Texas Apiary Law

Mary Reed
Chief Apiary Inspector
Texas Apiary Inspection Service

Texas A&M AgriLife Research

Texas Apiary Inspection Service

Introduction

- Established in 1910
  - Texas legislature enacted foulbrood suppression legislation
- 1920
  - First Chief Foulbrood Inspector
- Housed at Texas A&M

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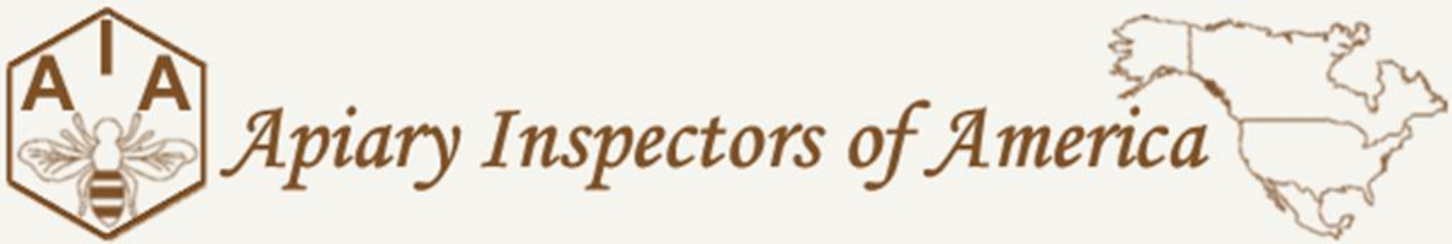
National Inspection Services

- Nationwide inspection services first started to combat American Foulbrood (AFB)
  - Largely successful in their efforts
- Currently many states continue to monitor for AFB as well as other pests and diseases



Mission Statement

- The mission of the Texas Apiary Inspection Service is to safeguard the apiary industry of Texas through the application of science-based regulations, educational opportunities and open communication with the industry.

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Texas Agriculture Code

- Operate under the authority of:
  - AGRICULTURE CODE TITLE 6. PRODUCTION, PROCESSING, AND SALE OF ANIMAL PRODUCTS
    - SUBTITLE A. BEES AND NONLIVESTOCK ANIMAL INDUSTRY
      - CHAPTER 131. BEES AND HONEY
- Texas Administrative Code (Rules)
  - TEXAS ADMINISTRATIVE CODE TITLE 4. AGRICULTURE
    - PART 4. OFFICE OF THE CHIEF APIARY INSPECTOR
      - CHAPTER 71. BEES

Texas Law

- Sec. 131.021. POWERS AND DUTIES OF CHIEF APIARY INSPECTOR.
  - (a) For the purpose of enforcing this chapter, the chief apiary inspector may:
    - (1) adopt rules and act as necessary to control, eradicate, or prevent the introduction, spread, or dissemination of contagious or infectious diseases of bees;
    - (2) prohibit the shipment or entry into this state of bees, honey, combs, pollen, or other items capable of transmitting diseases of bees from another state, territory, or foreign country except in accordance with rules adopted by the inspector; and
    - (3) seize and order the destruction, treatment, or sale of a colony of bees, equipment, pollen, or honey that is determined to be diseased, infectious, abandoned, or in violation of this chapter or a rule or quarantine adopted under this chapter.

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- Inspectors
  - Mary Reed
    - Chief Apiary Inspector
  - Bill Baxter
    - Assistant Chief Apiary Inspector
  - Hannah Blackburn
    - Apiary Inspector
  - Taylor Warren
    - Apiary Inspector

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Inspections

- Inspections performed on all beekeepers requesting import/export permits
- Other beekeepers (small scale) can request inspection
  - Inspections or signed health affidavit needed to sell nucs, queen cells, queens
- Emergency inspection as needed

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Permits

- Import (131.041)
  - $100.00 Fee
- Export (131.042)
  - $75.00 Fee
- Intrastate (131.043)
  - Bee Removal Transportation Permit (explained on next slide)
  - $35.00 Fee
- Queen Certificate (131.044)
  - $300.00

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Bee Removal Transportation Permit

- Bee removal is not regulated by TAIS
- Bee removal without a structural pest control license is done under an exemption in the structural pest control section of Texas occupations code, Chapter 1951
- In order to qualify for this exemption the beekeeper must be registered with TAIS
- In order for beekeeper to transport bees across county lines they must have an Intrastate Permit (131.043)

Bee Removal Transportation Permit

- TAIS maintains a list of beekeepers that are registered and have Bee Removal Transportation Permits
- TAIS maintains this list as a public service and makes no claims nor endorsements of any beekeepers listed
- Recommend to the public to read disclaimer on webpage before contacting bee removers

