve the identification, management, and/or control of these organisms, and performs extensive outreach to share generated knowledge with apicultural stakeholders and the public.

Dr. Md Moniruzzaman: Moniruzzaman is the Next Generation Sequencing (NGS) Lab Lead Scientist with the Division of Plant Industry at the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. The primary goal of the lab is to monitor invasive plants and plant diseases. Before joining DPI, Dr. Moniruzzaman worked for Florida A&M University; the Guangdong Academy of Agricultural Sciences in Guangzhou, China; BGI in Shenzhen, China; the National University of Malaysia in Bangi, Malaysia; and LalTeer Seed in Dhaka, Bangladesh. He enjoys learning new things, spending time in nature, reading books and spending time with family.

Kiley Epperson: Epperson completed her bachelor's degree in applied biology from the University of Florida in 2023. As part of her master's program at UF HBREL, she studies amitraz resistance in Varroa. Additionally, Kiley joined Florida Department of Agriculture's Honey Bee Diagnostic Laboratory in 2023 and is now a biological scientist, aiding in the identification of honey bee pests and pathogens.

Bianca Forsyth: Forsyth has been a lab technician with the Division of Plant Industry at the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services since the summer of 2025. Bianca has been working in natural resources and conservation fields since her interest sparked as an undergraduate at the University of Florida. Her role in the lab involves using molecular methods to test Africanized genetics, identify honey bee pathogens, and support the lab's ongoing research projects.



Agostina Giacobino, Ph.D.

Visiting Researcher, Auburn University Bee Center • Associate Researcher, CONICET (Argentina)

FRIDAY • 2:30 PM • MAIN ROOM

The US Beekeeping Survey: What Beekeepers Are Telling Us About Colony Losses and Varroa Management

With Nathalie Steinhauer, Zachary Beneduci, Samantha Brunner, Natasha Garcia-Andersen, Dan Aurell, Selina Bruckner, Stephanie Rogers and Geoffrey Williams

Since 2024, the Auburn University Bee Center, Oregon State University, and Apiary Inspectors of America have conducted the US Beekeeping Survey, an annual initiative that follows the Bee Informed Partnership's Colony Loss and Management Survey. This presentation will describe the survey and its contributions to describing colony losses and management practices across regions and operation types in the United States. It will highlight the interactive dashboard app developed to share survey data, visualize trends over time, and compare the prevalence of management practices across beekeeper groups, including those related to Integrated Pest Management (IPM). The presentation will also introduce the Summer Snapshot, a new initiative designed to characterize summer colony health and management, particularly among commercial beekeeping operations, and identify common practices, challenges, and areas where additional research or resources may be needed.

About

Agostina Giacobino is a biologist from Argentina with a PhD in Biological Sciences, with research focused on risk factors associated with the presence and spread of Varroa destructor in managed honey bee colonies. She is an Associate Researcher at Argentina's National Scientific and Technical Research Council and is currently on leave to gain international research experience. In 2024, she joined the Auburn University Bee Center, led by Dr. Williams, as a visiting researcher. Her work includes coordinating the US Beekeeping Survey on national colony losses, conducting field trials on Varroa control strategies, and interviewing beekeepers across the country to gather insights into Varroa management and amitraz resistance.



Jenn Hagen

Family and Consumer Sciences Agent, University of Florida/IFAS Extension, Lee County

SATURDAY • 10:30 AM • EL MORO B

Honey, Can I Sell That? Understanding Florida's Regulations for Beekeepers

Learn how to legally sell honey and hive-based products in Florida, whether you're a backyard beekeeper or pursuing commercial growth. This session clarifies the differences between commercial honey operations and home-based sales under the Cottage Food Law and explains the Cosmetic Manufacturing Exemption for value-added products. Gain practical guidance to expand your beekeeping business, ensure compliance, and unlock your hive's full potential.

About

Jenn Hagen is the Family and Consumer Sciences Agent at UF/IFAS Extension Lee County, where she specializes in food safety, regulatory guidance, and entrepreneurship. As a passionate advocate for pollinator health, Jenn brings both formal training and practical experience to her work with beekeepers. She empowers small farmers and food entrepreneurs to launch and grow their businesses. Born and raised in Southwest Florida, Jenn now works statewide to promote Florida agriculture and value-added practices. If you're curious about cottage food laws, value-added products, or launching a honey-based business, Jenn is your go-to guide for navigating Florida's regulatory landscape.



