VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT
OF AGRICULTURE AND
CONSUMER SERVICES

Since their introduction in the early 1600s, honey bees have been an essential part of agriculture in North America. Production of honey is the most widely viewed benefit of honey bees. However, their value as pollinators far exceeds honey production.

The [**Virginia Bee Law**](https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title3.2/chapter44/)authorizes an apiary inspection program which promotes the science of beekeeping, as well as regulates the movement of honey bees into the state and the sale of bees, queens and used bee equipment. The Virginia Bee Law requires that honey bees on combs, hives and equipment with combs must be accompanied by a certificate of health issued by the Office of Plant Industry Services prior to being sold in Virginia. In addition, any person who brings honey bees on combs or used equipment with comb into the Commonwealth must first obtain an [**Entry Permit**](https://www.vdacs.virginia.gov/pdf/Bee-Hives-Entry-Permit-Application.pdf) from Virginia’s State Apiarist. Queens and packaged honey bees brought into the Commonwealth must be accompanied by a certificate of health issued by the state of origin.

* [**Entry Permit Application for Honey Bee Hives & Equipment**](http://www.vdacs.virginia.gov/pdf/Bee-Hives-Entry-Permit-Application.pdf)
* [**Entry Requirements for Honey Bee Hives & Appliances**](http://townhall.virginia.gov/L/GetFile.cfm?File=GuidanceDocs\301\GDoc_VDACS_3254_v5.pdf)
* [**Shipping Requirements for Package Bees & Queens**](http://townhall.virginia.gov/L/GetFile.cfm?File=GuidanceDocs\301\GDoc_VDACS_2552_v8.pdf)
* [**Contact Information for Apiary Inspections**](https://www.vdacs.virginia.gov/pdf/Apiary%20Inspection%20Map.pdf) (pdf)

To facilitate communication between beekeepers and agricultural producers and pesticides applicators VDACS has acquired BeeCheck™, Apiary Registry by FieldWatch®. The program is an on-line system for mapping apiary locations and providing beekeeper contact information. Participation is free and voluntary.

* [**Virginia BeeCheck™ Apiary Mapping**](http://va.beecheck.org/)
* [**BeeCheck™ Fact Sheet**](https://www.vdacs.virginia.gov/pdf/BeeCheck-Fact-Sheet.pdf)

For interstate movement of hives, Virginia uses a uniform inspection certificate. Virginia also participates in the Mid-Atlantic States Agreement, which specifies inspection requirements for bee diseases and pests.

Office of Plant Industry Services staff members frequently give presentations, participate in demonstrations and conduct programs to educate the public about the importance of honey bees, beekeeping practices and pollination.

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