

University of Florida

Master Beekeeper Program

MANUAL



Mission

To improve honey bee health and the sustainability of beekeeping globally through beekeeper training and public outreach

Goals

- 1) Beekeepers in the UF MBP will learn and adopt research-based beekeeping best management practices.
 - 2) Beekeepers in the UF MBP will provide research-based education to the non-beekeeping public and serve as mentors to new beekeepers.
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Overview

The University of Florida (UF) Master Beekeeper Program (MBP) is a five-year (minimum) certification program managed by the UF Honey Bee Research and Extension Laboratory (HBREL). It is composed of four levels: Apprentice, Advanced, Master, and Master Craftsman.

Note: The UF MBP is not a Master's of Science or other degree-granting program.

Individuals who want to join the UF MBP can do so at any time by registering for the online Apprentice course through Canvas Catalog. The course will be housed on Canvas, an online learning management system (Appendix A). Registration instructions and UF E-Learning tutorials can be found at <http://entnemdept.ifas.ufl.edu/honey-bee/extension/master-beekeeper-program/>. All participants must enter the program at the Apprentice level; no one, regardless of experience, can skip levels.

Joining the program does NOT require an application, beekeeping experience, or specific educational requirements. There are NO maximum or minimum age limits to participate in the UF MBP. **To join the program, you must 1) be interested in keeping honey bees and 2) have access to a computer or mobile device with an internet connection.**

Program Requirements

To become an Apprentice Beekeeper:

1. Complete the online UF MBP Apprentice course.

Candidates for Apprentice Beekeeper must complete the training lessons and associated learning activities within the online Apprentice course (Appendix A). Lessons are grouped together in a series of modules; at the end of each module, participants must take an assessment and receive a perfect score. Each assessment can be taken as many times as is necessary to pass.

The MBP Board encourages you to begin the online Apprentice course before you ever acquire your first hive of bees, though this is not required.

2. Maintain at least one honey bee colony for at least one full year.

Before becoming an Apprentice beekeeper, you must have already kept honey bees for at least one year. This can happen at any point before being certified at the Apprentice level. Your one-year minimum does not necessarily need to be the year directly before being certified.

You will be asked to honestly complete an agreement form within the online Apprentice Course in order to fulfill this requirement.

3. Currently keep bees.

You must own or fully manage at least one honey bee hive at the time of being certified as an Apprentice Beekeeper.

You will be asked to honestly complete an agreement form and submit a photo of you working your bees within the online Apprentice Course in order to fulfill this requirement.

4. Register as a beekeeper in your state or country.

You must be registered as a beekeeper if the municipality, state, or country in which you keep bees has a mandatory *or* voluntary beekeeper registration. You are exempt from this requirement if registration is not possible in your area. You will be required to show proof of your beekeeper registration within the online Apprentice Course.

Anyone maintaining honey bee colonies in Florida must register his/her colonies with the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (more information can be found at <http://www.freshfromflorida.com/Divisions-Offices/Plant-Industry/Business-Services/Registrations-and-Certifications/Beekeeper-Registration>). In many cases, families can register together, rather than as individuals; this can satisfy the registration requirement for all members of the family.

5. Score 80% or higher on a hive inspection practical assessment.

This is the final requirement of the Apprentice level; all other Apprentice requirements must be completed before taking/submitting the practical assessment. Apprentice

candidates can complete the practical assessment in one of two ways: in-person or via a video submission. In both instances, participants will be asked to demonstrate their ability to light a smoker, inspect/correctly work a honey bee colony, and identify various components in the hive/colony. A standard rubric will be used for grading all Apprentice level practical assessments regardless of the practical format that you choose to use. See the online course for the grading rubric.

In-person: In-person practical assessments can be administered by UF HBREL staff, Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services Apiary Inspectors, certified Florida Master Beekeepers, and certified Florida Master Craftsman Beekeepers. These assessments will be administered at least twice per year at the UF HBREL Bee College events (visit <http://entnemdept.ifas.ufl.edu/honey-bee/extension/bee-college/> for details on these events). Other dates may be made available throughout the year at the discretion of the MBP Board.

Video submission: Participants also can choose to upload a recorded video of their hive inspection practical assessment, which can be submitted within the online Apprentice course. See the course for specific details on how to record and submit practical videos.

***Advanced, Master, and Master Craftsman requirements will be posted at a future date.
Check back later for updates.***

Appendix A: UF/IFAS Canvas, the MBP Learning Management System

All instruction within the UF MBP is offered through UF/IFAS Canvas, the online learning management system used by the University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF/IFAS). Each level of the MBP (Apprentice, Advanced, Master, and Master Craftsman) has a corresponding online course that participants are required to take. Multiple instructional modules make up the online course for each level; these modules are ordered by content and are composed of three to ten lessons each. Each lesson starts by specifically listing the objectives for the lesson, so that you know exactly what the given lesson is intended to teach you. Lessons are made up of instructional content (narrated presentation, video, document, etc.) followed by interactive learning activities. Each lesson also includes additional resources that reinforce the topics covered in the lessons. Information found in the Additional Resources section of each lesson will not be “testable” material unless that information was already covered in the lesson’s instructional content. Each module will end with a critical thinking assessment.