



APIMONDIA

The International Federation of Beekeeper's Associations

30 March 2020

Dear fellow beekeepers and friends,

I felt compelled to write to you when I was out visiting my bees today and realized how lucky we all are to have bees in our lives. First, I hope you and your family are safe in these trying times. I was working my bees today here in Salisbury, Maryland USA where the sun was shining and a whole field of wild mustard was in bloom. I was inspired by the bees and their determined nature to go about the work of nectar and pollen collection as the world around us is gripped in fear and isolation. How lucky we are to work with bees. Bees take us outside ourselves and give us a connection to the outside world. A chance to appreciate nature in the blooming plants and the rainfall that brings nourishment and life. When we are all going a little crazy with social distancing and isolation; bees bring us hope. Most jurisdictions recognize that bees are vital part of agriculture and are allowing beekeepers to visit their hives even as they impose strict rules on most outside activities. Use this freedom to visit your hives as you can.

I do hope that each of you is practicing social distancing. It is the single most important thing we can do as individuals to curb the effects of this virus. I also know that many of us will suffer losses of family members and friends during the coming months. To me the saddest part of this is not the loss of life itself but the inability to grieve together as loved ones are lost. This is where bees can help. Bees allow you a chance to get away and reflect. Seek some solitude and at the same time hope, in the determined purpose that we see in the bees as they collect pollen and nectar for an uncertain future. Yes they hoard; as a safe guard against drought or the coming of winter. This survival instinct is honed by local adaptation, to anticipate shortfalls, and try to ensure colony survival. We can learn from this.

So please take care of your family and loved ones. Take care of your bees and visit them often; if not for their needs, for your own sanity. It has never been more true; the bees don't need us, we need bees. Be thankful for all that we share in common and I hope to see many of you in Ufa, Russia in 2021 as the world returns to a new normal.

Warm regards

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeff Pettis". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jeff Pettis
Apimondia President