

President's Report

2025 progress of the Ontario Beekeepers'
Association (OBA) on our Strategic Plan



Stephen
Moore
OBA President

HIGHLIGHTS

Education & Research

Field trial data from the OBA's Technology Transfer Program was included in a submission to Health Canada's Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) for a new mite control product.

Engagement & Advocacy

Presented to Minister Trevor Jones, OMAFA. Met with MPs. Engaged with the public.

Organizational Excellence

Continued progress on rebuilding and sustaining the TTP

The Annual General Meeting is an opportunity to reflect on the year we have just completed and a time to shift our focus to the year ahead. When I think of the challenges and opportunities facing our industry it can feel a little overwhelming. The President's Report is a rare opportunity to celebrate our successes before we get back to work on the new opportunities and longer-term challenges that our industry faces. I am encouraged by the number of accomplishments we have to share with you this year. It speaks to the commitment, determination, and productivity of our team and the amazing volunteers, sponsors, and donors that support them.

The OBA's work is never done but we are making good progress in a number of important areas. We have organized the year's achievements by the three focus areas in our Strategic Plan. Many of these you will have read about through the Ontario Bee Journal or our email newsletter. If you need more information on any of them please don't hesitate to reach out to a Board member.



Focus Area 1: Education and Research

- Developed a new winter speaker series to make weekly presentations from the world's brightest beekeeping minds available to individual beekeepers and local beekeeping associations
- 319 enrollments in our online courses by 194 unique students
- 78 enrollments in five in person training workshops held covering topics including introductory level beekeeping, Integrated Pest Management, and queen rearing
- Provided educational presentations to seven different local beekeeping associations
- Carried out a second season of field trials for the novel mite control product Norroa™. Data from the OBA Technology Transfer Program's (TTP's) 2024 Norroa™ field trials were submitted to Health Canada's Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA).
- Received a grant from the Roots Community Foundation to review and summarize literature related to indoor overwintering of honey bees.
- Developed materials for a new TTP workshop on starting a queen and nucleus production business funded by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness (OMAFRA)
- Initiated a collaboration with an Ontario College researcher to better understand strategies used by small to medium scale beekeepers to maintain and/or grow their businesses.

Focus Area 2: Engagement and Advocacy

- Membership steady at just over 1,400 members
- Regular information sharing through mailing list of over 4,000 beekeepers and stakeholders in Ontario and beyond.
- 27,000 views on Instagram with a reach of 7,000.
- Newly created Facebook page. Follow our page called Ontario Beekeepers' Association Technology Transfer Program
- Agricorps implemented a 10% winter loss insurance premium discount for beekeepers that implement specific Best Management Practices
- Shared Ontario's winter loss survey results and presented current challenges and opportunities to Minister Trevor Jones in June
- Presented winter loss results to the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario
- Developed election packages for both the Provincial and Federal Elections to help beekeepers advocate for industry needs with a common voice across Ontario
- The OBA Canadian Honey Council (CHC) representative actively engaged in the Canadian Federation of Agriculture lobby day and Honey on the Hill events in Ottawa
- Increased public awareness of beekeeping challenges and opportunities through interviews with media on topics including US packaged honey bees, winter losses, and wild fires.
- Connected with bus loads of school children and the general public through an educational booth at the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair
- Produced educational articles to help beekeepers and vendors adapt to changes to the enforcement of the Pesticides Act
- Documented and shared the updated process for reporting suspected pesticide exposure incidents
- Provided industry feedback to OMAFA on proposed new ticketing powers
- Made a submission to the Canadian Food Inspection Agency's (CFIA) call for risk mitigation measures for the importation of packaged honey bees from the US
- Produced a position statement to help beekeepers effectively engage with Municipal leaders who are considering bylaws that would affect setback provisions in the Bees Act
- Increased dialogue with local beekeeping associations to identify collaboration opportunities
- Attended University of Guelph interviews for the recruitment of a new Professor of Apiculture position. Provided a written ranking of candidates to the selection committee.

Focus Area 3: Organizational excellence

- Recruited Dr Britteny Kyle as the new TTP Lead Specialist to continue the process of rebuilding and working towards long term sustainability for the TTP
- Carried out a search and eventually moved the TTP office to a different building on the same property after the landlord required us to leave the existing building
- Signed a Transfer Payment Agreement with OMAFA for the development of three new workshops and a miticide decision tree
- Received funding from the Roots Community Foundation for work to document existing indoor wintering practices
- Developed a winter speaker series to draw in revenue from beekeepers outside Ontario allowing the OBA to offer steeply discounted rates to OBA members while stabilizing revenue for the TTP
- Continuing to get input and identify needs of commercial beekeepers through the annual Commercial Beekeepers Roundtable
- Developed stronger connections to Local Beekeepers Associations through online meetings and the re-introduction of the Presidents Breakfast at the Annual General Meeting
- Established a Membership Working Group to address the 2024 resolution related to reviewing the membership structure and benefits
- Continued to strengthen the OBA's governance with the development of a new policy



These achievements would not have been possible without an incredible team and network of support. Mel and Kelsey on the administrative side work wonders to keep the wheels turning on the core functions of the association. Britteny, Charlie, Meg and our two summer students Gavyn and Elijah carried out training, education, and field research. Natalie continues to impress with the quality of the Ontario Bee Journal.

We have amazing volunteers like Michelle Wolfson, Jacob Parker, Dennis Edell, Steven Coyle, Ken Coyle, and Kevin Dolan that pour their energy into our annual meetings, working groups, or raising the profile of Ontario honey through the Royal Winter Fair. Countless other wonderful volunteers contribute many hours to make these initiatives successful. Association members, sponsors, and donors have provided generous financial contributions to make the association's work possible.

Finally, it has been a pleasure to serve on your Board of Directors with 13 other committed volunteers. The diversity of perspectives and insights helps to make sure that we land on the best decision even on the most challenging topics. All this continues to contribute to our vision of "A locally sustainable, prosperous beekeeping industry in Ontario that leads with well-informed beekeepers". A huge thank you to all of you.