
BUZZWORD



Beekeepers' Society of South Australia Inc.

www.bees.org.au

NEWSLETTER

Edition 112

January 2022



Correspondence to:

The Secretary
 Beekeepers' Society of SA Inc
 PO Box 283
 Fullarton SA 5063

email: office@bees.org.au

Many thanks to those who provide articles for the newsletter.

Contributors:

Bob Beer
 Trevor Greenfield
 Andrew Batten
 Susan Speck

BUZZWORD

(The Beekeepers' Society Newsletter)
 Articles are always being sought by the editor for inclusion in the newsletter. Please feel free to email or write in and provide any interesting experiences about the management of your hives.

If you wish to discuss any aspect of the newsletter please contact:
 Barbara Horwood, editor, on 8296 8478
 email: horwoodmb@internode.on.net

WEBSITE:

www.bees.org.au



See us on **FACEBOOK**. Go to www.facebook.com/beekeeperssa/

You can view a host of interesting material, photos and comments - you can "like" us and leave a comment of your own.

Equipment/Extractor Officers:

Eugene McEwen	(North)	8261 0514
Susan Lonie	(South)	0417 811 067
Trisha Blanks	(Central)	0437 713 790

CONTENTS:

Committee meetings	page 3
General meetings	page 3
Beginners' Etc Meeting	page 3
BSSA Apiary site	page 3
Subscriptions	page 3
Mentor List	page 3
BSSA Swarm list	page 3
Extractors Available For Use	page 4
Members' Lunch	page 4
Field Days - practical beekeeping	page 4
President's Report	page 5
Recent Events	page 6
- Sophie's Patch	
- Christmas Dinner	
Practical Tips and Tricks	page 7
Articles of Interest	page 12
The Bee-Friendly Garden	page 12
Did You Know ...?	page 13
Recipes	page 14
Book Corner	page 15
Amazing Animal Super Powers	page 16
The Sugar Shake Test	page 16

2020-2021 Office Bearers:

President:	Susan Lonie
Vice-President	Adrian Makarowsky
Treasurer:	John Thomas
Assistant Treasurer	Noel McPharlin
Membership Manager	Grant Gotley

Secretary: Trisha Blanks 0437 713 790
office@bees.org.au

Committee Members:

Sandra Ullrich
 Josh D'Ambrosio
 Trevor Greenfield
 Aphrodite Noikou
 Phil de Courcey

Co-ordinators:

Website:	James Field
Social Media:	Sandra Ullrich

Education: Trevor Greenfield, Aphrodite Noikou

Swarm Collection Co-ordinator:

Sandra Ullrich

Minute Secretary:	Xar Waskowski-Jones
Librarian:	Sue Speck

Committee Meetings

Third Monday of each month, 7 pm, at Kensington.

General Meetings

General meetings are held at Burnside Civic Centre Hall, 401 Greenhill Road, Tasmore on the **SECOND MONDAY** of each month at 7.30 pm

Supper is available (gold coin donation).

General meetings have resumed in person at the Burnside Civic Centre following some relaxation of COVID-19 restrictions.

Livestream meetings from past months can still be viewed via the BSSA website or Facebook.

Beginners And Intermediates Education Starts at 6.30 pm (Before the start of monthly General Meeting)

Teaching sessions commence at 6.30 pm for beginner beekeepers to participate in an hour of question-and-information exchange prior to the start of the main monthly general meeting. Participants need to register in advance. See page 6 for more information.

BSSA Apiary Site

The BSSA hives are located at:

Selgar Avenue, Clovelly Park - about 200 metres west off South Road and behind the Tonsley Hotel.

The BSSA hive situated at the SA Museum on North Terrace is currently not available for viewing by the public due to COVID restrictions.

Department of Primary Industries (PIRSA)
Project Coordinator, Apiaries:
Michael Stedman - 8429 0872

Subscriptions

Subscriptions are due from 1st July each year. The membership fee for the financial year commencing 1 July 2021 is:

\$65 single

\$35 junior

\$100 family (2 adults + 2 children or 1 adult + 3 children). Any additional child/member \$20.

Membership application and renewal forms can be downloaded from the link found on the Beekeepers' Society of SA website (www.bees.org.au)

Queen colours

Last digit of the year

0 or 5: Blue

1 or 6: white

2 or 7: yellow

3 or 8: red

4 or 9: green

Field Days

Practical aspects of beekeeping will be demonstrated on a number of occasions during the year. Please refer to Buzzword Field Days page and the BSSA website for details.

