



CONCHO
COUNTY APPRAISAL
DISTRICT BEEKEEPING
DEGREE OF INTENSITY/ GUIDELINES

CONCHO APPRAISAL DISTRICT
AG DEPARTMENT
BEE GUIDELINES

Beekeeping is an agricultural use and shall qualify for agricultural use productivity valuation if used for pollination or for the production of human food or other tangible products having a commercial value. (Sec. 23.51{2) Tax Code)

Acres requirement: the State of Texas has set a minimum of five (5) acres and a maximum of twenty (20) acres to qualify beekeeping as an agricultural use.

The property needs to have been previously in an agricultural process or the property owner needs to be able to show a five year history of Bee's or AG Use. Bees can be used to establish history with supporting documentation. Hives must be maintained and kept alive. Flowering plants must be planted to support hives **IF** the hives are in an area where there is limited vegetation that requires pollination.

Degree of Intensity: (first 5 acres 6 hives as per Section 131.001 Texas Agriculture Code's definition of an "Apiary"). "Apiary" means a place where six or more colonies of bees or nuclei of bees are kept. "Colony" means the hive and its equipment and appurtenances including bees, comb, honey, pollen, and brood.

5 acres	6 active hives
7.5 acres	7 active hives
10 acres	8 active hives
12.5 acres	9 active hives
15 acres	10 active hives
17.5 acres	11 active hives
20 acres	12 active hives

The hives must be located on the property at least 7 months of the year. January 1st thru December 31st

Hives must be active.

Production value used for Bee's will be the same as current land use category.

Section 23.51 (2)

The term agricultural use also includes the use of land to raise or keep bees for pollination or for the production of human food or other tangible products having a commercial value, provided that the land used is not less than 5 acres or more than 20.

..food or products must have commercial value, not commercial production. While human food and products must be produced, the law does not require that they be sold commercially.

1. The property needs to meet the same use requirements as for other AG Uses.
2. The property needs to have been previously in an agricultural use or
3. The owner/taxpayer need's to show a 5 year history of bees or other AG Use.

Use of Bee's:

Pollination: is the process by which pollen is transferred in the reproduction of plants, thereby enabling fertilization and sexual reproduction.

Production of Human Food: honey, bee pollen, honey candies, sweets

Production of Products: candles, beeswax, soaps

Legitimate beekeepers will have their bees in locations that provide food for their bees, pollinate various agricultural crops, food crops, and manage their bees in manner to keep them healthy, surviving and producing for the long term.

Hives must be *active*

Production value used for Bee's will be the same as the current land use category.

The intent of the law is for more people to raise bees (*Dennis Herbert*)

3 to 6 hives required on 5 acre the consensus of chief appraisers that met with the comptroller on June 21, 2012. (*Dennis Herbert conservationist*)

Bees should have an abundance of food. A bee keeper must think big, bee's need sources of nectar and pollen throughout the growing season (April-September or March through October or longer in Webb County) *Dennis Herbert*.

Dennis Herbert assisted the legislature to help pass the law regarding bees. He has also worked with the comptroller's office to develop implementation standards/guidelines for the bee law.

Beehives/Apiary:

A beehive is an enclosed structure in which some honey bee species of the live and raise their young. Natural beehives are naturally occurring structures occupied by honeybee colonies, while domesticated honeybees live in man-made beehives, often in an apiary. These man-made structures are typically referred to as "beehives". Several species of *Apis* live in hives, but only the western honey bee and the eastern honey bee are domesticated by humans.

A natural beehive is comparable to a bird's nest built with a purpose to protect the dweller. The beehive's internal structure is a densely-packed matrix of hexagonal cells made of beeswax, called a honeycomb. The bees use the cells to store food (honey and pollen) and to house the "brood" (eggs, larvae, and pupae).

Artificial beehives serve two purposes: production of honey and pollination of nearby crops. Artificial hives are commonly transported so that bees can pollinate crops in other areas.

An apiary (also known as a bee yard) is a place where beehives of honey bees are kept. Traditionally beekeepers (also known as apiarists) paid land rent in honey for the use of small parcels. Some farmers will provide free apiary sites, because they need pollination, and farmers who need many hives often pay for them to be moved to the crops when they bloom.

Remember bees forage in a 3 mile radius from the hive. I would survey the areas around you to see what is available for them to forage on. You don't want to over saturate the area with bees as they will be competing with themselves.

Any review of Texas bee law must begin with a review of Chapter 131 of the Texas Agriculture Code. Section 131.001 begins with defining terms to be used in the statute. For example. An "apiary" is a place where six or more colonies of bees or nuclei of bees are kept. That means most backyard beekeepers are not covered by many of the regulations in Chapter 131. However, several of the regulations apply to all beekeepers. "Beekeeper" is defined as a person who owns, leases, or manages one or more colonies of bees for pollination or the production of honey, beeswax, or other by-products, either for personal or commercial use. "Bees" means any stage of the common honeybee, *Apis mellifera* species. A "colony" is the hive and its equipment and appurtenances, including bees, comb, honey, pollen, and brood. Written by Donald Ray Burger, Attorney at Law

Texas Agriculture Code - Section 131.001. Definitions

§ 131.001. DEFINITIONS. In this chapter:

- (1) "Abandoned apiary, equipment or bees" means an apiary, equipment, or a colony of bees that is not regularly maintained or attended in accordance with this chapter or rules or quarantines adopted under this chapter.
- (2) "Apiary" means a place where six or more colonies of bees or nuclei of bees are kept.
- (3) "Beekeeper" means a person who owns, leases, or manages one or more colonies of bees for pollination or the production of honey, beeswax, or other by-products, either for personal or commercial use.
- (4) "Bee" means any stage of the common honeybee, *Apis mellifera* species.
- (5) "Colony" means the hive and its equipment and appurtenances including bees, comb, honey, pollen, and brood.
- (6) "Director" means the director of the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station.
- (7) "Disease" means American foulbrood, European foulbrood, any other contagious or infectious disease of honeybees, or parasites or pests that affect bees or brood.
- (8) "Equipment" means hives, supers, frames, veils, gloves, tools, machines, or other devices for the handling and manipulation of bees, honey, pollen, wax, or hives, including, storage or transporting containers for pollen, honey, or wax, or other apiary supplies used in the operation of an apiary or honey house.
- (9) "Inspector" means the chief apiary inspector.
- (10) "Label" as a noun, means written or printed material accompanying a product and furnishing identification or a description. The term includes material attached to a product or its immediate container and material inserted in an immediate container or other packaging of a product.
- (11) "Label" as a verb, means to attach or insert a label.
- (12) "Nucleus" means a small mass of bees and combs of brood used in forming a new colony.
- (13) "Pollen" means dust-like grains formed in the anthers of flowering plants in which the male elements or sperm are produced.
- (14) "Pure honey" means the nectar of plants that has been transformed by, and is the natural product of, bees and that is in the comb or has been taken from the comb and is packaged in a liquid, crystallized, or granular form.
- (15) "Queen apiary" means an apiary in which queen bees are reared or kept for sale, barter, or exchange.

References/Sources:

State Property Tax Code Section 23.51 (2)

Dennis Herbert (conservationist worked with TX Legislature on Bee Law /
Comptroller's Office on implementation standards/guidelines)

Texas Agriculture Code's. Section 131.001

Texas Beekeepers Association

Wikipedia Harris

County Somervell

County Washington

County Waller