

SUCCESSFUL BEEKEEPING

By Bill Ruzicka Inventor of **MiteGone**[®]
Commercial Bee Breeder in BC. 250-762-8156.

WANA-BEE PRACTICAL COURSE

As part of Bee Breeder Circle.

Purpose: to give the new beekeeper all the information and experience, he or she needs to make the right decision: **TO BE OR NOT TO BE A BEEKEEPER** before spending thousands of dollars.



Cost of the course is \$35 plus the cost of the mandatory reading and compulsory equipment. *Honey Bee Diseases and Pest* is \$15 and a DVD about organic treatments \$15. If you decide at any time not to be a beekeeper, I will refund the cost of the undamaged book and DVD at \$10 each. If you decide not to become a beekeeper, it will be the most wisely spent \$65 in your life. People can spend thousands of dollars before they come to the same decision.

You will get a one-hour private consultation with Bill where you learn about the mandatory reading and viewing. Plus, you will learn about the legal, ability, and health commitment you need to make to become a beekeeper. Do not buy anything else until you complete this step and fully understand the commitment beekeeping is.

You do not have to have bees on your own for this program. In the bee breeder circle program, you will learn all practical aspects of beekeeping including

- how to prepare the yard for bees and maintenance,
- how to set up a work station, easy ways to take hives apart and set them up for inspection
- cleaning the bottom boards and what to do with debris (do not throw them on the ground as they are waste carrying diseases and have to be removed.)
- how to inspect hives, how to find a Queen. The importance of drones.
- how various stages of brood, stores of honey and pollen look like
- how to use queen cells or caged virgins for making nukes and rearing new queens.
- artificial Swarming as a way to sell bees without transferring combs carrying AFB and as a way to save colonies infected with AFB the proper use of antibiotics.
- honey extraction and the use of queen excluders.
- treatments in August and preparing hives for winter. inter packing and bear protection.
- For lessons and dates see;

<http://www.mitegone.com/pdfpages/Breeder's%20Circle%20Proposal.pdf>

COMPULSORY EQUIPMENT: You must have your own bee suit, gloves, veil, hive tool and smoker. I will provide smoke pellets and teach you how to use them.

The course will be organized to be on weekends when possible (Saturday morning or Sunday afternoon). You have to recognize that bees do not follow a traditional calendar but mother nature. For example, the time to check your hives and unpack them in the spring is when apricots trees nearest you bloom. That is also the time for your spring mite treatment. The bees have their own calendar too. For example, when rearing queens, the cells must be caged 9 days after grafting otherwise first virgin born will kill all of the other cells. Drone take 38 days from day they are laid to mature, each virgin queen needs 12-15 drones to mate with and old queens do not start laying drones until mother nature has the apricots bloom. Result: you cannot have an early mated queen in early May, when matured Drones fly on end of May. It is all tied together.

LESSON 1 Legal, Ability, Health and Commitment you must make.

1.1 Find a bee yard. Select the place you will keep your bees and decide how many. My recommendation is to start with four hives. It takes the same time and effort to work one or four hives. Also, the add on costs like maintaining the yard's bear fencing etc are split in four. Further, if you lose one hive there are three others to replace it from. Choose a flat, easily accessible place. Preferred is a formerly paved or concrete pad. It makes it easy to then put a small dog kennel type enclosure around your hives to keep the bears out. Next go to your town or regional district office and ask if they have any policies or by-laws about bees. Submit a proposal in writing stating where and how many hives you want to have. Ask permission to have hives in the area you chose. If they say no, ask where you can have hives. If you get a definite no and decide not to be a beekeeper, it has only cost you the lesson fee. Believe me, there are lot of people who want to return their bees because neighbors did not like them and a by-law officer ordered them to move their hives so talk to your neighbors. Ensure that you have space to store all of your unused equipment. A garage, basement or shed in bee-yard must be bee tight, and vehicle to carry it.

1.2 Register your Apiary. When you succeed and start your apiary, remember to find the GPS coordinates of your yard and send an Application for Registration to the Apiary Branch of the BC Government. Remember not to put your bees too close to another beekeepers' registered yard as it causes problems and helps to spread diseases.

1.3 Are you strong enough? When you succeed and one day produce honey remember a dadant box full of honey will weigh 60+ lbs. and deep size box weigh 110+ lbs. You must be able to carry these heavy boxes or find someone to do it for you. Also, the extracting equipment is expensive. Find out if someone does custom extraction in your area. In Kelowna, I do but I will extract only honey frames. Keep your old stale honey in brood combs at home with your brood.

1.4 Are you allergic to bee stings? If unsure, visit your local allergy doctor and get tested to find out if you are allergic to bees. If the test is inconclusive, try getting stung several times but ensure that you have an EPI Pen with you. On a nice day, visit a friend's bee hive, catch a bee by the wings. Push the bottom side of the bee against top of your hand. Leave the stings in. A normal reaction is your arm will swell up. **You not Allergic.** If you have difficulty breathing and are severely swelling, you need to use the EPI PEN and have someone take you to the hospital.

You are allergic to bee stings and cannot be a beekeeper and it cost you only few dollars.

1.5 Beekeeping Literature. Take all your bee books and put them in a box marked TO RETURN. If you are in Kelowna come for a visit and for \$15, I will give you a booklet to read. If you cannot come by you can order this book it from the local Kelowna Bee Club. It is called *BEE DISEASE AND PESTS BY CANADIAN PROFFESIONAL APPICULTURIST 3 EDITION*. I want you to read the entire book but read the sections on bee diseases very carefully and several times until you are very familiar with the material. Read integrated pest management IPM once It really does not work. Make a lot of notes and write down any questions you have and would like to discus. After reading this book, if you are committed to protect and maintain the health of honey bees, then you can proceed onto Level 2. There are so many people that want bees but are unwilling to care for them properly thereby endangering the bee stock of the surrounding area.

If you have completed all of Lesson 1 successfully, then you can move into the beekeeper group to learn about successful beekeeping skills and you can call me your mentor (If you are going through Lesson 1 and you decide not to be Beekeeper just return undamaged book for a \$10 refund.

Now It's time to order beekeeper WISH BOOK catalog from MANN LAKE 1-800-880-7694 and order your bee suits, Hive tool, and Smoker. Do not buy any think else, wait until you finish course. Locally: OK bee supply 250-768-7078 BUCKERFIELDS or Bee Made.