



# All the Buzz from the Hive

September 20/08

It's been awhile since we wrote one of these newsletters and I think it's about time for an update to let you know as to what is going on around here.

When Spring came this year and the time to unwrap the beehives, it was pretty depressing. Fifty-three beehives had been put away the previous winter and after they were all unwrapped, only 22 had survived. It was sad to see all those dead hives but also the fact that all this had to be cleaned up.

Our beehives have been used in a test study during the last 2 years by two biology students from Acadia University. They found that not only did my hives have "nosema apis" but also "nosema cerana". That was a surprise, but as it turns out, so do most of the hives tested in N.S. Another surprise was that it was always thought that spore counts were high coming out of the winter months and went down as Spring progressed into summer and the bees were able to fly again. They did not go down. Something else to deal with!

No-one had a clear answer as to how to best treat these spores. A scientist from the States showed that heating the frames from a beehive to 120 degrees F would kill 90% of the spores. So, we built a heating closet, went through all the dead hives, did some housecleaning and cooked the remaining frames. Did it work? We won't know until spore count numbers are received back from Acadia Un.

All the remaining hives were fed sugar syrup and given pollen patties to help them build up in strength. Luck was with us as the Spring turned out to be perfect colony building weather. We were able to split our hives and get our #'s back up there. The summer, actually July was great weather for a honey crop and lots of pollen being collected. Then came August – rain – rain-rain- no end in sight. With very few flying days, the bees began to consume some of their honey stores for food – about 44lbs. per hive. Well, they do need to eat.

The Fall honey has been taken off and it's a nice mild tasty honey. Right now the bees are being treated for mites and will soon be fed. All the hives are looking really great. Good strong populations and lots of brood to get the hive through the winter.

This time of the year is also busy in the kitchen – lots of jams and jellies to be made using all that fruit that's now in season. We also played around with another recipe and are now making "Honey Sweet Mustard Pickles" using honey instead of sugar and thickened with modified cornstarch instead of flour. They've been well received. Delicious!! This has always been a favorite in our house.

Now that all the honey has been extracted, we'll have to begin making candles again. Two new molds have been bought and I'm looking forward to trying these out. Keep an eye out for them.

I almost forgot, we are now have a website. Crispin, our oldest son, designed the web page and you can check us out at [www.cornectfamilyfarm.com](http://www.cornectfamilyfarm.com). I have to spend more time on it, but it will just have to wait till all this work is done – maybe January! I think he's done a great job.

As some of you may know, Christmas in Sherbrooke Village, is cancelled for this year only. Therefore I have booked to be at "Christmas by the Sea" at the DeCoste Centre in Pictou instead. I will also be at Barb's Christmas sale in Lochaber and as always you can find me at Antigonish Farmers' Market. (The gift boxes are in the process of being made and will be available end of October, first of November.)

Have a great Fall and see you at the Market. Thanks again for all your wonderful support.

*The Cornect Family Farm*

**1-902-833-2747**