



ONTARIO BEEKEEPERS'
ASSOCIATION
Since 1881

2023 OBA Annual General Meeting – Speaker Bios

Robin Brown, Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association

Robin Brown is a Workshop Leader as part of OSCIA's Client Services team in East Central Ontario. She farms with her family near Lindsay and enjoys connecting with farmers across Ontario through facilitation and delivery of a variety of educational workshops and webinars as well as offering support with accessing any cost-share programs.



Tom Cowan, Ministry of the Environment, Conservation & Parks

Tom is a Regional Pesticides Specialist with the Ontario Ministry of the Environment and has been involved in pest management and pesticide regulation for 25 years. Tom holds an Honors Bachelor of Science degree in plant science from Trent University and a Masters Degree in pest management from Simon Fraser University. Prior to joining the Ministry of the Environment, Tom worked in the greenhouse and nursery industries as a pest management and plant health specialist developing integrated pest management plans for greenhouse, field, and container crops. In his spare time Tom enjoys playing guitar and trying to keep a few beehives alive.

Paul Kozak, Provincial Apiarist, OMAFRA:

Paul Kozak is the Provincial Apiarist for Ontario, based in Guelph, Ontario with the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs since 2010. This role includes regulation of the beekeeping industry in Ontario, working closely with provincial Apiary Inspectors, reporting on the status of the industry, providing technical and strategic advisory to government and industry regarding apiculture and collaborating with other specialists in apiculture on programs. Paul holds a BSc in Zoology and an MSc in Entomology, both the University of Manitoba.





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Dr. Brendan Daisley, University of Guelph:

Dr. Brendan Daisley is a Banting Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of Guelph and the current SFA President of the International Scientific Association for Probiotics and Prebiotics (ISAPP). He graduated from his PhD in Microbiology & Immunology at Western University in 2021. Brendan has a broad range of experience in environmental application of probiotics to honey bees. During his PhD, he helped coordinate several large field trials across North America (mostly in Ontario and California). Ultimately, his research goals are to improve beekeeping practices through the management of both beneficial and pathogenic microorganisms associated with honey bees.

Rushel Briscoe, First Work

Rushel Briscoe is the Project Lead and brings a decade of expertise in designing and managing employment programs to her role. Prior to joining First Work, Rushel championed re-integration employment programs with Elizabeth Fry focused on incarcerated women and also sex workers. Building on her Anti-Racism, Anti-Oppression work in London; Rushel is passionate about creating equitable outcomes through transparency, accountability and thought leadership.





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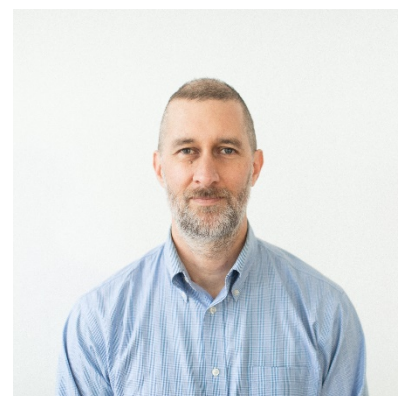
Dr. Amro Zayed, York University



As York Research Chair in Genomics, Amro leads a team of scientists that study the evolutionary, behavioural and conservation genomics of social insects, using the honey bee as a model organism. Amro has led or co-led 26 successful grant proposals, collectively worth over \$23 million CAN, including leading the largest grant on bee health in Canada (\$9.9M over 4 years). Amro mentors a diverse group of students that excel on both the national and international stage and is a member of several committees that provide expert advice to the Canadian federal government on matters of pollinator health. He is currently the inaugural Director of York University's Centre for Bee Ecology, Evolution and Conservation (BEEc).

