

Pollination Guidelines for Small Farms

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Large Farms Use Migratory Pollination



Migratory pollination is usually single-crop pollination where hives are moved into the crop during the bloom and removed immediately following bloom. Wildflowers and competing nectar sources are eliminated.

Principles of Stationary Pollination on a Small Farm



Honey bees forage up to 5 miles, but prefer to forage closer to hive.



Strong honey bee hives forage many crops.



The diversity of crops and blooming flowers that is typical of a small farm might also attract native bees. Honey bees and native bees working together shown to be a very effective pollination solution.

Beekeeping Tips for Small Farmers

- Orient hives close to the target crop, but as far away from pesticide drift as possible.
- Register your apiary on DRIFTWATCH.org

Cold Climate Winter Hive Preparation

Wind and Moisture Add fence, windbreak or move hives to a protected area. Add



reflective insulation to further minimize wind. Insulate under the hive cover, then add a layer of canvas to absorb condensation.



Mice



Install a mouse guard before temperatures drop.

Starvation

Check for honey stores and include a candy board for extra food.



Mites: Treating mites helps bees fight pests and diseases.



Small Farms are Different



On a small farm, there is usually a diversity of crops blooming within close proximity. Simultaneous blooms, including wildflowers, might compete for honey bee pollination.

Benefits of Stationary Pollination



- Season-long, multi-crop pollination
- Less stress for bees
- Multifloral honey (in a good year)