



Installing Your Wildflower Meadows' Nuc

Congratulations on the purchase of your new Wildflower Meadows' starter colony!

Transporting Your Nuc

The entrance to your nuc will be sealed and the box netted at the pick-up site. The safest and most highly recommended way to transport your nuc is in the back of a pickup truck. However, many customers have successfully transported their nucs in the back seat of a car. In all cases, please make sure that you have some way of bracing the nuc box so that it does not slide around – or worse – tip over.

The greatest danger to your nuc during transportation is overheating. After leaving the pick-up site, head directly to your colony's new location, avoiding any unnecessary stops along the way while you are transporting live bees.

It is imperative that the nuc not be left in the sun while netted and sealed, except for during transport. When you arrive at your bees' new location, unload and prepare the nuc without delay. Place the nuc box in the exact spot where you wish to keep your bees.

Smoke the bees before you take the netting and entrance cap off. The netting is best removed by cutting it free. You should be suited up in either a bee suit or veil when removing the netting and the entrance cap. After you have removed both, give the bees some time and space to get oriented to their new location.

Installing your Nuc

Nucs are easier to install than a package of bees, but there are still some factors to keep in mind.

If possible, wait about a week before transferring the frames into your own equipment. Your new queen is relatively young, and the bees are still getting accustomed to her, as well as to their new location. It makes sense to let the colony settle into their new environment while still in the nuc box in which they are already comfortable. Do not worry if rain arrives; the cardboard nuc box is coated, and can tolerate rainy weather for a reasonable period.

During this waiting period, do not place your new empty bee equipment alongside the location where you place the cardboard nuc. You do not want to confuse the bees or train them to avoid your bee equipment. It is better to introduce your new equipment at the same time as when you remove the cardboard nuc box.

When you are ready to transfer the frames into your own equipment, the goal is to make the transfer as seamless as possible for the bees. You will notice that when you open your four-frame nuc box that there are actually five frames – four frames of bees – and an extra frame of new foundation. This extra frame is Wildflower Meadows' gift to you to get you started on your way to a full hive. With any luck, the bees may have started building out comb on it!

Carefully transfer the nuc frames to the center of a deep hive body, one frame at a time, making sure that the frames end up together in the exact same order and direction as they were originally facing in the nuc box. You may want to first remove all the empty frames from your new deep hive body, so that you have plenty of room with which to work. When finished transferring the five frames, add your empty frames back into the colony, on the outside, to fill and complete your hive body.

When you are finished transferring the frames, shake the nuc box over the hive body to clear out any of the remaining bees. Make sure that you look for bees under the side folds of the cardboard box and shake these out as well. Try to clear out as many bees as you can, lest you accidentally leave the queen in the cardboard box. Move the empty or near-empty cardboard box at least ten feet away from the original location, so that bees returning from foraging are not tempted to return to it.

Please note that the cardboard nuc box lid rests higher over the bees than a standard hive body lid. The bees have a tendency to build a layer of wax on top of the frames while they are housed in the cardboard box. Before closing your hive body, you should scrape any of this extra wax away off the tops of the frames with your hive tool, so that your new lid will fit snugly over the frames leaving no exposed gaps. To keep your new colony well protected and limit the possibility of robbing, you may wish to use an entrance reducer.

Once your nuc has been transferred, you can begin feeding the bees at this time, if you wish. If you are starting your hive with all new foundation (as opposed to already built-out honeycomb frames), you will want to encourage the bees to build out the new foundation, by feeding sugar syrup.