



The Managed Mentoring Program on getting started in beekeeping.

Managed Mentoring



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Nucleus Hive Installation

Lesson | Transfer of Nuc into Equipment



What is Covered in this Module

Nuc Transport & Prep

Working with the Provider

Preparatory Steps

Nuc Placement and Transfer

Post Install



Nuc Transport Prep

Getting Ready for Nuc Placement & Transfer



Transport Prep

□ Preparing for Pickup

- *Preparation for transport requires a few considerations*
 - Protect your vehicle during transport
 - Bring some cardboard or a barrier to set the Nucs on, while protecting your interior surfaces.
 - Straps, Blue Tape, etc. – Things to secure the Nuc from moving around
 - Covers/Tarps – if you are transporting in the bed of a truck or trailer
- *Bring a full bee suit*
 - Many times, you go into a working yard. If you do not want to be stung, bring protective gear.



Pickup and Transport

□ Pickup, Pay, Secure, and Transport

- *Place the Nucs with consideration in your vehicle*

- If you are placing them in the interior

- Give space around the Nucs for some airflow.

- Do not place them tight to each other, as heat collects together where they touch. If they are nestled together, they can overheat on long rides. Avoid Vibrations and Loud Noises (No rock music on the way home!).

- Bees are like little heaters; they can generate a lot of heat and need airflow for excess heat to dissipate. Avoid swaddling them and closing them off from refreshing air.

- Interior Temperature

- Temps vary and if the car is hot inside (warm day), ensure it is well ventilated and comfortable. Consider air conditioner and open windows if it is hot inside.

Avoid leaving a Nuc in a vehicle while you stop off to do something

Do your best to plan to drive straight through to your destination



Considerations for Stray Bees

□ Anticipate loose bees hanging around

- *It is almost a guarantee that bees will be loose and flying in the area where Nucs are being distributed*
 - There are almost always stray bees on the outside of the Nuc
- *Consider Netting (Garment bag works)*
 - Maybe consider a large garment bag to place the Nuc in.
 - Cinch it up, brush off any strays, and place in your vehicle.
- *Bring Blue Painters tape to close off any openings*



Loose Bees During Transport

- If you still end up with loose bees in the car
 - *Don't panic*
 - They often try to stay with the Nuc.
 - If they do fly around, they typically fly to the windows
 - Consider your options
 - Safely pull over, open doors and windows and shoo them away
 - Or, keep going, and open the middle windows and as they move forward, they will fly out the open window when they get to it.
 - If you have a bee in the driver's area, pull over safely and open the doors.



More on Temperature

□ Trunk Transport

- *Placing Nucs in the truck of a car*

- Consider if it is too hot inside. Like keeping a dog in the car, you do not want to overheat the bees. Stopping at a light on a warm day, and leaving the bees sitting in a sunbaked car, is a recipe for dead bees.
- If you are facing a drive that takes time, consider keeping the bees in the driver's compartment and ensuring the temps are reasonable

- *Exterior Transport*

- If you are transporting in a truck bed, consider the wind chill
 - Keep the Nuc in a spot where it is not subject to the winds from driving.



Nucs Staged in a Yard for Pickup

Check with your provider

- *Open the hive and inspect?*
 - Some providers do this, others do not. Experiences Vary case by case.
 - Many times, providers have multiple Nucs setout for pickup and they do not take the time to take you through the colony. You back up, make payment, and leave with your hive.



Nuc Inspections - Treating Nucs

□ Check with your provider

- *Most Nucs have been cared for in anticipation of sale and are ready for installation*
- **TREATMENTS:**
 - Ask your provider what was done for treatments, and ensure you take timely notes (write it down)
 - Sometimes you will find treatments in the Nuc (perhaps an Apivar Strip)
 - Ensure you find out how long it has been in there, and when it should be removed.



Some Consumer Housekeeping

□ Instructions and Consumer Protection

- *Some suggestions:*

- Take a moment to absorb any information given to you from the seller – instructions, contact information, where the bees came from, treatment information, etc.
- Consider your options if the Nucleus is of poor quality
 - This is very rare, but it does happen.
 - A Nuc should be five well drawn-out frames of honeycomb, a full complement of bees, and resources
 - If you open a box and it of poor quality, you might even consider taking it back.
 - This is a rather serious decision, and we hope you do not have to face it. Ideally you have chosen a reputable provider as the best insurance against this.

Write it down as soon as you get into the vehicle so you can get the details right



Prior to Install

□ Set Up the Apiary

- *Setup the hive equipment to receive the bees in advance of install*
 - Cut the grass tightly, and do any necessary trimming in the apiary
 - Place a bottom board on your hive stand
 - Stage the equipment for the following day – more on this in a moment.
 - When you hear the process, this will make more sense.
 - Prep a single box with an internal feeder, and 9-frames.
 - Consider an entrance reducer as an option; again, more on this in a moment



Foundation Installation (last minute)

- Install Foundation in your Frames *the day before*
 - *We offer this suggestion to make the hive more attractive and entice bees to build quicker*
 - Foundation in the package has as odor of fresh wax
 - When you place it in the comb and leave it hang in a box, that smell dissipates
 - If you hold off putting the foundation in the frames, the hive will have a wax odor for the bees being installed
 - If you can do it, we suggest you hold off on putting your foundation in your frames until just before putting the frames in the hive. This is one thing you may not be rewarded for if you do it in advance.