Erin Jenkins

Apiary Inspector, Apiary Inspection Section, Division of Plant Industry, Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS)

FRIDAY • 10:30 AM • EL MORO B

State Inspector Updates, Q & A

About

Erin Jenkins is a fifth generation beekeeper whose family started beekeeping in the 1920s. Inspired by a 2017 visit from State Apiary Inspector Glenn Barnett, she earned a B.S. in Agriculture Sciences in 2021 and now works as an Apiary Inspector for the Florida Department of Agriculture. Jenkins remains involved in her family's bee business and is dedicated to supporting fellow beekeepers.



Jan Lohman

Development Chairperson, Project Apis m. / Bee Health Collective

FRIDAY • 11:30 AM • EL MORO B

20 Years of Bees, Research and Innovation

Project Apis m. is celebrating 20 years this year. This session covers how the organization is driving science to deliver innovation for healthy bees for everyone.

About

Jan Lohman was a commercial beekeeper with Vazza Farms in Oregon for over 30 years, traveling the pollination circuit across Oregon, Washington, and California. She fell in love with beekeeping while running a bookstore and helping her partner, Vince, with his hives. Jan was part of the team that created the Oregon Master Beekeeper Program, serving as an advisor, instructor, and mentor for 14 years. She also served as President, Secretary, and Grant Coordinator for the Oregon State Beekeepers Association. In retirement, she joined the Executive Board of Project Apis m. / Bee Health Collective, where she currently serves as Development Chairperson.



DC Padgett

President, South Brevard Beekeepers

FRIDAY • 1:30 PM • EL MORO B

Swarm Removals (classroom presentation)

About

DC Padgett is a semi-retired machinist of over thirty years. He began beekeeping a little over ten years ago after a friend invited him to work his hives, and he quickly developed a knack for recognizing a hive in trouble. He co-founded South Brevard Beekeepers, where he now serves as club president, and the club maintains an apiary open to the public every Sunday afternoon. DC started doing bee removals in his first year of beekeeping and now works with a team of four, completing most removals within about an hour. He enjoys sharing what he has learned with other beekeepers.



Kimberly & David Lott

Founders, Crop Disaster Recovery • Advocates for Farmers and Beekeepers

SATURDAY • 10:30 AM • EL MORO A

USDA Updates / RMA Updates

About

Kimberly and David Lott are the founders of Crop Disaster Recovery (CDR), a national consulting firm supporting agricultural producers as they navigate USDA programs and disaster relief. As seventh-generation Florida cattle ranchers, their deep roots in American agriculture drive a mission focused on justice and fairness for farmers and rural communities.

David Lott, CEO, brings expertise as a Juris Doctor and extensive experience in business, finance, and agriculture. He has guided CDR to represent clients in over 30 states, recovering tens of millions in federal funding and bridging the gap between producers and federal agencies. Kimberly Lott, Chief Operating Officer, holds an MBA in accounting and is celebrated for her analytical approach. After Hurricane Irma in 2017, she uncovered errors in government payouts and ensured correct compensation, including payment increases of up to 1000% for producers. Her advocacy highlighted the need for a liaison between farmers and government, a role she embraced as CDR grew.

With over 150 years of collective experience on staff, CDR champions fair representation for all farmers, including beekeepers. The firm simplifies complex regulations, maximizes program benefits, and represents clients during audits and appeals. Kimberly and David, joined by their three children, have built CDR not just as a business, but as a mission to protect the future of American agriculture.



Lisa Reynes

FSBA Member and Retired Florida Bee Inspector

FRIDAY • 2:30 PM • EL MORO B

David Miksa Kids' Zone Training: How to Use This Material

Learn how to bring the FSBA Kids' Zone, a free, ready-to-use program for teaching children about Florida's honey bees, to schools, libraries, festivals and camps in your community. This session walks through the program kit: working with hosts, staffing and safety, building a program for any setting, three lesson themes, and the games, snacks and printables that go with them. FSBA members who attend can enter their club in a drawing for one of two Kids' Zone Club Starter Grants of up to $250 in supplies, made possible by a donation from Dr. Garett Slater, our 2025 keynote speaker. Session and class materials sponsored by Seb-Bees LLC.

