



RIVERSIDE COUNTY AGRICULTURAL COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

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January 17, 2024

APIARY REGISTRATION LETTER

To: Apiary Owners / Beekeepers in Riverside County

This letter is to inform you that **Apiary Registration in the County of Riverside for the year 2024 is now open.**

California Food and Agriculture Code Section (FAC) 29040 requires every person that is the owner, broker, or is in possession of an apiary that is located within the state, on the first day of January of each year, to register the number of colonies in each apiary that is owned or possessed, and the location of each apiary, with the Agricultural Commissioner's Office. FAC § 29042 requires every person who moves bees into the state, or who otherwise comes into possession of an apiary that is located within the state after the first day of January, shall register the name of the owner and the number and location of colonies moved into the state or so acquired within 30 days after coming into possession of the apiary. Movements of bee colonies within the county, or into or out of the county, must also be reported to the Agricultural Commissioner's Office within 72 hours.

Bee registration and colony movements can be reported to the Agricultural Commissioner's Office by using the BeeWhere system at <https://beewhere.calagpermits.org>, in person or by email.

Apiarists will be able to remit payment of registration fees through the BeeWhere system once the payment portal is established. **Those having registered their colonies for 2024, through BeeWhere, will be considered in compliance until that time.**

If you have any questions or need assistance, please call our office at (951) 955-3045 or email us at Bees@rivco.org.

Sincerely,

Misael Martinez
Deputy Agricultural Commissioner/Sealer
Riverside County Agricultural Commissioner's Office

Encl.
Sections of the FAC & Riverside County Ordinance No. 551

FOOD AND AGRICULTURAL CODE - FAC

DIVISION 13. BEE MANAGEMENT AND HONEY PRODUCTION

CHAPTER 1. Bees

29040.

Every person that is the owner, broker, or is in possession of an apiary that is located within the state, on the first day of January of each year, shall register the number of colonies in each apiary that is owned or possessed by the person and the location of each apiary. Every person required to register under this article, shall do so on the first day of January of each year in which they maintain, possess, or are in possession of an apiary, or within 30 days thereafter, as prescribed in this article.

29042.

Every person who moves bees into the state or otherwise comes into possession of an apiary that is located within the state after the first day of January, shall register the name of the owner and the number and location of colonies moved into the state or so acquired within 30 days after coming into possession of the apiary.

29043.

Registration of an apiary shall be filed with the commissioner of the county in which the apiary is located, or with the director if there is no commissioner in the county. The director shall adopt a form of registration to be used statewide, which shall include a request for notification of use of pesticide in accordance with Section 29101. All commissioners shall use the same form.

29044.

(a) Each beekeeper, apiary owner, apiary operator, broker, or person in possession of any apiary, shall pay, in addition to any other fees imposed under this chapter, an annual registration fee not to exceed two hundred fifty dollars (\$250) to the secretary on January 1 of each year, to cover the cost of apiary registration. The secretary shall by regulation adopt and periodically update a schedule of the registration fees that shall include late fees for anyone who fails to register an apiary under Sections 29041 and 29042. The board of supervisors of any county, with the approval of the secretary, may waive the registration fee for any beekeeper, apiary owner, apiary operator, or person, who is a hobbyist not in the business of beekeeping and who possesses nine or fewer colonies.

(b) The secretary may enter into contracts with counties to reimburse the counties for costs incurred by the commissioner in the administration and enforcement of this chapter. The source for reimbursement shall be the funds received from the registration fees described in subdivision (a). The reimbursement shall be apportioned to the commissioner in relation to each county's expenditure. The secretary shall make the payments to each county only if the commissioner acts in compliance with the contract entered into pursuant to this subdivision.

(c) The secretary, after consulting with the board, shall establish standards of performance for administration and enforcement.

(d) For purposes of this section, "broker" means a person or entity that receives a monetary profit from the managing of beehives, hive equipment, or honeybees that they do not own, but have control of, through a private or public agreement between one or more parties.

29045.

It is unlawful for a person to maintain any apiary that is not registered pursuant to this article. Each registration is valid until January 1 of the following year.

29046.

(a) No person shall maintain an apiary on premises other than that of his or her residence unless the apiary is identified as follows:

(1) By a sign that is prominently displayed on the entrance side of the apiary or stenciled on the hive, that states in dark letters not less than one inch in height on a background of contrasting color, the name of the owner or person responsible for the apiary, his or her address and telephone number, or if he or she has no telephone, a statement to that effect.

(2) If the governing body of the county or city in which the apiary is located has provided by ordinance for the identification of apiaries, in the manner that is prescribed in the ordinance.

(b) No person shall locate or maintain an apiary on private land not owned or leased by the person unless the person has approval from the owner of record, or an authorized agent of the owner of record, and can establish approval upon demand of the secretary or commissioner. The approval shall include the name and phone number of the person granting approval.

