

Apimondia 2019 Canadian Beekeeping Symposium I

Sponsored by:

University of Guelph Honey Bee Research Centre

Moderators: Rhéal Lafrenière / Geoff Wilson

Monday, September 9, 2019 Room 517A

Time	Beekeeper	Title	Province
15:30	Rene Van Acker	Introductory Message from Session Sponsor	Ontario
15:35	Jerry and Michael Poelman	The Growth of a Prairie Operation: 35 Years of Growth and Taking Advantage of New Opportunities	Alberta
16:00	Alison and John Van Alten	Meeting the Ontario Market: Honey Packing and Queen Production	Ontario
16:30	Bryan Ash	Ash Apiaries – Managing Risk and Income Diversification on the Family Farm	Manitoba
17:00	Joël Laberge	Les Ruches dans La Belle Province	Quebec
17:25	Session Wrap-up		

Apimondia 2019 Canadian Beekeeping Symposium II

Sponsored by:

Canadian Seed Trade Association

Moderators: Geoff Wilson / Rhéal Lafrenière

Tuesday, September 10, 2019 Room 517A

Time	Beekeeper	Title	Province
15.30	Lauren Martin	Introductory Message from Session Sponsor	Ontario
15.35	Lauren Park	Beekeeping in Atlantic Canada	Nova Scotia
16.00	Dani Glennie	Beekeeping to the Max: Getting the Maximum Honey Crop Through Queen Breeding and Intensive Management in Saskatchewan	Saskatchewan
16.30	Albert Devries	A Year at Clovermead	Ontario
17.00	Kevin Nixon	Commercial Beekeeper in Alberta and International Marketing of Premium Canadian Honey	Alberta
17.25	Session Wrap-up		

Biographies:

Apimondia Symposium: Canadian Beekeeping Session I

Jerry and Michael Poelman - - The Growth of a Prairie Operation: 35 years of growth and taking advantage of new opportunities

Jerry and Michelle are the founding owners of a beekeeping business in Fort Macleod, Alberta, Canada that has grown far past any of their expectations. They now are partners with all 3 children: Jennifer, Michael and Ryan; working with them and their son-in-law, Mike and daughter in-law, Breanne. They also have an invaluable core group of employees.

Poelman Apiaries has grown into a large family business. It had humble beginnings back in 1983 when we bought our first 100 hives. Growth was slow over the first 10 years with a drought in our area of southern Alberta giving us poor crops. With the development of hybrid canola seed production in southern Alberta and the need for hives to pollinate this crop, we were able to benefit from the stability of a diversified income. For several years, we had exponential growth, which helped to start several new bee farms in Alberta. Honey production has remained the main focus with canola pollination a close second.

We have been able to make use of great employees and have given some the opportunity of managing a new farm and becoming shareholders in the business. The business has grown to include wax rendering and filtration, and a shop that builds trailers and truck decks.

Alison and John Van Alten - - Meeting the Ontario Market: Honey Packing and Queen Production

Alison, John and their two young sons reside in Freulton, Ontario, Canada. John started beekeeping in 1981 and developed a beekeeping and honey bottling business. From humble beginnings, the business grew to a 2000 hive operation with an emphasis on pollination and honey marketing. Dutchman's Gold has become a well known brand in southern Ontario.

Alison grew up in a hobby beekeeping family in western Newfoundland. While an undergraduate student at the University of Guelph, Alison began working for the Ontario Beekeepers' Association Technology Transfer Program (TTP). In 2000, Alison completed her M.Sc. studies and became the TTP Specialist. She resolved to deal with emerging issues in Ontario's beekeeping industry for another ten years. In 2010 Alison resigned from the TTP to work full time raising queens. Tuckamore Bee Company is committed to producing quality bee stock and is a proud member of ORHBS (Ontario Resistant Honey Bee Selection) Program.

In 2012, The Van Alten family moved to Apiyuri Farm and have since been enthusiastically renovating the farm to suit their honey bee businesses and family life.

Bryan Ash - - Ash Apiaries – Honey Packing and so Much More!

Bryan Ash is the office and operations manager for Ash Apiaries Ltd in Gilbert Plains, Manitoba, Canada. Ash Apiaries Ltd. is the largest family-operated honey producing and processing business in Manitoba. The business was founded in 1972 by Floyd and Peggy Ash and now

includes their three sons: Brent, Grant and Bryan. Starting with 200 honey bee colonies in 1972, the business has grown to approximately 13,000 colonies.

In 1989, Ash Apiaries expanded and started packing under the Sunshine Valley Natural Honey label. In addition to packing traditional honey products like liquid and creamed honey, Ash Apiaries expanded into producing specialty honey products such as flavoured creamed honeys and energy drinks using only 100% pure Canadian honey. The modern processing and packaging plant also provides custom packaging of liquid and creamed honey for retail, wholesale, industrial and private label customers.

The success of Ash Apiaries relies heavily on teamwork and diversification. All the family members bring special skills to the business and are responsible for leading various aspects of the operations. Bryan for example has a business administration degree in accounting, which helps with managing the business' finances, but major business decisions are always made as a family.

