

Bees play an important role in the pollination of food crops, including backyard vegetable gardens and edible community gardens.

To keep bees in the district, you must provide evidence of membership of a beekeeping club or completion of a suitable course to implement good hive management practices to minimise potential nuisance or risks to public health and safety.

This Standard is necessary to protect the public from nuisance and to promote and maintain public health and safety.

### **MANAGING YOUR BEES**

Bees forage in a radius of up to 5km from the hive, and the presence of too many bees in a single area can cause competition between honeybee colonies.

Without suitable food sources, bees can starve or become weak and less able to resist diseases and pests.

An adequate food source of nectar and pollen is important for bee nutrition.

Having an adequate food source on the property is important in preventing the bees from changing flight paths to nearby food sources on neighbouring properties.

The use of syrup is an acceptable alternative if there is a seasonal deficiency in the natural food source on your property.

You must provide fresh water for the bees you keep on your property.

#### **Depending on the size and suitability of your property, you must consider:**

- The number of hives.
- Ways to limit and control potential nuisances.
- Flight path management which is an important aspect of responsible beekeeping as Bees will fly at head height for some distance from their hives unless their surrounding environment directs their flight path upwards.
- Bees can be encouraged to fly above head height if a flyway barrier, 2m or higher, is placed 1-2m from the hive entrance.
- Barriers you can use to direct a flight path are:
  - Shrubs or trees
  - A wall, hedge or a fence.

It is important that you do not direct flight paths across public pathways on private or public land.

#### **Prevention of overcrowding:**

Beekeepers must prevent overcrowding and manage bee stocking rates.

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## **MINIMISING NUISANCES**

No person shall keep bees in any part of the District, if in the opinion of Council, the keeping of bees is, or likely to become a nuisance or annoyance to neighbours or potentially dangerous or injurious to the health of any person.

Council may prescribe conditions relating to the location and number of hives able to be kept on any premises or place within an urban area of the District.

### **Excrement Management**

Hive placement is important for minimizing nuisance to neighbours.

Bees often excrete after exiting the hive and this can be within a 500m radius.

You should position or rotate hives in a way to avoid excrement dropping on neighbouring washing lines, vehicles and buildings.

### **Swarm prevention**

Although swarming is the natural means of dispersal of honey bee colonies, beekeepers can minimise the risk of swarms occurring in urban areas by:

- Re-queening on an annual basis
- Taking a nucleus colony out of populous hives (artificial swarming), re-queening colonies that have been started from swarms.

## **NATIONAL LEGISLATION**

Beekeepers are required to register their apiary with Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI). MPI carry out surveillance to protect honey bees from exotic pests and diseases.

Registrations are processed byASUREQuality Ltd and beekeepers must keep the registration number visible at each apiary (usually on a hive).

You can register your apiary and find more information on pest management on the ASUREQuality website, <http://www.afb.org.nz/>.

## **TALK TO THE BEE KEEPING EXPERTS**

For advice contact your local Beekeeping Club or the National Beekeepers' Association of New Zealand.

You can get further information on beekeeping from the Apiculture New Zealand website <http://apinz.org.nz/>. Check out their guidelines "Starting with Bees" or contact the association.