

Clinical Examination of the Hive

It is best to let the beekeeper open the hive and remove the frames for examination. Typically, the best time to perform this operation is the hottest part of the day. It should be performed in a systematic, methodical way. Personal protective equipment should be worn. Types of protective equipment varies and is a personal preference. The use of a camera may be helpful.

It is usually very helpful to become acquainted with beekeeping clubs in your practice area and attend their meetings. You may also find it a helpful part of your bee medicine efforts to acquaint yourself with the equipment used in beekeeping.

You may find that you become fascinated enough with bees to obtain your own hives.

My suggestion is that you offer an overall farm visit service or some type thereof for hobby beekeepers in your practice when you visit their apiary. Many of the beekeeping hobbyists have other animals that you can offer services to upon your visit such as equine vaccinations, poultry examinations, rabbit examinations, etc. The hobby of beekeeping continues to increase as does the keeping of poultry and/or rabbits. Nationwide the county agents and Extension specialists are reporting increased calls seeking information about these small livestock species due to fear about food supplies during this pandemic.

A hive examination sheet can be developed for your practice or you can download one from the internet. The three main elements to consider are as follows: Medical History, External Examination of Apiary, and Internal Hive Examination. A sample form and points to consider is included on the next page.

Apiary Owner _____

Date _____

Address: _____

Phone _____

Apiary Examination:

Environment _____

Flora in area _____

Number of Hives _____

Hive Appearance _____

Bee Activity

Area _____

Entrance _____

Hive Outside Appearance:

Type _____

Supers _____

Maintenance _____

Direction of Hive _____

Hive Stand _____

Landing Board _____

Soil in Front _____

Abnormalities _____

Other _____

Internal Examination:

Propolis _____ Odors _____ Behavior _____ Insects _____

Frames: Bee Appearance _____ Number _____

Condition of Frames _____ Brood _____ Larvae _____

Eggs _____ Pattern _____ Honey _____ Pollen _____

Workers _____ Drones _____ Queen _____

Dead Bees _____ Floor of Hive _____ Sides _____

Empty Frames _____ Other _____

Tests _____ Diagnosis _____

Notes _____
