

# QUEEN'S BRIGADE



## Our Mission

The Queen's Brigade is a nonprofit 501c-3 affiliate of Killer Bees Honey. Honeybees are the lifeblood of a sustainable environment. While bees play a critical role in pollinating all the food we consume, they receive most of their nutrients from the abundant flowers on trees. The mountain apiaries of Killer Bees Honey contribute to maintaining the purity and biodiversity of our surrounding forests, keeping a healthy environment for all who call the forest home.

Our focus is dedicated to third-party independent research and providing information on pollinators in general and honeybees specifically. We support the scientists who are expanding our knowledge of Mother Nature's most successful pollinator, the Honey Bee who supports us all.

- **Research** – We fund scientific research conducted by institutes and universities on topics that are significant to both long-term scientific questions on honeybee populations and also short term applied questions for immediate relevance on honeybee health and productivity.
- **Education** - We support educational institutes through student internships in addition to educational seminars and short term learning opportunities with hands on tours.

## 2023 News & Updates

2023 was busy but difficult year for our hive girls. Spring in the Western North Carolina mountains begins for bees at the end of February, when the first pollen of the red maple tree appears. Unfortunately, a late snow storm arrived last March and burned the flowering red maple at its peak. The subsequent freeze killed off nascent wildflower blooms which reduced the nectar flow and caused all our hives to go into distress. We ended up supplying the hives with extra honey supers (boxes) which we store if the need arises.

We always leave each hive 50 lbs. of their own spring wildflower honey. Wildflower honey is rich in nutrients and enzymes to keep the bees alive and healthy during the winter. The health of the hive and the bees is our first priority. Due to the storms, the freeze, and the reserves we kept for the bees, the 2023 spring honey flow (wildflower) didn't leave much honey for our customers. And, as most of you discovered, our sourwood flow in the summer was equally negligible.

Many beekeepers in WNC had hive losses. In addition to the abysmal spring last year, we are most likely dealing with another repeating issue —the ever-evolving Varroa destructor mite. Killer Bees Honey will still be using an organic method, but more aggressive in application. If our diligence works and the weather cooperates, we hope to have our pure, unadulterated and

May 3, 2023

chemical-free wildflower honey available by the end of **June** and our sourwood honey at the beginning of **August**.

We at Killer Bees Honey thank all of customers for continued loyalty and support which means everything to us and the Hive Girls. Despite all the knowledge gained from books and experience, beekeeping is still a profession whose most precious assets are hope and faith. Here's wishing you and your hive a hopeful, healthy and humming 2023.

We continue to contribute 20% of ALL honey sales from Killer Bees Honey went directly to our non-profit. Our new and loyal honey lovers, or *AmBEEsadors* as we like to call them generated over \$11,000 in grant income from honey sales. This is lower than 2022, because we had less honey to sell. In fact, in 2023 we sold out of honey by early December... hopefully everyone got their holiday shopping done early!

## 2022 Grantee Recipients

Our grant giving increased slightly this year from \$26,000 in 2022 to just over \$32,000 in 2023. Most of this increase was due to the expansion of our Education component.

## Honey Bee Research

We continue to support some of the most innovative and ground breaking research happening in the country. We fund scientific research conducted by institutes and universities on topics that are significant to both long-term scientific questions on honeybee populations and also short term applied questions for immediate relevance on honeybee health and productivity. We are focused primarily on large educational institutions at the forefront of honeybee research, relying on scientists who are conducting cutting-edge work on honeybee sustainability.

We are particularly interested in some of the work being done by current recipients. Up here in the North Carolina mountains, seasonal weather is critical to the bees health and survival. It is particularly relevant since our newest grantee has been conducting research in the area of honey bee nutrition. Texas A&M has been exploring the creation of special food patties for honey bees in instances where nectar is scarce (or non-existent) due to environmental issues.

Research into the impact of changing weather patterns on Mother Nature's perfect pollinator becomes all the more important.

Below is a brief description on the area of honeybee research being conducted by these wonderful etymologists; all of whom are contributing to our expanding understanding of honeybees and the steps necessary for their survival.

### North Carolina State University - Apiculture Program

The Apiculture Program at NC State has three core missions: Extension—providing information, advice, and other outreach services to help beekeepers at all levels; Research—using the scientific method to test hypotheses about honey bee biology and ways to help improve bee management; and Instruction—teaching and disseminating knowledge about honey bees and apiculture through formal classes and academic training.

## **Texas A&M - Honey Bee Lab**

The Texas A&M University Honey Bee Research Program, in the Department of Entomology, focuses on basic and applied research, as well as education and outreach regarding honey bee biology and management. Their research interests revolve around the reproductive biology of honey bee queens and drones, the behavioral ecology and population genetics of feral and managed honey bee colonies, as well as pollination and beekeeping practices.

