

Beekeeping Insights #45 email notes

The year is fast winding down. I would like to direct your attention to the Bee Culture Pod cast site: [Special Saturday – Catch the Buzz | Bee Culture](#). I have written articles about the biology of the winter honey bees nest but this pod cast says it all! There is nothing in the Article quoted from 2016 about the winter honey bee nest that I could add to. Everyone one should check this pod cast out. I have known Kim Flottum, former editor of Bee Culture Magazine, over the course of many years and he has written a number of books and articles on beekeeping. Listen to what he has to say and count on it being the best out there.

The Note for this week is about some ads I have seen on the Internet bee sites that are offering bees and equipment for sale. First let me use an old saying, "All that glitters in not gold" to point out how true that statement continues to be regarding honey bees for sale.

Over years past, I bought bees and equipment from the many larger beekeeping operations due to health or passing of owners. Widows often are in a position to handle the sale but are in no frame of mind to deal with those arriving like vultures. In some cases bee clubs step up and help with the sale. We all want bargains! But beware: There are sellers more than I have ever seen selling things at outrageous prices. Many ads are now appearing for the sale of nuc's before winter even sets in. Many ads are for early for next year.

I have read blogs which include discussion about prices for next year. The general trend is to raise prices because everything else is being raised. Many sellers of queens and equipment have not yet indicated what prices will be for 2022. The old "Gleanings in Bee Culture" under the editorship of A.I. Root actually identified those taking advantage of unsuspecting buyer of bee equipment. Early editions carried a section called "Blasted Hopes" and a section called "Humbugs & Swindles". Taking advantage of a person with little knowledge of keeping bees seems to be on the rise.

I can recall several bad actors selling packages over 20 years ago. The company sold packages during winter offering a discount for packages to be delivered during April. I am told one of the bee magazines carrying the ad had a file cabinet full of complaints and stopped printing the ad. Major problem -- the company took the money and never delivered on the packages at the time they were needed. In fact many never received any packages at all. The same thing happened just a few years ago in Ohio when orders for packages were made and a delivery date set. On the pickup date, no packages and a lot of unhappy beekeeper showing up for packages that never arrived. The owner selling the packages had died. No one was notified that the packages would not be present for pick-up. I am not sure if the people who prepaid got any money back. In fact, the issue was so bad, the police had to be called to send beekeepers home without their packages.

Sometimes the quality of packages becomes an issue. It is now a practice to refer to packages as number # 3 packages. The # 3 package has taken the place of the 3 pound package. Many 3 pound packages were sold underweight. Thus, the change to # 3. All we know is a # 3 package has more bees than a # 2 package. It is something like reducing the amount of candy in a candy bar.