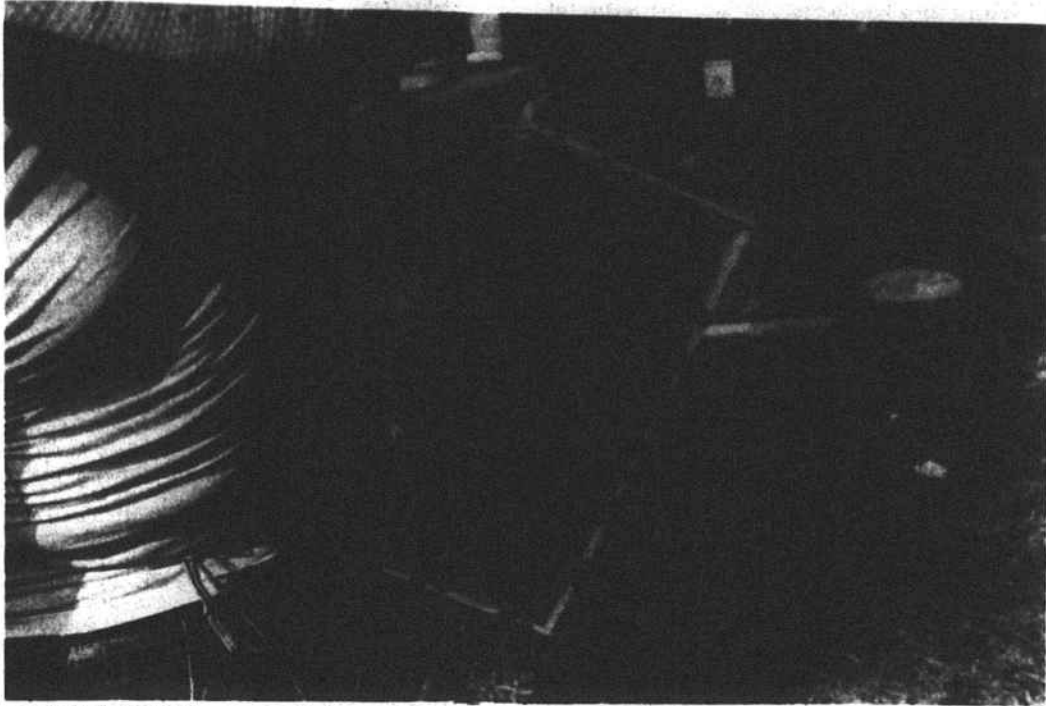


# Farm News



MAKING HONEY -- County Beekeeper Carl Miller checks the honey production of bees in one of his 14 hives.



GETTING READY -- Miller feeds bees sugar water for winter storage to replace honey robbed for the hive.

## Bee Business Buzzes On Hoke Farms

by Warren Johnston

The average honeybee makes about 500 trips each day gathering nectar and other supplies vital to the survival of the hive.

In the winter, bees huddle together in the center of the hive to keep temperatures at a constant 92 degrees.

When the summer sun is blazing, worker bees gather on either side of the hive entrance and move air in and out with their wings to air condition the unit.

"They are busy as bees," Hoke County beekeeper Carl Miller said. Miller and 36 other area residents are members of the Hoke County Beekeeper Association, who oversee more than 700 of the county's estimated 1,000 hives.

Beekeeping has become a big business for North Carolina, which now ranks third in the country in the number of hives.

The state's beekeepers raise approximately \$5 million a year in honey, however, the value of the bees is considered by the agri-

cultural community to be 20 times greater, Hoke County Agent Willie Featherstone said.

Without bees, vegetable and fruit production would drop dramatically, Featherstone said, noting that farmers have seen large increases in yields after hives have been placed near crops during the blooming season.

Backyard gardeners have also seen production double by adding to hives, he added.

"Without proper pollination, fruits and plants are not going to produce," Featherstone said.

Through breeding, beekeepers have developed mild species of "yard bees" who are gently and not as likely to sting as some of the wild varieties of bees.

In fact, Miller believes that once a keeper gets to know his bees, protective clothing is less necessary.

"As long as you don't swat at them and slap them, they won't bother you," Miller said.

Bees have a sophisticated society inside the hive, and each member

has a job.

Some members build the wax cones and fill them with honey, while others clean the hives, care for the sick or injured and remove the dead bees from the hive.

Queen bees have the responsibility to keep the hive going by laying eggs and ruling the nest. However when a queen gets beyond her prime, subordinate bees fertilize a specially selected egg with "royal jelly" and overthrow the old ruler.

A well maintained hive will produce about 35 pounds of surplus honey each year for the beekeeper.

In a good year, unlike this one, at least that amount can be harvested and enough honey left for the bees to eat during the winter, Miller said.

Because of the cold weather, which killed many plant blossoms prematurely, Miller says he hopes to get enough honey this year from his 14 hives to give away for Christmas gifts.

