

Apiary Inspection Form - Virginia Best Management Practices for the Keeping of Honey Bees

Date of Inspection: Inspection Completed By: Signature:	BMP Followed		Documentation of BMP (as necessary) And Other Notes
	Yes	No	
A. Any person owning or operating an apiary that is not located on his own property shall post the name and address of the owner or operator in a conspicuous place in the apiary. (2VAC5-319-30.)			
B. An apiary operator shall maintain a healthy populous colony of bees by: (§ 3.2-4411.1. Apiaries; limitation on liability.)			
1. Removing or securely sealing any empty bee equipment in an apiary. For the purpose of this subdivision, "empty" means without bees but containing comb or other materials attractive to bees and does not include equipment in use as a bait hive for capturing a swarm;			
2. Removing all colonies in a state of decline, combining such colonies with other colonies, or taking other action to establish a healthy populous condition in such colonies;			
3. Repairing or replacing damaged or defective hive boxes, frames, and other bee equipment;			
4. Replacing frames containing old comb with new or cleaned frames containing foundation such that all comb in a hive is replaced every five to seven years;			
5. Feeding or maintaining an adequate amount of honey and pollen in a hive for brood production during the growing season;			
6. Preventing disturbance or injury to bee colony or hive by vertebrate pests; and			
7. Managing the colony to address any disease or pest infestation or remove all disease or pest-infested hives that may be detrimental to the health of other colonies in the vicinity of the apiary. An apiary operator shall inspect hives for disease at least once every three months.			
C. For the purposes of this subsection, (i) "full hive" means a hive consisting of a minimum of two eight-frame deep hive boxes for a Langstroth-style hive, or a hive of equivalent capacity, that has movable frames with combs, and (ii) "nucleus hive" means a hive with less capacity than a full hive. A full hive should enter the winter with a minimum of 60 pounds of honey and the equivalent of four frames of pollen stores. A nucleus hive should enter the winter with a minimum of 30 pounds of honey and the equivalent of two frames of pollen stores.			
D. An apiary operator shall practice proper management and control techniques to reduce the likelihood of swarming.			
E. An apiary operator shall maintain all colonies at least 10 feet away from property lines to prevent an individual from impeding normal bee flight activity from a hive. An apiary operator shall place all colonies that are less than 40 feet from a property line behind a barrier that is no less than six feet in height and is located between the colony and the property line or elevate the hive entrance no less than six feet above the property line. Barriers should be of sufficient density, length, and height to establish bee flyways six feet or higher above ground level.			
F. When an apiary is located in an area in which the apiary operator should reasonably expect that the bees may rely on a nearby unnatural source of water, the apiary operator shall maintain a water source within 50 feet of a colony or less than one-half the distance to the nearest unnatural source of water, whichever is closest. An unnatural source of water includes a swimming pool, bird bath, and pet or livestock watering receptacle.			
G. An apiary operator shall avoid opening or disturbing a colony when the apiary operator has knowledge that another person is participating in outside non-beekeeping activities or using machinery within 150 feet of the apiary.			
H. An apiary operator shall only maintain a colony with EHB or EHB hybrid stock and shall:			

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1. Purchase queens, packaged bees, nucleus colonies, or established hives from suppliers providing EHB stock, or obtain a queen and bees from a local supplier or raise queens from stock owned by the apiary operator, provided the origin and EHB status of the mother queen is known;			
2. Not obtain queens or bees from suppliers within 100 miles from known Africanized honey bee populations;			
3. Introduce queens from healthy stock when making divisions or splits of established colonies;			
4. Replace queens in all captured or trapped swarms within 45 days of capturing or trapping swarms;			
5. Replace queens in all colonies every two years to minimize swarming behavior; and			
6. Mark the thorax or clip a wing of the queens in a manner that allows the age of the queens to be determined prior to their introduction to splits, swarms, or colonies.			
I. An apiary operator shall limit the number of colonies that he places in his apiary as follows:			
1. If the property on which the apiary is located is 1/4 acre or smaller, the apiary shall not have more than two colonies. The apiary operator may increase the number of colonies up to four colonies for not more than 60 consecutive days for the purpose of queen mating and swarm control.			
2. If the property on which the apiary is located is more than 1/4 acre, but less than 1/2 acre, the apiary shall not have more than four colonies. The apiary operator may increase the number of colonies up to eight colonies for not more than 60 consecutive days for the purpose of queen mating and swarm control.			
3. If the property on which the apiary is located is 1/2 acre or more, but less than one acre, the apiary shall not have more than six colonies. The apiary operator may increase the number of colonies up to 12 colonies for not more than 60 consecutive days for the purpose of queen mating and swarm control.			
4. If the property on which the apiary is located is one acre or more, the apiary shall not have more than six colonies per acre. The apiary operator may increase the number of colonies up to 12 colonies per acre for not more than 60 consecutive days for the purpose of queen mating and swarm control.			
5. If all colonies are placed at least 200 feet from all property lines, there is no limit on the number of colonies that an apiary operator may place in his apiary.			

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For relevant Code of Virginia visit:
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