

Bee: colony assessment

1. User:
 - all beekeepers
2. Frequency of use:
 - the frequency of assessment will depend on the size of the operation, beekeeper preference and their reason for doing the assessment (e.g., checking for disease, suitability for breeding)
3. Reasons for recording this information include:
 - business management
 - it helps new beekeepers should get familiar with these sorts of assessments to learn more about their bees
 - it helps beekeepers detect disease before it becomes widespread in hive, bee yard or is spread to neighbouring bee yards
 - it is a management tool to assist with scheduling hive activities (e.g., when to treat, feed, super, split, move frames, re-queen)
 - it is a tool to help reduce the amount of medication used
 - the information in the table is useful for queen selection
 - increased honey production
 - it is a tool to increase honey production by knowing what management (e.g., when to treat, feed, super, split, move frames, re-queen) is needed for each hive
 - communication
 - it can serve as a communication tool between beekeepers and staff
 - bee biosecurity
 - it helps to trace disease in colonies
 - it is part of overall management to reduce disease loads and spread through bee yards
 - food safety
 - it is part of overall management to reduce potential contaminants in honey
4. References to the Bee Biosecurity Standard, CBISQT and BMP:
 - Bee Biosecurity Standard: pages 27-39
 - CBISQT: none
 - this template is an adaptation of Bee Biosecurity Standard form 2.0 (page 133-135)

 - BMP: pages 43-48
5. General comments:
 - beekeepers with many colonies may need to alter this template if a random selection of hives in a bee yard is assessed rather than all colonies,
 - beekeepers may find it useful to photograph their colonies/frames if there are any questions or odd findings. Images can then be compared with those of healthy colonies/frames, and emailed to experts (e.g., provincial apiarist, extension staff, bee inspector) if there is a question about disease presence or declining colony health.
 - beekeepers may find it handy to keep a few blank paper copies of this template (or their equivalent) in their bee truck/vehicle for crews to communicate and record odd or unexpected bee behaviour
 - one reviewer suggested using colour markers (e.g., push pins) on hives to indicate queen age