

ALABAMA MASTER BEEKEEPER PROGRAM

PURPOSE

- To provide the information, advice and hands-on experience necessary for an individual with no beekeeping skills and or an existing beekeeper to obtain a master certification in beekeeping. How to obtain equipment, honey bee's, and manage a colony that's meets acceptable beekeeping requirements.
- The program will offer four levels of training and advancement, Apprentice Beekeeper, Experienced Beekeeper, Master Beekeeper, Master Craftsman Beekeeper.
- Each applicant must meet certain requirements for each level to become certified.

ADMINISTRATION

The program will be administered by certified directors set by the sponsoring body or advisors. It can take up to four years to complete the program. There is no minimum age requirement for the beginning beekeeper certification but some examinations may be difficult for younger applicants under 12 years of age and may need more supervision to successfully pass some written and practical test.

Requirements

- **Apprentice Beekeeper:**

- A) The Apprentice Beekeeper must be a registered beekeeper in Alabama or their home state. In Alabama hives must be registered with the Alabama Dept. of Agriculture and Industries
- B) The Apprentice Beekeeper must own or have owned at least one colony of honey bees for at least one year prior to taking the exams. He must have in possession at least one colony or more when he takes the certification exams.
- C) The Apprentice must score a 70% or higher on a written examination. The written test includes, but is not limited to beekeeping classes and materials provided from references on Apprentice reading list, or (web site lectures or classes). The exams are provided three times a year. (example: Annual Beekeepers meeting, Spring Symposium, or summer picnic).
- D) The Apprentice must score 70% or higher on a practical examination. The practical exam can include, but is not limited to: describing the physical parts of a beehive; igniting and properly using a smoker; recognizing the various stages of brood, differentiating castes, and finding (or least describing) the Queen; differentiating between brood, pollen, and capped honey cells; recognizing propolis and describing its functions; and describing the layout of the brood nest (placement of honey, pollen, and brood), etc..

Experienced Beekeeper

- A) The candidate for this level of certification must have held the Apprentice Beekeeper certification for at least one year and have been practicing beekeeper for at least two years. He also must be a registered beekeeper in Alabama or their home state.
- B) The candidate must show proof of passing at least 12hr's of honey bee training with a score of 80% or more. These will focus on (1) honey bee pests/parasites/pathogens, (2) social wasps and bees, (3) pollination biology, (4) pesticides and honey bees, (5) Africanized honey bees, and (6) honey judging.

Experienced Beekeeper cont.

- C) The candidate must score 70% or more on a written examination. The written exam can include, but is not limited to the previous classes listed in section (B). This exam will cover more information than required in the Apprentice Beekeeper level. The exams will cover information as set by the Certified Directors in provided classes as set at different teaching sites that are made available to the beekeeper. Example ; class room studies, or internet.

Experienced Beekeeper cont.

- D) The Candidate must score 70% or more on a practical examination. The practical exam can include, but is not limited to; scoring a jar of show honey, reading pesticide labels and determining which is safest to use around honey bees, identifying several beekeeping items, examining honey labels for errors, distinguishing between bees, wasps, hornets, etc., and identifying anatomical structures of a bee and a flower.

Experienced Beekeeper cont.

- (E) The candidate must perform and document completion of five (5) public service credits using the public service credit form provided by the Certified Board of Directors. The candidate can submit extra public credits which is encouraged, but they can not be used in higher certification levels.

Master Beekeeper Requirements

- A) Candidates must have held the Apprentice and Experienced Beekeeper certification for one year each and have been a practicing beekeeper for three years. He must also be a registered beekeeper of Alabama or his home state.
- B) The candidate must demonstrate and document ten (10) additional public service credits beyond those required for the Experienced Beekeeper level. Any extra obtained during the Experienced Beekeeper level cannot be used.

Master Beekeeper cont.

- C) Candidates must pass written exam and practical documentation 70% or higher..
- D) Candidate must demonstrate expertise in six (6) of the following nineteen (19) majors.
 - 1) Documenting training in life-saving of persons suffering from allergic reactions to insect stings.
 - 2) Conducting a program or workshop at a state, regional, national, or international beekeeping meeting or convention.
 - 3) Attend at least three (3) regional, national, or international beekeeping meetings, or convention.
 - 4) Winning 1st or 2nd place in an authorized competition in; extracted honey.

Master Beekeeper cont

- 5) 1st or 2nd in comb or cut honey
- 6) 1st or 2nd in spun or creamed honey
- 7) 1st or 2nd in beeswax
- 8) Being recognized as a beekeeping authority in your local area in the news paper, or appearing on the radio or TV.
- 9) Publishing an article in a beekeeping publication.
- 10) Publishing an article in a non-beekeeping publication.
- 11) Demonstrate competence in small-scale queen rearing.
- 12) Successfully complete a course on instrumental queen insemination.
- 13) Participate in a beekeeping research or Extension project at an approved institution.
- 14) Acquire other certified bee-related training as approved by the Board of directors.
- 15) Provide a hive of bees to pollinate a public garden.

Master Beekeeper cont.

- 16) Become a certified Master Gardener
- 17) Serve two or more years as an officer of a bee organization at state level or higher. (can be in more than one organization)
- 19) Acquire a personnel pesticide applicators license.