JP Pawliw, Generation Solar Renewable Energy Systems

JP Pawliw is co-owner and Vice President of Generation Solar Renewable Energy Systems Inc. As a Professional Engineer and Journeyman Electrician, JP brings a broad set of skills and experience to the clean energy table and has co-led Generation Solar to be a highly respected clean energy contractor, able to handle a wide array of projects with a focus on quality and customer experience. Generation Solar has been serving Peterborough and area for 25 years. Amid a backdrop of rising concern for climate change and energy security, JP will summarize the opportunities and costs of clean energy technology for residential and small commercial applications and how to get started in your own clean energy project.



Les Eccles, Eccles Apiaries/Chatsworth Honey

Les Eccles farms Eccles Apiaries and Chatsworth Honey with his wife Raquel Mijares González. They produce ORHBS stock, pollinate apples and produce honey along with running the farm store at Chatsworth Honey.

Ben Lefort, Ontario Federation of Agriculture

Ben is a Senior Farm Policy Analyst with the Ontario Federation of Agriculture. Ben holds a Bachelor's degree in economics from Acadia University and a Master's degree in Economics & Finance from The University of Guelph.



Dr. Ernesto Guzman, University of Guelph



Ernesto Guzman was born and raised in Mexico, where he started to keep bees when he was 17. His interest in bee biology and beekeeping further developed when he became an assistant for an introductory apiculture course at the National University of Mexico. Eventually, Ernesto kept more than 300 colonies and produced over 10 tons of honey a year. He got a degree in Veterinary Medicine and obtained M.Sc. and Ph.D. degrees in Entomology from the University of California. After getting his PhD, he conducted research on behaviour and genetics of Africanized honey bees and on their resistance to parasitic mites for 12 years. Then, he accepted a position at the University of Guelph where he has worked for more than 18 years on causes of honey bee mortality. Dr. Guzman has received numerous honors and awards and is recognized as a world authority in honey bee breeding and parasitic diseases of honey bees.

Paul Kelly, Research and Apiary Manager, UoG Honey Bee Research Centre

Paul has managed the Honey Bee Research Centre for the past thirty-five years. His primary role at the centre is to manage honeybee colonies for research and teaching purposes. He provides research support for hive health science, training for students and beekeepers, coordinates and teaches beekeeping courses, conducts facility tours for the general public and hasn't stopped talking about bees since taking his first apiculture course in 1980! His interests include bee breeding, beekeeping tool design and manufacture, beekeeping video production, medicinal use of hive products, and hive management techniques. Paul received the Eastern Apiculture Society Teaching Award in 2017 and was inducted into the Ontario Agriculture Hall of Fame in 2022.





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Dr. Rob Currie & Matthew Polinsky, University of Manitoba & Knowledge Research Transfer Program



Rob Currie is a Professor and former Department Head in the Department of Entomology at the University of Manitoba. He teaches a wide range of courses in the Diploma, Degree and Graduate programs within the Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences. His research interests focus on issues related to the biology and management of bees (honey bees, leafcutting bees and native pollinators) and the crops that they pollinate. A major focus of his research relates to how parasites, disease and other stressors such as nutrition interact to bee health and winter survival of honey bees.



Matthew Polinsky is the Lead of the Manitoba Tech Transfer Program (KRTP). He has been working in apiculture for 15+ years; mainly in commercial operations in Saskatchewan, New Zealand, and Australia, as well as in the urban beekeeping community in Montreal. Before joining the KRTP he contributed to Canadian honey bee research via UBC and Agriculture and Agri-food Canada. Matthew is originally from Saskatchewan and is a graduate of Concordia University (Montreal, QC).

Dr. Sarah Wood, University of Saskatchewan

Sarah grew up on a farm in Saskatchewan, studied veterinary medicine at the University of Saskatchewan, and practiced as a small animal veterinarian and a diagnostic veterinary pathologist. She never expected that one day she would find her 'dream job' as the first veterinary Research Chair in Pollinator Health in North America, a position made possible by support from SaskCanola, Manitoba Canola Growers, the Saskatchewan Beekeepers Development Commission, BASF, and the British Columbia Blueberry Council. Sarah's current areas of research include infectious disease and toxicology of honey bees and the role of pollinators in sustainable agriculture.

