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## SARE Farmer Grant Awarded to Compare Colony Start Options

By Erin MacGregor-Forbes, Master Beekeeper

Last Spring the New Hampshire Beekeeper's Association Spring meeting featured a talk by the Northeast SARE grant outreach coordinator. While I was unable to attend the meeting, the flyer and subject intrigued me I contacted Wendy Booth of the NHBA for more information. She provided me with flyers from the workshop and I began exploring the SARE website to learn more about the grants they offer. ([www.nesare.org](http://www.nesare.org))

Northeast SARE is funded by the US Department of Agriculture and the programs are designed to support innovation and education in sustainable farming practices. The programs include a number of different grants including the smaller "farmer" grants where individuals are encouraged to explore ideas and share their results with other farmers.

Last fall I applied for a grant with a proposal entitled "A Comparison of Honey Bee Colony Strength and Survivability between Nucleus and Package Started Colonies." I found out this week that I was awarded the grant.

In summary, the proposal is to start twenty four new colonies this spring. Sixteen colonies will be started from Georgia packages and eight of the colonies will be started from overwintered nucs from Connecticut. In June once commercially raised Northern queens are available, eight of the packages will be re-queened with Northern queens from Vermont. This will create three groups. Group one will be 'straight up' packages, Group two will be package started but re-queened with Northern Raised queens, and Group three will be overwintered nucs headed by their own Northern Raised queen.

The twenty four new colonies will be split into two yards - one managed by me and the other managed by Larry Peiffer of Standish. We will start all of the colonies on identical equipment and assess all colonies on a regular basis using a "hive assessment tool" which is designed to provide an objective assessment of colony health and strength. The Hive Assessment Tool includes aspects of colony strength such as brood quantity and quality, honey quantity, pollen quantity, colony numbers, queen performance, colony temperament, buildup, mite load, disease presence, pest presence, and other characteristics. In addition to our regular assessments, all of the colonies will be inspected and assessed at least once by Tony Jadcak, our State Apiarist and also by our other two practicing Master Beekeepers, Carol Cottrill and Rick Cooper. We seek these outside evaluators to help promote impartiality in colony assessments.

A big part of the SARE program in general and our grant proposal in particular is outreach to other farmers. As part of my proposal, rather than just providing a "final report" of the results, I have promised to write a series of articles describing the grant progress and results. This is the first of the series. I haven't got a lot to report just yet as the grant award is quite new and snow is still on the ground. Our next report (in the June Bee Line) will describe the setup of the apiaries and the initial inspections.

Our hope is to not only learn a little about the differences between the three types of colonies started, but also to share our experiences and engage the MSBA membership in a discussion of the options and alternatives for starting new or replacement colonies.

I must at this time give great credit to Rick Cooper of Bees-N-Me ([www.bees-n-me.com](http://www.bees-n-me.com)) bee supplier in Bowdoinham Maine for building all of the equipment for the twenty four colonies. We'll be running the colonies in two deeps plus we ordered two mediums each in the event that the new colonies are prepared to make a surplus this year. That's 96 boxes and 960 frames newly wired with wax foundation for the grant colonies alone. Building all of that is a lot of work for anyone and we sincerely appreciate all that Rick has done. I'd also like to thank Tony Jadcak for his support and sign-on as Advisor to the grant, and Larry Peiffer for being willing to participate and double his colony numbers (and quadruple his hive assessment and recording time) for the sake of the grant. This project is very relevant to all Maine beekeepers and I hope that we all learn from the experience.

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## New Hampshire's Spring Beekeeping Meeting in Northwood, NH

By Joanne Romano

I was so disappointed that I missed Dr Theodore Cherbuliez's talk on apitherapy products in Falmouth a few weeks ago. So, you can imagine how excited I was to attend the New Hampshire spring meeting on March 22 in Northwood, NH. Frederique Keller, licensed acupuncturist, medical herbalist, and president of the American Apitherapy Society was the featured speaker. Her talks were no disappointment. Since she was the key speaker, this article focuses primarily on her. Frederique offered great information on apitherapy products and discussed how she oftentimes uses acupuncture in conjunction with bee sting apitherapy. Frederique noted that the very narrow, flexible, solid metal, acupuncture needles are used on the patient first, followed by bee venom injections.

