



# Regina & District Bee Club

## Mentor Program

People who are wanting to become beekeepers are matched with experienced beekeepers, who provide opportunities for hands-on experience working with bees, and mentorship about keeping bees.

*Both parties will be conscientious about biosecurity and disease transition, by wearing clean clothes and shoes, and not using equipment, such as hive tools and smokers, with each other's bees.*

### Role of the Mentor:

- Provide best practice beekeeping and honey processing advice.
- Establish a means of communication that is mutually agreeable between the mentor and student - eg. in person, by e-mail, Skype, phone, etc.
- Initiate communication, offer demonstrations, be accessible, respond to questions, and discuss any limitations in this area.
- Where possible, offer hands-on working with bees demonstrations.
- Be available to the student.

### Role of the Student

- Attend learning events offered by the Club.
- Study local beekeeping information by reading available information and watching videos on the Club's web site.
- Let mentor know beekeeping goals.
- Follow the means of mutually agreeable communication.
- Acknowledge that mentors are busy and that beekeeping is weather-dependent. When a Mentor contacts to offer bee demonstrations, be flexible and attend.
- Listen to and apply the advice that the mentor provides.
- Not expect that the mentor will do everything.

### How to become a Mentor

Mentors should have successfully overwintered bees for a few years; understand American Foulbrood Disease, Varroa mite, and pest prevention and detection techniques; and, be confident and comfortable doing hive inspections, detecting and correcting queen and hive issues, providing supplementary feedings and managing seasonal procedures such as reversing hives, preventing robbing and preparing hives for winter.

### How to become or get a Mentor

Contact Andrew Hamilton [hamiltonhoney1@hotmail.com](mailto:hamiltonhoney1@hotmail.com).

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## Mentor Program Waiver and Release

By joining the Mentor Program, the student understands that the Mentor Program is offered on a volunteer basis by other Club members for other Club members as a coaching tool only.

Approaches to beekeeping are as unique as the individuals who take up the practice. It is the Student's responsibility to follow all federal and provincial laws pertaining to beekeeping and honey/food processing, regardless of if that topic is raised or discussed by the mentor.

As with any agricultural practice involving animals or insects, the handler, and in this case, the beekeeper, is responsible to manage their own risk of personal injury. which includes, but is not limited to:

- back problems due to improper lifting and carrying techniques, and
- crushed toes or feet due to dropping full brood boxes or honey supers.

Beekeepers will definitely get stung. At best case, there will be swelling, which may be dangerous if it is near the eyes or respiratory tract; and, at worst case, may cause anaphylactic shock, which can be fatal. It is recommended that before entering the practice of beekeeping, individuals talk with their doctors about their personal risks of allergic reactions and anaphylactic shock, and purchase medications that their doctor may recommend including EpiPens, for themselves and their family members, and post-sting treatments. Until individuals know how their body will react to stings and build up immunity, new beekeepers are encouraged to:

- remove all rings prior to handling bees; and,
- wear a veil to discourage bees from stinging near the face, especially near the eyes and respiratory tract.

It is the beekeeper's responsibility to handle, transport and store smokers with care to prevent fire, and be prepared to put out fires. Fire-proof containers are advisable.

When dealing with hive treatments, beekeepers must follow all label instructions dealing with how to apply, and when to remove treatments, and personal safety.

The Club recommends that members discuss their involvement in the Mentor Program with their insurance agent to ensure that their existing home or commercial liability insurance covers incidents that could occur at either a Mentor or Student's residence or place of business, particularly where live bees are kept and honey processing occurs.

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Name

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Date

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Signature