

SARE Grant – Beekeeping Project
Texas Beekeeping Laws Outline

- About Texas Apiary Inspection Service (TAIS)
 - TAIS is the state agency responsible for mitigating the presence of pests and diseases in managed honey bee colonies.
 - TAIS was established in 1910 due to legislation enacted to suppress foulbrood disease.
 - TAIS is housed at Texas A&M University in College Station, TX.
 - The mission of the Texas Apiary Inspection Service is to safeguard the apiary industry of Texas through the application of science-based regulations, educational opportunities and open communication with the industry.
 - TAIS's primary role is to conduct health inspections on beekeeping operations throughout the state.

- Texas beekeeping laws
 - Agriculture code: Chapter 131 Bees and Honey
 - TAIS does not oversee the bottling and selling of honey. This falls under the jurisdiction of the Texas Department of State Health Services.
 - Administrative code: Chapter 71 Bees
 - The Administrative code provides additional support to the Agriculture code

- Inspections
 - An inspection typically consists of an apiary inspector looking through a percentage of the beekeeping operation. The inspector will look at multiple frames in the brood chamber and takes note of any damage or symptoms of a pest or disease infection. The inspector will collect samples if symptoms of foulbrood disease is present. The inspector may also collect additional samples to assess the levels of other pests (i.e. Varroa mites). All results are reported back to the beekeeper.
 - Annual inspections are performed on all migratory beekeepers (those requesting Import and Export permits).
 - Any beekeeper is able to request an inspection at any time.
 - There is a \$75 fee for requested inspections. This fee covers the entire inspection. If no disease is found, then a Certificate of Inspection is issued to the beekeeper.
 - Selling bees and/or queens
 - In Texas, beekeepers are not required to be inspected by TAIS if they are selling bees (i.e packages, nucs, or hives) or queens (i.e. cells or mated queens). If the beekeeper's operation is not inspected by TAIS, then they are required to provide every customer with a self-generated and signed health affidavit stating that their operation has not been inspected, but they believe their bees to be free of disease. If the operation is inspected

by TAIS, then the beekeeper provides their customers with a copy of their current Certificate of Inspection issued by TAIS.

- Emergency inspections
 - If a beekeeper suspects that their hive has foulbrood disease, then they are required to report it to TAIS. One of TAIS's inspectors will work with the beekeeper to schedule an emergency inspection. There is no cost for this type of inspection.
- Permits
 - Import – This permit is required for each beekeeper bringing honey bee hives into Texas. A separate permit and payment is required for each state the hives are brought from. The permit expires once the movement is complete.
 - Export – This permit is required for each beekeeper moving honey bee hives out of Texas. A separate permit and payment is required for each state the hives are being taken to. The permit expires once the movement is complete.
 - Intrastate – This permit is required for moving hives across county lines in Texas. This is an annual permit and expires August 31st of every year.
 - Bee Removal Transportation – This is a version of the Intrastate permit, meaning that it allows movement of honey bee hives across county lines. This permit is applied for by beekeepers who conduct bee removals in multiple counties in Texas. **Note: this is not a bee removal license.** Information from this permit is used to generate the public list available on the TAIS website. This permit expires August 31st of every year.
- Apiary Registration
 - Apiary Registration is voluntary regardless of how many hives a beekeeper operates.
 - Apiary locations are considered trade secrets in Texas, so this information is only known by TAIS and the beekeeper. Information pertaining to apiary locations is not shared.
 - There is no fee to register.
 - A beekeeper is not required to renew their Apiary Registration on an annual basis.
- Apiary Equipment Brand
 - In Texas, beekeepers are required to identify their hives either by:
 - Placing their name and address on the outside of their hive boxes, or
 - Affixing their Apiary Equipment Brand Number to the outside of their hive boxes.
 - This brand is generated by TAIS and is a unique identifying number assigned to the beekeeper.
 - This number is not shared publicly and is only known by TAIS and the beekeeper.
 - The brand number provides a method of identifying hives without advertising a beekeeper's name and information.

- There is a \$10 application fee, and does not need to be renewed on an annual basis.