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Registration

- Apiary Registration (131.045)
  - Free and voluntary
- Equipment Brand Registration (131.062)
  - $10.00 Fee
  - Numeric brand assigned to beekeeper by TAIS
    - 1-XXX-YYY
      - 1= Texas
      - XXX= County Number
      - YYY= Beekeeper Number

Hive Identification

- Sec. 131.061. IDENTIFICATION REQUIRED. A person may not operate an apiary in this state unless the apiary equipment is:
  - (1) clearly and indelibly marked with the name and address of the person; or
  - (2) branded in accordance with Section 131.064 of this code with a brand registered to the person by the chief apiary inspector.

A History of Inspections

- Timeline of introductions and significant events in Beekeeping
  - 1910 –TAIS formed to combat American Foulbrood
  - 1984 –Tracheal Mites
  - 1987 –Varroa Mites
  - 1990 –Africanized Honey Bee
  - 2006 –Colony Collapse Disorder
  - ???

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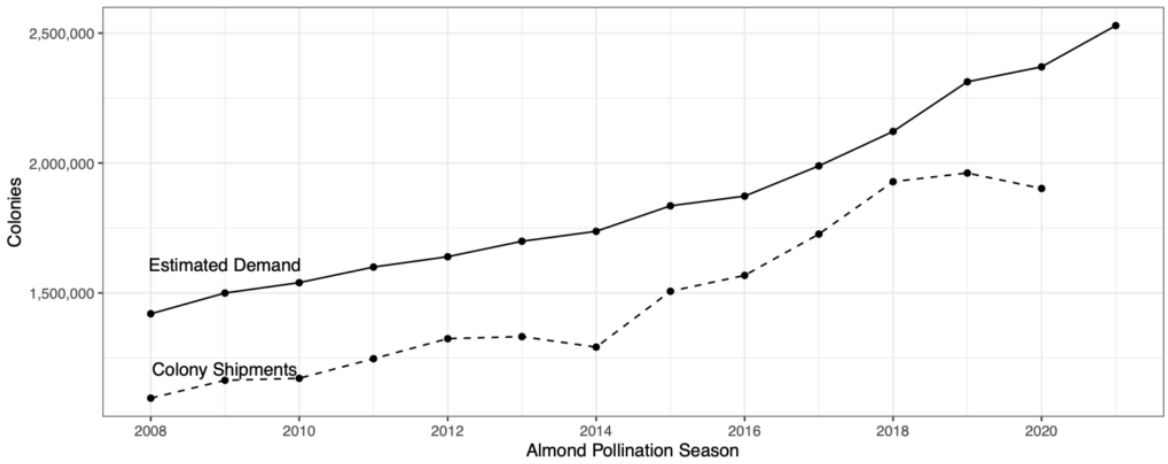
A New Demand in Beekeeping

- At the same time there has been an increase in demand for honey bee pollination
  - Almonds
    - 1.2 million bearing acres (2020)
    - Need 2.4 million colonies to pollinate



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Changes in the Beekeeping World

- Currently about 2.98 million colonies in the U.S. (2020)
- With the increased demand, methods must be found to increase colonies
- Novel solutions for the apiary industry must be found

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Innovation in Beekeeping

- Inspection service acts as a bridge between beekeepers and research
- New solutions
  - Bee Informed Partnership
    - Tech Transfer Teams
  - Collaborations with research
    - USDA National Survey

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The Boom in Beekeeping

- Post CCD the interest in beekeeping has skyrocketed
  - Urban and small scale beekeeping have become extremely popular
    - Unknown exactly how many but estimates in the thousands
  - Transcends socioeconomic boundaries

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The Role of TAIS

- The increase in the popularity of beekeeping has caused the inspection services to adjust
  - More demand for information to a non-beekeeping/ beginning beekeeping audience
    - Including:
      - Extension
      - Home owners
      - Municipalities
      - Agricultural clubs
      - Etc

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Education

- Education is key for small-scale operations
- TAIS regularly presents at bee schools and conferences
- Website
  - Pest and disease section
  - Best Management Practices
  - Many other educational resources

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It's more than just inspections!

