

PENNSYLVANIA APIARY ADVISORY BOARD

VOLUNTARY GENERAL BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES FOR
MAINTAINING EUROPEAN HONEY BEE COLONIES IN THE
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

Name & mailing address of beekeeper:

Beekeeper Identification Number issued to registered

beekeeper by the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture: _____

Apiary yard(s) to which the BMPs will be applied: _____

I hereby voluntarily pledge to follow and abide by the "*Voluntary Best Management Practices for Maintaining European Honey Bee Colonies in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania*" as outlined below:

Definitions:

- 1) **EHB** – the European Honey Bee, being the common honey bee species managed in North America.
- 2) **Non-EHB** – means non-European honey bees. These include hybrids of the European Honey Bee with other species of bees which may be more aggressive than European subspecies.
- 3) **Requeen** – this is when the queen of the honey bee colony is removed by the beekeeper and replaced with another queen by means of a queen cell or a method of controlled release of an adult queen.

Guidelines:

- 1) Abide by and remain in compliance with all Commonwealth (state) and local laws as they pertain to honey bees.
- 2) Not knowingly maintain colonies of any race of bee other than European races (EHB).
- 3) Report all colonies suspected of being non-EHB race to The Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture (PDA) (www.agriculture.pa.gov; search "apiary").
- 4) Requeen all colonies which are overtly defensive.
- 5) Place hive entrances in such a direction that bees fly across my own property. The use of barriers may be employed to redirect the bees' flight pathway and establish bee flight pathways above six feet.
- 6) Manage honey bee colonies to minimize swarming.
- 7) Provide a convenient source of water on the property that is available to the bees, if one is not otherwise available, so that the bees do not congregate at unintended water sources.
- 8) Not establish an apiary within 50 feet of any pre-existing animal tethered, kenneled, or otherwise prevented from escaping a stinging insect.
- 9) Not manage or disturb colonies if neighbors or the general public are participating in outside activities or using machinery within the immediate vicinity.

- 10) If transporting colonies during daylight hours, secure the load and screen entrances or place a net over the colonies to prevent bees from escaping.
- 11) Post a honey bee caution sign in or near apiary as needed.
- 12) Marking or labeling hives with contact information is recommended.
- 13) In the event that a county in which I keep bees is determined by PDA to be a non-EHB suspect or detected area I will:
 - a. Kill all swarms caught or trapped in the county or replace the queens of all swarms caught or trapped with queens produced from known European sources.
 - b. Maintain at least one bait trap in each apiary.
 - c. Requeen and destroy all drone brood in colonies found not to be EHB (with a 95% certainty).
 - d. Provide the name and contact information of all suppliers from which I purchased queens.
 - e. Depopulate all colonies determined to be a pure or hybrid race other than EHB.
- 14) Consider reasonable hive densities for given locations to minimize conflict with adjacent properties. Factors influencing hive density in an area may include: human density, quality and quantity of plants, and number of bee hives already present. Beekeepers and venues with a beekeeping component may have varying numbers of colonies in an area depending on many factors including: normal agricultural operations, pollination and other contractual requirements, queen bee production, nucleus colony production, honey production, and educational needs.

The PA Apiary Advisory Board strongly recommends seeking expert advice from the Pennsylvania State Beekeepers Association, The Penn State Center for Pollination Research, The Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, local beekeeping associations, and universities and colleges with an apiary program in order to determine optimal hive densities. Pennsylvania's Pollinator Protection Plan (P4) is available at <https://ento.psu.edu/pollinators/pollin-spotlight-items/the-pennsylvania-pollinator-protection-plan-p4> and provides helpful information for everyone.

This is a voluntary Best Management Practices Program and creates no legal obligations, commitments or enforceable requirements. This Voluntary Best Management Practices Program is not intended to, and does not create, any contractual rights or obligations with respect to the signatory person.

BEEKEEPER'S SIGNATURE: _____

BEEKEEPER'S PRINTED NAME: _____

DATE SIGNED: _____

The Pennsylvania Apiary Advisory Board is made up of industry leaders and is an advisory group collaborating with the Pennsylvania State University, the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, and other state, federal and private partners to enhance the protection of Pennsylvania's plant resources Revised March 18, 2019.