

Kootenay Mountain Grown Apiary Standard



General

1. The treatment and management of colonies shall respect the principles of Kootenay Mountain Grown production standards.
2. The management of bee health shall be based on such measures as selection of stock with disease resistant traits, availability of suitable forage, and good apiary management practices.
3. An operator of a Kootenay Mountain Grown apiary shall prepare a plan which provides information on sources of bees and production methods. The plan shall include a description of colony management including diet, disease, pests, breeding related problems with production. The operator shall also outline the details of crop management practices where applicable.
4. Honey and other apiculture products shall not be labelled or marketed as Kootenay Mountain Grown unless the bees were managed in accordance with this standard from the previous beekeeping season.

Transition

1. Products from Kootenay Mountain Grown apiculture operations, in accordance with this standard, shall be from colonies that have been well established.
2. Drawn comb used for honey production shall be incorporated into the operation the previous season unless new or previously unused. Introduction of previously used equipment is to be inspected by a government bee inspector.

Origin of Bees

1. Queens and bee stock shall be obtained from Kootenay Mountain Grown or organic production units where commercially available.

(Note: This is difficult in our area as locally produced queens are rarely available early enough in the season to allow for establishing of nucs or hive splits. Local queens are usually available for late season requeening.)
2. New stock shall not be used for apiculture production unless introduced to the operation two brood cycles (approximately 42 days) prior to a honey flow.

Location of Hives

1. Hives shall be located on land which is maintained to Kootenay Mountain Grown standards.
2. It is recognized that being aware of what crops are being grown or how they are being managed within a given radius is very difficult to determine, especially given the number of small holdings in the region where Kootenay Mountain Grown is established.
3. Further, there is no way to control spraying of railway rights of way nor is there any control over the spraying along highways under the noxious weed program.
4. Every effort shall be made to ensure that hives are located where bee's access to commercial spraying is minimized.

Forage and Feeding

1. The operator shall ensure there is adequate forage and clean water where hives managed under Kootenay Mountain Grown standards are established.
2. When deploying bees to outyards, the operator shall make every effort to ensure, the foraging area is not treated or exposed to substance not in accordance with this standard.
3. Kootenay Mountain Grown honey and pollen shall be the major foodstuff for adult bees.
4. Honey and pollen shall be maintained in adequate supplies in the colony, sufficient for the colony to survive the dormant period.
5. The feeding of colonies can be undertaken to overcome temporary feed shortages owing to climatic or other exceptional circumstances. Feeding shall be carried out only between the last honey harvest and 15 days before the onset of the next nectar flow.
6. In such cases Kootenay Mountain Grown honey or organic sugars shall be used if commercially available. If unavailable or if cost prohibitive, non organic sugars may be used.
(Note: DO NOT feed bees unrefined sugars such as Demerara or commercial dark sugars. The bee's gut cannot digest the particulate matter in these products)
7. Honey from outside sources shall not be fed to colonies.
8. The feeding on un-medicated pollen supplements is permitted for Spring build up and Fall brood rearing. Collection of the beekeepers own pollen is recommended for mixing with the supplement
9. Sugar syrup shall not be fed following the placement of honey supers on hives in expectation of the honey flow.

Colony Management

1. A simple log book shall be kept to record visits and activities to locations/yards. Information can be recorded such as weather, management procedures, honey flow dates, adding or removal of honey supers extraction dates, feeding and medication applications etc.
2. Hives do not necessarily need to be individually marked but notes on daily, weekly or monthly management activities can be marked on the covers to indicate what further actions may or may not be required on the next visit to a particular hive.
3. Bees shall be removed from honey supers with bee escape boards, brushing or blowing.
4. Synthetic materials in bee smokers are prohibited.
5. Brood frames must not be used for honey production. However, as part of the management techniques for swarm control, honey frames can be used temporarily as brood frames, so long as no treatments are administered during this period.

Hive Construction

1. Hives shall be constructed of natural materials including wood and metal. Pressure treated lumber, particle board, wood preservatives or materials of such nature shall not be used in Kootenay Mountain Grown related equipment.
2. Exterior surfaces of hives shall be painted only with non lead based paints or stains.
3. Plastic foundation if sprayed or dipped in beeswax is permitted.

Health Care, Disease and Pest Management

1. Preventative health care practices shall be maintained including resistant bee stocks (where available).
2. Maintain a program of renewing old brood comb, regular cleaning of equipment and destruction of contaminated or diseased equipment.
3. The operator shall be knowledgeable about the life cycle and the behaviour of bees as well as related disease causing organisms, parasitic mites and other pests. The operator shall also initiate efforts to restore the health of the colony in the presence of such pests, parasites or diseases.
4. Every effort shall be made to prevent/control diseases and pest problems. This may include the use of management techniques, modified hive equipment and or recognized and controlled non-synthetic or synthetic substances. Such substances must be approved by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency permit and applied as per the manufacturers or suppliers directions.
5. No treatments may be administered during honey flow
6. No treatments may be made two brood cycles (approximately 21 days) prior to honey flow.
7. All treatments must be made in or on the brood chambers only.
8. Hives requiring treatment during honey flow, shall be removed from production for the current honey season.

Honey Extraction, Processing and Storage

1. Extraction of honey from brood comb or comb with live brood is prohibited.
2. Surfaces in direct contact with honey shall be constructed of food grade materials such as stainless steel and food grade plastic tanks. The use of galvanised materials is prohibited.
3. The heating of honey for extraction shall not exceed 35 Celsius and the de-crystallization temperature shall not exceed 47 Celsius.
4. Gravitation settling and / or sieves shall be used to remove debris from extracted honey.
5. Honey shall be packaged in airtight containers.
6. The operator, in accordance with this standard, shall not sell, label or represent as Kootenay Mountain Grown, honey and edible hive products that are produced from a hive treated with prohibited substances.

Wax Harvesting

1. No wax (comb, bur or ladder) may be harvested for sale or reuse from the brood chambers.
2. All wax from this source must be kept separate from all other wax and be destroyed by burning.