About

Lisa Reynes has been a beekeeper for 26 years. She retired in 2024 from the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, where she served as an apiary inspector for 14 years. She continues to mentor new beekeepers and also enjoys gardening and quilting.



Debbie Seib

President, American Beekeeping Federation (ABF)

SATURDAY • 11:30 AM • EL MORO A

American Beekeeping Federation Overview

The American Beekeeping Federation serves beekeepers of all levels. Learn what the ABF does for beekeepers, what it has been working on in 2026, and how to find more information.

About

Debbie began keeping bees over thirty-five years ago in Indiana. She is a commercial beekeeper and a Mann Lake dealer. In 2015 she served on the joint task force that combined two state Indiana beekeeping organizations, and after they became one organization she completed the documentation for their 501(c)(3) status. Starting at the 2011 American Beekeeping Federation (ABF) conference, Debbie served as the Indiana State Delegate, and from 2014 to 2024 she was the ABF State Delegates Assembly chair. She served as the Special Interest Group leader for the Honey Producers and Packers for four years and was instrumental in the association's recovery beginning in 2023. Debbie served as co-chair of the ABF Conference and Tradeshow from 2024 to 2026 and is the current chair for the 2027 conference. After being elected Vice President in 2024 and 2025, she was elected ABF President in 2026.



Jessica Sullivan

Extension Agent, University of Florida IFAS Extension, Osceola County

FRIDAY • 10:30 AM • EL MORO A

Pesticide CEU Class (Part 1): Using Pesticides in Beekeeping: What Private Applicators Need to Know

Session topics include: pesticide resistance management in hives; beekeeping pesticide application, equipment and PPE; and beekeeping pesticide toxicity. This presentation offers one CEU for pesticide applicators in the "Private Applicator-Agricultural Pest Control" category.

About

Jessica Sullivan has been an Extension Agent with the University of Florida IFAS Extension in Osceola County for 25 years. Her current programs focus on sustainable agriculture and local food systems, including beekeeping. She has a B.S. in Horticulture and an M.S. in Entomology.



Brooke L. Moffis

Commercial Horticulture Agent, UF/IFAS Extension, Lake County

FRIDAY • 11:30 AM • EL MORO A

Pesticide CEU Class (Part 2): CORE Concepts for Pesticide Applicators: Safety, Labels, and Formulations

This presentation provides a practical overview of pesticide safety, label interpretation, and pesticide formulation types for licensed applicators. Participants will learn how to read and follow pesticide labels, understand key safety and environmental protection requirements, and recognize how different formulations influence handling, application, and efficacy. Attendance qualifies for one (1) FDACS CORE Continuing Education Unit (CEU) for pesticide applicators.

About

Brooke Moffis is the Commercial Horticulture Agent at UF/IFAS Extension in Lake County, focusing on Florida-Friendly Landscaping and urban biodiversity. She has a Master's in entomology from the University of Florida and worked in integrated pest management at Walt Disney World's Living with the Land. Additionally, she is a certified FDACS pesticide CEU provider.





Kevin & Teresa Yates

T's Bees, Gulf Breeze, FL

> *Kevin and Teresa are unable to join us this year after suffering heavy damage from Hurricane Isaias, and their Bee Buggy sessions have been cancelled. Our thoughts and prayers go out to them and to all of the beekeepers affected by the storm.*

About

Kevin and Teresa Yates both come from medical backgrounds, with more than 75 years of experience between them. Kevin has always been interested in aviation — he worked crash rescue in the USAF, then had a career as a flight nurse — and it only seemed natural that, about 10 years ago, he'd take an interest in bees, with Teresa along for the ride. Their first hive was a top bar hive, ideal for learning, and as their knowledge of bees grew, so did their bee yard. They had to find something to do with all the honey, so T's Bees was born.

