

TRAVIS COUNTY

Guidelines – Beekeeping

The Texas Tax Code, Title 1, Chapter 23, Subchapter D, Section 23.51(2) includes: the term agricultural use to include the use of land to raise or keep bees for pollination or for the production of human food or other tangible products having a commercial value, provided that the land used is not less than 5 or more than 20 acres.

i. Application, Current and Principle Use, and History

The application, use and history requirements for beekeeping are all the same as for agricultural land use.

Pursuant to Chapter 131 of the Texas Agricultural Code, apiaries are subject to regulatory oversight by the Texas Apiary Inspection Service who reports to the Director of the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station.

ii. Degree of Intensity

A property owner must have five acres in use, or a total of six acres if there is a home site or future home site, and no more than twenty acres, with a minimum of six active hives. The property owner must also provide documentation of their registration with the Texas Apiary Inspection Service.

In addition to the minimum of six active hives, for each additional two (2) acres, one additional active hive is required:

The degree of intensity requirements also include standard beekeeping practices such as, but not limited to:

1. Appropriate equipment including but not limited to the components of the hive, protective gear, smoker and hive tool, and the equipment you need for handling the honey crop.
2. Abide by all beekeeping rules and regulations set forth by the State of Texas
3. And, perform best management practices which should include, but is not limited to:
 - a. Checking hives periodically, at least once a month, and keep good records to improve practice general management of the colonies, nutrition and pest management
 - b. Control tall vegetation around colonies and keep apiaries clean
 - c. Ensure honey bee hives have sufficient resources throughout the year

 - d. Unless there are natural water sources adjacent to the apiary, establish a perpetual water source near the apiary

 - e. Supplemental feeding when natural resources are limited
 - f. Pest and disease management

Acres	Hives		Acres	Hives
5.0	6		13.0	10
7.0	7		15.0	11
9.0	8		17.0	12
11.0	9		19.0	13

Hays County

BEEKEEPING OPERATION

Effective January 1, 2012, the Texas Legislature added another agricultural use for purposes of open space land appraisal. Tax Code Section 23.51 (2) was amended to include the definition of agricultural use “the use of land to raise or keep bees for pollination or for the production of human food or other tangible products having a commercial value, provided that the land used is not less than 5 or more than 20 acres.”

This Provision permits the owner to raise or keep bees for two purposes (1) pollination or (2) the production of human food or products that have commercial value.

The minimum degree of intensity was established using Section 131.001 of the Texas Agricultural Code’s definition of an apiary as a place where six or more colonies of bees or nuclei of bees are kept. A colony is the hive and its equipment and appurtenances including bees, comb, honey, pollen and brood.

When a property owner initially seeks qualification for agricultural use appraisal for beekeeping, they must show proof of history of agricultural use on the land for five (5) of the preceding seven (7) years. Acreage with a Homestead Exemption will not be considered for agricultural history of use or for agricultural valuation; this also means that if you have a 5-acre parcel with a homestead you will not meet the minimum of 5 acres used for a beekeeping operation. You must have a minimum of 5 acres plus additional acreage to account for your homestead improvement to qualify for this agricultural valuation.

HAYSCAD will require copies of the Registration of the Apiary with the Texas Apiary Inspection Service thru the Agrilife Research Office (<http://tais.tamu.edu>) and the property owner will also be required to submit a landscape plan of the property and indicate how different plantings (fruit trees, shrubs, vines, flowers, clover, buckwheat, vetch, etc.) contribute to bee foraging.

In order to continue to qualify the hives must be located on the property for at least 9 months of the calendar year and all hives must be maintained and kept alive. The properties that qualify for bee management will be inspected 1-2 times per year to check for compliance by the HAYSCAD AG Appraiser.

The agricultural productivity value for land used for bee keeping will be its own land category.

Hays County’s minimum degree of intensity standard is set at 5 acres with 6 colonies. For each additional 1.5 acres one additional hive is required.

ACRES	HIVES	ACRES	HIVES	ACRES	HIVES
5	6	11	10	17	14
6.5	7	12.5	11	18.5	15
8	8	14	12	20	16
9.5	9	15.5	13		

Contact Information

Hays Central Appraisal District 512-268-2522 Agricultural Department
Melisa Dickerson, AG&Wildlife Appraiser x265 mdickerson@hayscad.com
Dabby Ritchie, RPA, AG Appraiser x245 ritchie@hayscad.com
Rosario Barrientos, Department Assistant x241 rbarrientos@hayscad.com

WILLIAMSON COUNTY

Beekeeping

Beekeeping is an agricultural use and shall qualify for agricultural use productivity valuation if used for pollination or for the production of human food or other tangible products having a commercial value. (Sec. 23.51(2) Tax Code).

23.51

Text of subd. (2) effective until Jan. 1, 2012, if constitutional amendment (S.J.R. No. 16) is approved.

(2) "Agricultural use: includes but is not limited to the following activities: cultivating the soil, producing crops for human food, animal feed, or planting seed or for the production of fibers; floriculture, viticulture, and horticulture; raising or keeping livestock; raising or keeping exotic animals for the production of human food or of fiber, leather, pelts, or other tangible products having a commercial value; planting cover crops or leaving land idle for the purpose of participating in a governmental program, provided the land is not used for residential purposes or a purpose inconsistent with agricultural use; and planting cover crops or leaving land idle in conjunction with normal crop or livestock rotation procedure. The term also includes the use of land to produce or harvest logs and posts for the use in constructing or repairing fences, pens, barns, or other agricultural improvements on adjacent qualified open-space land having the same owner and devoted to a different agricultural use. The term also includes the use of land for wildlife management. The term also includes the use of land to raise or keep bees for pollination or for the production of human food or other tangible products having a commercial value, provided that the land used is not less than 5 or more than 20 acres.

Acreage Requirement

The State of Texas (set by HB 2049) has set a minimum of five (5) acres and a maximum of twenty (20) acres to qualify beekeeping as an agricultural use.

Intensity Requirement

The minimum degree of intensity was established using [Section 131.001 Texas Agriculture Code's](#) definition of an apiary, which is a place where six or more colonies of bees or nuclei of bees are kept. A colony is the hive and its equipment and appurtenances including bees, comb, honey, pollen and brood.

For each additional two (2) acres, one additional hive is required. If additional acreage is less than two (2) acres, no additional hive is required. For example, if a property owner has fifteen acres of land used for beekeeping, eleven hives would be needed to qualify.

First 5 acres	6 hives
<u>Additional 10 acres</u>	<u>5 hives</u>
Total Hives Required	11 hives

History Requirement

When property owners initially qualify for agricultural appraisal they must show proof of history for agricultural use / beekeeping for any of the five preceding seven years. One way to do this is to provide export, import or intra-state permits, which are required by the Texas Apiary Inspection Service to transport hives. Also, historic financial records indicating active honey production and /or leases.