

MEDINA COUNTY APPRAISAL DISTRICT

BEEKEEPING GUIDELINES



Medina County Appraisal District
1410 Avenue K
Hondo, Texas 78861
(830) 741-3035

Beekeeping Guidelines

Beekeeping is an agricultural use and shall qualify for agricultural use productivity if used for pollination or for the production of human food or other tangible products that have commercial value, Texas Property Tax Code, 23.51(2). This type of operation provides many products: honey, beeswax, bee pollen, candles, soaps, propolis, and bees to sell to other beekeepers.

The State of Texas set a minimum of 5 acres and a maximum of 20 acres to qualify beekeeping as an agricultural use.

MCAD's degree of intensity standard is set at a minimum of six colonies (hives) and 5 acres. The minimum degree of intensity standard was established using section 131.001 Texas Agriculture Code's definition of an apiary, which is a place where six or more colonies of bees or nuclei of bees are kept. A colony is the hive and its equipment and appurtenances including bees, comb, honey, pollen and brood.

For each additional 2.5 acres one additional hive is required. If additional acreage is less than 2.5 acres, no additional hive is required. For example, if a property owner has 17 acres of land used for bee keeping ten hives would be needed to qualify.

First 5 acres	6 hives
Additional 10 acres	4 hives (10/2.5)
<u>Remaining 2 acres</u>	<u>0 hives</u>
Total hives required	10 hives

Minimum colony (hive) requirements are as follows:

ACRES	HIVES
5	6
7.5	7
10	8
12.5	9
15	10
17.5	11
20	12

Bees need an adequate source of nectar and pollen throughout the growing season of April to September. Bees will travel within a 3-mile radius from the hive to find adequate forage for survival. If adequate forage cannot be found the bees will simply move (abscond) or die. It is the responsibility of a prudent and conscientious manager to see that adequate forage is available for his/her bees.

Beekeepers will have their bees in locations that provide food for their bees, allow for the pollination of various agriculture and food crops, and manage their bees in a manner to keep them healthy, surviving, and producing for the long-term. Beekeeping is not a “cheap” endeavor nor is a short-term endeavor.

Requirements

- Six (6) – twelve (12) active hives of honeybees
- Each hive must include at a minimum one brood box (8 or 10 frames) with a cover and bottom
- Hives must be located on the property for the bulk of the year, be maintained and kept alive
- Due to the limited flowering vegetation located in our county, planting of flowering plants and shrubs may be necessary
- A 3 to 5-year plan of action is required to be submitted with the initial application. This plan should include the following:
 - Type of bees
 - Number of hives
 - Map with location of hives and plant life
 - List of vegetation for food source (all plant life intended to support hive)
 - Marketing plan for production of human food or products that have commercial value
 - Number of acres to be used for beekeeping, including leases
 - Information about bee migratory habits
 - The primary operation and any secondary uses of the bees
 - Plans for expansion
 - Contingency plan in case of a catastrophic disaster of hives
- An annual report is required. This annual update provides the district with an overview of activities throughout the past calendar year and is due by April 30th of each year. Examples of items to include in the annual report:
 - How much honey was produced
 - Were the bees used primarily for pollination
 - What by-products were produced
 - What products were purchased for the operation
 - Maintenance log of the hives
 - Supplemental feeding log of the hives
 - Additional bees purchased during the year
 - Predator prevention such as Africanized bees or fire ants
 - Any other information important to the operation

Typical Management Practices for Beekeeping

- Monitor bee health
- Hives maintained and kept alive
- Collection of honey and other products
- Provide supplemental food and water
- Control pests/management of disease
- Harvest and market products

When property owners initially qualify for agricultural appraisal they must show proof of history for agricultural use/beekeeping for five of the preceding seven years. One way to do this is to provide export, import, or intra-state permits, which are required by the Texas Apiary Inspection Service to transport hives. Also, historic financial records indicating active honey production and/or leases.

Beekeeping Supplement

(include with initial application)

Property Owner Name: _____

Property ID #(s): _____

Acreage Requirement: The State of Texas has set a minimum of 5 acres and a maximum of 20 acres to qualify beekeeping as an agricultural use.

Number of acres on this application is _____

When property owners initially qualify for agricultural appraisal, they must show proof of history of agricultural use for any of the five out of seven preceding years. One way to do this is to ask for export, import or intra-state permits, which are required by the Texas Apiary Inspection Service to transport hives. When did you receive your bees? _____

Attach a copy of the apiary receipt from your purchase.

When did you obtain your equipment for the bees? _____

What type of bees are you raising? _____

How long have you been raising bees? _____

How many colonies do you have on the property now? _____

If you have less colonies than required, please explain why: _____

Who will be managing the bee colony? _____

Is there a hired bee wrangler? If yes, who? _____

Describe any beekeeping education obtained: _____

DESCRIBE THE PRODUCTS YOU EXPECT TO HARVEST:

- ____ Honey – [Extracted, Comb, Chunk, Creamed or Whipped Honey]
- ____ Beeswax
- ____ Propolis
- ____ Royal Jelly
- ____ Pollen
- ____ Bees themselves

Expected pound of production per hive is _____

How do you plan to market your products? _____

DESCRIBE ANY POLLINATION PLANS FOR YOUR PROPERTY: What plants are on your property now? Do you have clover? Have you planted specific flowers for the bees?

Do you have hives on another property? _____ If "yes," please give location _____

PLEASE NOTE: The bees must be alive, active & producing to qualify & are subject to annual verification.

SIGNATURE: _____ **DATE:** _____

Printed Name: _____

✓ **Attach an additional sheet to provide more information if necessary.**

Beekeeping Annual Report Checklist

- Name
- Phone number
- Property ID #(s)
- Total acreage of property (less acreage for homesite and acreage over 20 acres)
- Land map with location of hives
- Total number of colonies
- Number of hives harvested
- Number of times were the frames were harvested in the last year
- Pounds of honey produced
- Other by-products produced
 - ✓ Details
- Inspections -- (Include maintenance log of the hives)
 - ✓ How often
 - ✓ When/times of year
- Additional bees purchased during the year
- Queen replacement
 - ✓ How often
 - ✓ Last replacement
- Predator prevention
 - ✓ Africanized bees
 - ✓ Fire ants
- Additional feeding of bees -- (Include feeding log of the hives)
 - ✓ How much
 - ✓ What
 - ✓ When
- Improvements to habitat: Planting clover, flowering plants, shrubs, etc.
- Current state of bees (active/inactive)
- Winter activity
 - ✓ Electric light
 - ✓ Inactive/hibernate
- Products purchased for the operation
- Were the bees used primarily for pollination
- Include proof and any supporting documentation that is relevant