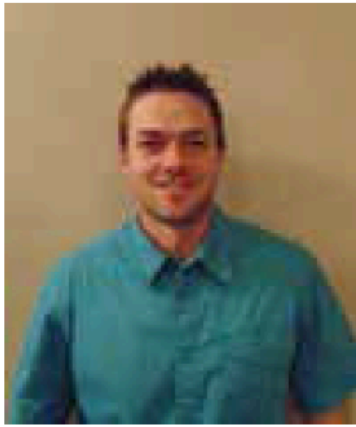


Alberta



Kevin Nixon

It is July 4 as I write this and we have one load of bees left to move into pollination tonight. So a very busy time. Bees are looking good from what I hear all over Alberta. Up til early May it was very dry, then a week of rain followed by a week of unseasonably cold temperatures with freezing in some areas at night. Dandelion flow was very short in most areas and bees really didn't get a whole lot off them. Most beekeepers were feeding thru May and into June. With big populations and lots of brood hatching, they burn thru feed quick! The honey market continues to be depressed. I recently had a beekeeper from

Argentina at our farm and I asked him what the story is there. He told me there was not a huge amount of carry over in Argentina, but his interpretation of huge is all relative to what they had produced in total. However, he said that when they try to sell their honey, they are having difficulty getting a price quoted as well. They are told there is a lot of honey coming in from China and other countries which is believed to be transhipped Chinese honey. How do we fix this? The CHC wrote a letter to the Minister of Agriculture requesting a meeting to discuss this topic and others and 6 months later we received a response which was basically sorry for the delayed response...and that was about it. Pretty frustrating receiving that kind of a letter.

I also testified to the House of Commons committee who is doing a study on bee health monitoring in Canada. It amazed me how these folks are still stuck on a single topic as a cause of bee losses, being neonics. I guess they are susceptible to be swayed by media reports and others as well. Equally amazing was how the Ontario Beekeepers Association also got themselves on the agenda to testify, yet not one other provincial organization was represented outside of the CHC. Frankly, I am not sure why the OBA continues to be a member of the CHC yet act independent of the CHC as they continue requesting action from the national government which is in conflict with what the CHC requests. A year and a half ago, the OBA wanted to be rid of the bee health roundtable. Now they are asking to be a part of it, yet not one other provincial organization has a representative there. If a member organization does not agree with the principles and action items which are developed by the board, why would such an organization continue being a member? Why do we as an organization continue to allow membership to one of our member organizations who seems to operate on ideological principles and actions which contradict the CHC? We are seeing so many resources wasted on a single item when so many other important topics are being overlooked.

Hope everyone has had a decent summer and fall/winter preparations go well so our hives can be in good shape for next year.
