

May /June 2006

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*ListProc Correction  
Almond Production*

*2006 WAS Conference  
Solid Honey Wafer*

*Hidden Small Hive Beetles  
Monitoring Varroa Fall*

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Techno-glitch, Already

As a number of you probably have already found out, I gave you the wrong instructions for signing up for free home delivery of my newsletter, directly to your computer. Most of what I sent was correct, but the e-mail address to which you send the sub(scription) message is: listproc@ucdavis.edu. I left the DOT edu off the last set of instructions. Perhaps you computer savvy folks figured that out on your own.

The following instructions are still correct. In the body of your message (not the Subject line) put in the following: sub ucdavisbeenews <your first name (without these "brackets" around it)> <your last name>. If I were subscribing, it would be: sub ucdavisbeenews Eric Mussen. If you wish to be removed from the list, then you do the same thing, but instead of sub you use unsub or signoff, then the name of the list and your first and last names.

Where the Almonds Grow

The following data reflects the "meat weight" (in pounds) of almonds, from the CA producing counties, for the 2005 season.

Kern	209,732,088
Fresno	159,948,403
Stanislaus	132,118,041
Merced	102,048,636
Madera	82,246,257
Butte	50,423,908
San Joaquin	41,648,411
Glenn	41,563,079
Colusa	41,001,154

There are a total of 19 counties listed as producing almonds, with remaining production less than 16 million pounds per county. The total crop weighed in at 910,409,538 pounds. The 2006 crop is expected to reach or exceed the 2005 production, with prices currently above \$2.50 a pound.

This information was taken from the May 2006 issue of Update, published by Blue Diamond Growers.

2006 WAS Conference

I have devoted most of this newsletter to the 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the Western Apicultural Society. We hope that many of you will decide to join us at that gathering. Let the work slide a few days – have fun and learn, too.

**24-27 July 2006**

**Western Apicultural Society Conference in Buellton, California  
Pea Soup Andersen's Conference Center**

Plans for the 2006 *W.A.S.* conference in Buellton, California, during the last week of July (24th-27th) proceed pretty much on schedule, with exciting events and speakers already lined up.

Is it conceivable that any *W.A.S.* member would not want to come to the Santa Barbara area for our conference? Whereas Santa Barbara itself might be too expensive, we have managed to put together a relatively inexpensive conference package at a nearby location that will permit attendees to enjoy “the Last Jewel of Southern California” — as I envision our environs — without taking out a loan.

You can order a 44-page 2006 free visitors guide for the Santa Ynez Valley (one that will be sent to you by mail) by accessing: [www.syvva.com/html/contactus.php](http://www.syvva.com/html/contactus.php)

That region now has more than five-dozen wineries, some of which have become quite renowned (if you are interested in wines). For more information, check out: [www.californiacoastalwines.com/regions/sanbarbara/index.cfm?action=default&CFID=4117355&CFTOKEN=36295564](http://www.californiacoastalwines.com/regions/sanbarbara/index.cfm?action=default&CFID=4117355&CFTOKEN=36295564)

Although Buellton is not in Santa Barbara, it is remarkably close to that city in this day and age (45 minutes away on an un-congested portion of the US 101 freeway). By staying in Buellton, one can afford the Santa Barbara experience without paying high prices for lodging there. For information about what to do in Santa Barbara itself (very often with experiences that have no charge), open: [www.santabarbara.com/community/visitors\\_center/things\\_to\\_do/](http://www.santabarbara.com/community/visitors_center/things_to_do/)

The information in that web site is, as might be expected, somewhat overwhelming but doesn't include the fact that the first 75 minutes of parking is free — both on the street and in the parking lots.

*W.A.S.* members might especially appreciate the Santa Barbara Botanic Garden, which focuses exclusively on native California plants — as well as the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History. Both exist without government funding and are well worth a visit.

