Alamance County Beekeepers Association

Beginning Beekeeping Course – 2027

Objective:

To create an interest in beekeeping and provide essential information needed for a person to become a successful keeper of honey bees — a beekeeper.

Course Topics

Week 1: Introduction to Beekeeping

- Course Overview
- Benefits of Beekeeping (pollination, hive products)
- History of Beekeeping
- Key Organizations: ACB, NCSBA & NCDA&CS

Week 2: Bee Biology & Bees as Social Insects

- Bee anatomy, caste development, and pheromones
- Communication (dances)
- Other insects (hornets, wasps, etc.)

Week 3: Nectar & Pollen Plants of NC / Equipment of Beekeeping

- Flower Biology and Pollination
- NC Sources Pollen & Nectar Plants – By Seasons
- Recommended Plants
- Toxic Plants
- Planting a Pollinator Garden & Resources
- Protective gear and smoker
- Hive tools, frames, straps, components
- Woodenware and other hive components
- Different type of frames and foundations

Week 4: Equipment of Beekeeping Continued

- Woodenware and frame assembly

Week 5: Starting a Honey Bee Hive

- Locating and starting a hive (packages, NUCs, splits, swarms)
- Feeding and checking new colonies
- Hive relocation considerations
- Risks in the apiary

Week 6: Maintaining a Hive - Part One

- Spring hive management
- Splits – the How and Why
- Swarming
- Supering for Honey
- Requeening options and advantages
- Methods for introducing queens

Week 7: Maintaining a Hive - Part Two

- Summer hive management and extraction
- Fall & Winter hive management
- Common mistakes beginning beekeepers make

Week 8: Honey Bee Pests & Diseases

- Common bee diseases: foulbroods, chalkbrood, sacbrood, nosema
- Mites (Varroa, Tracheal)
- Small Hive Beetles
- Treatment options and methods

Week 9: Course Review & Test

- Review Equipment, disease control, colony health, wintering tips, and more
- Test

Field Day (Local Apiary Visit)

- Hands-on hive inspection
- Varroa check, queen spotting, installing bees
- Spring & Winter preparation demos

Location & Time

All evening classes will be held in the N.C. Cooperative Extension Center
Address: 209 N Graham Hopedale Rd, Burlington, NC 27217
Time: 6:30 PM – 8:30 PM on listed class dates
Field Day: 4-hour session at a local apiary (exact time TBD)