

ADOPT-A-HIVE

Quarter 2 - 2021

The beekeeping season is officially underway! A lot of time (literally months) is involved with getting to the point where your adopted bees begin foraging in preparation for the upcoming winter season.

As part of the natural cycle of being beekeepers, the reality is that, sometimes, bee colonies just don't make it through the winter **despite a beekeeper's best efforts**. While your colony was doing very well coming into mid-February, the harsh cold snaps we regularly experience in our environment proved to be too much this time and, unfortunately, we lost them.

That said, we've introduced a **brand new (and vibrant) colony into your adopted beehive** for this season. However, unlike previous years where we've [installed a 3 lb. bee package](#) to revitalize the hive, this time we were able to introduce a **full-blown swarm**.

Honey bee swarms are characterized by a large group of bees that leave a beehive (man-made or otherwise) in search of a new home. Each swarm contains *all* of the necessary components to start a new colony.

Did you know? When swarming, the bee colony designates a number of "scouts" who's job is to find safe new living places for the colony. When viewing a swarm of bees, those flying outside the main cluster are almost always scout bees.

Full swarms are a great because that there are usually far more bees in a swarm than there are in a 3 lb. package. In a typical bee package, we expect to get anywhere from **10,000 - 30,000** bees. With your swarm, however, we estimated that we captured between **60,000 - 80,000** bees!

“The way humanity manages or mismanages its nature-based assets, including pollinators, will in part define our collective future in the 21st century”

As you can see, this swarm has created a huge population disparity that **helps your adopted colony grow much faster**. It also dramatically increases the likelihood that the bees will survive the following winter (though this is never a guarantee).

Note: *While honey bee swarms can look menacing, believe it or not, they are actually extremely docile when swarming. At this stage, the colony is solely focused on finding a new home. They are not even slightly interested in passersby. As long as you don't poke a stick at the colony, etc. it is nearly 100% guaranteed that the bees will leave you and everyone else alone.*

We're very excited to have this new colony of bees in your adopted beehive and look forward to their progress this year!

-ACHIM STEINER