

Ellis County Requirements to Qualify Land for 1-d-1 (open-space)
Agricultural Use Appraisal for Beekeeping

Effective January 1, 2012, the Texas Legislature added another agricultural use for purposes of open space land appraisal. Tax Code Section 23.51 (2) was amended to include the definition of agricultural use "the use of land to raise or keep bees for pollination or for the production of human food or other tangible products having a commercial value, provided that the land used is not less than 5 or more than 20 acres."

This provision permits the owner to raise or keep bees for two purposes: (1) pollination or (2) the production of human food or products that have commercial value.

The minimum degree of intensity was established using Section 131.001 Texas Agricultural Code's definition of an apiary as 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.

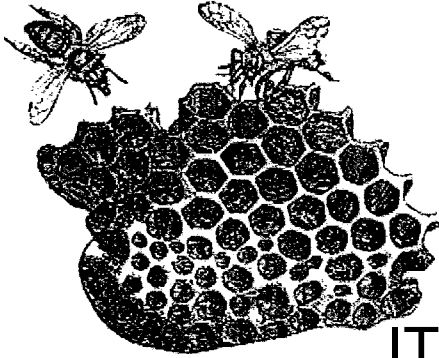
Ellis County's minimum degree of intensity standard is set at 5 acres and 6 colonies

For each additional 1.5 acres one additional hive is required

Number of Acres	Number of Hives
5	6
6.5	7
8	8
9.5	9
11	10
12. 5	11
14	12
15. 5	13
17	14
18. 5	15
20	16



- When a property owner initially seeks qualification for agricultural use appraisal for beekeeping, they must show proof of history of agricultural use on the land for five of the preceding seven years.
- Acreage with a Homestead Exemption cannot be considered for agricultural history or agricultural appraisal.
- The Appraisal District will require copies of: Registration of the Apiary, Certificate of Inspection, Branding information, and export, import or intra-state permits as required by the Texas Apiary Inspection Service.
- The property owner should draw a landscape plan of the property and indicate how different plants and plantings (fruit trees, shrubs, vines, flowers, clover, buckwheat, vetch etc.) contribute to bee foraging.
- The hives must be located on the property for the majority of the year.
- The hives must be maintained and kept alive.
- The agriculture productivity value for land used for beekeeping will be based on the typical productivity per acre of land used for beekeeping in Ellis County.



ITEMS OF USE

- Bee Suit
- Purchase of boxes
- Purchase of bees
- Queen bee
- Purchase of sugar in large quantities
- Planting of flower (seeds)
- Receipts for sale of honey or related products such as beeswax, candles, soaps etc.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Additional information on beekeeping can be obtained from the Texas Apiary Inspection Service at <http://tais.tamu.edu>.