Nuc Transfer

Nucleus Hive Placement and Transfer



Bloomer

Immediately Place the Nuc

□ Place the Nuc box

- *Upon arriving home, take the Nucleus box and set it on the staged bottom board.*
 - Open the entrance and let the bees fly for 24-hours
 - This allows the bees, in a comfortable setting within their Nuc box that they are acquainted with, to get oriented to the new location
 - They will fly out and anchor themselves to the spot.

You could install right away. We think it is better to wait a day, considering they were just transported from the provider.

They will likely be a little calmer during transfer if you give them a day to settle in.



Second Day

□ Prep for transfer

- *Bring your hive equipment out*
 - Single box, frames, inner feeder, inner cover, and outer covers
 - Optionally the hive entrance reducer
- *Don your protective gear, light your smoker.*
 - Lightly smoke the Nuc box at the front entrance.
 - Pick up the Nuc box and set it alongside of your hive stand; in anticipation of the transfer. "Bee Aware" of it, don't kick it over, trip over it, etc. :-)
 - Note, bees will be coming and going to the spot where the Nuc was sitting prior to you transferring the bees into your hive equipment; this is expected.



Stage the Hive Equipment

□ Setup the box

- *Place the hive box on the bottom board*
 - Affix the entrance reducer under the box if you are using it
- *Place the feeder inside position 1 or 10 and fill it.*
- *Add 3 prepared frames to the outside of the box*
 - 1 Frame next to the inner feeder.
 - 2 frames on the opposite side, against the wall.
 - Place the hive box and 4 frames on the stand. Add the entrance reducer. Do not add the covers yet.

Typically, a Nuc can protect itself and has plenty of bees to guard the entrance. Still, if you want a little more guarding against robbing, or cool nights are in the forecast, consider adding an entrance reducer



Transfer the Bees: Option 1

- Move the bees into your equipment
 - *Lightly smoke the Nuc hive sitting on the side.*
 - *Remove the lid and inner cover (giving a puff of smoke as you do so)*
 - *Starting with an outside frame (queen is not likely to be there)*
 - Transfer the frames one by one into the center of the hive box you have staged.
 - Take them out in the order (and orientation) that you found them and place them exactly as they were sitting in the Nuc box.
 - To be more specific, do not change the order of the frames, and keep the front edge to the front of the hive box (not turning them around as you transfer them)
 - *Add the final frame (which makes 9 frames total and the feeder)*



Transfer Bees (Second Option)

□ One Instruction Change (background)

- *In a perfect scenario the bees will start in the center of the box.*
 - This means that frames that contain developing brood will be placed purposefully in the center of your hive equipment
 - Then frames of pollen followed by honey stores to the outside.
- *Some advocate that this is a better way to transfer in a Nuc*
 - Our take, if you are so inclined to do this it is fine. It breaks one rule that some beekeepers like which is keeping the frames in the way the bees had it (i.e. option 1 instructions)
 - If this is a preference, simply rearrange as you load in, or follow the first option



Close Up

Give a puff of smoke here and there as you are working.

The wisps of smoke makes the bees go down into the hive and prevents crushed bees

□ Close Up Procedure

- *Transfer left over bees in the Nuc*
 - Do a quick check for the queen in the box (Highly unlikely!)
 - Hold the Nuc box over the frames, invert it, and give it a solid blow with your fist (ensuring you do not hit any bees in the process). The sharp wrap will dislodge the bees and they will fall into the hive below.
 - Alternatively, you can simply set the empty box in front of the hive and the bees will find their way into the box by the next morning.
- *Push the frames together centered between the walls*
 - Ensure they are tight to each other, shoulder to shoulder; this thwarts the bee propolizing the frames together
- *Add the inner and outer covers and strap the hive.*



The first weeks

□ Settling In

- *The first week is simply about observation*
 - They have food and a working colony.
 - Leave them be, let them settle in.
- *Second Week*
 - Inspect in a wee or 10 days to see how they are progressing
 - Weather dependent, get a sense of the stores and check how they are doing building comb.
 - When the weather breaks, open up the entrance



Closing Comments

■ Customary Close

- Where we stand, where we are going...
 - *This module closes out some of the philosophical baseline topics*
 - *Our next topic moves to the preparatory steps for getting started:*
 - Introduction to hive equipment
 - Recommendations of hive equipment for purchase
 - Sourcing Protective Gear
 - Additional Equipment for the operation of the apiary
 - And Introduction to Bees for purchase



Q&A

- **What Questions did we not anticipate?**
 - If you have feedback, you can leave a constructive comment; but be nice.
 - You could also send an email to comments@managedmentoring.com
 - *Please refer to this video in the subject so we know what the reference is.*

