



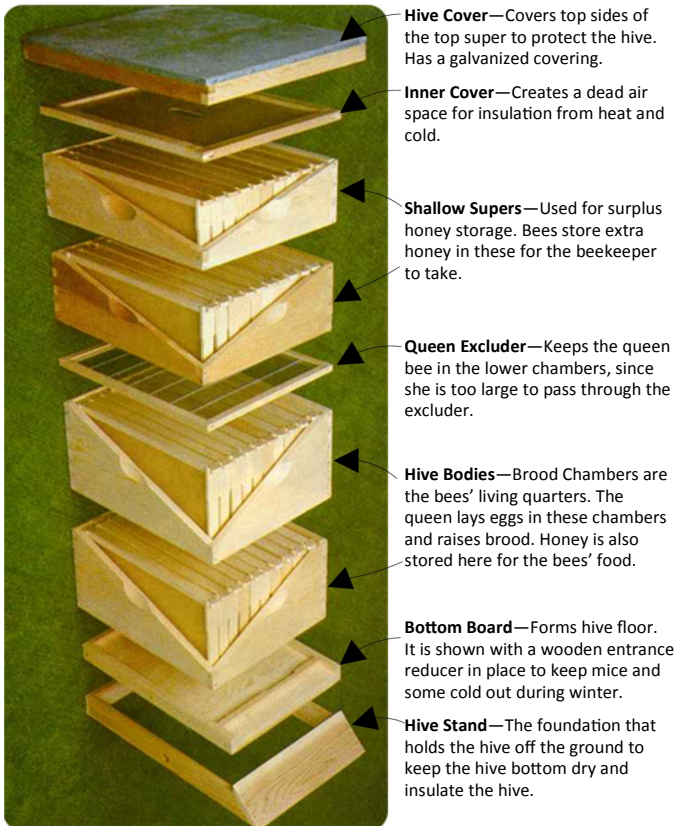
Bees Make Honey

STAR of the Hive
Queen Bee



Components of a Hive

A modern beehive is like a highly-efficient multi-storied factory. Each story (layer) has a specific function. These layers work together to provide a home for the bees and a honey factory for the beekeeper.



Hive Cover—Covers top sides of the top super to protect the hive. Has a galvanized covering.

Inner Cover—Creates a dead air space for insulation from heat and cold.

Shallow Supers—Used for surplus honey storage. Bees store extra honey in these for the beekeeper to take.

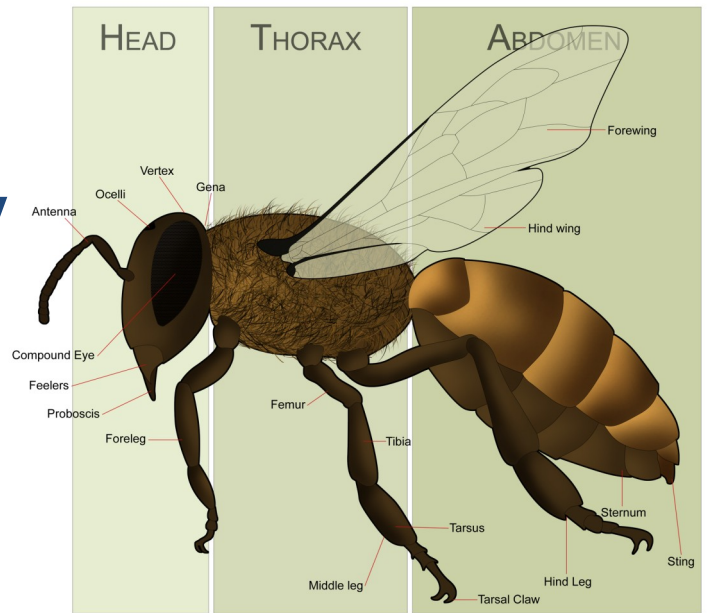
Queen Excluder—Keeps the queen bee in the lower chambers, since she is too large to pass through the excluder.

Hive Bodies—Brood Chambers are the bees' living quarters. The queen lays eggs in these chambers and raises brood. Honey is also stored here for the bees' food.

Bottom Board—Forms hive floor. It is shown with a wooden entrance reducer in place to keep mice and some cold out during winter.

Hive Stand—The foundation that holds the hive off the ground to keep the hive bottom dry and insulate the hive.

Successful beekeeping requires easy manipulation of the frames of brood and honey. The beekeeper wants to provide a surplus of honey beyond that needed by the bees to live on and rear their replacements. It is this surplus that the beekeeper removes and markets. If the beekeeper removes too much honey, the bees will not have enough to eat and will die.



Honey is one of the oldest sweeteners used by man. Ancient Egyptians valued it highly for its medicinal and healing properties. Honey is made when honeybees collect the nectar from plants. The bees then modify the nectar and store it in a honeycomb.

Bees aren't the smartest of God's creations, yet they still can fly and land with pin-point accuracy. Somehow, they find their way from the hive to flowers filled with nectar, collect the nectar, pollinate flowers, and make it back to the hive before dark. Farmers depend on the bee pollination to grow fruit and vegetables, so if there were no more bees...well, you do the math.

Bees collect nectar from flowers and store it in "honey stomachs," separate from their true stomachs. When they return to the hive, they regurgitate the nectar and either contact other worker bees for more processing or dump it directly into the honeycomb. The bees then beat their tiny mighty wings to fan air through the hive to evaporate excess water from the honey. Finally, they cover honeycomb cells with wax to save the honey for whenever they get hungry.

It may be disgusting to think about thousands of honey bees lining up and regurgitate together to make honey, but humans have harvested bee barf and eaten it for thousands of years. Incidentally, honey is the only insect-created food that humans can eat.

Beekeepers collect excess honey to extract, process, package, sell, and deliver to your table. Beekeepers ensure they take only excess honey and leave enough for the bees to eat. After all, it's only fair to let the bees, who did most of the work, enjoy their own honey.