UF/IFAS HONEY BEE RESEARCH & EXTENSION LAB

UF IFAS UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA
Honey Bee Research And Extension Lab



Cameron Jack, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor, Entomology and Nematology Department, University of Florida

FRIDAY • 10:30 AM • MAIN ROOM • WITH AMY VU

UF Honey Bee Lab Updates

About

Dr. Cameron Jack is an Assistant Professor in the Entomology and Nematology Department at the University of Florida. He teaches many of UF's beekeeping and honey bee health courses and mentors graduate and undergraduate student researchers. His research focuses on honey bee toxicology and epidemiology.



Amy Vu

State Specialized Extension Agent II, UF/IFAS Honey Bee Research and Extension Lab

FRIDAY • 10:30 AM • MAIN ROOM • WITH CAMERON JACK, PH.D.

UF Honey Bee Lab Updates

About

Amy Vu leads Extension programming for the UF/IFAS Honey Bee Research and Extension Lab, including the UF Master Beekeeper Program and UF Bee Colleges, and co-hosts the lab's podcast, “Two Bees in a Podcast.” Her work focuses on honey bee health, beekeeping entrepreneurship, and training beekeeping instructors. Before joining the lab, she was an urban horticulture agent with UF/IFAS Orange County Extension. She has kept bees since 2013.

Friday Lunch & Learn • 12:20 PM • Main Room UF Student Presentations



Pierce Barron

Master's Student, UF Honey Bee Research and Extension Laboratory

About

Pierce Barron is a master's student at the UF Honey Bee Research and Extension Laboratory, where he started as a volunteer and field technician while earning his B.S. in Entomology and Nematology. He has worked on projects involving honey bee behavior, nutrition, and pest control, and his graduate research focuses on emerging control methods for Varroa destructor.



Alexis Masnjak

Ph.D. Student, UF Honey Bee Research and Extension Laboratory

About

Alexis Masnjak is a Ph.D. student at the UF Honey Bee Research and Extension Lab, where her research focuses on Ascosphaera apis, the fungal pathogen that causes chalkbrood. She has a background in microbiology and molecular biology and earned an M.S. in Biology from the University of South Florida, studying behavior and gene expression in Hymenoptera.



Louise Petit

Ph.D. Student, UF Honey Bee Research and Extension Laboratory

About

Louise Petit is a Ph.D. student at the UF Honey Bee Research and Extension Laboratory. She was introduced to HBREL as a visiting scholar during her master's in Bioengineering in France. She is interested in honey bee toxicology, and her graduate project focuses on Varroa destructor control.



Julia St. Amant

Ph.D. Student, UF Honey Bee Research and Extension Laboratory

About

Julia St. Amant is a Ph.D. student at the UF Honey Bee Research and Extension Laboratory. She started at HBREL as a volunteer, then became the lab technician conducting research on Varroa destructor and other pests and pathogens. She holds an M.S. in Entomology and Nematology from UF, and her research focuses on honey bee pathogens.



Marie Yanchak

Master's Student, UF Honey Bee Research and Extension Laboratory

About

Marie Yanchak is a master's student at the UF Honey Bee Research and Extension Lab. With a background in commercial beekeeping, her research focuses on improving oxalic acid treatments for Varroa destructor control.

SPECIAL GUEST



Ally Malay, Ph.D.

Postdoctoral Research Fellow, USDA Agricultural Research Service, Pollinator Health Unit, Davis, CA

SATURDAY LUNCH & LEARN • 12:30 PM • MAIN ROOM

Updates From Ally: USDA Edition

Ally will give a brief overview of the projects she is working on at USDA-ARS.

About

Ally began her beekeeping journey at the University of Central Florida as an undergraduate student. She continued with bee research in graduate school, focusing on honeybee viruses in Florida and viral flow between other pollinator species. After graduating in May 2026, she is now a postdoctoral fellow at USDA Agricultural Research Service's Pollinator Health Unit in Davis, California.

PANELS

Products of the Hive Panel

FRIDAY • 3:30 PM • LA PALOMA

Panelists: Jenn Hagen (UF/IFAS Extension) and Christopher & Iris Alonso (Alonso Apiaries).

Honey is only the beginning. Our panelists talk about turning honey, beeswax and other hive products into value-added goods: what sells, what the rules are, and the lessons they learned along the way. Bring your questions.

