

Honey Bee Importation

Please do not import honey bees, used equipment, pollen, beeswax, etc.

Beekeeping in Newfoundland and Labrador is still in its infancy, with about 50 hobby and commercial beekeepers and around 500 colonies in the entire province. However, increasing numbers of people are interested in taking up beekeeping and several people are running commercial operations. The future of beekeeping in the province points to expanded production of honey and other products, commercial pollination services and other benefits.

NL is currently in a unique position because it is free of most of the pathogens, pests, and diseases that are causing serious problems for honey bees elsewhere in the world. Varroa and tracheal mites, American foulbrood, hive beetles, wax moths and other pests are not here – YET!



The vampire parasite – *Varroa destructor*

The Newfoundland and Labrador Beekeeping Association is deeply concerned that importing honey bees, beekeeping products such as beeswax and pollen, used wooden ware and other beekeeping equipment could transmit these pathogens to our honey bees.



American foulbrood is a highly contagious bacterial infection.

The law

The importation of honey bees and used wooden ware (“hives”) into NL is regulated under the Government of NL’s *Animal Health and Protection Act, Animal Health Regulation 33/12*, sections 6 and 7. A permit is required to import honey bees and used beekeeping equipment, and various restrictions and requirements apply. The regulation does not address other sources of infection such as beeswax, pollen and semen, but the NL Beekeeping Association recommends that their importation be restricted.

Animal Health and Protection Act, Animal Health Regulation 33/12

6. (1) A person shall not bring honeybees (*Apis mellifera*) or honeybee hives into the province unless that person has first obtained a permit to do so from the minister....

7. (1) A person shall not bring honeybees (*Apis mellifera*) or honeybee hives into the province unless accompanied by a certificate signed by an official veterinarian or licensed veterinarian in the place of origin of the honeybees or hives or by an accredited veterinarian or other person approved by the Chief Veterinary Officer certifying that:

(a) the honeybees and hives are free from the following pests:

- (i) honeybee tracheal mite (*Acarapis woodi*),
- (ii) varroa mite (*Varroa destructor*),
- (iii) greater wax moth (*Galleria mellonella*), and
- (iv) small hive beetle (*Aethina tumida*).

Read the complete regulation here - <http://www.assembly.nl.ca/Legislation/sr/Regulations/rc120033.htm>

Pathogen vectors

One of more of the nasty pathogens and diseases that plague honey bees in mainland North America can be transmitted by way of the following:ⁱ

- Honey bees (live queen honey bees, worker bees and drones, larvae and pupae);
- Honey bee semen and eggs;
- used equipment associated with beekeeping (e.g., woodenware, drawn comb, foundation wax);
- honey, comb honey, honey bee-collected pollen, royal jelly;
- beeswax (in the form of honeycomb);
- raw beeswax (not honeycomb)

Pathogens, pests, and diseases can greatly increase the complexity and cost of beekeeping.



Small hive beetle infestation.



Waxmoth larvae infestation.



Beekeeping in Newfoundland & Labrador (photo courtesy Phillip Cairns)

What you can do

Given our health status, NL could make a significant contribution to protecting honey bees and their important role in fruit and vegetable pollination around the world.

We need your help to keep our province free of these pathogens, pests, and diseases. Please do not bring honey bees, beeswax, comb, pollen, used woodenware, and other used beekeeping equipment into the province without a permit from the Government of NL.ⁱⁱ

More information

If you have any questions about the importation of honey bees, bee products and equipment, please contact the Provincial Apiculturist – Karen Kennedy
karenkennedy@gov.nl.ca

Notes

ⁱ Mutilleni, F. 2011. "The Spread of Pathogens Through Trade in Honey Bees and Their Products (Including Queen Bees and Semen): Overview and Recent Developments." *Rev. sci. tech. Off. int. Epiz.* 30 (1): 257-271.
<http://nlbeekeeping.ca/data/documents/mutinelli2011.pdf>

ⁱⁱ Irradiated pollen patties purchased from reputable suppliers are okay.