

Hiving a Package of Honey Bees

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This method has been proven effective in Minnesota.

For more details see “Beekeeping in Northern Climates” manual.



1. Gather equipment. You will need a 2 pound package of bees (mid April), hive stand, bottom board, entrance reducer, deep hive body with frames, inner cover, telescoping cover, gravity feeder, box to cover feeder, sprayer and light (1:1) sugar syrup.

2. Chose good apiary site. A good site will have a wind break on the north side, good air drainage, water near by (within 1/2 mile), good vehicle accessibility and nectar and pollen plants nearby.

3. Order your package to arrive mid-April. Assemble the equipment, and place in its location in the apiary.

4. Place entrance reducer to its smallest opening (plug loosely with grass), and put a cork in the hole. Remove 4 frames from the center of the box.

5. Spray bees with syrup through the screen. Be sure they are all coated with syrup.



6. Remove the shipping lid from the top of syrup can and queen cage. Wrap the package (lift up about 14 inches and slam down on the hive body) to dislodge the bees to the bottom of the package.

7. Remove syrup can. If bees are still flying, spray them with more sugar syrup. Set the syrup can to the side.

8. Remove queen cage and put queen in a warm safe place. Your pocket is a good place.

9. Shake bees into hive. You will have to tip it from side to side as you shake to get them all to come out.

10. Carefully spread bees out on the bottom board with your hive tool.



11. Spray queen lightly with syrup through the screen. If it is cold keep the sprayer in a warm place.

12. Carefully open the screen on the queen cage and let the queen crawl out onto a frame. Be careful the screen does not spring back and kill her.

13. Carefully replace the frames.

14. Put a pollen substitute patty on top of the frames. Do not put it in the middle where it will block the hole to the feeder. Put on the inner cover.

15. Fill feeder with light (1:1) sugar syrup and install the cover. Check in 24 hours to be sure bees are under the feeder and it is not leaking. Wait at least 5 days to remove frames and see if the queen is laying eggs.