During her discussions of bee sting therapy, she stressed the importance of respecting the honeybee and noted that she can administer, at most, eighteen micro stings to a person using one bee and its stinger. Now that is a skill! In a case like this, she used one honeybee versus eighteen.

Of course, you can't talk about bee venom therapy at a beekeepers' meeting without a demonstration. There were three volunteers, with Frederique pointing out the two key immune system points on your back and how to locate them. Within moments, more people were in line for some bee venom therapy. Stings were administered on shoulders, arms, backs, feet, hands, and others.

Frederique also discussed other apitherapy products and recipes, and she was not secretive about her recipes. She even stated that if anyone was interested in a particular recipe, to send her an email request and she would reply with the recipe. Hopefully she will place her curative recipes on the American Apitherapy Association's website ([apitherapy.org](http://apitherapy.org)), as this was suggested by someone in the audience.

She shared many interesting applications of apitherapy. Did you ever think of preserving your pollen by adding it to honey? If you do, you won't have to keep your pollen in the refrigerator, as the honey acts as a preservative for the pollen. Did you know that bee venom therapy has a 99% cure rate for shingles, and that it is used to reduce the symptoms of Lyme disease? Royal jelly is good for the memory. Now, where in my freezer are those queen cells I saved?

Frederique noted that honey can act as a vector for other products such as royal jelly, venom, propolis, pollen, and essential oils. For example, many of us know that you can add honey to an open wound, as honey has antibacterial properties and tissue replenishing properties. But, did you think of adding propolis to the honey? Why not? It has antiviral properties! Is that a natural medicinal marriage made in bee heaven or what?

Perhaps you are a skeptic. If you are a beekeeper you already have the apitherapy products, free for the taking. What do you have to lose by trying a bit of honey for that constipation? Remember, honey is hydrophilic and can act to hydrate your intestine. Why not add a honey dressing to that ulcerous wound that won't heal (under a doctor's supervision)? Surely you can deal with a few stings to get rid of the pain and discomfort of shingles, knowing its cure rate? Did you know that a bee sting between your breasts and at the top of the head can help depression? Did you know that if the stinger penetrates your brain, you would increase your IQ by 25%? Well, okay, that's not true, but the other stuff is worth checking out!

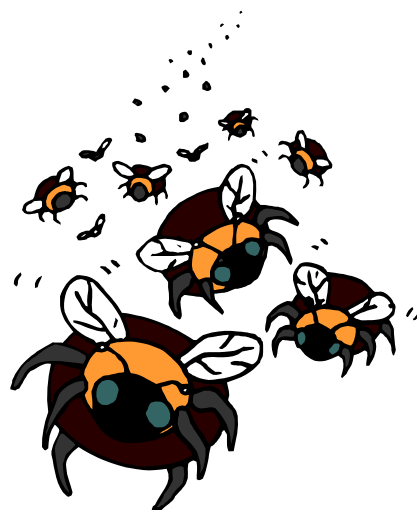
We can only hope that at sometime in the future Frederique will find the time to write a book on her apitherapy thoughts, experiences, curatives, and their recipes. She is truly an interesting and sincere person with precious knowledge that so many of us would suck up like bees at a pool of spilled honey, or as she might put it, "like bees at happy hour".

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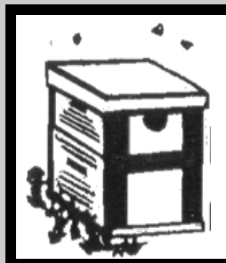
Another speaker at the NH meeting included Todd Hardy of Honey Gardens in Vermont (honeygardens.com), who at one time had 1,900 hives! He discussed plant medicine and brought a few items to sell and display, including elderberry syrup. Raw honey, Echinacea, and vinegar are some of the ingredients in the elderberry syrup, used as a cold medicine. Both he and Frederique encouraged not heating honey above 90°F, as you risk destroying its natural medicinal properties. Todd also noted it is best not to use a filter much above 400 microns. You will filter out the pollen when using a 600 micron filter.