Pest and Disease Treatment/Control Discussion Panel

SATURDAY • 2:40 PM • MAIN ROOM

Hosted by Vita Bee Health • David Westervelt

Our panels are sponsored by Vita Bee Health

Thank you, Vita, for supporting the Products of the Hive Panel and the Pest and Disease Treatment/Control Discussion Panel.

COMING IN 2027

A New Annual $500 Educational Scholarship

Beginning in 2027, Vita Bee Health will sponsor an annual $500 educational scholarship through FSBA. The scholarship will honor the Latner Family and the Cutts Family for their long dedication to Florida beekeeping. Watch for more details in 2027.

FSBA MEETINGS & EVENTS

Commercial Beekeepers Meeting

The Agriculture Industry Agenda • Facilitated by Nate Jester

FRIDAY • 1:30 PM • MAIN ROOM

Commercial beekeepers and anyone working in pollination or honey production are invited to talk through the issues facing Florida's beekeeping and agriculture industry.

Local Club Presidents & Club Representatives Meeting

SATURDAY • 10:30 AM • MAIN ROOM

Presidents and representatives from Florida's local beekeeping clubs meet to share what is working, swap ideas and connect with FSBA.

FSBA Annual Meeting

SATURDAY • 3:25–4:45 PM • MAIN ROOM

The annual meeting of the Florida State Beekeepers Association membership. Hear FSBA's year in review and plans for the year ahead. All members are encouraged to attend.

Loader Rodeo

Sponsored by JBEE Enterprises and UBees

FRIDAY • PRACTICE SEAT TIME • RODEO ARENA

SATURDAY • 10:30 AM–12:20 PM • OFFICIAL RODEO

Test your skills on the loader in the Rodeo Arena. Seat-time tickets are $10 per session. Awards are presented at Closing Remarks on Saturday.

SAVE THE DATE

2027 FSBA Annual Conference

October 21–23, 2027

Mission Inn Resort & Club, Howey-in-the-Hills, FL

PRODUCT DEMONSTRATIONS

norroa™

Eric Walgren & Adam Pachl

Norroa • Product Demonstration

FRIDAY • 11:30 AM • OUTDOOR APIARY

Presentation in the Hive

OUTDOOR APIARY

Hands-On Sessions Outside

Friday, 11:30 AM: Presentation in the Hive, Eric Walgren & Adam Pachl (Norroa)

Saturday, 11:30 AM: The Art of Managing Cell Builders, Celena Bennett

See the presenter pages for details.

FSBA Grant Steering Committee

Lisa Fussell (Chair), Bobbie Gebhart, Sue Smothers & Chloe Planakis

FRIDAY • 1:30 PM • LA PALOMA (PART 1) & SATURDAY • 10:30 AM • LA PALOMA (PART 2)

FSBA Grant Reviewer Training (Parts 1 & 2)

Training for FSBA members who will review and score applications for the FSBA grant program. Reviewers must attend both sessions to be certified. Part 1 is led by Lisa Fussell, Bobbie Gebhart and Chloe Planakis; Part 2 is led by Lisa Fussell, Sue Smothers and Chloe Planakis.

A Special Thank You

Thank you to every FSBA member who has served on the Grant Steering Committee. Your time, care and hard work built the foundation of the FSBA grant program. With its work complete, the Grant Steering Committee will dissolve, and the FSBA Grant Committee will be formed for 2027 to carry the program forward.

FSBA Grant Steering Committee Members

1. Lisa Fussell (Chair)
2. Bobbie Gebhart
3. Jamie Guined
4. Timmi Finnerty
5. Sue Smothers
6. Chloe Planakis
7. Allison Malay
8. Matthew Strickland
9. Rein Verbeek
10. Nancy Palilonis

Special Thanks

With gratitude to our stakeholder Jenn Hagen for her expert guidance.

NOT A MEMBER OF FSBA YET?

Join Us Today!

Florida State Beekeepers Association has served Florida's beekeepers since 1920. Membership connects you with beekeepers across the state and helps fund honey bee education and outreach across Florida.