"I don't think that I'll have enough to sell, but I hope that I have enough to give away to friends," he said.

Honey and pollination are not the only financial benefits of beekeeping.

Hoke County growers pride themselves on the high quality of the honey here, Miller said.

Local honey is dark and has a strong taste, he added.

Some keepers do not grow honey at all, but collect pollen from the feet of the bees. The pollen is sold to health food stores and used as a remedy for allergies.

Other growers raise queens for sale, and royal jelly is sold as a "cure-all."

Miller points out that if human babies grew as rapidly as young queen candidates do after being given the royal jelly, the humans would weigh 2,000 pounds after two months.

All is not honey and flowers for local beekeepers, the association members have found that they

must co-exist with aerial sprayers and pesticide applying backyard gardeners.

In order to make a claim against an aerial sprayer, state law provides that beekeepers register hive locations.

In Hoke County only one grower has registered his hive, and no kills have been reported because of aerial spraying, Featherstone said.

"I think that is a testament to how the aerial sprayers are working with these beekeepers," he said, adding that most local pilots are aware of the hive locations and warn beekeepers when they are going to spray.

With a days notice, a hive can be shut down and the bees protected from the spraying, Featherstone said.

The local beekeeping association is an open group and membership is designed to encourage all members of the family to participate.

The group wants new members, and is willing to help any new keepers with their bees.

"We believe in sharing with each other," Miller said.

Association members are also willing to help anyone who might have a problem with honey bees.


If bees are swarming and are a nuisance, an association member will come to the rescue and remove the bees, Miller said.

Miller recently helped remove a swarm of bees from outside a small county store, and those bees are now producing honey in his yard.

"We're glad to get them," he added.

Anyone wishing to grow bees or to get more information should contact Featherstone or attend the monthly meeting of the group on the first Thursday of each month.

The meetings are held at the agriculture extension service building at 8 p.m.



### Farm Focus

by Richard Melton  
Extension Livestock Agent  
Banks Wannamaker  
Extension Field Crops Agent

### CRUCIFEROUS CROPS?

I did a double take too when I read those words. They are such plants as broccoli, collard, and cabbage. Each year these crops are plagued by three insect pests: the imported cabbageworm, the diamondback moth, and the cabbage looper.

In addition, a number of sucking insects can infest cole crops including the cabbage aphid, turnip aphid, green peach aphid, and the harlequin bug.

Through the Mid-Atlantic states the cabbage looper poses the most serious threat. Full grown larvae are about 1½ inches long and are easily distinguished by their "looping" habit of arching their back as they move.

Several general guidelines for treatment have been proposed based on average number of worms per plant or visual damage estimates.

An average of 1 to 5 larvae per 10 plants, or 1 to 2 feeding holes per plant, probably justify application of an insecticide. Some of the insecticides which are effective on this pest are Pydrin, Dipel, SOK-Bt, or Thuricide.

### SEPTEMBER SUGGESTIONS

- ...take soil and nematode samples
- ...plant fall vegetable transplants (collard, broccoli, cauliflower)
- ...plow under crops when harvest is complete
- ...continue to control weeds, insects, and diseases
- ...side-dress long season crops like okra, tomatoes, and eggplant

### BORON DEFICIENCY IN FALL VEGETABLES

Fall vegetables that lack enough boron from the soil are likely to be

of poor quality. Signs of boron deficiency are as follows: hollow, brown and corky stems in broccoli, cabbage and cauliflower; pithy roots of radish, turnips, and rutabagas; and dark brown spots on cauliflower curds.

This problem can be corrected by adding boron in the form of "20 Mule Team Borax" to the soil. Two level teaspoons of borax can be mixed with 3-4 cups of fertilizer and applied to 100 feet of row.

### AFLATOXIN LAB

There is an aflatoxin lab located in Whiteville, N.C. at the Border Belt Experiment Station. This lab will check corn and milo for aflatoxin content from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. free of charge. Each sample must be a minimum of 10 lbs. For more information contact your agricultural extension service.

### ON-FARM TESTS

Now is the time to talk to your extension agent if you'd like to have an on-farm test for next year. Extension specialists from N.C. State University have research in tobacco, cotton, corn, soybeans, small grains, forages, etc. and need farmers interested in cooperating. Contact us now so we can begin making plans.



About half the meadowlark's diet is insects harmful to man, and the other half, weed seed.

## Hoke ASCS News

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has changed its farm storage facility loan program, to increase the number of farmers eligible for storage loans, Secretary of Agriculture John R. Block, said today.

Block said the changes will enable the USDA to lend farmers money to build facilities to store up to two years' production of eligible crops. These facilities will be in addition to any present on-farm facilities being used to store grain held in the grain reserve program.

Previously, farmers were limited to borrowing to build storage for one year's crop, including storage used for the reserve program.

