

Benefits to Beekeepers Summary- Proposed Changes to the Texas Agriculture Code, Chapter 131 - 2017, HB 1293

The Texas Beekeepers Association (TBA) and Texas beekeepers in general are working together to update the beekeeping laws in Texas. These laws were last updated in 1983 and are sorely out of date with the current situation of modern beekeeping.

If the proposed changes contained in HB 1293 are enacted into law during the 2017 legislative session, there will be several benefits for Texas beekeepers to enjoy.

1. Beekeepers would **only be required to report** "diseases, pests, and unwanted bee species" as specified by the Chief Apiary Inspector in a published "reportable" list.
2. The Texas Apiary Inspection Service (TAIS) would be **required to present educational programs** and publish information to support the beekeeping interests in Texas.
3. **Abandoned equipment**, bees, pollen, or honey would be subject to seizure, destruction, treatment, or sale by the Chief Apiary Inspector.
4. A **protective quarantine**, imposed by the Chief Apiary Inspector to limit the spread of diseases, pests of bees, or unwanted species of bees would be subject to review or exemption by a beekeepers petition to the director of Texas A&M AgriLife Research.
5. **Sellers** of fewer than 25 queen bees, packages, colonies, or nuclei, collectively in a year, or those who sell fewer than 100 queen cells, would no longer be required to have a certificate of inspection or pay associated fees.
6. The **permits** required for both intra- and inter-state movement will be simplified, and beekeepers owning not more than 25 colonies would be exempt from fees.
7. **Registration** with the TAIS for beekeepers with fewer than 25 colonies or nuclei will remain optional; however registration will be mandatory for those with 25 or more colonies.
8. **Identification marking methods** for apiaries and equipment will be simplified and at the beekeepers' choice as long as they are permanent, contain the beekeeper's name and contact information, and in letters at least 1 inch high. Apiaries located at the beekeeper's principal residence are exempt from the marking requirements.

This is not an exhaustive list of the proposed changes. You can view the actual bill submitted to the legislature at <https://texasbeekeepers.org/blog/>. If passed into law, most of **these changes would take effect on September 1, 2017**. The mandatory registration and diseases and pest reporting penalties would take effect on September 1, 2018.

The Texas Beekeepers Association encourages all beekeepers to become informed on the proposed changes and then encourage your legislators to support the coming bill. You can find your state senator and state representative at <http://www.fyi.legis.state.tx.us/Address.aspx>.

If you have a question about this Benefits to Beekeepers Summary send an e-mail to ["131questions@texasbeekeepers.org"](mailto:131questions@texasbeekeepers.org) for a quick response from an informed fellow Texas beekeeper.