

SUCCESSFUL BEEKEEPING

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KELOWNA BEE BREEDER CIRCLE: 2019 PROGRAM

For group of beekeepers in Kelowna area who wish to keep and rear Vernon stock honey bees.



My cardiologist told me that my heart is fixed and can last another 10 years, but he also told me that I have to give up physical labour while keeping my mind busy. What I am proposing is not a queen rearing course but recreation of Vernon stock improvement project to replace what I, Bob, Kay, Rick, Smiley and others did for many years; under principles I learned in that project and followed for 50 years. I can teach, manage, and mentor and ensure the Starters / Finishers are done right as well as the grafting and selecting breeding mothers and drone mothers. But you will have to do all the work, provide the bees and some equipment.

In past years we relied on me to produce breeding stock, this year I will provide some but participants will select Best of Vernon stock own hives. (I hope You kept good records as I asked you last fall) and bring them 14 days before day ZERO into breeder circle.

There will be 2 types of participants: Any member of club is invited call me at 250-762-8156.
Hive Lenders Participation limited to 20 hives: 2 story standard deep, queen excluder & empty dadant on top to prevent swarming. (do not Worry you will get them back). The formula is: You will be entitled to 30 cells per hive donated or 60 % of cells you graft. (do not worry you may leave grafting to experience grafter) You will lose 3 combs one of open honey one pollen and one of graft they will be replaced by Foundation Frames.

Learners Students helpers: they will have opportunity to be at, and learn all process and if wanted can try to graft they will get instruction and training to do one or 2 bars of cells cups. As all other aspects will be under my control and your bars will be in same frame with 2 experienced grafter the number of cells will be true result of your ability to graft.

Organizer for his part will get all surplus cells virgins and Starters / Finishers to convert into nucs and rear queens and sell them to pay for yard maintenance, tractor, cell cleaning, and replacements, frames, feed, medicines, and treatments.

April 13th or 14th Participants Pre meeting: We meet on day and time which will suits most. Please state your preferred day and time on your Sign-Up form.

April 20th UNPACKING (I will try to organize all work into weekends (Bee calendar permitting) by unwrapping my 24 wintered colonies. We select possible breeder "mothers" by evaluating how well they wintered and factor in last summer's performance (honey production, brood pattern, temperament). These hives will be given drone combs to also produce mating drones. (If you wish You can bring your DRONE combs and have them laid in Vernon stock drones, you take them home when they are capped to produce mature mating drones in your hives for time you need them to mate your queens.) Hives will be marked accordingly and treated for mites with MITEGONE Formic acid treatment Hive lenders are expected to do the same to their hives.

By MAY 16th or earlier: Moving Colonies to Breeder circle location (prior to day zero):

For many years, Bob has been providing most hives and bees for conversion into starters, finishers, incubators. For this year and future years, participants will bring their strongest two high colonies (Lend hives) 10 days before day zero to a common bee yard. Placed on pallets in groups of 4 to establish colony location and flight patterns. Hives will be inspected for strength, disease, quality of queen; if accepted they will receive preventive AFB treatment. Don't worry about your hives as you will get them back on day zero Minus 1 day with your queen, swarm control done, and ready to produce honey. Participants will bring as many hives as they wish to produce cells, bringing one hive for every 30 cells desired. There is limit of 20 hives. In Breeder circle.

MAY 21 4 days before ZERO the lend hives will have nice fully drawn comb with Lenders name tag placed into their Mothers Breeders hives and Queen transferred to it in proper place removing one unused comb. (which will go to one who supplied the perfect comb.) The eggs deposited into those combs will on graft day become perfect graft.