The real gem for me is the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History. A colleague of mine (former head of the Natural History Museum in Amsterdam) considered it the best natural history museum west of the Mississippi River. Located just behind the “Queen of the Missions” in Santa Barbara, it has one of the largest mollusk collections in the world and an active educational program for people of all ages. As you park in the museum lot, you will see the mounted skeleton of a blue whale.

Recently the museum opened the Ty Warner Sea Center on the Santa Barbara wharf, a fabulous interactive facility for education about the Santa Barbara Channel and marine biology in general. Everyone I have met who has visited the museum has registered astonishment about what is available there. Just contact: <http://www.sbnature.org/> for more information.

### **Accommodations in Buellton**

Adjacent to Pea Soup Andersen's Restaurant we have made arrangements for stays at a Best Western motel (still with the name of Pea Soup Andersen's Inn, though no longer affiliated with the restaurant). Rooms will be only \$69 per night if you specify that you are a part of the **W.A.S.** conference and make reservations before June 20th. Phone 1-800-732-7687 or 1-805-688-3216 to reserve a room.

### **Speakers**

We already have all speakers confirmed; See schedule of events below

### **Conference Barbecue**

The barbecue and auction this year will occur at the end of the last full day of talks. The cost of that BBQ is included in the registration fee. It will be held at one of the University of California's three-dozen Natural Reserves. The pristine 6000-acre Sedgwick Ranch Reserve sits at the base of Figueroa Mountain and provides a window into early California ranching practices. You can gain an appreciation of that setting by opening: <http://www.nrs.ucop.edu/Sedgwick.htm>

The manager and staff of the reserve will prepare the barbecue for us; their efforts will spare us running about for supplies, etc. I can also guarantee that we will have no rain. Before the event, I will help control the yellow jacket wasp problem and provide instructions on how that can be done in your bee yards and home areas. Given time, I will set up a demonstration of how to train bees to visit feeding stations. Also, you will have an opportunity to see an experimental 20-acre organic farm being developed on the reserve.

### **Optional Santa Ynez Valley Tour**

A Santa Ynez Valley tour by **Stagecoach Co. Wine Tours** during the free Wednesday afternoon will be available for the first 20 who sign up for the event. The price includes a visit to the Buellton ostrich farm and at the Quicksilver Miniature Horse Ranch. It also includes stops at two wineries for some wine tasting and a souvenir wine glass. You can instead schedule a more expensive tour with that company on your own, a tour that will leave at 11 a.m. and include lunch at one of the wineries (see: [solvangusa.com/html/wine.html](http://solvangusa.com/html/wine.html)).

(Unfortunately, apparently none of the several dozen wineries in the area produces mead.)

Some conference participants might take the free afternoon to explore nearby Solvang and Santa Ynez, where Lance Armstrong practices with his crew, also the location of the movie, *Sideways*. For more information, check out: <http://www.solvangusa.com/>

### **Pea Soup Andersen's Restaurant**

That restaurant is the site of our conference and has excellent meals at affordable prices. You can learn about its history at: [peasoupandersens.net/history.shtml](http://peasoupandersens.net/history.shtml)

### **Optional post conference tour**

The Santa Barbara Channel is one of the very best places on Earth for whale watching tours. In July blue whales frequent that channel (the largest animal ever to live on Earth) — perhaps with the largest concentration of such whales anywhere. As a group, we can get a 20% discount if we have more than 20 people sign up for that event. For detailed information about the whale watching experience, see: [www.condorcruises.com/#](http://www.condorcruises.com/#) .

Prepared by WAS President, Dr. Adrian Wenner.