The field days are a must for all new beekeepers.

MENTOR LIST

A mentoring service is available to our new beekeepers who would like assistance at home. Please contact the BSSA secretary for more information.

BSSA SWARM LIST

If any BSSA member is interested in having their name as a swarm collector listed on the BSSA website please contact either Trisha Blanks (BSSA Secretary) or Sandra Ullrich at sullrich@aapt.net.au

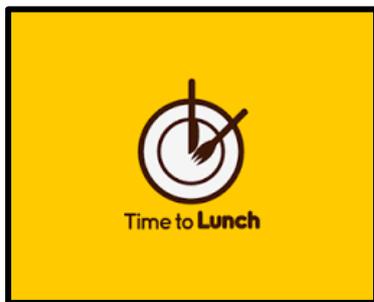
**EXTRACTORS AVAILABLE FOR USE
BY MEMBERS**

A reminder that three extractors, uncapping trays and wiring gigs are available for use on loan to financial members.

Contacts:

Eugene McEwen (North) 8261 0514
Susan Lonie (South) 0417 811 067
Trisha Blanks (Central) 0437 713 790

They must be returned in a clean and undamaged state. Please report any concerns/damage



MEMBERS' LUNCH

All members are welcome to join the regular lunch group which will meet at the

Rising Sun Hotel, Bridge Street, Kensington on the 2nd Thursday of each new season, ie Summer, Autumn, Winter and Spring. The next lunch is scheduled for **Thursday, 10 March**.

It is imperative that intending participants contact Bob Beer in advance (0413 208 835)



FIELD DAYS

(Practical Beekeeping)

HIVE INSPECTIONS

**PROGRAM OF MANAGEMENT FOR THE
BSSA HIVES**

Honey extraction as required

The BSSA hives are located at **Selgar Avenue, Clovelly Park** – about 200 metres west off South Road and behind the Tonsley Hotel

Saturday	26 February Time: 1 pm To return “stickies” back onto hives for cleaning of honey supers
Wednesday	16 March Time: 1 pm Disease presentation and inspection before winter; Sugar Shake inspection for mite inspection
Saturday	9 April Time: 1 pm (same as for 16 March session) Disease presentation and inspection before winter; Sugar Shake inspection for mite inspection
Wednesday	27 April Time: 1 pm Closing for Winter. Last Field Day for year 2022.

All participants must have at least long sleeves, long-leg trousers and a head veil. Attendance is limited to 15 persons.

Bookings can be made only through the BSSA secretary or Bob Beer at beersbees@bigpond.com or mobile 0413 208 835. Cost - \$10 (members); \$20 (non-members).

VOLUNTEERS REQUIRED to assist new beekeepers on field days. Contact BSSA secretary if you are interested.

Useful links:

https://pir.sa.gov.au/biosecurity/animal_health/bees

https://pir.sa.gov.au/biosecurity/animal_health/bees/beekeeper_registration

<https://www.legislation.sa.gov.au/LZ/C/A/Livestock%20Act%201997.aspx>

<https://www.legislation.sa.gov.au/lz/c/a/food%20act%202001.aspx>

<https://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/public+content/sa+health+internet/about+us/legislation/food+legislation/food+legislation>

President's Report



Hello BSSA Members and all who may read this.

We are more than halfway through summer and a season with differing rainfalls, thus differing levels of honey production. I trust all are

staying cool on the very hot days.

I note bees, being summer, are busy collecting pollen and nectar. Importantly, like us and other animals, bees will consume an increased amount of water in hot weather so please ensure they have a water source they can access as is required under legislation.

Currently being the caretaker for one of the three extractors the Society has for member use, I am aware that many beekeepers are extracting good amounts of honey. Please remember the requirements of the *Food Act* whilst extracting and further requirements such as labelling laws if selling honey or other products.

The Fire Danger Season has commenced, with total fire bans being enacted several times in many regions to date, though not yet the Adelaide Plains (though this has occurred in the

past). Please be familiar with CFS notifications and fire safety if tending to hives, no matter where. Commonly these are very hot days, sometimes with strong winds, which can cause not just a risk with smokers but also honey can melt fast, bees may be temperamental, and it can be very, very hot in a bee suit!

