



Southern Arizona Beekeepers Association

DATE: 5.11.2018

LOCATION: Columbus Library (22nd Street & Columbus Blvd)

ATTENDEES: (41people)

FACILITATOR: Will Fitz

Business:

Pima County Fair is over – a huge thank you to all who participated, especially for Will Fitz and Lucas Schvindt who brought observation hive daily to the fair, and to Jaime de Zubeldia, Lucas and Jaime who provided honey for sale, and for others who provided bee products such as soap, lip balm, and bees wax. Net income from fair was \$632.00. There were lots of visitors to our booth, much interest in bees. The staff at the fair was very pleased with our booth and invited us to return next year.

Swarm season -- this year it is very late and small. There have been few calls from the public, few swarms seen in bee yards, few swarms caught in swarm traps. Most likely cause is short warm winter, and VERY dry.

Pollen is plentiful – mesquite blooming all over Pima County, higher elevations having a later bloom than the lower elevations. Because of plentiful pollen there is little robbing occurring in most bee yards.

Heat -- Due to the early hot weather bees may need feeding of sugar water or honey water as there has been so little rain (approximately half the normal rainfall). Hives need plentiful water supply and shade and ventilation to survive and to thrive. Make sure your hives have dependable water supply (not the neighbors' swimming pools).

Honey extractor – it will be available for use by club members only, check out procedure is being developed, and will be posted as soon as it is available.

Many new faces at the meeting, several new members!! WELCOME!!!

Suggestion that we take time at beginning of each meeting to discuss what is happening with bees relative to weather, pollens, etc.

Presentation: Mead Making!!

Carvin Wilson – president of Arizona Society of Homebrewers, moderator of Modern Meadmakers Facebook group, certified judge for mead, beer and wine, winner of over 100 awards for his mead and beekeeper with over 20 hives located in far southeastern Arizona, in the foothills of the Chiricahua mountains.

Definitions:

Fermentation – chemical breakdown of a substance by yeast, giving off heat and effervescence. (beer, bread and mead all are fermented products)

Mead – mixture of honey, water and yeast, fermented to create a delicious and life-giving beverage.

Must- a naturally occurring substance containing wild yeast spores, sometimes used in fermentation.

Yeast – single celled microorganism which reproduce by budding, converting sugar into alcohol and carbon dioxide in the process.

SNA – staggered nutrient additions – adding chemicals at appropriate times to maximize the growth of “good” yeasts.

Lees – sediment of wine or mead in barrel or container

Rousing – slowly stirring up the dead yeast hulls in the bottom of the fermentation container, increases CO₂ and alcohol production.

DAP – diammonium phosphate, used to ‘feed’ yeast

NH₃-N – inorganic nitrogen, usually in the DAP

FAN- free amino nitrogen, usually organic and found in the honey

YAN – yeast assimilable nitrogen, basically FAN + NH₃

Fermaid O and Fermaid K – products available at homebrew stores to ‘feed’ yeasts and maintain good fermentation

Important points from presentation –

Use SNA – for benefit of healthy yeast, low lag time, high yeast reproduction, less “off flavors”, lees aging.

Keep work area and products very clean – wild yeasts can create “off flavors” and destroy the mead.

Keep temperatures steady at appropriate level for each type of yeast used. Use water bath, bathtub with cold water and/or frozen 2 liter soda bottles, chest freezers with temperature regulators, or other dedicated coolers.

Stir meads BEFORE adding nutrients or it will explode with volcanic action.

Feed your mead with combination of nitrogen and other nutrients at consistent times (24, 48 and 72 hours)

For consistent product you must control the fermentation and note what is added when, or you will not be able to reproduce the mead you create.

Follow recipes and instructions exactly when you first begin making meads. When you are comfortable with process you can start making alterations.

Do not use “grocery store” yeast. Mead making requires special yeasts and supplies available at homebrew stores and online.

Do not use “grocery store” honey. The quality of honey used is vital to quality mead.

Mead can be varied many ways, depending on the yeasts, honeys, liquids such as apple juice or other juices, extra flavorings such as vanilla, cinnamon, coffee, both in the initial fermentation period or adding after the fermentation is completed. When you make a fruit or prickly pear mead pectinase is needed to make it work correctly, to neutralize the pectin from the fruit

Proportion of yeast to honey/water is minimally 5 grams yeast to 5 gallons liquid, but 3-5 grams per gallon is better.

Distilling alcohol can kill people if done wrong, mead making will only cause belly ache!!

Have fun & enjoy!!! There will be a local mead competition in August, \$10 entry fee.

Attached is the Power Point presentation from Carvin Wilson.