Adding to the variety of events at the meeting was a series of raffles, a nice buffet, a vendor was onsite selling bee supplies, and there was a honey tasting contest in which approximately 20 honey samples were tasted and critiqued by everyone! By the end of the meeting, the big buzz was a honey buzz, as the cluster of full-bellied and contented beekeepers split this hive for the nuc they call home.

As a disclaimer, I would recommend trying apitherapy under the supervision of a qualified person and/or doctor.



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*We are honored to have two great speakers this year, read about their speaking topics on Page 1!!!*

**Program:** (Each Lecture will include a short question and answer period.)

8:00 - 9:00 — Registration and Coffee  
9:00 - 9:15 — Welcome -Sally Greene, President, MSBA  
9:15 - 10:15 — Greg Hunt, Trying to Breed Varroa Resistant Bees  
10:15 - 10:30 — Break  
10:30 - 11:30 — Greg Hunt, Honey Bee Behavioral Genetics  
11:30 - 12:00 — Business Meeting (Annual Report, election of officers, MSBA awards)  
12:00 - 1:00 — Lunch  
1:00 - 1:15 — Inspector's Report and Updates - Tony Jadczyk  
1:15 - 2:15 — Ross Conrad, The Current State of Beekeeping from an Organic Perspective  
2:15 - 2:30 — Break  
2:30 - 3:30 — Ross Conrad, Nontoxic Varroa Control  
3:30 - 4:30 — Raffle and Door Prizes  
4:30 — Adjourn

**Luncheon buffet:** Roast Turkey and Pork, mashed potatoes, green beans, vegetable lasagne, coleslaw, deviled eggs, pickles, olives, French bread, coffee, tea, milk, bottled water and dessert. There will be juice, coffee, tea, bottled water and baked goods available in the morning.

**There will be raffles to benefit the association. You are invited to bring an item for the raffle table (not necessarily bee related) and will want to purchase tickets for your favorite item. Everyone who pre-registers receives one free raffle ticket at the Registration Table.**

**Directions:** From I-95 North & South: Take Exit 113 (Route 3-Augusta/Belfast) to the first traffic light. Go right on Route 104 south (West River Rd) toward Augusta. The Calumet Club is located on the right at the top of the hill 0.4 miles from the light.

From the East on Route 3: Travel west toward Augusta and I-95. Cross Route 201 and the new bridge. Go , left on Route 104 south (West River Rd). The Calumet Club is located on the right at the top of the hill 0.4 miles from the light.

From the West on Route 27: Go north on I-95 a short distance to Exit 113. See directions from I-95.

Please mail the coupon below (keep this half for your info) with your check payable to **MSBA** to:

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#### Registration For MSBA Annual Meeting, April 4, 2009

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Which Chapter(s) are you a member of? \_\_\_\_\_

## The MSBA has Brood Hatching

Some number of years ago, York County had a beekeeping club. But, it's my understanding that the beekeepers lost interest in having a club. Many quit beekeeping. And, the club soon dissolved. The situation is quite different now. With a renewed buzz of interest in beekeeping, the desire to have a club has reemerged.

As the MSBA webmaster, teacher of several years of short courses, and now involved with the York County Extension Bee School, I can clearly see the interest and desire for a new, York County Beekeeping Club. I've had many inquiries from our guest page on the MSBA website. Where ever I've been involved with teaching bee classes, the students have asked of such a York organization.

So, last year I inquired as to the best way to get a new Chapter started. I'd hoped that I could get one going 2008, but had no idea how to attempt it. Once I became an MSBA Board Member, I put the question before the board. Tony Jadczyk explained that once I got involved with the bee school, that those people would become the nucleus for the club. So it sounded reasonable and logical. A year has since passed and now things are starting to develop. The First Annual, York County Coop Extension Service Bee School is under way, taught by Master Beekeeper, Erin Forbes and myself. We have a class of 41 good looking, future beekeepers. Several asked if there was a club in the area. The answer was no, but I was working at a remedy for that.