(c)

(1) No person shall locate or maintain an apiary on any public land without the expressed oral or written approval of the entity that owns, leases, controls, or occupies the land, and can establish this approval upon demand of the secretary or the commissioner. The approval shall include the name and telephone number of the person granting the approval. During the citrus bloom period, as established by the commissioner, including 72 hours before the declaration of the bloom period until 48 hours after the conclusion of the bloom period, the apiary operator shall obtain written permission to place bees on public land, and shall make it available to the secretary or the commissioner upon demand. Any apiary located or maintained on public land without lawful consent is a public nuisance and may be subject to seizure by the secretary or the commissioner.

(2) The secretary or commissioner may commence proceedings in the superior court of the county or city and county in which the seizure is made petitioning the court for judgment forfeiting the apiary. Upon the filing of the petition, the clerk of the court shall fix a time for a hearing and cause notices to be posted for 14 days in at least three public places in the place where the court is held, if the person owning the apiary is unknown, setting forth the substance of the petition and the time and place fixed for its hearing. At that time, the court shall hear and determine the proceeding and upon proof that the apiary was located or maintained on public lands without approval of the entity, may order the apiary forfeited. Any apiary so forfeited shall be sold or destroyed by the secretary or the commissioner. The proceeds from all sales shall be used in accordance with Section 29032.

29070.

(a) Any person relocating a colony of bees from a registered apiary in one county to another county, where the apiary is not registered for the current calendar year, shall notify the destination commissioner within 72 hours of the first movement or entry into the county. The notification shall include all of the following:

(1) The name and address of the apiary operator or the operator's designated representative.

(2) A telephone number where the apiary operator or the operator's designated representative may be reached.

(b) The apiary operator or the operator's designated representative shall provide locations of each colony upon request by the commissioner of any county.

(c) Subsequent movement into the destination county shall require further notification to the commissioner within 72 hours of movement.

(d) When the apiary operator removes the last colony from the county, the operator shall notify the commissioner of that final movement within 72 hours.

29070.5.

Any apiary operator or the apiary operator's designated representative relocating a colony of bees within a county where the apiary is currently registered shall notify the commissioner of the movement within 72 hours of the relocation.

Riverside County Ordinance No. 551.1 – BEES

Section 2 - Location of apiaries.

A. All apiaries owned or kept within the unincorporated territory of Riverside County shall be kept and located at a place at least three hundred (300) feet from any and all public roads.

B. All apiaries owned or kept within the unincorporated territory of Riverside County shall be kept and located at a place at least five hundred (500) feet distant from the nearest structure used as a dwelling or as a place of business, and such apiaries shall not be kept or maintained at a lesser distance thereto unless the owner or the person having control or possession of such apiaries first procures permission from the owner or the person having control or possession of the structure as a dwelling or place of business to do so, and upon request, satisfactory evidence of such permission shall be furnished to the agriculture commissioner.

- C. All apiaries owned or kept within the unincorporated territory of Riverside County near school yards or places where people congregate shall be located and maintained behind barriers, natural or otherwise, so as to cause bees to fly at a high altitude over such school yard or places where people congregate.
- D. No apiary shall be maintained in any particular location within the unincorporated territory of the county whenever there are bees from such apiary which are entering land, other than where such apiary is situated, in an amount such as to endanger public health or safety, or to create unreasonable interference with the comfortable enjoyment of life or use of property of others.

Section 3 - Apiary identification.

No apiary shall be kept or maintained by any person on premises other than that of his or her premises unless such apiary is identified either:

- A. By a sign which is prominently displayed on the entrance side of the apiary, that states in black letters not less than one inch in height on a background of contrasting color that name of the owner or person having control or possession of the apiary, his or her address and telephone number, or if he or she has no telephone, a statement to that effect; or
- B. In letters not less than one inch in height on a background of contrasting color, the name of the owner or person in possession of the apiary, his or her address and telephone number stenciled on a beehive located at the entrance of the apiary.

Section 4 - Water supply.

A plentiful supply of fresh water must be furnished and kept available to all apiaries at all times, unless an apiary is so located that the nearest supply of water is an isolated stream or reservoir where water is available to such bees, and all other sources of water at locations where people or animals congregate, dwell, reside or remain are farther from the apiary than the stream or reservoir.

If no such stream or reservoir is available to the bees, the owner or person having control or possession of an apiary shall cause to be placed and maintained a plentiful supply of fresh water within three hundred (300) feet of such apiary.

Section 5 - Hives of bees—Transportation.

When the temperature exceeds fifty-five (55) degrees Fahrenheit, no person shall transport within the county between one-half hour before sunrise and one-half hour after sunset hives of bees, or cause the same to be done, unless such bees are confined by screens in good repair or other equally effective means of confinement.

Section 6 - Apiaries located on premises of another.

No apiaries shall be kept or located upon the premises of another without the owner or the person having control or possession of such apiaries first procuring permission of such premises to do so, and upon request, satisfactory evidence of such permission shall be furnished to the agriculture commissioner.

Section 7 - Bee hazard defined.

"Bee hazard," as used in this chapter, means a condition that exists upon the premises upon which an apiary is located, which is causing bees to enter upon other premises in an amount such as to endanger public health or safety, or to create unreasonable interference with the comfortable enjoyment of life or use of property of others.

Section 8 - Public nuisance.

Any bee hazard in the unincorporated territory of Riverside County is declared to constitute a public nuisance.