

2023 Stahlman Beekeeping E-mail Notes Issue #12a

This week's Stahlman Notes welcomes a number of new beekeepers to our mailing list. The topic "Bee Inspections" is going to be involved with topics to look for when examining a hive. I just visited a friend's hive this week that had a pile of dead bees extending at least one foot from the entrance of the hive. This hive was strong with a laying queen. I have only seen something like this with a chemical kill but this was one of two hives in the bee yard. The other hive had no dead bees.

My immediate question is why didn't the other hive have dead bees -- if it was a chemical kill? The state inspector was contacted and suggested several things: Nosema or mites. He will inspect the hive. In the meantime, a sample of dead bees was collected in a plastic bag and put into the freezer.

It is a story that I will follow up on and share with you.

This is swarming season in Raleigh! Swarm management has not been very successful except for those beekeepers making hive increases. I have heard of one swarm from a nucleus hive just purchased two weeks ago. Even though the nuc was transferred into a 10 frame hive, it still swarmed! I am guessing the new foundation placed in the hive was ignored by the bees. If drawn comb had been added, it might have been a different outcome.

When I am asked why? I can only answer -- "That is what bees do!"