May 25th Breeding and Grafting Preparation Day – One Day prior to Day Zero (0-1):

On this day, in good flying weather, two donor hives facing same direction in each four pack will be removed and, in their place, (in the middle) will be placed my equipment to create the starters. From the bottom up, the starters consist of a single bottom board, a queen excluder, a wet honey Dadant box, and a standard box that will contain 6 combs and 2 inner feeders with thin feed. The field bees will soon start populating this new starter. Meanwhile, the queens are found in the donor hives and stored on the comb where they are found and placed in a screened nuk box. Then, each donor hive gives one comb of open honey and one of pollen to the starter. If that hive has a graft comb than it will be placed in between honey and pollen. Then, 60% of the nurse bees are shaken from the donor hives into the starter. All of the combs except for the one honey and pollen, and graft comb are put back into your hive. Two or 3 frames of foundation are placed in the top box of your hive to replace the donated comb and the queen is returned to the lower box. Your donor hive is screened and moved immediately to circle 4 to be loaded for transport back to your yard, swarm control done. In the end, the starter will have bees from two different colonies and two combs of honey and two combs of pollen. The remaining two comb spaces in the starter will be filled by grafting combs same day from my or your breeders. Also, on each pallet where there were four lender hives will now be two starters.

This year we set combs in breeder hives and will find the grafting combs in my master hives and yours, next year we will set them and find them in your hives only as my hives may be sold. Your work and two frames per hive is the cost of your participation. They will be replaced by Frames of Foundation. State on Sign up form if you have any and bring them.

MAY 26th Grafting Day - Day Zero (0):

Three years ago, I perfected my grafting system. I converted my honey house into a temperature and humidity-controlled space that accommodated up to 6 grafters in comfort. You will need to bring a head lamp, two Chinese grafting tools, and glasses to see well. Magnification glasses or lenses are also helpful. I will teach you how to graft and help you improve your grafting. Also, there will be experienced grafters grafting so you are guaranteed a successful graft. I have had two people who have never grafted and after one "test and show" bar were able to graft 15 cells out of 15 cells consistently. Bob's wife Kay improved from 9 to 14 out of 15 very quickly!

GRAFT RULES: The graft comb and grafted frames with 3 bars of 15 cells are stored and transported to and from the yard in heated and humidified boxes insuring success. WE graft only 3 bars of 15 cells from each GRAFT comb to eliminate inbreeding. Frames are numbered and bars named so results of each grafter are accurate. When we distribute the mature cells, we take a maximum of 10 cells from each bar ensuring there cannot be more than 10 sisters. (if you have just few, we make sure you do not have any sisters, because we have 18 mothers.

ON both days 25th & 26th In Afternoon Artificial Swarms will be Produced:

Learn how by reading " Selling and buying bees in 21 century" on WWW.MITEGONE.COM:
<http://www.mitegone.com/pdfpages/Buy%20sell%20bees%20Beeculture%20Feb%202019.pdf>
You may select to sell your hives in form of ARTIFICIAL SWARMS as some participants want to learn this method, it will be part of this year program, and may be next year too.

MAY 29th.Graft Day + 4 Days (0+4): Cells are ready to go into nucs in cell protectors at same time as nucs are being made. **UNTIL June 3rd.**

JUNE 1st & 2nd Full size colony / incubators swarm shaking and nuk making

This is how I will sell my colonies make nucs and rear the new queens and populations for next year. You all welcome to join me and learn.

JUNE 3th Graft Day + 9 Days (0+9): All unused cells are caged and placed in frames that accommodate these cages. The virgin queens are born on day 10 or 11. They can be sold direct or mailed for mating in anyone's nucs. Also, on this day, a virgin bank is created to store any excess caged virgins. Also, the starters are converted into mating nucs and can be sold. That is where pay for my involvement come: 1/3 of proven stock cells will be available to all beekeepers to buy, and rear they own new queen for wintering at reasonable cost.

JUNE 6st Graft Day + 12 Days (0+12): On this day all nucs are checked to make sure the queen has emerged from her cell. If she has not, replace the cell with the caged virgin

JUNE 8-11th Graft Day + 14 to 17 Days (0+14 - 17): By now cells and virgins must be used.

JUNE 12th Graft Day + 17 Days (0+17) The virgins are ready to mate. Watch for nice calm sunny afternoon.

JUNE 19th Graft Day + 24 Days (0+24) If there was nice weather they should be mated and laying. But give her another week to prove it.

July 3th Graft Day + 38 Days (0+38) If not laying she is stale and its time to unite it with mated one.

If you wish to participate: Give me a call 250-762-8156. And I will send you:
PARTICIPATION RULES AND, SIGN UP FORM TO FILL.