Our first meeting for the year will occur soon on the 2nd Monday in February, a calendar being produced to reflect the year. As COVID restrictions appear to be easing we hope to continue with larger numbers at Burnside but will also continue to film meetings. Please do contact us if there are topics you wish us to focus on or education you wish to receive and/or a guest speaker you wish to hear from. We will continue to try to have visual items to look at in the hall which can help to raise questions, in addition to our library books.

Our Beginners and Intermediate classes prior to the meeting at Burnside will also recommence, whilst our field days have and do continue, on site at Clovelly Park. The committee is also exploring the prospect of teaching advanced classes during the year.

Hopefully this year all shows and events will resume, many of which were cancelled last year. These provide the opportunity to enter produce such as honey and wax for judging, in addition to facilitating the sharing of knowledge and experience of beekeeping to others through the various stalls we hope to host during this year.

Please continue to stay safe, enjoy the rest of summer, the beginning of autumn, find pleasure in all that beekeeping can offer and continue to manage your hives in line with legislation.

PIRSA's site can assist.

https://pir.sa.gov.au/biosecurity/animal_health/bees

Please continue to send comments, advice, concerns or any questions you may have, including anything you may wish us to do. I hope you enjoy the year ahead.

Susan Lonie

President BSSA



BEGINNERS, INTERMEDIATE, JUNIORS AND MASTERS EDUCATION PROGRAM

**6.30 PM TO 7.30 PM
(BEFORE THE START OF MONTHLY
GENERAL MEETING)**

Planned structured Week 1 – 5 classes commence in February 2022 and will be repeated from July. Participants need to register for each session. Please contact the BSSA Secretary.

Members may attend five sessions. Non-members will be permitted to attend two sessions before being required to join BSSA.

Masterclasses are anticipated to be held during weekends in 2022. Further information will be available on the BSSA website.

RECENT EVENTS



Open Garden

November 6, 7 and 8 2021

A gorgeous sunny spring day was enjoyed by the many interested visitors to Sophie Thomson's Open Garden over the November weekend. As usual, happy BSSA members were on hand at our marquee to promote and answer questions about our club and beekeeping in general.



Toni Waterhouse, Mark Horwood and Anna Simpson with interested attendees



BSSA marquee at Sophie's Open Garden



Some of the many visitors



CHRISTMAS DINNER



Our final meeting for 2021 wrapped up with a festive fare served up by outside caterers to conform with current Covid regulations. The event was well attended. Susan, our President, outlined some novel new proposals for the coming year which are under consideration by the committee, a report of which will be provided as the months progress.

The BSSA website can be accessed for a full viewing of the December meeting.

PRACTICAL TIPS AND TRICKS FROM AN EXPERIENCED BEEKEEPER

BSSA member, Trevor Greenfield, shares his ideas from practical experience:

Watering Bees

Simple Waterer

Made from kitty litter tray, hessian, paver offcuts and some poly pipe. Water topped up every second day.



Larger Waterer

This started as a 45-litre plastic bin from Bunnings.

The centre rail is a piece of 20 mm electrical conduit tied to the handles [holes in the bin handles for the cord].

Hessian is draped across from edge to edge and secured with clips made from 13 mm conduit - cut into lengths about 10 mm long and then cut lengthwise to form a 'peg-like' clip.

The white tubes to weigh the hessian down are lengths of PVC drain pipe - 40 mm diameter.

This is located in slightly dappled shade which seems to work best, and keeps the water cool even in hot weather.

The bees seem to find the right level that suits them to drink, and while there is open water, they are always close enough to get to the hessian sides and clamber out if they fall in.

Maintenance is to drain and flush the mosquito larvae out and re-fill every week or 10 days, and to replace the hessian every season. [The old hessian will dry out and burn in a smoker so it doesn't go to waste either.]



Modified Hive Tool

I modify the normal Australian J-tool to give it a sharp hook point. I find that this allows me to insert the end of the tool into places that are very restrictive or tight. An example would be to lift out Flow Hive flow frames. These have tight tolerances that make it awkward to use the conventional hook.

It's also useful for cleaning out the groove when cleaning up wax foundation frames for re-use. No separate tool needed.

I grind the shape out using an angle grinder fitted with a 1 mm stainless steel cutting blade, then clean up the new shape with a curved file.