I didn't need any prodding. I got a list of York beekeepers from Tony Jadczyk that had registered their hives in the past couple of years. I also got a list of MSBA members from Skip Strong, our membership executive. I then received terrific help from Erin Forbes in compiling the three lists, York Bee School, MSBA membership and registered hives. Erin was so good that she made me

mailing labels. Once I informed the board of my progress and they gave me their go-ahead, I sent out a letter of introduction and intent to our future membership of the new, York County Beekeepers Club. This club would become a new MSBA Regional Chapter. Another chapter with the intent to inform and educate the public as well as our beekeepers.

Monday, April 13, the second Monday of the month, will be our first official meeting. The meeting will be held in the Willard Middle School in Sanford, from 6:30 to 8:00. The excitement of having a club with a mission has already started. Questions related to getting an extractor are out. The idea of having mentors has surfaced. Anxiety is building to get into an Open Hive. So we look forward with great anticipation to the success of this new, Regional Chapter, *The York County Beekeepers*.

By Lawrence Peiffer

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## Buzzings

All MSBA members are invited to submit announcements and news for this newsletter at least two weeks before publication date. THE BEE LINE is usually mailed on: February 1, April 1, June 1, August 1, October 1, and December 1.

### New York County Beekeepers Association Meeting

April 13th at the Middle School in Sanford. 6:30—8:00 pm. Come Join Maine's newest bee club!

**Librarian Seeking Return of Materials!!** The MSBA Librarian, Carol Armatis is seeking the return of loaned materials! Please bring your borrowed books and videos to the Annual Meeting for their return to the MSBA Librarian or mail them to her directly. Carole Armatis, 368-4419, 77 Palmer Road Newport, Maine 04953 **Thank you!**

### Swarm Prevention, Control and Capture Workshop.

The CCBA will be sponsoring a swarm prevention, control and capture workshop on April 13, 2009 7:00 pm—9:00 pm at the Mabel L Wilson School in North Yarmouth. Learn how to minimize swarming in your colonies, and capture swarms that do emerge. **This workshop is a must for city and suburban beekeepers!!** Cost is \$30 and includes one home-made swarm trap. Preregistration required. Contact Erin Forbes for registration: queenbee@overlandhoney.com 772-3380

### Making Overwintering Nucleus Colonies Workshop

The Cumberland County Beekeepers Association will again be hosting an overwintering nucs workshop. Workshop Date is June 25, 2009 2pm—5 pm.

This will be a hands-on workshop utilizing the Cumberland County Beekeepers Association's club hives to make summer nucs for the purpose of wintering over for following year use. Northern raised queens from Michael Palmer of French Hill Apiaries will be utilized to head the newly raised colonies. Participants will learn the fundamentals of making their own summer nucs as well as receive instruction on preparing the new colonies for wintering. Participants will leave the workshop with two queens from French Hill Apiaries and one divided hive body so they can make up their own nucs in their home apiary. Participation is limited to 20 people. Cost is \$110 and includes two queens and one divided hive box.

Contact Erin MacGregor-Forbes for registration form, queenbee@overlandhoney.com 207-772-3380

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## THE BACKYARD BEEKEEPER

By Larry Peiffer

It was a beautiful summer July day. I was in the middle of my summer vacation. The sun was out. There was a slight breeze. And the buzz of the bees could be heard around the hives. What more could you want. That's when my wife asked me, if I had any plans of mowing the lawn this weekend. Well, I'm sure I could find better things to do. Like stare at my bees to see what they're bringing in the hives. Or count them leaving per minute to determine how big the population might be. So, to keep everyone happy, I surveyed the lawn. The dandelion crop had all gone to seed and was well spread about. That was okay. I didn't want to shorten my potential nectar crop. Then I noticed my clover. I had to check it a bit closer. But yes, it was ready to go to seed, so I could cut it too. Often times when you cut it, you get a second crop. I wasn't quite so worried about the weeds. So, I guess it was as good a day to cut the grass as any.

