

Obtaining Bees



Obtaining Your Bees

- Five options for acquiring your bees
 1. Swarms
 2. Cut-Outs
 3. Splits
 4. Package
 5. Nucleus colony (NUC)



Catching A Swarm

- If you are a first-time beekeeper, ask for help from an experienced beekeeper.
- ALWAYS wear protective gear!

Swarm in May, worth a bale of Hay
Swarm in June, worth a silver spoon
Swarm in July, let them fly
Higher than 10 ft – wish them well



Why Do Bees Swarm?

- Swarms are normal reproductive behavior of a healthy colony
- The Queen and 60% of the workers leave to establish a new nest
- April, May, and June are peak swarming months
- Signs bees are going to swarm
 - Crowded conditions
 - Queen cells appear (peanut)
 - Increased drone brood occurs
 - Dandelions are in bloom*







Swarm Traps

- What do bees like?
 - 15 feet above ground
 - Keep it at a height you can safely/comfortably managed
 - Small opening near bottom
 - Opening facing South/Southeast
 - Room to hang
 - 20 - 60 liters of volume
 - Deep box roughly 43 liters
 - Deep plus medium roughly 72 liters
 - Empty drawn comb for scent
 - Swarm Commander, lemongrass, etc.



Cut-Outs



Performing Cut-Outs

- Observe
 - Time inhabited
 - Numbers
 - Entrance size
- Plan
 - Time-line
 - Less bees/resources
- Relocate
 - Save as many resources as possible
- Remove/Restore
 - Consider contacting a professional contractor (we don't want to burn a house down)
 - Comb, honey, remains
 - Wash with soapy water
 - Avoid consuming any extra honey. It could be contaminated.
- Prevent
 - Fill in gaps (from inside, outside, or both)
 - Consider purchasing bait hives

Split A Colony

- Increases colony numbers from existing colonies
- Raise new queen or install mated queen
- Reduces honey losses
- When to split
 - April, May, June – swarm months
 - Crowded conditions in hive
 - Charged queen cells



Types Of Splits

- Artificial Swarm split
 - Requires finding Queen
 - Remove Queen and population of bees
 - Simulates swarming
- "Piecemeal" split (nucleus split)
 - Does not require finding Queen
 - Create 5 frame nucleus colony
 - Can raise own queen or introduce one
- "Walk Away" split
 - Does not require finding Queen
 - Pick up top box and walk away

Buying Package Bees

- Buy locally or online will ship
- Consists of 3 pounds of bees (about 10,500 bees)
- Queen is caged and must be released
- Approximate cost is between \$130 - \$190
- Free of brood diseases
- Bees may require pollen
- Must feed them immediately



Buying A Nucleus (NUC) Colony

- Usually will not ship
- Consists of 3-5 frames
- Active colony with honey, pollen, and brood
- Queen will be mated and laying eggs
- Most expensive (\$180 - \$230)
- Easy to transport and install
- May likely need mite treatment
- Must feed them immediately



Local Bee Suppliers

NC Inspected Sellers List
ncbeekeepers.org

D&M Russian Apiaries
darlenemyers93@gmail.com
Hayesville, NC & Murphy, NC

Wayne's Feed & Seed
869 Andrews Road
Murphy, NC

Appalachian Apiaries
3248 Patton Road
Franklin, NC

Mountain Sweet Honey
758 Georgia Hwy 184
Toccoa, GA

Barnyard Bees
1009 N 3rd Avenue
Chatsworth, GA

Blue Ridge Honey
6306 Hwy 441 South
Lakemont, GA

Questions?