Hive Stands With Ant Traps

The photo on the left has stands made from school student desks. The one on the right is an adjustable stand for use with Flow Hives.

Both have small 'tuna' tins under the legs so that the legs do not touch the edge of the tins. These tins hold engine oil (even used sump oil is OK). Ants won't cross the oil barrier, and are most reluctant to

cross even when the oil collects dust and a few bees. There are some losses of bees, but this doesn't affect hive strength. Ants in the hive affect the hive to a greater extent than the small number of bees lost to the ant traps.

Hint 1: DO NOT use water. It dries out too quickly, and the ants resume their way into the hive.

Hint 2: DO NOT use vegetable oil. This forms a dry skin on top and the ants just use it as a highway into the hive.



Storing Frames

Use broccoli boxes from fruit and vegetable shops. These can store up to 8 unused full-depth frames or 6 drawn

full-depth frames. Frames that have been frozen to kill wax moth can be stored without further refrigeration if they are transferred into the box cold and the box sealed with duct tape.



Smoker Modifications

There are two modifications:

- The smoker has a hook added to the front to allow it to be clipped onto the open hive box when working bees. This gives off a small amount of smoke across the box without any interaction.
- I've added a 'stopper' made out of a piece of tapered dowel. (It could be a piece of stick or a cutdown cork). This is secured to the smoker with a light chain and a screw eyelet.

When finished with the smoker the 'stopper' is pushed into the end of the smoker and the smouldering smoker material soon exhausts the available oxygen inside the smoker and the material goes out.

This saves smoker fuel as any remaining can be mixed with fresh fuel and further used.

The use of a 'stopper' improves the safety of using a smoker in the warm dry conditions of summer and autumn.

I also use the smoker box (the red metal box under the smoker) to further improve safety. This is especially good when transporting a freshly used (and hot) smoker in a vehicle after a swarm capture for example.



Hessian As Smoker Fuel

I use hessian from bags as fuel and find that pre-preparing all my fuel saves a lot of frustration if you run low halfway through looking at bees. It also avoids the problem of damp fuel (as in pine needles or gum leaves).

Bags are cut up across the bag width, following the weft on one side. I pull off one thread to use to tie up the bag section. Each bag segment is lightly rolled and tied up ready for use. Too tight and it fails to burn properly, too loose and it burns away too quickly (and too hot!). Each segment is about $\frac{2}{3}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ the length of the smoker barrel. This way, an additional segment can be stuffed

in on top of the earlier, burning portion. Normally I break the securing thread before I use the fuel in the smoker.

Hint 1: If the bag is stitched together using synthetic thread unpick the bag and remove all thread.

Hint 2: If the bag has been oil stained, cut out the oil stain and discard.

Bees object to fuels that have oils or synthetics in them. They burn with aromatics that agitate bees greatly.



Simple Heater To Re-liquify Honey

Ever had honey candy in the jar and you really would like it to be liquid? Most honey will naturally candy as the sugars in it form into small crystals. Honey can be re-liquified by warming it to around hive temperature or a bit more, definitely no more than 50°C though.

Here's an easy way to do this, and at no cost too:

Place the jar inside an old electrical cable reel in a warm sunny spot. I use the top of my hives.

The cable reel should have one end cut off (for stability and to remove any shadowing).

Of course, this works best when the day is sunny and warm.



Shading For Bees

These 'shade lids' are put in place when the weather is hot and removed when the heat moderates. The 'rule of thumb' I use 'if the hot weather is for more than 2 days about 40°C maximum and the overnight minimum is above 20°C' then deploy the shade lids. The rationale for this is hives normally run at 34°C so that an outside temperature of 38-40°C is only 4-6°C above normal. During the day bees collect water and evaporate it to cool the hive. However, bees use bearding as an overnight process to cool the hive and in particular the brood combs as they can't collect water at night. If the overnight temperature remains high this bearding overnight becomes much less effective in cooling the hive for the next day.

Extended hot weather where the overnight temperatures remain high stresses the bees in a cumulative manner, and the hive temperature continues to rise day-by-day despite the bees' best effort. This is when the 'shade lids' reduce the amount of radiant heat being absorbed by the hive, particularly through the roof and sides of the honey super. It is white coloured to reflect heat away from the hive.





