



BANV MEMBER SURVEY ON QUEENS & WINTER SURVIVAL

May, 2011

Purpose

- To determine if there is any relationship between the source of queens and the ability of the colony to survive the winter
- Purpose was not to determine;
 - Why colonies die
 - What we as beekeepers did wrong
 - If other “colony loss” estimates are accurate
 - The “survival rate” in this study is not directly comparable to rates you may see elsewhere

Survey Questions

- 1. How many colonies did you (or your bees) start in 2010?
- 2. What was the queen source for each start?
- 3. How many were still alive on March 15, 2011?

Abbreviations/Definitions

common “outside” sources

- WP = Wilbanks package
- WQ = Wilbanks queen
- BN = Billy Davis nuc
- BQ = Billy Davis queen
- HN = Nuc with Pat Heitkem queen
- HQ = Pat Heitkem queen
- OH = Queen from member of the Ohio Queen Breeders
- CQ = Package from GA; but (maybe) not Wilbanks
- CN = Nuc from Charles Walters
- JN = Nuc from Mr. June
- RQ = Russian Queen from the Federation

Abbreviations/Definitions

BANV's backyard sources

- LQ = “Local” queen raised by local beekeeper
- SQ = “Local” queen raised by the bees (from supercedure or swarm cells)
- LN = Nuc from another local beekeeper
- SM = Swarm captured by beekeeper

Then,

- Put data on spreadsheet, as it came in
- Asked computer to calculate survival rate of each category
- Grouped categories (where it made sense to do so)
- And then made the following slide

Summary of Results

1. Locally produced nucs with local or H/T queens 87%
2. Locally produced queens with H/T 70%
3. Bee raised queens (emergency, supercedure and swarm) 68%
4. Beekeeper produced queens 60%
5. Queens from SPP 35%
6. Locally produced nucs with SPP queens 25%
7. Packages from SPP 23%

“Take Home” Implications

- Need to get serious about where and when we get our QUEENS, NUC's & PACKAGES
- Need to understand the elementary economics of small-scale beekeeping (requires simple math)
- Need to understand the “why's” of summer vs Spring requeening
- Need to get BANV members interested in raising a few nucs and local queens for themselves, our new beekeepers, and others

AND HAVE SOME FUN DOING IT