

## Education

The first and most critical step in responsible beekeeping is education. All beekeepers should have a solid understanding of honey bee biology and basic beekeeping methods. We also encourage all beekeepers to join OSBA.

Beekeepers need to stay current on recommended changes in all aspects of beekeeping. One way to do so is to become a member of a beekeeping association that holds regular (preferably monthly) meetings. For a list of local associations visit:

[www.ohiostatebeekeepers.org/associations](http://www.ohiostatebeekeepers.org/associations)

## Disease Control

There are a number of honey bee diseases and pests. Some, like American Foulbrood (AFB), are extremely contagious. AFB can only be destroyed by burning the bees, honey, wax, and woodenware. Beekeepers should be extremely cautious about mixing hive equipment and purchasing used equipment.

## Swarming

While swarming is natural honey bee behavior, it is one that should be prevented or minimized, especially in urban and suburban settings. Two primary causes of swarming are congestion and poor ventilation in the brood chamber. Swarm management practices are explained in detail in most beekeeping books, classes, and local club meetings.

## Considerate Hive Management

Prior to setting up, your hives it is a good idea to inform your neighbors where you intend to place the hives. Weather conditions influence bee behavior. Plan to work bees when conditions are favorable. Beekeepers should make sure that neighbors are not working or relaxing outdoors when they open hives, and should perform hive

manipulations as quickly as possible with minimum disturbance to the bees. Extended hive manipulations, particularly when removing honey, should be carefully planned to accommodate neighbors' activities.

## Hive Placement

Correct hive placement is a critical consideration for responsible beekeeping in urban and suburban settings. Wherever possible, hive openings should face toward the southeast. It is best to place the hive in a sunny area, not on the top of a hill, nor at the bottom of a hollow. Hives must be placed in a quiet area of the lot, and not directly against a neighboring property unless a solid fence or dense plant barrier of six feet or higher forms the property boundary. Hives should be kept away from roads, sidewalks and rights-of-way. Flight paths into the hive should remain within the owner's lot. Barriers, including solid fencing, hedges and shrubs more than six feet high may be used to redirect bees' flight pattern.

## Colony Temperament and Behavior

While generally docile, honey bees do sting. A colony's temperament is determined by its queen's characteristics. Its behavior is affected by temperament, health and environmental factors such as weather and proximate activities. Every effort should be made to maintain a docile and non-defensive colony.

## Conclusion

The above information is meant to serve as a guide only, with the exception of following all State and Local Laws, and will not be suited to every Beekeeper in every situation.

**OSBA would like to welcome you into the Beekeeping family. Enjoy the adventure!**



# Best Management Practices for Beekeeping in Ohio



## INTRODUCTION

This set of recommended Best Management Practices (BMP) is an outline for responsible management. This document is intended as a reference and standard for honey bee management for the state of Ohio.

It may serve as:

- A resource for information to enhance community confidence in the safety of beekeeping activities.
- A standard reference for avoiding potential complaints or conflicts about beekeeping activities.
- A compendium of best management practices that all Ohio beekeepers are encouraged to follow.

Most beekeepers are “backyard/part-time” beekeepers. We are and want to be good neighbors.

Ohio State Beekeepers Association, Inc. (OSBA) helps beekeepers stay informed of recommended changes in beekeeping practices, including the use of pesticides, hive treatments, integrated pest management, new threats to honey bee health, and government regulations. The recommended practices for maintaining honey bees in managed colonies include:

1. Comply with all homeowner association, Local, State, and Federal ordinances, regulations, and laws pertaining to beekeeping: Ohio Revised Code regarding Apiaries and Honey bees <http://codes.ohio.gov/orc/909> Apiary registration form: <http://www.ohiostatebeekeepers.org/reg/> **(Apiary registration is REQUIRED by State Law)**
2. Have knowledge of honey bee behavior and beekeeping, and we recommend completing an Introductory Beekeeping course

offered by a local beekeeping association or Master Beekeeper (often called a Short Course), and stay current on issues of colony health and management.

- 3) Allow inspection by Ohio Department of Agriculture County Apiary Inspector.
- 4) Maintain strong, healthy, populous colonies.
  - a) Remove/securely seal all empty hive equipment.
  - b) Remove or combine all weak colonies.
  - c) Properly treat with an approved product, following all label instructions, or remove all disease and/or pest infested colonies.
- 5) Practice proper management and control techniques to prevent colonies from swarming.
- 6) Maintain all colonies at least 10 feet from property lines. (In accordance with local Laws)
- 7) Place all colonies less than 40 feet from property lines behind a barrier no less than 6 feet in height. Barriers should be of sufficient density to establish bee flyways above head height.
- 8) Maintain a water source within 50 feet of colonies or less than one-half the distance to the nearest un-natural water source, whichever is closest for urban and suburban apiaries.
- 9) Do not establish an apiary within 50 feet of any animal that is tethered, penned, kennel, or otherwise prevented from escaping a stinging incident.
- 10) Avoid opening or disturbing colonies when neighbors or the general public are participating in outside activities or using machinery within 150 feet of an apiary.
- 11) Maintain colonies with honey bee races of European honey bees (EHB).
  - a) Purchase queens, packaged bees, and nucleus colonies from reputable sources outside of Africanized honey bee, (AHB), infested areas or localities adjacent to AHB infested areas.

**For a list of Ohio Suppliers of bees visit:**  
[www.ohiostatebeekeepers.org/bees](http://www.ohiostatebeekeepers.org/bees)

12. Replace queens and destroy all drone brood in colonies exhibiting defensive behavior that may be injurious to the general public or domesticated animals.
13. Treat all honey bees with respect. Treating all honey bees with respect is a fundamental pillar of beekeeping as honey bees are indispensable and important to the human food supply.

### Key Points–

- ✓ Check your zoning laws
- ✓ Register your bees with Ohio Department of Agriculture
- ✓ Join a local beekeeping association



<http://www.facebook.com/OhioStateBeekeepers>