Tentative Schedule — 24-27 July 2006

Western Apicultural Society in Buellton, California  
Pea Soup Andersen's Conference Center

- Monday**
- 1:00 Exhibits set up  
3:00 Exhibits open  
Silent Auction begins
- 6:30 Registration (until 7:20)
- 7:00 “Bee Buzz” Social — No host bar**
- Tuesday**
- 7:30 Registration until 8:20  
8:00 Welcome to the Conference  
Exhibits open  
Door prizes
- 8:30 **Joe Traynor**, Almond Pollination — Past, Present,  
and Future
- 9:15 **Frank Eischen**, Australian vs California Bees  
in Almond Pollination
- 10:15 Break
- 11:00 **David Kellum**, Living with Africanized Honey Bees  
for Decades
- Lunch on your own
- 12:45 Registration (until 1:10), door prizes
- 1:15 **Jim Bach**, Formic Acid Use in the U.S.A.
- 2:00 **Dewey Caron**, Small Hive Beetles: A Potential Threat
- 2:45 Break
- 3:15 **Serge Labesque**, Achieving self-sufficiency as beekeepers,  
and the question of sustainability of contemporary  
beekeeping practices
- 4:00-5:00 Delegates/Directors Meetings
- Dinner on your own
- Wednesday**
- 7:30 Registration until 8:20  
8:00 Exhibits open
- 8:30 **Adrian Wenner**, Odor and Honey Bee Exploitation  
of Food Crops.

9:15 **Tanya Pankiw**, Brood Pheromone Effects  
On Foraging Behavior and Colony Growth

10:15 Break

11:00 **Robbin Thorp**, Diversity in Bees: Native Bees, Exotics,  
Solitaries, Cuckoos, and Socials

Lunch on your own

**Free Afternoon** — or (optional):

**1:30 Tour of the Santa Ynez Valley — “Sideways” Country**

**or: Self-Guided Tours**

**Thursday**

7:30 Registration until 8:20

8:00 Exhibits open, door prizes

8:30 **Tom Glenn**, Twenty Virgins a Day: How I Keep Up!

9:15 **Marina Meixner**, Selection of Honey Bee Lines

10:00 Break

10:45 **Debbie Delaney**, Genetic Diversity of Honey Bee Populations  
in the United States: Comparative Analysis of Commercial  
Breeding Populations through Time

Lunch on your own

1:00 End of silent auction

1:15 **Diana Sammataro**, The Tucson Lab work on Oxalic acid and  
Sucroside

2:00 **Harrington Wells**, Introduction of the European Honey Bee  
To Pakistan

2:45 Business Meeting and Awards

5:00 **Auction and Barbecue at the University of California  
Sedgewick Reserve**

**Friday**

**Optional: Post Conference Whale Watching Tour**

**WESTERN APICULTURAL SOCIETY**  
**Andersen's Pea Soup Restaurant**  
**Buellton, CA July 24-27**

**Pre-Registration Form**

Name (s) \_\_\_\_\_

As you wish it (them) to appear on your name badge (s)

Current mailing address \_\_\_\_\_

Street, apartment #

\_\_\_\_\_

City

\_\_\_\_\_

State/Province

\_\_\_\_\_

Zip/Postal code

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone no.

\_\_\_\_\_

E-mail

**Conference**

Cost per person

Full (4-day) Conference Package \$100 x \_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_  
(including Bee Buzz snacks and Santa Maria Style Barbecue)  
**15% discount for registration before June 15<sup>th</sup>**  
50% discount to new **WAS** members who pay dues before conference

Single Day (Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday, without barbecue) 30 x \_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_  
Barbecue (independent of Full Conference package) 30 x \_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_

Will you need bus transportation from the motel to the BBQ \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No

**Lodging** Available for \$69 per night at **Pea Soup Andersen's Inn** if reserved before June 20<sup>th</sup>  
Phone: (805) 688-3216 and specify Western Apicultural Society (**WAS**).

