

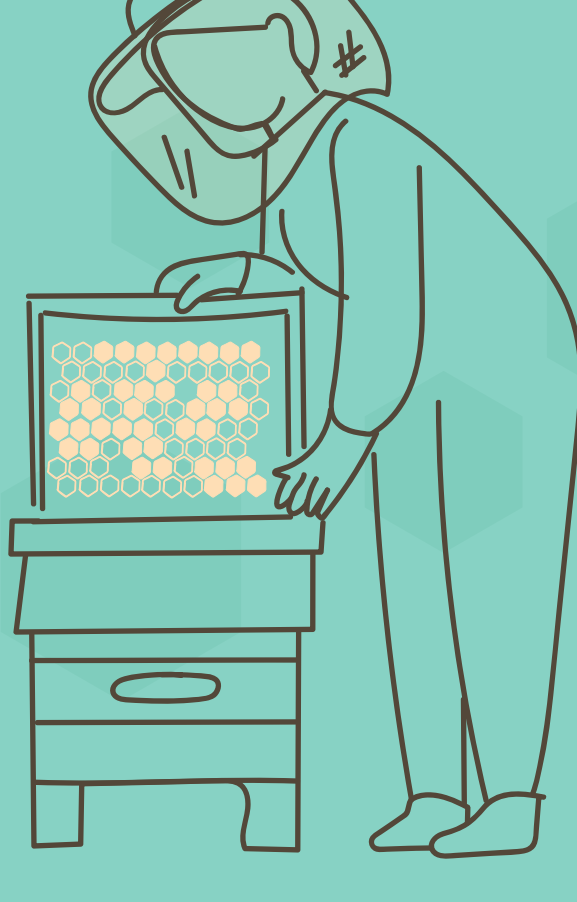
GOOD BEEKEEPING PRACTICES | Record-Keeping

Colony Management

Keep records of breeding activities and colony observations

In order to carry out breeding activities consistently and effectively it is important to keep accurate records to monitor and compare the development of the colonies and their behaviour, resistance to diseases and performance.

The success in such practice is closely linked to the quality of the records taken at all stages of the process as this also allows to constantly follow the colony conditions.



step 1

Improving beekeeping skills requires careful note-taking.

Comparing practices and seasons helps you learn and improve.

We quickly forget details—no notes mean no development or improvement.



step 2

There are many ways to record a hive's status, each serving different purposes. We must distinguish between quick notifications and long-term notes.

Notifications can be simple—the "stone-age" method uses the position of a stone on the hive roof to show the beekeeper's current status signal.



step 3

Various methods for hive notifications — stones, bricks, pins, or even a German-style board on the hive.

The problem is that this information is not permanent and is gone for winter evaluation.



step 4

The most common method is a simple hive log card.

Many countries provide preprinted national versions.

This method is highly valuable and widely used by major commercial queen breeders. It's easy, fast, and reliable — but if you lose or forget your paper copy, it's gone.

Make photocopies of your cards from time to time to avoid this problem.



step 5

In recent years, more online hive log programmes have appeared, either as apps or web platforms.

The advantage is that your data is stored in the cloud and rarely gets lost. The disadvantage is that using a phone or tablet in the apiary can be difficult—sun glare, gloves, and sticky propolis or honey make typing hard.

This can be solved by using a stylus and covering your device with a plastic bag or protective cover.



step 6

Search online for hive log programmes, and you'll find many versions.

Most offer a basic free version and charge an annual subscription for managing more than about five hives.

The programmes are quite similar in function, so try a few and choose the one that suits you best.



step 7

Use your winter evenings to evaluate your beekeeping season, find successes and failures.

Note your observations and learn so that you avoid repeating mistakes. Even evaluate your queens and how they performed. Maybe you find your own breeder queen!