I got the keys to the garage from the house. Got the mower out and got it running with a full tank of gas. At that time, it cost me almost \$8.00, for gas to cut the entire lawn. That was incentive to let it grow. I mowed the short side, the front and the other side to the house, all without incident. I had to make the occasional pit stop at the compost pile to empty my bagger. The compost pile was getting taller. That's okay. You can't have too much compost.

Then I started to mow the back yard. I always have the same pattern in the lawn. It adds character, texture, style, and elegance to the dull green surface. So, I'm able to follow the last path I made from the last mow job. It goes easier, faster, and before long, you have time to watch the Red Sox. So, I was zipping along at a rate you might holler at the kids for. But then, it was the back yard. Who's going to see it if the rows aren't straight. Well, that was fine, until I came upon my backyard hives. I zipped by this way and that. You might have thought I was a race car driver. All until, the bagger caught the back corner of a hive. Oooop's, did I do that? Over it went, like Godzilla knocking over a skyscraper. The double deep and three shallows. Kablam!!



Well, there wasn't anything I could do at the scene. The bees were in a state of shock. So I figured I better clear the area before they find I'm the culprit. I continued my drive 30 feet from the crime scene. I shut off the tractor and scurried to get a veil and returned to the hive. I was surprised. They were trying to recoup and figure out what was going on. They were happy to see me rebuild their home, their palace. Not a sting. After I was done with the reassemble, I felt bad... guilty. Let it be a lesson to you, speed kills!

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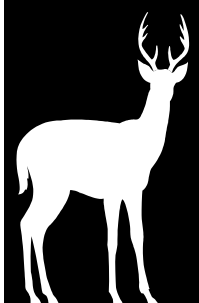
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[http://www.maine.gov/ifw/hunting\\_trapping/hunting/expandedarchery.htm](http://www.maine.gov/ifw/hunting_trapping/hunting/expandedarchery.htm)

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Contact Steve Nordborg, Auburn Mass. At [srnord@juno.com](mailto:srnord@juno.com)

## Sheltered Beehives

Roy Cronkhite

03/28/09

There's a lot of information available to help the beekeeper find the best place to locate and position hives.

Some of the common features are to have a dry spot, with southern exposure, on a slight hill so water and cool air will move away from the hive, dappled shade in the afternoon, and protected from the wind.

In my little area of Maine, the wind usually comes from the west around a hill and across open fields. It is a challenge to find a natural windbreak and still have the hive get southern exposure.

Back in the 70's when Roy Sr. started beekeeping; he decided to build a "bee house". He made it large enough to hold three hives and allow him to stand up behind the hives. He put a long shelf in the back and stored his beekeeping equipment there. I have included a photo with a strange creature who wanted to see the hives for itself.

When I became interested in beekeeping, I bought the family farm and my parents had set up a home across the road in a field. They had a three car garage; two bays for two cars and one for other stuff. But that extra bay just wasn't enough. One summer Dad had me helping him "add on" to the back of it maintaining the same pitch. He said that it was to hold seasonal equipment with a spot reserved for a new bee house. It was eight feet long to hold several hives and lots of bee equipment. The next year I asked him if we might expand it to twelve feet to fit some more hives. Since then we have more bee equipment in that addition than the seasonal equipment. We added an old storm door to the west side so that bees could take cleansing flights without taking the full brunt of the wind. In the winter we place a two-foot high panel across the front of the bottom to cut the draft and keep back the snow. Dad likes the fact that he can go out there any time of year and in any type of weather to check on his bees. I enjoy going out there with him just to watch the girls come and go.



There came a time when the new bee house was not big enough. We had a little shelter where the grandkids waited for the bus. We called it the "Bus Hut". Dad decided to put on an addition and we turned it into our latest bee house.

Last year, Steve Packard, a new student at our bee school discussed setting up hives with Roy Sr. Dad usually carries around a notebook filled with photos that we have taken regarding beekeeping. When he saw the bee house, he got excited and said that he could do the same thing with his house. Dad and I got a chance to see his setup after a WMBA honey extraction party. He was able to build his bee house and it worked great.

