Honey producers can apply for USDA aid to meet coronavirus expenses

Honey producers, as well as producers of specialty crops including fruits, vegetables, horticulture, tree nuts, maple sap, or indigo, whose operations have been directly impacted by the coronavirus pandemic, may apply through Dec. 11 for the USDA Coronavirus Food Assistance Program 2 (CFAP2). The program, which began taking applications in late September, benefits agricultural producers who continue to face market disruptions and associated costs because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Phil Craft lead speaker at Nov. 7 KSBA Zoom meet

Phil Craft, former Kentucky state apiarist and a former Beekeeper of the Year, will keynote the members-only Zoom virtual fall meeting of the Kentucky State Beekeepers Association (KSBA) set for Nov. 7 at 7 p.m. EST. Craft’s presentation will explore the use of oxalic acid as a Varroa mite treatment. KSBA members will be sent the code required to join the meeting.

60-year beekeeper
Kenneth E. Garman, 85;
Kenneth Eugene Garman passed away Sept. 4, less than two weeks before his 86th birthday.

Garman was a beekeeper for nearly 60 years, starting as a young hobbyist, later making beekeeping his full-time profession. He did all the maintenance work on his several thousand hives himself, until late in his career.

He was a friend of Walter Kelley and Earl King of Kelley’s Beekeeping Supply.

Garman was a founder of the Kentucky State Beekeepers Association (KSBA), serving as president for a term. He also worked the KSBA honey sales booth and furnished honey for State Fair sales for many years.

Family friend and nurse Sherie Spalding said, "He was kind and generous with his time as he mentored many new beekeepers. He was a friend to bees, always saying 'Every bee matters,' as he would gently replace a frame back into a hive.

“We lost a world of knowledge of beekeeping, honey flow, and bee plants, as well as losing a true friend,” Spalding said.

Garman was preceded in death by his wife, Elizabeth (d. 2016).

To-do list:

1. Please read the petition and submit your opinion, asks State Apiarist Tammy Potter.

   Here's the petition

2. USFS wants the comments of beekeepers or farmers directly affected by this issue. Click below to email USFS executive director Victoria Christiansen.

   Research is sketchy
   The petition also requests public and private forest managers currently associated with government programs cease working with commercial beekeepers. The petition was filed last July. No formal public comment period has been set, but comments to USFS are welcome any time, said Tammy Potter, Kentucky state apiarist.

   “Working with forest managers, commercial beekeepers
Potter said there is still much incomplete science on the topics of forage and competition. One reason why she participates in the Native Bee and Wasp Survey is to help build a national insect inventory, which currently does not exist. Much more work needs to be done, and in the meantime, public policy should not be adjusted with incomplete datasets, she said.

“Until Varroa mites arrived in the 1980s, honey bees co-existed with native bees without any perceived problems,” Potter said. “Changing policy without complete forest and insect inventories is irresponsible and unfair to beekeepers.”

Authority since 1960
Under the Multiple-Use Sustained Yield Act, passed in 1960, commercial beekeepers can locate hives on federal forest land with the manager's approval. “Although this typically happens in the West, and does not happen a lot, forests can provide much-needed pollen and/or nectar for hives, especially when managed agriculture can be subject to pesticides,” Potter said.

Forests provide invaluable nutrition in the form of nectar and pollen, especially in the spring, and many forests are removed from harmful sprays and pesticides, so they make a good place to take bees in between flowering crops, especially in the West, which the petition has targeted, Potter said; “I’m concerned the consequences of such requests could be broad and have unintended effects.”
**Educational events for beekeepers**

**Oct. 17.** *Louisville Fall Beekeeping School*, Honey Depot Beekeeping Store & Apiary, 14005 Taylorsville Road, Louisville. Sessions for beginner, hobbyist, and sideline levels. $45 per person, Free to age 16 and younger. Food provided, families welcome. Indoor and outdoor (if over 55 degrees F) sessions, so bring your bee apparel.

The roster of speakers include EAS Certified Master Beekeepers **Kent Williams** and **John Benham**, Kentucky State Beekeepers Association president **Mike Mabry**, local veterinarian **Dr. Leonard Davis**, commercial beekeepers **Chris Renfrow** and **Tom Ballinger**, Kentucky State University entomologist **Dr. Tom Webster**, and HoneyBear Farms owner **Joel Gonia**.

