



The Bee Farmer

School for bees

The School for Bees scheme lends itself to integration with many aspects of the KS1 & KS2 curriculum, numeracy, literacy and STEM subjects through the environmental, practical and biological aspect of keeping honeybees. The scheme is aligned with the objectives of Food for Life initiative.

At The Bee Farmer (TBF) we understand the challenges of keeping honeybees on a busy site. The School for Bees is the complete scheme. However the scheme can be delivered in a number of formats which do not require a beehive on site.

The Gold Standard School for Bees is delivered in eight sessions over the two school years. The practical, academic and husbandry is delivered in the winter/spring terms of one year with the harvest, processing and marketing in the autumn after the return to school.

Below is a specimen timetable

Session length 90 mins. Ideally delivered in the afternoon of the date arranged

Session 1 *Date – before hive build* (Long form & short form version of the induction)

An introduction to different types of bees. Bumblebee, Honeybees, Solitary bees, Wasps

What is an insect? Explain lifecycle of the honeybee.

Explanation of key elements Body parts, legs & wings. Draw, cut out and colour in honeybee.

Lots of interaction and Q&A

Homework/competition – spot the first flying insect – what is it – where and when?

Session 2

Build hive, frames and paint.

Break group into three work stations.

Station 1 build a super or brood box. Stations 2 & 3 builds frames.



Extra work for school

Paint hive exterior not directed by TBF. Search Croatian hives for ideas on painting.

Session 3

Hive game - School hall required. Define a hive with mats.

Talk on pollination. What it is and honeybees role in pollination. Why is it important (food production), what can we do to help pollinators?

Homework – find and identify flowering plants (trees and flowers) Make flower list of locally occurring flowers (agricultural, herbaceous, hedge & tree, weeds)

1. Hive game. Assign bee roles to students. Set them foraging. See how colony grows.
2. Evolution: Re-assign bee roles. Set them foraging, introduce “chemical markers”, direct foragers to die off, examine effect on the hive.

Close with Q&A on why chemicals is an issue for pollinators and how we can help. (flower planting)

Install the Bees *Date – the week after hive build. Weather dependant.*

The Bee Farmer delivers the bees to site. The newly constructed and painted hive is already placed in the apiary ready to receive bees. The Bee Farmer describes the series of event that are to take place. Bee suits are buddy checked for correct fit. Smoker lit, videographer assigned and hive record begun. The queen is found and secured. If the weather allows the bees are shook on to a cloth to allow them to walk into the hive. Brood frames are moved from the delivery hive to the new hive. If the weather is poor the bees will be transferred on the frames. Queen released. The children to do as much as they are able considering their strength and attitude around the bees.

Session 4

Well being hive summer visit. *Date- before school breaks up for the summer.*

The class visit hives. We have the students look in the hives and handle the frames of bees.

We have the student weigh the hive and record the findings.



School session

Label design and make - school led session

Prior to bottling the group is set a series of tasks arising from a discussion on the size the crop and the perceived market. The legal requirements and size of the label will be given and it is for the group to decide upon the design of the label given the legal requirements and the jar size. The group to work out a price per jar that a customer is willing to pay versus the cost of manufacture. The labels must be printed/drawn and ready in time for the bottling session.

Session 5

Extraction

TBF delivers supers to school. TBF helps the students uncap the frames of honey and use the hand cranked extractor to separate the honey from the comb. The honey runs out of the extractor, through a filter and into a bucket. We weigh the extracted honey to compare with other figures. The exercise is carried out in the school kitchen or dining room in an afternoon. We talk about hygiene for food handling.



Session 6

Bottling– Date to be arranged but must be before Christmas fairs.

The Farmers delivers bulk honey to school to facilitate students putting honey in jars, with regard to hygiene rules. The jars will be labelled and packed into boxes. TBF will have sufficient of jars for the honey crop to hand.



Outdoor sessions with bees subject the weather.

Additional breakout sessions

Talk on Bees

A version of session 1

Foraging for answers

A multiple choice Q&A interactive game (indoor/outdoor)

The Hive game

The effects of environmental contaminates (indoor/outdoor)

Bespoke sessions

Sessions created to deliver on a schools agenda

Session	Topic	Resources
1	Types of bees. Life cycle of Honeybee.	DMc Powerpoint School – Beeswax, pollen, honey, Eric the half a bee.
2	Build hives and wax frames	DMc hive, frames, tools & glue
3	Hive game & pollination talk	DMc props
4	Colony wellbeing visit	DMc
5	Honey extraction	DMc in kitchen
6	Bottling and labelling	DMc in kitchen

Resources	Number
Complete bee hive inc frames	1
1 Adult & 3 mini beesuits	4
1 x Smoker + 1x Hive tool	1
1 x Foundation course	1

Jars and lids for honey will be provided at 60p each inc VAT
Extra beesuits can be rented at £5 per session.

Indicative costs. Subject to change

Elective costs

In the first year the school needs to invest in be suits and tools. The tools like the hives will give many years of service. The beesuits last a long time however zips will fail after a few years of use or sooner if subject to rough treatment.

The school may wish to send one or more staff members on a foundation course so that they be more involved in looking after the bees. This is a choice.

How the scheme and insurance works

The bees themselves are called a colony. A colony lives in a vessel called a hive. The honeybee colony is provided by The Bee Farmer and remain his property. The hive provides a learning opportunity and a home for the bees. Since the bees belong to the Bee Farmer the schools is absolved of the responsibility of the husbandry and specialist insurance premiums. The Bee Farmer carries £10m Public Liability insurance. When the bees are no longer required at the school the hive is donated to the Bee Farmer to continue looking after the honeybees.

Honey crop

A crop of honey is not guaranteed but, in most years, a modest crop can be expected. The honey is gifted to the school in order to round out the end to end experience. It tastes nice too !

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