Scan the code or visit **flstatebeekeepers.org**

FLORIDA HONEY QUEEN



Camryn Brown Ferenczy

2026 Florida Honey Queen

Welcome Back, Florida Honey Queen!

FSBA is proud to see the Florida Honey Queen Program back, and we owe a special thank-you to Camryn Brown Ferenczy for bringing it back. As our Florida Honey Queen, Camryn represents Florida's beekeepers and shares the importance of honey bees with communities across the state. Thank you, Camryn, for your time, your energy and your commitment to Florida beekeeping.

A sincere thank-you to Barkman Honey for sponsoring the Florida Honey Queen Program. Your support helps the Honey Queen reach more people and share the story of Florida honey.

Crowning at Friday Fiesta Night: The 2027 Florida Honey Queen will receive her crown during Fiesta Night on Friday, October 23.

Barkman Honey

Follow the Florida Honey Queen

Please follow the Florida Honey Queen and invite your beekeeping friends and family to follow along too.

Instagram: @floridahoneyqueen

Facebook: Florida Honey Queen

FSBA HONEY SHOW



FSBA Honey Show Judges

Florida State Beekeepers Association Honey Show

SATURDAY • 11:30 AM • EL MORO B

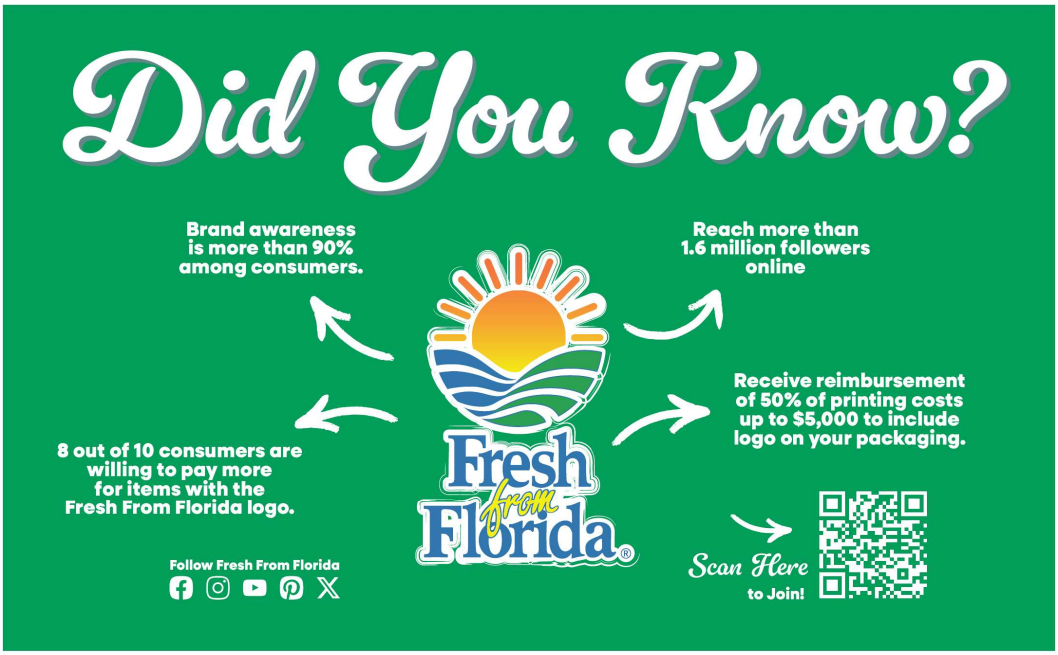
How to Enter the Honey Show

Thinking about entering the Honey Show? The FSBA Honey Show judges walk through the entry categories, how to prepare and present your honey and hive products, and what judges look for when scoring. Bring your questions and learn how to give your entries their best chance at a ribbon.

Honey Show Entry drop-off:

Thursday, 10/22/26, 12:00–4:00 PM, & Friday, 10/23/26, 7:30-10 am in the Honey Show room.

Honey Show Team: **Nancy Palilonis**, Presiding Judge; Judges **Maxwell Goodacre**, **Kevin Lausman** and **Diane Spoden**; **Heather Cherry**, Show Chairperson / Lead Secretary; **Jamie Guined**, Secretary; Stewards **Gregory Clapp**, **Katie Sloas** and **Kevin Sloas**.