**Exhibitors**

Exhibit space will be available. Check with Eric Mussen for more  
Information ([ecmussen@ucdavis.edu](mailto:ecmussen@ucdavis.edu))

**Tours (optional)**

1. Half Day Tour of the Santa Ynez Valley (Wednesday) 55 x \_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_  
(First 20 people to sign up)

2. Post-Conference Whale Watching (Friday) 60 x \_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_  
(20 people minimum)

**Annual Dues (US funds)**

\_\_\_\_\_

(Individual: \$10, Juniors & Seniors: \$7.50, Couple: \$15, Associate: \$10, Commercial: \$50, Life: \$100,  
Couple Life: \$150, Benefactor: \$500, Patron: \$1000)

**Total Payment Enclosed**

\_\_\_\_\_

All W.A.S. pre-registration forms and payments at full rate (no credit cards) must be received no later than July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2006. Forms must be mailed and checks must be made payable to **Western Apicultural Society**. Mail to: George Steffensen, Treasurer, Western Apicultural Society, P.O. Box 956, Grants Pass, OR 97528, USA

## Solid Honey Wafer

We all know that liquid honey is sticky. In fact, just about any sugar solution is sticky. However, we can purchase glucose and fructose as dry granules, so why not honey?

The National Honey Board sponsored development of a honey product that is a consumer friendly way to get a serving of honey into a hot or cold beverage. About the size and shape of a quarter, the new product is dehydrated (solid) honey, with no additives, that the Honey Board suggested calling "Simply Honey." The packaging is not mentioned, but I would guess that each "honey wafer" is individually wrapped, to prevent the fructose from absorbing atmospheric moisture and making the outer surface of the tablet sticky.

The product was introduced, as a hot beverage sweetener, at large U.S. food trade shows in March, April and May. The hope is that a company will decide to manufacture, package, advertise and sell products based on this research on the world market. Examples might be: a honey lozenge infused with natural lemon or menthol to sooth a sore throat; or the use of "honey essence," which is removed from the honey when it is turned into a solid, for scent baths, beauty products, or room deodorizers. [Watch out for a house full of small hive beetles with this last approach!]

How much longer the National Honey Board remains in operation is yet to be determined.

## Hidden Small Hive Beetles

In a recent edition of the combined

Journal of Apicultural Research and Bee World 45(1): 47-48 (2006) researchers report on survey work conducted in Maryland and Florida. They found that colonies hived with screened bottoms, that opened directly to the bottom board, tended to have small hive beetles growing in the debris under the screen. This was true of two of 18 colonies in Maryland, and four of 64 colonies in Florida. There was no indication of colony destruction, but the colonies were weaker than normal due to lack of hygienic behavior or inability to get around the screen, queenlessness, or being drone layers.

The take home message was to allow the bees to have access to all parts of the hive, so that they can remove the beetle larvae, and to keep debris from piling up on the bottom board.

## Monitoring Varroa Mite Fall

At one of my past meetings, I picked up a short report on the natural level of *Varroa* mite fall in colonies in the Mid-Atlantic region of the U.S. Dewey Caron and Josh Hubner, University of Delaware, were trying to determine when the mites would reach the theoretical treatment threshold of 50 mites per day. The survey was conducted over a five year period, from 1998 to 2002.

Included in the study were the results of using different types of sticky boards. They found vegetable oil, cooking oil spray and Contact<sup>®</sup> paper to be "less reliable" when compared to Vaseline<sup>®</sup> and commercial sticky boards. They also found very little "predictability" when comparing ether roll, powdered sugar, and drone brood sampling to sticky board counts.

What caught my eye was the gradual variation in average mite numbers over the five year period. The first year, average mite fall per day ranged from about 45 in June to 60 in July and 120 in August. The second year, counts were much lower – under ten in June, around ten in July and 20 in August. The third year turned out to be the highest mite level year of the study – about 40 mites in June, 155 in July and 255 in August. Over the next two years, the mite numbers declined and ended up about the same as the first year’s numbers. There wasn’t enough information given to determine if the numbers were lower in the

final two years because the mites had killed the more heavily infested colonies.

Sincerely,

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