## **Bee Informed Partnership**

Bee Informed Partnership Inc national 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization using science-based, data-driven approaches to improve the health and long-term sustainability of honey bees (*Apis mellifera*), other plant pollinators and the ecosystems upon which they depend.

The Bee Informed Partnership is dedicated to working with beekeepers to improve colony health and increase colony survivorship. We provide relevant, timely data that helps beekeepers make informed management decisions. Beekeepers of all sides of the industry, from large scale to small scale benefit from our work.

Gathering survey data from thousands of beekeepers every year and collecting more than 10,000 field samples each season to understand how different management practices, forage, pests, diseases, nutrition and other environmental factors affect honey bee health.

## **Conservation and Food Purity**

This year we continued to provide funds to a number of membership organizations whose work centers around forest conservation and food purity: **Friends of Panthertown, Conserving Carolina, Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation, Specialty Foods.**

## **Education**

Our education component continued to expand this year .

As last year, our education goals are broad and include the educations efforts of Universities listed above in addition to a variety of avenues focusing on environmental studies and outdoor education. We continued our internship with Brevard College (Brevard, NC) and were fortunate to be able to fund a continuing intern this year from the Environmental Studies Dpt.

Our secondary education goal is to continue to provide fun, informational presentations to local community groups, resorts and garden groups about the importance of honeybees and all pollinators. In 2023 our presentations were in high demand, doubling from last year throughout the spring, summer and fall. They events are always lively and entertaining; it's not hard to anthropomorphize the fascinating life of a honey bee colony and their Queen. Life in the Hive never ceases to amaze and entertain.

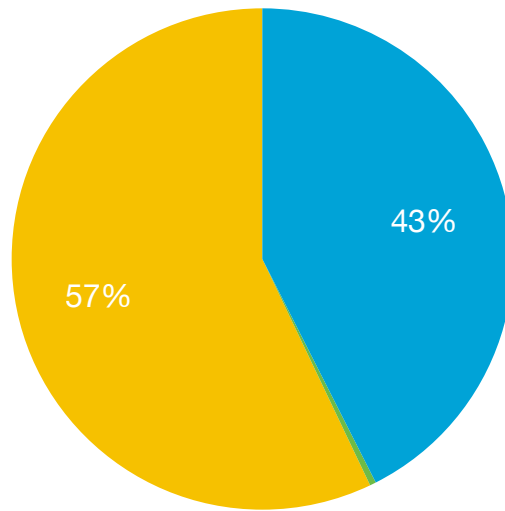
*Denise & Sean*

# Finances

		2023
\$0.64	Collinsworth Foundation	\$52,400
\$0.36	Honey Sales	\$11,425
\$0.01	Individual Donations	\$1,000
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$64,825</b>

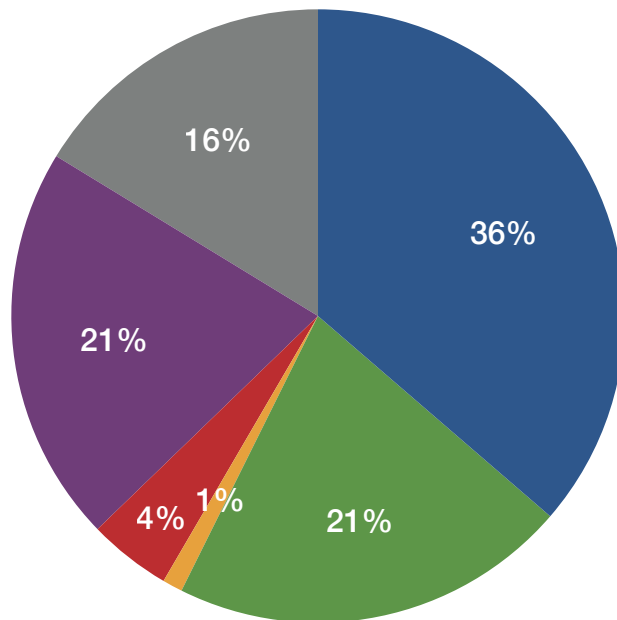
		2023
\$0.21	Education Funding	\$32,180
\$0.36	Research Funding	\$21,291
\$0.01	Professional Services	\$8,479
\$0.16	Apiary Maintenance	\$2,243
\$0.04	Office & Business	\$2,060
\$0.21	Taxes & Insurance	\$2,172
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$68,425</b>

## 2020 REVENUE



- Honey Sales
- Individual Donations
- Collinsworth Family Foundation

## 2022 EXPENSES



May 3, 2023

## LIABILITIES

2023

Unrestricted	\$4,882
Temporarily Restricted	\$0
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$4,882</b>

## AND NET ASSETS

2022

Liabilities	\$0
Net Assets	\$4,882
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$4,882</b>

*SPRING RAIN COMING INTO KILLER BEES HONEY MOUNTAIN TOP*