So, if you or someone you know has difficulty with the wind or the elements, think about building a shelter for them. Everyone who wants bees should be able to have them.



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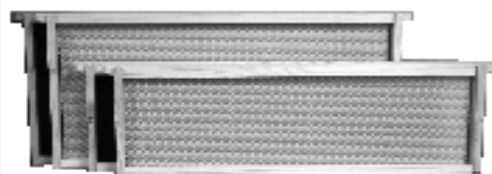
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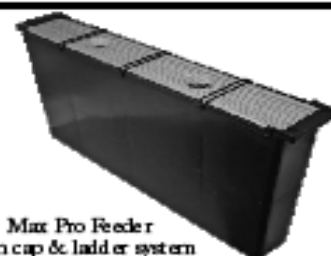
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[sagreene@maine.rr.com](mailto:sagreene@maine.rr.com) 926-3780

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**Erin Forbes, Secretary** queen-bee@overlandhoney.com 838-4046

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EAS Director, Master Beekeeper

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*State of Maine Bee Inspector*  
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287-3891 or 287-7562

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563-2555

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*National Honey Board*  
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**Nick Kelley**, 363-4121,  
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**Roy Cronkhite**, 897-4043,  
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#### Speakers

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**Rick Cooper**, Master Beekeeper,  
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**Nick Kelley**, 364-4121, [bakelley39@yahoo.com](mailto:bakelley39@yahoo.com), Western Maine  
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Past EAS Director, EAS, Beekeeping

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Beekeeping, Commercial pollination,  
Packing, Nucs

**Skip Strong**, 685-4780,  
Membership director  
[skipstrong@netscape.com](mailto:skipstrong@netscape.com), Beekeeping

**Fred Wardwell**, 342-5570,  
Making mead (honey wine)

### *Maine Chapters of MSBA*

#### Borderline Beekeepers

Ed Wilkey 925-3203  
[edwardwilkey@yahoo.com](mailto:edwardwilkey@yahoo.com).

**Cumberland County Beekeepers** Ed  
Lewis, [mittenhed@msn.com](mailto:mittenhed@msn.com)

**Down East Beekeepers** Barb & Jim  
Reed, 244-3684, or  
[virginia\\_ruth\\_\\_2000@yahoo.com](mailto:virginia_ruth__2000@yahoo.com)

**Knox-Lincoln County Beekeepers (KLCB)** Al Mahoney, 832-5162, [ne-waim@midcoast.com](mailto:ne-waim@midcoast.com), or Cheryl Rudy,  
785-3055 [finalee@tidewater.net](mailto:finalee@tidewater.net)

**Penquis Beekeepers' Association (PBA)** Tish Dutson @ 997-3546,  
[tishdutson@yahoo.com](mailto:tishdutson@yahoo.com)

**Sagadahoc County Beekeepers** Bob  
Budden 725-8527, or  
Sonia Woodrum 375-8839,  
[woodrum1102@roadrunner.com](mailto:woodrum1102@roadrunner.com)

#### Tri-County Beekeepers

Jon Cullen, [johnandkaren@pivot.net](mailto:johnandkaren@pivot.net) or  
Adin Tooker, [amttookergmail.com](mailto:amttookergmail.com)

**Western Maine Beekeepers Association (WMBA)** Carol Cottrill, 364-0917,  
[WMBAmail@msn.com](mailto:WMBAmail@msn.com); or  
Nick Kelley, 364-4121, [bakel-](mailto:bakel-)

## Maine State Beekeepers Association

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Cost	Membership Type
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_____ \$15	MSBA Chapter Renewal
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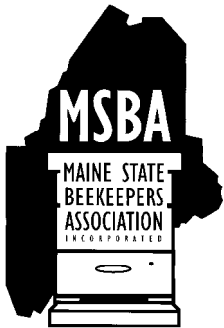
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**BEES NEED YOU!!!**



### THE BEE LINE

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