

FAQ: Non-Commercial Beekeeping



The Urban Agriculture Ordinance brings hobby beekeeping to Sacramento's Residential, Recreation, Mixed Use, Commercial and Industrial zones. Honeybees are our most important pollinators as well as producers of fresh natural honey. Keeping bees locally benefits Sacramento County's ecosystems and residents.

How do I know if I am eligible for non-commercial beekeeping?

Your lot must be at least 5,000 square feet, you must maintain a current registration status with the Agricultural Commissioner, and you must install proper barriers and provide a permanent fresh water source on your parcel within 15 feet of the proposed hive(s).

What about bee stings?

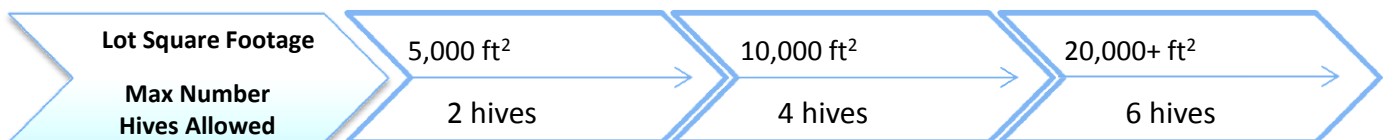
Honey bees only sting to protect the hive and are present in the environment, regardless of beekeepers. In fact, the number of aggressive (Africanized) bees are reduced in the vicinity of a docile honeybee hive. Beekeeping provides a home base for bees as they carry out their work of pollination. Barriers are required in front of hive entrances to minimize interactions between bees and neighbors. However, communicating with neighbors about potential bee allergies and keeping an epi-pen handy is advised.

Can I sell the honey products my bees produce?

Yes. However, your beekeeping must remain "non-commercial", meaning that the keeping of honey bees is incidental to your permitted residential or non-residential use and beekeeping products do not constitute a significant source of your income.

Is there a limit to how many beehives I can have?

Yes. The number of permanent hives allowed per parcel is based on the parcel size and ranges from two to six. The doubling of hives is temporarily allowed for hive management purposes.



How do I get the honey bees?

Mail order bees not recommended. Buy established bees who have already built some comb. Look for hives with 4-5 frames of brood with drawn out wax. Bring your gear to investigate before you buy.

Uncle Jer may have some bees available. 916-425-2286

Make a connection with a local beekeeper at a Sacramento Area Beekeepers Association (**SABA**) meeting:
<http://www.sacbeekeepers.org/>

Check Craig's List for local beekeepers with hives for sale.

Notes: _____

Equipment Resources

Below are three major suppliers (in our area) that we have experience with. All have mail order and storefront.

Dadant & Sons <http://www.dadant.com/>
15 C Valley Ct
Chico, CA 95973
Toll Free Order Number: 1-877-332-3268
Phone: 530-893-0921
M-F 8:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
M-F 12:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Open Saturday Feb 1 to June 1
8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Mann Lake <http://www.mannlakeltd.com/>
500 Santa Anita Dr.
Woodland, CA 95776
866-880-7678
Monday - Friday 8 am - 5 pm
Saturday 8 am - 4:30 pm

Sacramento Beekeeping Supply <http://www.sacramentobeekeeping.com/>
2110 X Street
Sacramento CA, 95818
Phone (916) 451-2337

Basic Equipment

Must have;

- Veil/hat
- Gloves
- Hive tool
- Smoker
- Two 9-10 frame supers
- Bottom board
- Cover
- 9-10 Wax foundation grooved top bar frames
- Entrance feeder

Nice to have;

- Smoker fuel
- Full suit or jacket
- Entrance reducer

Notes: _____

Inspecting Your Bee Hives

Not more than every 6 weeks.
Make sure they have enough room to make more honey or they may swarm.

Notes: _____

Honey Production

Packaging containers can be found at equipment suppliers (above).

Labels – fill in the blank roll and nutritional labels can be found at above suppliers, although Mann Lake has a printing service available. Their print quality is not perfect, though. Individual stickers can be ordered at PSprint.com at low quantities. If you sign up for their email alerts they discount them quite often up to 65% off. You will have to design, but they have good instructions online and you can order the size and quantity when they are on sale and design later.

Equipment – may be rented from your beekeepers association or Sacramento Bee Keeping Supply. We recommend trying rented equipment before you buy. Some associations organize extraction days.

Basic Equipment

- Extractor
- Uncapping scratcher or electric knife
- Large pans or uncapping tub
- Large pans for uncapped frames
- Extra supers for uncapped frames
- Stainless steel or other strainer
- 5 gallon pail with lid (gate optional)

Notes: _____

Plant a pollinator garden

Your local fruit and vegetable gardens will be done blooming by August or September. Plant a pollinator garden with flowers that bloom through the fall. Lists by area include bloom time and water needed are on our site: http://bee-show.com/educational_resources_and_other_stuff

Notes: _____
