March 11, 2016 DAR Alliance Chapter meeting

April 28, 2016 DAR Illinois State meeting

DAR Honeybee presentation:

Did you know that honeybees have to fly about 50,000 miles and visit about 2 million flowers to make just 1 pound of honey?

First, I will tell you a bit about how I got started and about Curtis Orchard. Next, I will take you into the home of a honeybee and share some of the day to day activity. Lastly, I will provide a few things you can do to help the declining pollinator populations and some resources if you are interested in becoming a beekeeper.

**Slide 2:** Rachel-

* Commercial beekeeper for Curtis Orchard-apx. 15 hives, 6 years
* Began beekeeping Africanized honeybees in Paraguay, South America as a Peace Corp Volunteer in 2009
* SARE grant with Maggie Wachter—varietal honey and best practice for small scale farmers.

**Slide 3:** Curtis Orchard

80 acre apple orchard, pumpkin patch and entertainment farm in Southwest Champaign

* Began as a hobby for my grandparents, Paul and Joyce Curtis, and today is a must-visit attraction hosting over 170,000 visitors annually
* All honey, pumpkins and apples are sold direct to consumers…(show orchard and patch on picture)

**Slide 4:** Placement of hives

Honeybees will fly up to 3 miles

**Slide 5:** Best Tasting Honey in the World

Center for Honeybee Research Black Jar Honey Tasting Contest

Ashville, North Carolina

**Slide 6:** Honeybees and beekeeping

Image of a typical day in the Apiary

Honey supers and inspections

**Slide 7:** Life Cycle

Honey bees live about 40 days during the summer

Cycle through various jobs—cleaning-foraging

**Slide 8:** Caste of bees

Worker: 21 day gestation

Drone: 24 days gestation

Queen 15-16 days gestation

**Slide 9:** Queen bee and her attendants

Lays 1,000-2,000 eggs per day

**Slide 10**: Start-up costs:

Start with 2 hives; add more as you feel comfortable.

* Cost starts out at $900 for 2 hives with packages of bees
* Time- 15-30 hrs per hive per year (April-November)
* Cost of classes $25- $70
* Sustainability: sell the honey, beeswax

**Slide 11:** Further resources

Online, classes, books, and meetings

Slide 12: What can you do?

* Plant native plants in masses.
* Plan to have an assortment of flowers blooming all season long.
* Zinnia and Sunflower are great annuals that grow from seed.
* Leave space between flowers during the growing season and dead stems during the winter for shelter from the elements and nesting areas for solidary bees.
* Limit or eliminate pesticide use.
* Follow proper application and timing when using pesticides and contact your local UI Extension for help.
* Avoid planting plants treated with neonicotinoids. These are particularly detrimental to bees.
* Add a mason bee hive or keep bees.

Slide 12: Borage

Slide 13: Echium

Slide 14: Goldenrod

Slide 15: Melissa Lemon Balm

Slide 16: Phacelia Tansy