Bid, Win and Support Florida's Bees

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 24 • 8:00 AM – 3:30 PM • HONEY SHOW ROOM

Donating an item? Drop it off at the registration table during check-in, Friday or Saturday, 8:00–9:00 AM.

Stop by the Honey Show room to browse this year's auction items, all generously donated by our members, clubs, vendors and sponsors. Place your bids, check back often and see what you can take home.

Every dollar raised supports FSBA's community outreach programs, bringing honey bee education to schools, families and communities across Florida.

How It Works

1. **Find your bid number.** It's printed on your conference badge.
2. **Place your bid.** Write your bid number and amount on the item's bid sheet. Each new bid must be higher than the one above it.
3. **Bidding closes at 3:30 PM.** The highest bid on each sheet wins.
4. **Pay and pick up.** Winners pay and collect their items by the end of Closing Remarks, 4:45–5:00 PM. Cash and card payments through Square are accepted.

Thank you to everyone who donated an item. Your generosity makes this auction possible.



Sponsored by Beekeeping Insurance Services

Thank you for supporting the Community Outreach Silent Auction and FSBA's work across Florida.

Bring the Kids' Zone to Your Community

FRIDAY • 2:30 PM • EL MORO B

The FSBA Kids' Zone is a free, ready-to-use program that helps clubs teach children about Florida's honey bees. The kit includes everything you need to plan a program for schools, libraries, festivals, camps and community events: tips for working with hosts, staffing and safety, three lesson themes, hands-on activities and games, bee-friendly snacks, and printables to send home. Come learn how to use these activities with the children in your own community.



In honor of David Miksa, whose lifelong commitment to beekeeping in Florida lives on through his family and through every young beekeeper this program reaches.

David Miksa (holding plaque) and his family at Miksa Honey Farm with his American Honey Producers Association Lifetime Achievement Award.

Kids' Zone Club Starter Drawing

Two clubs will each win up to $250 in Kids' Zone supplies!

1. **Get your ticket.** Each FSBA member who attends the training receives one raffle ticket.
2. **Enter your club.** Write your club name on your ticket and drop it in the drawing box. The more members from your club who attend, the more chances your club has to win.
3. **Two winners are drawn.** Two winning clubs are drawn at the end of the session. A club can win only once.
4. **Share the Kids' Zone.** Each winning club holds at least one Kids' Zone presentation in its community before the 2027 FSBA Annual Conference and tells us about it with the "Tell Us About Your Presentation" form.
5. **Get reimbursed.** The club buys its supplies and sends the reimbursement form with itemized receipts to AnnualConference@FSBAbee.org. FSBA reimburses the club up to $250.

The Club Starter Drawing is made possible by a generous donation from Dr. Garett Slater, our 2025 keynote speaker. Thank you, Dr. Slater!

Seb-Bees
Quality Queens And HoneyBees

Sponsored by Seb-Bees LLC

Thank you, Seb-Bees, for sponsoring the Kids' Zone Club Training and its class materials, and for helping bring honey bee education to Florida's children.

Buy the Plate. Save the Bees.



3,827 Plates on the Road!

As of October 1, 3,827 “Save the Bees” plates are on the road, exactly one year after the plate became available. Help us reach our goal of 5,000 plates by the end of the year!

How to Get Your Plate

Visit any DMV or county tag office. Bring your voucher if you purchased one, or simply ask for the “Save the Bees” plate when you register or renew. Personalized plates are available for an additional $15 per year using HSMV form 83043.

Give the Gift of the Plate

Specialty plate gift certificates make easy holiday and birthday gifts. Purchase one at any Florida motor vehicle or tag office, and the recipient can pick up their plate at any tag office, anytime, with just a Florida driver’s license or ID. The gift certificate never expires. Since most Florida registrations renew on the owner’s birthday, it’s a perfect birthday surprise.

Every plate supports FSBA’s honey bee research, education and outreach across Florida. Scan the QR code below or visit savethebeesplate.com to learn more.

Show your love for Florida’s honey bees on every drive, and encourage your family and friends to get one too!