

2019 Hive Irradiation Project

Fellow Beekeepers,

Spring will be here before many are ready for it. Now is the time to make preparations for the arrival of new packages and nucs. If you have dead out hives from last season and this winter you should consider getting those hives sterilized before you introduce new bees into them. The hive irradiation program will safely kill any disease or harmful bacteria in your hives that could harm new bees you put into your dead out equipment. This program has operated successfully for years allowing beekeepers from OH, PA, NJ, NY, and DE to sterilize second hand equipment and dead out hives and put them safely back in their operation without the threat of infecting new bees in that equipment. Last year there was a tie for the longest distance traveled beekeepers; one from Pittsburgh, PA and one from Massachusetts.

If you want to take part in the hive irradiation sterilization program you will need to deliver your hive equipment to Sterigenics at 75 Tilbury Road, Salem, NJ 08078 on Monday March 18th at about 10:30 A.M. Go to, <http://www.montcopabees.org/services-resources/irradiation/> for complete details about how to prepare and palletize your hive equipment. You MUST follow all of the instructions to palletize your equipment. Watch the video and read the instructions on bagging boxes with honey and stores in them. You can take loose hive equipment to Sterigenics and put it on your pallet there. And there is a post office close by to buy your money order after you find out exactly how much it will cost to irradiate your equipment.

I suggest that you talk it up among your area beekeepers and combine equipment to make it more cost effective and economical to take part in the treatment process. If we get enough equipment for 7 pallets the cost will be only \$186.67 for a standard 40" x 48" pallet. On one pallet we can pack 42 deep boxes and 6 mediums on top all with frames and comb which breaks down to treatment cost of \$3.89 per box. You can pack 66 mediums on a pallet. That would be \$2.83 per box to have them treated. That is certainly cheaper than the cost on new boxes, frames, and foundation plus the time, energy, and food resource bees need to build comb.

Steve Finke, 1st Vice President of the PSBA, has organized a drop off/consolidation location in Bethel, PA for the past couple of years. If you prefer to drop off in Bethel, the total cost including the irradiation, freight to and from NJ, and palletizing and wrapping is approximately \$10 per deep box. This is payable to Meadow View Beekeeping by cash or check at the time of pickup. This may not only save you some driving, but the drop off at Steve's is on the weekend (16/17 March) so you won't have to take a day off work to drop off at Sterigenics on Monday. If you are interested, you can contact Steve Finke at steve@meadowviewbees.com or 610-737-7676.

The treatment at Sterigenics usually takes 3 – 6 days and they will notify me when the equipment is ready for pick up. I can provide more details of equipment pick up at Sterigenics and Steve Finke can provide details on the pickup procedure for equipment dropped off in Bethel.

You can sterilize boxes, frames, honey comb, and the honey in them. Just double bag any boxes that contain honey as per the instructions on the MCBA website. That is cheap health insurance when you are putting a new package of bees that costs over \$100 into a dead out hive. **If anyone is taking part please let me know by the beginning of March. And please pass this on to others.**

Sincerely,

Mark Antunes

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PA State Beekeepers Association Member

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