

Beginning Beekeeper Course

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A course for beginning beekeepers will be held in Executive Auditorium of the Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center in Abingdon, Virginia on the following Thursdays from 6:00 p.m. until 9:00 p.m. each evening., January 19, 26, February 9, and 16, 2026. The schedule of topics includes

Honeybee Biology – understanding the honeybee as an individual and as a colony including how caste members function, interactions between bees, factors that affect roles in the colony, factors that affect management, and more.

Beekeeping equipment and construction, what equipment is needed, equipment design essentials and more. Participants will construct their own basic hive including bottom board, brood box, inner cover, cover, and one deep frame. **It is highly recommended that you participate in the building of the hive. It is a discounted deal on the wooden materials.**

Seasonal management of honeybee colonies. This session will cover best management practices that give bees the best chance of survival and productivity

Honeybee health. What are the diseases and pests that must be considered and how should bees be managed to minimize losses?

A follow-up session in an apiary will be held in the spring to give course participants hands-on experience with hive inspection and handling honeybees, installing packages, installing nucs, and more. This is an excellent opportunity if you have an interest in honeybees. There is always the opportunity to ask questions and get answers.

The cost of the class is \$125.00 and is limited to 40 participants. Pre-register by sending a check for \$125.00 payable to the **Highlands Beekeepers Assn.** to the Washington County Extension Office, 234 W. Valley St., Suite B, Abingdon, VA 24210. Participants who do not wish to build and take the hive home can register for \$60. You will still be able to participate in the session and observe the assembly of the hive. Participants will receive a course notebook, the Beekeeping Basics booklet, a certificate of completion, and a one-year membership in the Highlands Beekeepers Association.

The class is sponsored by the Washington County Extension Office and the Highlands Beekeepers Association. Call the Extension Office at (276) 676-6309 if you have questions.