



Nuc Transfer Instructions

Nucleus Colonies

Some beekeepers start their colonies with nucleus colonies, called “Nucs.” If you buy a nuc from us, we take care of the initial feeding and inspections and sell you thriving bees. This reduces the risk that you will make an error as a new beekeeper and makes it more likely for your colony to survive.

Nuc Pickups and Transfer Instructions

At our nuc pickups, beekeepers transfer frames from our 5-frame nuc boxes into their hives, take them home, and place them in their apiary by morning.

Beekeepers pick up their nucs on one of our set pickup dates, usually on Friday evenings in May.

Before taking the nuc home, we want you to look inside the hive and make sure the colony is thriving, the queen is laying eggs, and see the temperament your bees. New beekeepers often appreciate having an experienced beekeeper there when they make their first hive inspection.

We set up our nuc pickups so that you can inspect your colony and transfer it to your equipment during daylight hours (around 6:00 PM), and then take them home after sundown (around 8:30 or 9:00 PM) after all the foraging bees are home. There will be some waiting time between transferring and moving bees. It is a good time to meet other beekeepers and ask questions.

To Bring

- Hive
 - One deep box
 - 5 deep frames (the nuc will come on 5 more to make 10 total)
 - 1 lid
 - 1 bottom board
- Protective clothing
 - Suit, jacket, bee veil, etc.
 - Please wear closed-toed shoes and long pants.
 - We will have a few extra bee suits to loan for the event, if needed
- Beekeeping Gloves
- Smoker with matches and fuel (like burlap)
- Tie downs for your hive: bungee cord, rope, etc. You will need to tie one around the box to hold it together, and others to tie it to the truck bed.
- Duct tape to seal the entrance if transporting bees in an enclosed cab. It's best to transport bees in a truck. Duct tape is not necessary in a truck.
- A feeder



To Do In DAYLIGHT:

Transfer the nuc from our equipment into yours.

Nuc Transfer Instructions

- Start your smoker and put on your protective clothing.
- Find and mark the nuc you would like. Smoke them before disturbing them.
- Move the nuc box over a few feet and place your box, lid and bottom board in the same spot, with the entrance facing the same direction.
- Remove the empty frames from your box.
- Use hive tool to pry the lid off of the nuc.
- Puff enough smoke on the hive to cause bees to move off of the top bars of frames. Don't over-smoke them.
- Move frames from the nuc box to your 10-frame box one at a time.
 - Start with a frame near the edge to avoid squishing the queen. Use the hive tool to pry the frame up. Do this from the middle of the frame rather than the ends to avoid breaking the frame ears or the box.
 - Gently lift the frame straight up, trying not to squish bees.
 - Inspect the frame for comb, brood, honey, pollen, larvae, the queen, workers, drones, and eggs. This is the most important part. When you leave today, we want you to be able to identify eggs.
 - Place the frame in your box, keeping the frames in roughly the same order and orientation.
 - On the next frame, slide it a bit away from the other frames, into the space and carefully remove it, inspect it, and place it in your box. Repeat for 5 frames.
- Once all 5 frames have been transferred, slide them together to the middle of the box. Add the empty frames so there are 10 total frames.
- Tap the empty nuc box upside down on the ground in front of the new hive to remove leftover bees.
- Take the empty nuc box to the nuc box pile. If we don't, bees will smell their old box and want to go back to it.

Here are two different YouTube videos on how to transfer a nuc.



To Do AFTER SUNDOWN:

Transport your bees to your apiary. We do this after dark so most of the worker bees will be home for the evening and no longer flying.

Place your hive in its long-term location before dawn. Moving bees across the backyard is tricky after they have oriented.