Block said only farmers who participated in USDA's acreage reduction programs would be eligible for the program.

New loans will be limited to a maximum of \$25,000, but on a case-by-case basis, farmers who have reserve grain stored on their farm and who have outstanding storage facility loans will be allowed to carry an aggregate loan balance of up to \$50,000, Block said.

For example, if a farmer had a \$30,000 outstanding farm facility loan, the maximum he or she could borrow with a new loan is \$20,000.

Block said that another change provides that soybean production can be counted in determining storage needs under the program, provided there is a crop on the farm that is eligible for the reserve program.

"We decided to make these program changes after reviewing the current storage situation and prospects for record feed grain and soybean crops. Farmers face a severe storage problem this year," Block said.

"These changes will help producers use the facility loan program ahead of harvest and will allow them to market their crops in a more orderly fashion," he added.

Farmer-elected county Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation committees will have the authority to limit the loan commitment period to assure farmers

intend to erect the new facility in the near future, Block said.

Last month, USDA announced it would resume approval of new applications for farm storage facility loans, up to a total of \$40 million. With the exceptions of the changes announced today, all other provisions of that program will remain the same, Block said.

### Accent On Agriculture

Crime has been moving out of the cities and into the suburbs and even into rural areas in recent years.

Using semi-trailers, thieves can invade a rural area, load up a haul of expensive farm machinery and be miles away along the interstate highway system before the loss is discovered.

Similarly, rustlers can pick off a valuable load of fat cattle or market hogs, haul them miles away to a slaughter site and before you know what happened, the evidence is destroyed.

Farm people, always firm opponents of crime, aren't taking such a trend lying down. Many, through organizations like Farm Bureau, are doing something about it.

For example, Farm Bureau in cooperation with law enforcement groups and other agencies has developed and implemented a farm equipment identification program that has met with a wide degree of success throughout the state.

In conjunction with the identification program, Farm Bureau presents theft rewards to the first person giving information that leads to the arrest and final conviction for arson, malicious injury to property, burglary or other felonies committed on property posted with a special Farm Bureau reward sign.

Farm people are greatly concerned over the increasing incidence of theft and other crimes in the rural areas of North Carolina.

## Hoke Agricultural Extension News

by Willie Featherstone, Jr.  
County Extension Chairman

### GRAPE HARVEST

North Carolina grape crop is forecast at 6,000 tons for 1982. This is 18% above last year's crop of 5,100 tons.

Nationally, grape production is expected to total 5.4 million tons, 20% above last year.

This should mean lower prices paid by consumers. "Some wineries have announced they will pay around \$200-\$205 per ton for processed grapes this year, and pick-your-own operators are expected to charge about 25 cents per pound for fresh grapes." These price estimates are the same as last year.

### SWEET POTATOES

Fresh market sweet potato prices continue to range between \$4-\$6 per 50 pound carton for top quality washed, uncured yams. This is well below last year's grower prices.

This is the price growers receive upon delivery to wholesale markets and prices for retail markets will vary depending on demand and supply within a geographical marketing area.

As demand increases for the holiday season and supplies become less plentiful, prices should improve. Growers with large quantities of potatoes should examine storage as a marketing option this year.

### SOYBEANS

Prospects for a bumper U.S. crop continue to put pressure on prices and will keep November futures ranging between \$5.40-\$5.75 per bushel through harvest. Factors that could move the market higher during the next 15-30 days are early frost, light farmer selling, strong processor demand and Soviet purchases of grain or oil seeds.

Farmers should look for any significant rally in the market to price new crop beans. Barring a major advance in export sales, the

soybean market is expected to show only a gradual upturn following harvest. Stored beans next spring will probably average about \$6/bushel.

### NC Dairy Farmers In Price Squeeze

A little-noticed provision in recent amendments to the dairy price support program will put North Carolina dairy farmers in a severe cost-price squeeze and result in putting many out of business.

This is the belief of John Sledge, President of the North Carolina Farm Bureau Federation.

Sledge referred to the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1982 which amends the dairy price support program by assessing all dairy farmers \$5.50 per hundredweight for all milk produced beginning October, 1982, and an additional \$.50 effective April, 1983.

The purpose of the provision, as outlined in the legislation, is to fund the Commodity Credit Corporation for purchases of excess cheese, butter and milk powder not needed for normal commercial trade.

In letters to the state's congressional delegation and John Block, U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, Sledge pointed out that North Carolina dairymen are discriminated against because "to my knowledge no cheddar cheese, butter or milk powder is produced in North Carolina for Commodity Credit Corporation purchases."

According to Sledge, the average dairy farmer in the state is operating with no return on his investment of around \$500,000 and is realizing only a small return for his labor and management. "The \$1.00 per hundredweight assessment will result in an annual loss of \$15 million of dairy farmers for our dairy farmers," he pointed out.