REGULATORY

health inspections, certificates, enforcement action, investigations

INSPECTIONS

pests, parasites, pathogens

RESEARCH

USDA-APHIS HB Survey, sampling, invasive pest sampling, diagnostic labs

EDUCATION

programs, workshops, training, mentoring, educational materials

RESOURCE

beekeeping, management practices, state and local resources, pollinator plantings

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TAIS Website

txbeeinspection.tamu.edu

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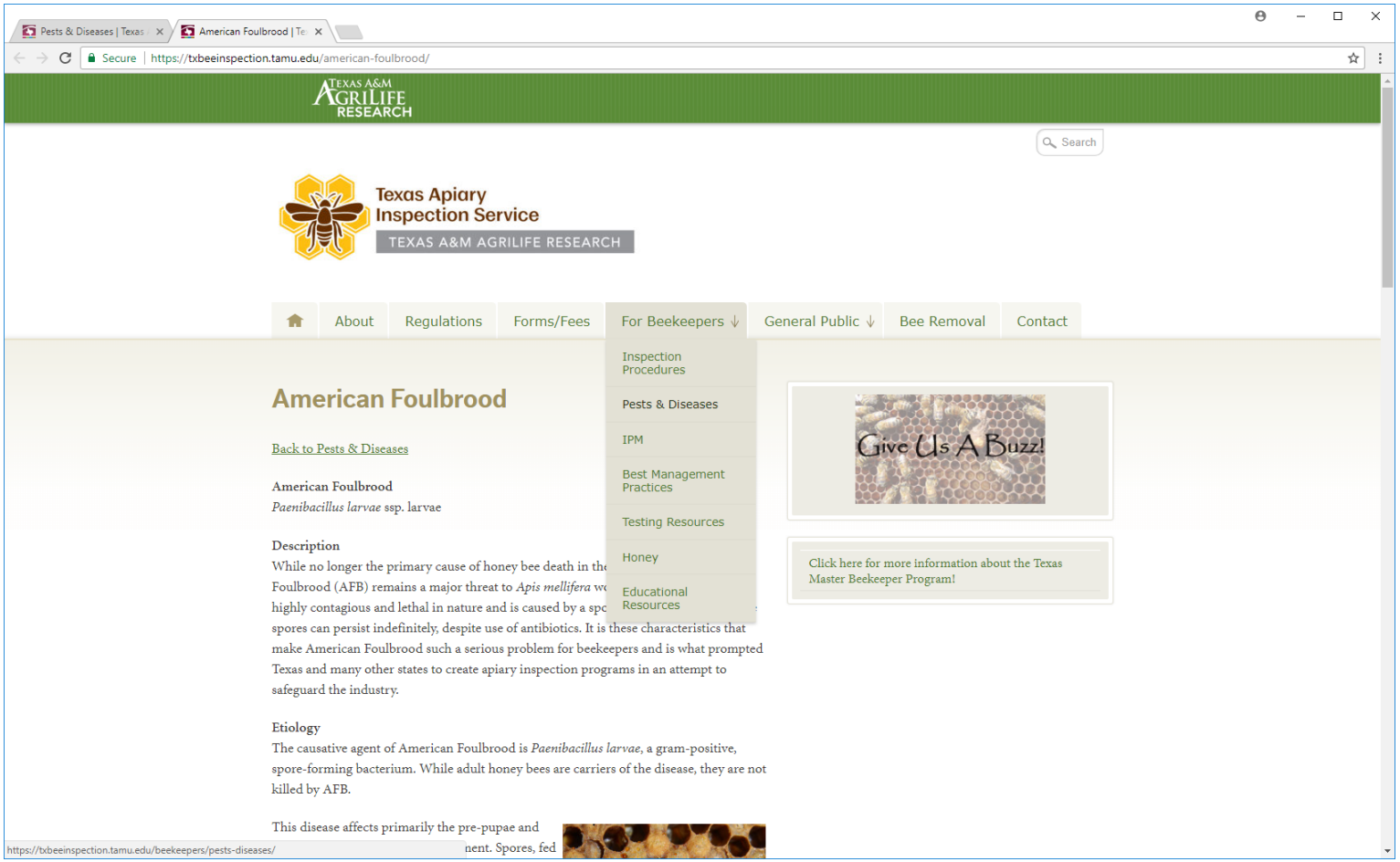
Online Resources



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Texas Master Beekeeper Program

- Texas Master Beekeeper Program started in 2015
  - This program aims to increase the knowledge of participants and they in turn will act as ambassadors to the community
- Collaboration between
  - TAIS
  - Texas Beekeeper Association (Lance Wilson)
  - UF Honey Bee Lab (Dr. Jamie Ellis)

Texas Master Beekeeper Website

masterbeekeeper.tamu.edu

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The Future

- Continue monitoring for novel pest and diseases
- Promote and support education programs
- Work with NGO's and other research groups

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Thank You

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