

Sept 15, 2007

Madison County Beekeepers Association
Young beekeeper training program
Advisor guidelines

The term of commitment will be one year or in one year increments. Average time commitment will be approximately 12 hours per year excluding travel time and advisor's bee yard visits. The mentor must be available via email or telephone to answer all beekeeping related questions that the student may have. In addition to the 12 hour commitment the advisor is encouraged to invite the student beekeeper to accompany him on trips to work the advisor's bees to the extent that all basic "bee yard" activities are covered at least once (time not included in the 12 hour commitment).

1. Advise and instruct student beekeeper on the proper procedure for building supers (all 3 sized – deep, Medium and shallow) to include:
 - a. The difference in soft wood and Cypress to include the need for Copper Naphthenate treating of soft wood and the requirement of pre drilling all cypress wood prior to nailing.
 - b. Caution against assembling with handles up side down or inside the hive.
 - c. Proper gluing of all joints
 - d. Proper painting
2. Advise and instruct the student on the different options available for frames and the advantages of each one.
 - a. Proper assembly of frames to include the importance of glue and the end bar nails.
 - b. Frame styles and related foundation options.
 - c. For beeswax foundation:
 - i. The reason for using eyelets and how to install
 - ii. The proper procedure for wiring frames (all sizes)
 - iii. Options for imbedding cross wires
3. Advise the number of frames to use in the hive, when, where and why.
4. Advise and instruct the student on all other hive parts and how and when to use them.
5. Instruct the student on the proper installation of package bees and assist the student in doing so.
6. Instruct the student on making a walk away (no queen) and a standard split and preferably assist the student in making a split by either or both methods.
7. Instruct the student on the proper procedure for hiving a swarm.
8. Meet with the student and assist in setting up his or her first hive.

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9. Arrange to meet with the student at the student's hives one week after the initial installation of his colonies to assure queen release (if a package) and monitor colony health if otherwise.
10. Meet with student one month after initial installation and go through the hive as needed and explain what you are doing and why.
11. Meet with the student at the student's hives 2 months after installation of his colonies to advise on the need and proper procedure for supering and the do's and don'ts of using a queen excluder.
 - a. The advisor should change the supering date based on what he is seeing in his colonies ie.... Base supering date on the current year's honey flow or other factors that may affect the need for supers.
12. Continue to meet with the student at his hives at 1 month intervals until surplus honey is removed.
 - a. Advisor will instruct the student in the methods for getting the bees out of the production supers (Fume board, bee blower, and smoker).
 - b. Advisor will instruct and assist in removing and handling surplus honey.
 - c. Advise, instruct and assist the student in extracting the honey, proper procedure for bottling and displaying strained honey.
 - d. Advise and instruct the student on the production, packaging (to include 24 hour minimum deep freezing) of the various comb honey products.
 - e. Advise and instruct the student on storage of unused equipment.
13. Advise and instruct the student on the proper use and how to apply the various medication options for fall treatment of the bees.
14. Advise and instruct the student on monitoring the bees for winter stores.
15. Advise and instruct the student on the methods for swarm control and collecting swarms.
16. Advise and instruct the student on spring supering relative to spring build up and medication removal.
17. Arrange at least one meeting with the student and the Alabama state bee inspector.
18. Be available at all times to field questions via phone or internet
19. If at all possible the advisor should invite the student to assist him or her in the day-to-day visits to the advisor's bee yards to the extent that the advisor feels adequate.

Bob Fanning