

Bee Harmony

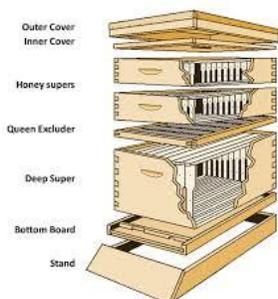


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Installing Package Bees

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Installing Package Bees.

Prior to your package of bees arriving, make sure you have all the components of the beehive and they are in good working order. The hive parts include (from bottom – up). Hive stand, bottom board, brood chamber (super), queen excluder, honey super with frames, inner cover and telescoping lid. Initially, you will not need the honey super and it will be your decision to utilize the queen excluder, but with bees it's important to be prepared.



With the installation of a package, it's recommended to block a portion of the entrance. Do NOT block the entrance entirely. You can use one of the commercial entrance reducers or place grass or leaves in a portion of the entrance.



Although a package is designed to be stored for a short period of time. It best to install the package as soon as possible. Delay will result in fewer bees surviving. If you are delayed in installing the bees you can feed them by preparing a sugar syrup made of one part sugar mixed with one part water. Heat the water to boiling

point, add the sugar and dissolve completely. Once it has cooled you can feed the bees by dripping or spraying the sugar syrup through the sides of the screen of the package. Add only enough syrup to dampen the bees.

Time for installation, it's best to wait for a sunny, calm day and install them before noon since bees become active later in the day.

Double check that you have all necessary equipment: Hive tool, pair of pliers and small regular screw driver. All these tools may be helpful in opening the package. Although it's recommended to use your hive tool, I've found it helpful to use the screw driver to pry the staples from the top of the package and then use the pliers to make the final removal of the staples. I've also found the screw driver useful in removing the syrup feeder can that is comes with the package.

You also need a small knife to remove the cork plug in the queen cage, a small nail make a small hole in the candy, and push pin for pinning the queen cage to the frame and a bee brush, for brushing away bees during the installation.

Vail, vail hat, beekeeper's gloves and coveralls. Although package bees are generally not defensive and you may not need these – why take a chance. If you are a beginner you might as well begin working with all your beekeeping garb.



Last, a feeder with sugar syrup.

Now you're ready.... Place the package near your hive and pry the lid off the package, but do not discard the lid. Option – at this point some beekeepers recommend using a spray bottle filled with sugar water to dampen the bees in the package. Wet bees have difficulty flying and are more likely to fall into the hive when they are unloaded. For new beekeepers, I would recommend using the sprayer to prevent some of the bees from flying. It's intimidating when ten thousand bees are buzzing.

Remove the can of syrup and queen cage. Place the lid back on the package to keep the bees from leaving the package. At this stage, several bees will have escaped but don't worry about them - they will return.



Examine the queen inside her cage. She may have several bees clinging on the outside of her cage. Use your bee brush to brush them off. Make sure she is alive and looks healthy. If the queen is dead, contact your provider immediately and request a new queen. The bees inside the pack will survive several days if they have sugar syrup to feed on.



If your bee provider has "marked" the queen, make note of the small color spot on her thorax. This color represents the year she was born.



Assuming the queen is okay, remove the cork plug at the end of the queen cage by using a small nail or knife. Once the cork is removed, make a small hole in the candy allowing the bees to remove the remainder of the candy. Be certain not to injure the queen while making the hole. As a reminder "Remove the Cork." This is an easy step to miss. The removal of the candy and queen may take several days. This delay allows the worker bees packaged with the queen to accept her as their new queen. This is done by the queen's release of pheromones, which are key to her control of the entire hive.



Hang the queen cage along one of the frames in the middle of the brood chamber super with the candy opening pointing down. If the queen cage comes with a tether to hold it in place inside the package, use the push pin to hold the queen cage in place via the tether. Make

sure the screen on the cage is not blocked on at least one side so the bees can feed the queen until they release her.



Install the bees by holding the package directly over the area were the frames were removed, turning the package over, opening the lid and unloading the bees inside the brood chamber. Most the bees will fall inside the hive.



Many bees will fall out of the cage and fly around the area. Some bees will remain in the cage. This is normal – don't panic! Place the package with the remaining bees near the entrance of the hive. These bees will make their way into the hive along with all the bees that flew out during the installation.

Option: Some beekeepers prefer to place the entire package inside the inside, remove the lid, allowing the bees to come out on their own. The package will be removed during your first inspection. If you chose this option, makes sure you are using a large super. You may find it difficult to place the cage in a medium or small super.

Install the feeder. There are several types of feeders, including internal and external. If you use an internal, make sure it is full of sugar syrup before closing the hive.



Close the hive with the inner cover and telescoping lid. Congratulations! You've installed your package of bees!!

Bee Harmony is a 501 (C) 3 Non-Profit Organization dedicated to confronting Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD) and providing the public with an opportunity to learn about Honey Bees and providing Honey Bees with bee hives in environmentally friendly locations safe from pesticides.

Notes

Other Programs presented by Bee Harmony

Presentation topic: "How to Photograph Pollinators"

This PowerPoint presentation starts with the basics of photography from using your cell phone to high end digital SLR's. The focus is to help the audience understand the importance of composition, use of the sun and shadows, when to use your flash and many other keys to improving your photographs. This presentation is not only focused on photographing Pollinators, but it will also provide you with ideas on improving your travel photographs.