Planning ahead and spreading risk when possible are also critical to the success of operating a large beekeeping business. Whether it is buying equipment or feed supplies well before it is needed, providing apiary site maps to farmers and pesticide applicators well in advance of the insecticide spraying season, or wintering 1/3 of the colonies outside, 1/3 inside and moving 1/3 to a warmer climate like British Columbia to spread the risk, risk management is the key.

Joël Laberge - - Les Ruches dans la Belle Province

Joël Laberge is a second generation beekeeper from Saint-Stanislas de Kostka, Québec, Canada. His father, Paul-André started beekeeping in 1960 with 2 honey bee colonies and now Joël, his wife and four children (2 boys and 2 girls) are managing 2000 colonies. This year is the Laberge's 59th year in operation. During this time, the company has divided into several divisions:

- Miellerie St-Stanislas is focused on honey production, pollination, marketing honey
- Stanabbey is focused on beekeeping equipment supplies, bee sales and bee nutrition
- Creampal Equipements is focused on equipment for creaming honey

As the third generation looks to carry on the legacy of Paul-André and Joël, the Laberge family continues to be dedicated to finding ways to invent new technologies to improve beekeeping. Although their invention for creaming honey is probably their most famous invention, it certainly will not be their last.

Biographies:

Apimondia Symposium: Canadian Beekeeping Session II

Lauren Park - - Beekeeping in Atlantic Canada

Lauren Park is a first generation beekeeper who has been working in agriculture for over a decade. She is a beekeeper in the Annapolis Valley of Nova Scotia where the focus is on fruit pollination, honey production and queen production. Lauren operates two farms, Forest Hill Apiary and Cosman and Whidden Honey Ltd. She is passionate about ensuring farmers and the public are educated about beekeeping and agriculture and ensuring that beekeepers have a strong voice in the industry. As part of this commitment to education, she teaches a beekeeping course at Nova Scotia Community College. Lauren is past President of the Beekeepers Association of Nova Scotia and is a director of the Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture.

Cosman and Whidden Honey Ltd. started as a dream of husband and wife Tom Cosman and Mary Ann Whidden 40 years ago and grew into a commercial beekeeping operation that has now been taken over by the second generation. This family farm pollinates multiple types of crops including haskap berries, cranberries, apples, lowbush and highbush blueberries. The farm also focuses on honey production and the wildflower honey produced is packed on farm and sold in the domestic market. Cosman and Whidden Honey also make beeswax candles and are regulars at the Halifax Seaport Farmers Market.

Dani Glennie - - Honey Production and Queen Breeding in Saskatchewan

Dani Glennie is a 2nd generation beekeeper on a 4000 colony farm in Eastern Saskatchewan which was started by her mother in 1997. Her entire family has either once or still works on the farm. The farm is currently run by her Dad, Dennis Glennie, Mom, Janine Meyer and herself. The farm is mostly based in honey production, producing very large honey yields through management techniques and queen breeding program. The queen breeding program is primarily for use within their own operation.

Dani started the queen breeding program on the farm in 2002 raising 13 cells her first year. She now puts upwards of 1500 hearty nucleus colonies into winter made with queens reared from her breeding program. These nucs are solely used for the hive succession / replacing poor or failing colonies on their farm. Her diligence for genetic diversity, breeder traceability, and bee health advocacy allow her to fill an interesting niche in the beekeeping world.

Dani has also served the industry on the provincial and national scene. She has sat multiple terms on the Saskatchewan Beekeepers Association (now Saskatchewan Beekeepers Development Commission) and one term on the Canadian Honey Council (CHC) where she has contributed greatly to the Canadian industry.

Albert Devries - - A Year at Clovermead

Clovermead was established in 1975 by the Hiemstra Family, in Southwestern Ontario's prime agricultural region, halfway between London and Lake Erie. This business is split into two divisions, a commercial beekeeping division and an agro-tourism division. The company started

as a commercial beekeeping operation which now operates 1000 bee colonies for honey production, pollen production, bee sales, and occasionally pollination contracts. The agro-tourism portion of business provides bee education and entertainment on a 30-acre bee farm. The Clovermead agro-tourism farm has been a great success and currently welcomes over 50,000 visitors a year.

Albert Devries has been keeping bees at Clovermead farms for 17 years. Along with his business partner, Chris Hiemstra, he runs the bee division of Clovermead. Albert has also served as a director with the Ontario Beekeepers Association and the Canadian Honey Council. During this presentation, Albert will walk you through the challenges and the opportunities in a year at Clovermead.

Kevin Nixon - - Commercial Beekeeping in Alberta and International Marketing of Premium Canadian Honey

Nixon Honey was established in 1998 by father and son Bryan and Kevin Nixon, and is now operated by brothers, Craig and Kevin Nixon. This commercial beekeeping operation runs 9000 colonies based out of Red Deer, Alberta for honey production and pollination services. Every year, the majority of the colonies are used for honey production with approximately 3000 to 4500 colonies rented for hybrid canola pollination contracts.

Beekeeping in Canada's prairie provinces provides special challenges, with long very cold winters with a very short intense honey production season. This farm has been very success and produces an in-demand high quality honey. Nixon Honey has used their reputation to actively search for new international markets for their high quality prairie honey. They are often among the first in the Canada to look to new opportunities.

Kevin is a dedicated beekeeper who graduated from the Fairview College beekeeping program. He has been instrumental in growing his business while also serving on the Alberta Beekeepers Commission and the Canadian Honey Council.