ARTICLES OF INTEREST

LA PALMA BEES

You may recall that in September a volcano erupted on the Spanish Island of La Palma.

Many people were forced to flee the area, and among those were a number of beekeepers (La Palma is home to over 100 beekeepers). Fifty days after the eruption, one beekeeper returned and was amazed to find that the bees in five of his six hives - just 600 metres from the volcano and buried under volcanic ash - had survived.



The bees had sealed any gaps in the hives with propolis to keep toxic fumes out, and relied on honey already stored in their hives for food. It never ceases to amaze me just how incredible bees are 🐝
(from Nelly Burrows)

Photo credit: Elías González, La Palma Bee Keepers Association, via EPA-EFE/Shutterstock

THE BEE-FRIENDLY GARDEN



FLOWERING PLANTS

As a beekeeper it makes sense to populate the area round your hives with those plants that provide good supplies to your bees of

the pollen and nectar essential for their wellbeing. There are myriad flowering plants available to suit the various climatic and gardening conditions found in your area.

While advice can be sought from local garden centres and nurseries on the types of plant likely to thrive and flower in a certain area, for the beekeeper there are other additional considerations apart from personal preference that will influence plant choice.

To earn a place in the bee-friendly garden a plant has to offer pollen, nectar or both and make these easily available to the visiting bee.

PLANT CHOICE

Whether you are renovating a small area of an existing garden or planning a new garden to maximise the forage available for your colonies of bees, there are certain initial considerations that will assist your final decision on what to plant. The following questions will guide you in your plant selection:

- Does the plant flower? When, how often and for how long?
- Is there access to nectaries?
- Will the plant thrive and flower in the available conditions?

DID YOU KNOW ... ?

The bee has the ability to see ultra-violet light, which humans cannot, and many of the marks or features it finds attractive in a flower are not visible to us. While a bee cannot see the colour red many flowers of this colour have other visible markings such as black spots and ultra-violet lines that act as a map to guide it to the nectary of the flower.



What we see with our ordinary human vision



What is seen by a bee with its ultra-violet vision

Bees are particularly drawn to the colours blue, purple, violet, white and yellow. During a foraging trip a bee tends to show an affiliation for one particular type of flower and will often ignore other nearby flowering plants that also provide pollen and nectar.

Armed with this knowledge of bee behaviour you can plan a renovated or new garden by focusing on the colour and type of plant known to be favoured by the bee and then plant flowers of a single species in these colours in clumps or groups throughout your garden.



RECIPES



SWEET SUMMER SALAD

- 1 cup (155 g) cubed watermelon
- 1 cup (155 g) cubed cantaloupe
- 1 cup (155 g) cubed honeydew
- 1 cup (145 g) blueberries
- juice of 1 lemon
- ½ cup (170 g) honey (a light and mild variety)
- ¼ cup (45 g) fresh whipped cream

In a large bowl, mix the watermelon, cantaloupe, honeydew, and blueberries. Squeeze the lemon juice over all the fruit, then drizzle with the honey. Stir just enough to get both the lemon and the honey on most of the fruit. When mixed, refrigerate for a least an hour. Just before serving, fold in the whipped cream. Serve in a clear glass bowl.

Variation on the whipped cream: chill the cream before whipping. Add ½ teaspoon (2.5 ml) vanilla and 1 tablespoon (20 g) of the same honey used in the salad. Whip until you get soft peaks, and then keep chilled until needed.

Makes 8 servings.

(From the Backyard Beekeeper's Handbook by Kim Flottam)



What better way to quench a summer thirst than with a nice cool ale? BSSA member Andrew Batten has brewed his own version, which some of you may have sampled at our recent Christmas dinner. Of course, he includes honey. Here is his recipe:



BEE KEEPER'S ALE

(Adapted from the Coopers Recipe)
(<https://www.diybeer.com/au/recipe/beekeeper.html>)

Fermentables

- 1.7 kg – Thomas Coopers Preacher's Hefe Wheat Extract
- 1 kg - Light Dry Malt Extract
- 500 g - Honey 2 EBC (this is the amount of fermentable sugars in the honey)

Carbonation drops if bottling or if kegging 200 g - Corn Sugar (Dextrose)

Yeast

- 1 pkg Wheat Yeast – or the yeast from the Preacher's Hefe tin

1. Mix

Add 1 kg of light dry malt to a fermenting vessel then add 2 litres of warm water. Immediately pick the vessel up and swirl the contents until dissolved (approx 15 secs) - this method minimises clumping.