*Topics:* Introduction to honey bees, beekeeping, and honey; apiary set-up; establishing pollinator habitat; winter prep, treatment, and feeding; oxalic acid application; Varroa mites; pest and disease treatment; queen rearing and mitstanding behavior; beekeeping classes and mentoring programs; the KSBA; and the Certified Kentucky Honey Program (CKHP).

Register on-line or in person at the Louisville Honey Depot beekeeping store. In-person registration opens 7:30 a.m. day of school.

More information and registration: **Joel Gonia**, HoneyBear Farms, (502) 212-6228, honeybearfarmsky@gmail.com; **Jessica Martens**, jessica@honeybearfarmsky.com.

**Nov. 18.** *Planting for Honey Bees: A Guide for Beekeepers*. Instructor, **Shannon Trimboli**. Virtual class conducted by Trimboli, author and authority on honey bee plant preferences. Registration fee is $10 and will open in mid-October. Trimboli will explore the answers to “What can I plant for my honey bees?” Specifics recommendations can vary greatly depending on location and what else blooms at the same time. The class will explore basic concepts you can apply to your own property, illustrated by how Trimboli has managed plantings on her farm.

Registration link, mid-October: shannontrimboli.com/virtualclasses/.

**Changes set for ELAP risk management program**

The USDA’s Farm Service Agency (FSA) operates a risk-protection program, the *Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honey Bees and Farm-Raised Fish Program* (“ELAP”), said **Lindsey New**, FSA executive director in McCrory and Pulaski counties.
For honey bees, ELAP covers colony losses, honey bee hive losses (the physical structure) and honey bee feed losses where the colony, hive, or feed was destroyed by a natural disaster; or colonies lost to Colony Collapse Disorder. Colony losses must be in excess of normal mortality. ELAP also covers losses because of eligible adverse weather or loss conditions, including blizzards and wildfires on non-federally managed lands.

ELAP has announced program changes and new deadlines for reporting losses in advance this year.

- **Calendar year.** ELAP will now run programs on a calendar-year basis. The signup deadline for calendar year 2020 losses is **January 30, 2021.** Producers are still required to submit an application for payment within 30 calendar days of the end of the program year. This is not a policy change, but will affect deadlines.
- **15-day window replaces 30 to report losses.** Starting in 2020, producers will have 15 days to file a notice of honey bee loss from when the loss is first apparent, instead of 30 days. This change matches up ELAP with the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program, which also has a 15-day notice of loss period for honey.
- **Show how you replaced inventory.** If you were paid for the loss of a honey bee colony or hive in either or both of the last two years, you will be required to provide additional documentation of how your current-year inventory was acquired.
- **More details about CCD.** If the honey bee colony was lost because of Colony Collapse Disorder, you must certify that the loss was directly due to at least three of the five symptoms of CCD.

**Annual reporting** is required on form FSA-578 to stay eligible for FSA programs.

- Annual reporting is due each Jan. 2, if you enrolled in the **Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program ("NAP")** for the current year, or if you want to be eligible for ELAP in case of an eligible disaster-related loss.
- Further reporting is due within 30 days of the date colonies are acquired, brought into, or removed from the county.

Lindsey New, executive director, FSA Office Pulaski/McCreary counties.
45 Eagle Creek Drive, Ste. 101, Somerset, KY 42503. Email lindsey.new@usda.gov Phone: (606) 678-4842, Ext. 125.

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**Here’s how to protect hives from mosquito spraying**

Listing your hives with the **KDA Pollinator Protection App** will provide general ongoing protection. The app is a communication tool shared by chemical applicators spraying crops. The applicators notify participating beekeepers when applicators intend to spray one of the listed controlled pesticides within the beekeepers' geographic area. The app gives listed beekeepers the chance to take protective action.


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**Entomological Society of America honors Dr. Clare Rittschof**

University of Kentucky (UK) entomologist **Dr. Clare Rittschof** has been recognized by
entomology colleagues around the world for her innovative research and teaching.

She received the Early Career Innovation Award from the 7,000-member Entomological Society of America for groundbreaking research into honey bee behaviors and how they contribute to honey bee health.

Rittschof’s studies combine neuroscience, genomics, and landscape and behavior ecology, to connect bees' social interactions, nutrition, and other environmental factors to their behavior. Her work on social behavior is relevant beyond entomology; she works with professionals in fields including sociology, human development, and health sciences.

Rittschof teaches two new courses at UK titled “Bees and People” and “Neuroscience of Pollination” that explore the biological and social connections between bees and humans.

Press release by Katie Pratt, UK Ag Communications / Photo of Dr. Rittschof, Steve Patton.

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