

# SKAGIT VALLEY BEEKEEPERS



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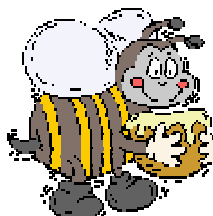
November 2009

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Our next meeting , the first of the New Year, is the second Thursday of January, the 14th at 7:00 PM. Our regular meeting space is the CENEX administration offices in Burlington, WA. with which our membership should be familiar. Speaking of membership, it is time again to begin thinking about renewing your membership and your subscriptions to the beekeeping journals. You will find our renewal form in this newsletter. Diane Dong is currently the person to whom this form should go.

President Bill has asked our own Bruce Bowen to speak on how he prepares his bees and what the expectations are, for pollination of almonds in California. This is becoming or has become a specialized pollination with high expectations for the beekeepers involved. Think big money as the price of almonds is down and the water issue still an unknown for this year. It is a crap shoot.

Last year I decided to push the idea of powdered sugar as an effective, proactive way to reduce mite populations. I tried it but had a lot of mites in Fall. My fault probably but I killed a bunch though, trying.



Some recommend using powdered sugar weekly for a month plus, then monthly for the summer season. But you have to stay on it! I didn't.

You should know there is a new formic strip application which should be available to beekeepers from NOD Apiaries soon. Biodegradable, one time application which can be used anytime, it sounds good. Formic attacks metal in the hive. So, what is my rant this January? VSH trait in our purchased queens.

I have been paying attention to VSH, reading the journals and what is available on the internet. Who is outright claiming VSH trait in their queens? Only a few. If you read Glenn Apiaries artificial insemination site you will know that they have crossed back a lot of their stock for VSH and many producers are using these queens and they advertize mite resistance

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# SKAGIT VALLEY BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION



## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION or MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

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ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL \_\_\_\_\_

I wish to subscribe to: Check choice -Circle a price/year

American Beekeeping Journal 1/yr \$18.70 2/y 35.40 3/y 49.80

Bee Culture Magazine 1/yr \$21.00 2/yr 38.00

**Annual Membership Total** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Dues \$12.00**

Checks to: Skagit Valley Beekeepers Association  
c/o Diane Tait Dong 13700 Avon Allen Road  
Mount Vernon, WA 98273

which is a real advancement. But still only a very few producers come right out and offer VSH cross queens. I think like powdered sugar, we should be planning to reduce mites early, often and in an ongoing manner. That is VSH trait right there! I'm thinking is not enough to try to blast them when we get too many mites for the bees to live and be strong.

It turns out that pure VSH queens and stock are so aggressive at cleaning out mites in cells, which we want with workers, that they deplete their own populations in 6 weeks or so. You have to add brood to these hives or they die! So open mated VSH queens produce bees that are very acceptable. As always with bees, there is a sliding scale of true effectiveness. It may be that the back crossed queens from Glenn stock is enough. I do not know.

Again, I want to list VSH trait queen producers for you. I know not much to nothing about these folks. I am presenting information from ads and others and hoping there is good stuff there. The bee articles I read state that some producers are flat lying and others are not. How you figure it out is another thing. I feel that our best defense in this is folks who make open claims in advertising, so that is why I am listing only the VSH claim folks. Some of these folks have web sites, others do not.

Most are in northern California, some in southern California and one in New Mexico. I'm sure to miss some but I don't see how to find them. Tell me! Local is great!

- Pendell Apiaries 530 963 3062 outright info- N CA Best ad
- Z's Bees 530 520 8558 N CA Italians
- Olympic Wilderness Apiaries 866 204 3426—Port Angeles
- Shamrock "S" 209 205 0183 Cells and Queens. Cells aren't offered by many folks N CA
- Taber's - Russian—Good reputation Not the same as VSH
- Zia queens— 509 689 1287 New Mexico— Randy Oliver said that these were his best looking queens this year '09, but not a full year yet. ZIA has an online presence and they have articles in the journals just now.
- DISCLAIMER—Understand that hygienic behavior is NOT the same as VSH trait. VSH IS a form of hygienic activity but much more mite specific. Some bees apparently identify mite laden cells and other bees dig them out and destroy infected pupae and the young mites with them. The mother mites remain but have to start over and over to reproduce. Bad if you are a mother mite. ALSO -
- This information is stolen outright from other, more knowledgeable folks than myself. The list is very long.
- READ— Bill wants the association to ask for grant money to raise our own local queens. The money is now out there. We need a core of folks though willing to stick with it.