Add the Preacher's Hefe Wheat Extract and the honey and stir to dissolve.

Top up with cold tap water to the 20-litre mark, stir thoroughly. Check the temperature and top up to the 23-litre mark with warm or cool water (refrigerated if necessary) to start the brew at 22C.

Sprinkle the wheat dry yeast and fit the lid.

2. Brew

Ferment at 22C and fermentation is complete once the specific gravity is stable over 2 days.

Expected final gravity readings should be around the 1006 to 1010 mark.

3. Bottle

Gently fill clean bottles to about 3cm from the top.

Add 2 carbonation drops per bottle and secure the caps (use only one carbonation drop for bottles intended to be stored for a longer period).

Store the bottles upright in a location out of direct sunlight at or above 18C.

Or keg - if that is what you do - and carbonate as normal!

4. Enjoy

After at least four weeks, there should be sufficient carbonation in your bottles.

Bottles kept unrefrigerated should improve with age.

When ready to drink, chill the bottles upright. The chilled beer may be poured into clean glassware, leaving the sediment behind.

Expect the alcohol content to be approximately 5.1% ABV.

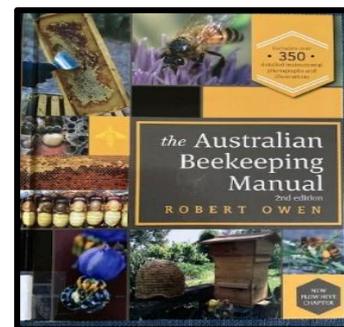


BOOK CORNER

The BSSA website includes a list of recommended books and new additions to the library, including the following:

From the BSSA Library from February

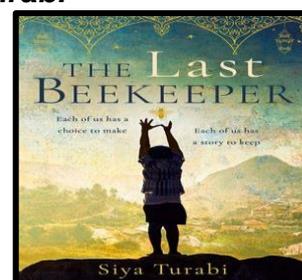
The Australian Beekeeping Manual, 2nd Edition by Robert Owen



This hard copy book is a comprehensive reference for both novice and experienced beekeepers in Australia. It contains over 350 photographs and illustrations, and covers all key areas of beekeeping.

You may like to read this book which is available online from Amazon, Booktopia, Apple Books

The Last Beekeeper by Siya Turabi



Publisher Description

Pakistan, 1974: The secret-wreathed trees of Harikaya have always called to Hassan. He knows if he doesn't find the last beekeeper and salvage a precious jar of his mythical black honey before the floods come, his mother will lose her sight.

But then he wins a scholarship to study with the state governor in Karachi amidst a brewing storm of political turmoil and simmering espionage. His entire world is turned upside down when he meets Maryam, the governor's niece visiting from London.

All the while the fate of his mother and his promise to the bees calls him back to the forest, and so he must decide: Maryam or the beekeeper, England or Pakistan, his head or his heart. One of the most exciting debuts of 2021, this is a lyrical historical novel of family, friendship, and self-discovery exploring the power of choice in a changing world and love in communion with nature.

AMAZING ANIMAL SUPER POWERS - an interesting fact about bumblebees

Sixth Sense

A bumblebee generates a positive electrical charge as it flaps its wings and transfers some of the charge to a flower when it lands. Thanks to a 2013 study in the journal *Science*, experts now know that when bees detect a change in the flower's charge, they avoid the flower, sensing that another bee has recently removed its pollen.

From an article in Readers Digest, May 2019

THE SUGAR SHAKE TEST

Sugar shakes are a great way of testing your bees for exotic bee pests like Varroa mite and Tropilaelaps mite. The Australian Honey Bee Industry Code of Practice stipulates a sugar shake should be conducted on your hives twice per year.

March or April are good months to perform a sugar shake test on hives. At the field day on Wednesday, 16 March such a test will be demonstrated to the attendees, and again at the field day on 9 April.

For a factsheet on how to conduct a sugar shake test visit:

<http://beeaware.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/Sugar-shaking.pdf>



Bees covered in icing sugar during the sugar shake test

HAVE YOU SEEN THE “buzz” AROUND TOWN????



Novel footwear seen at a recent event