



**VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND CONSUMER SERVICES
DIVISION OF CONSUMER PROTECTION
OFFICE OF PLANT INDUSTRY SERVICES**

GUIDANCE DOCUMENT

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Subject:	Beehive Grant Program
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PURPOSE

To establish guidelines and requirements for qualification under the Beehive Grant Program.

BACKGROUND

- The Virginia General Assembly created the Beehive Grant Fund (Fund) for the purpose of promoting the establishment of new beehives in the Commonwealth.
- Any individual who either purchases a new hive or purchases materials or supplies to construct a new hive may apply for a grant from the Fund.
- Each grant shall be in the amount of actual expenses incurred for the purchase of items to establish a new hive up to \$200 per hive, not to exceed \$2,400 per individual per year.
- Grants will be awarded from the Beehive Grant Fund as monies are available. In the event that the amount of funds requested exceeds the amount of funds available during the fiscal year when the request was made, such grants shall be paid in the next fiscal year in which funds are available.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

- Only residents of the Commonwealth of Virginia who are 18 years of age or older at the time the application is submitted are eligible to receive a grant from the Fund.
- Funds received through the Beehive Grant Program are subject to state and federal taxes.

- Payment of funds is subject to the provisions of the Set-off Debt Collection Act regarding the collection of delinquent debts owed to Virginia’s administrative government units and courts (Va Code § 58.1-520 through § 58.1-535).
- New hives funded through this program, either fully or in part, shall be installed and remain within the Commonwealth of Virginia.
- A new hive shall consist of a minimum of two deep hive boxes with frames and foundation, a bottom board, and cover (for a Langstroth-style hive), or a hive of equivalent capacity that has movable frames with combs or foundation that cause the bees to construct brood combs and that may be removed from the hive without injuring other combs.
- A qualifying purchase must include all of the following qualified items, provided the items are used to establish a new hive:
 - Hive box or boxes
 - Frames for the purchased hive box(es)
 - Foundation for frames purchased for the hive box(es)
- The following items will also qualify if purchased in conjunction with the items above:
 - Bottom board
 - Inner cover
 - Outer cover
 - Queen Excluder
 - Entrance Reducer
 - Feeder
- Payment of funds is based on the number of hives specified in an individual’s grant application and cost of qualifying items purchased. Extra hive equipment such as frames in excess of the maximum number of frames for the hive box or boxes purchased, sheets of foundation in excess of the number of qualifying frames purchased, or bottom boards and outer covers in excess of the number of new hives to be constructed will not be considered.
- Non-qualified items include, but are not limited to, hand or electric tools, honey bees or queens, hive stands, raw materials used to fabricate a hive component, used hive components, and personal apparel or equipment. Note: Lumber used to fabricate a hive component is a non-qualified item.
- Qualified items must be used to establish a new hive with a viable colony of honey bees within one year of the date the items were purchased.
- Qualified items must be purchased from beekeeping supply stores and other such vendors, or from beekeeping clubs or associations. Receipts must clearly show vendor or beekeeping

club/association name, date of purchase, and an itemized list to include the quantity, description and cost of each qualified item. Bundled or prepackaged purchases containing qualified items must include an itemized receipt or an itemized listing of each item and associated costs.

APPLICATION PROCESS

- Requests for grants from the Fund may be submitted electronically to the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS) utilizing the online application that is accessible at <http://www.vdacs.virginia.gov/plant-industry-services-beehive-grant-program.shtml>.
- Applicants may send completed applications and required documentation to the address below. Printed application forms are available upon request. Please be advised that the processing of applications received by mail may be delayed.

VDACS
Office of Plant Industry Services
Beehive Grant Program
P.O. Box 1163
Richmond, VA 23218

- Upon completion of the application process, individuals will be registered as a beekeeper with VDACS.
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- Applicants are required to provide the following documentation with their application:
 - A completed [Commonwealth of Virginia Substitute W-9 form](#), *Request for Taxpayer Identification Number and Certification*. Copies of the form may be obtained from the Virginia Department of Accounts or the VDOA website at http://www.doa.virginia.gov/General_Accounting/Forms/W9_COVSubstitute.pdf.
 - Itemized receipts clearly showing vendor name, date of purchase, as well as the quantity, description and cost of qualified items. If the receipts also list non-qualified items, applicants must strike through the non-qualified items.
 - Receipts for the purchase of a kit or bundled items which includes an itemized list and the associated cost of each qualifying item.
- Completed applications will be processed for payment in the order in which they are received. However, because of funding limitations, applicants are encouraged to submit

their applications as soon as practical. If requested amounts exceed available Beehive Grant funds, applications will be retained until such time as funds are available.

- Completed applications, including a W-9 form and receipts, must be submitted within twelve (12) months of the purchase date of qualifying items.
- Applicants may elect to receive their grant payments electronically. To do so, applicants would need to submit a *Grantee EDI Form* directly to the Virginia Department of Accounts (DOA). Please contact DOA at edi@doa.virginia.gov or Virginia Department of Accounts, eCommerce Unit, P.O. Box 1971, Richmond, VA 23218 for additional information.

INSPECTION

VDACS reserves the right to inquire into the legitimacy of any grant application, as well as the right to inspect any bee colony established with grant funds. A colony shall consist of a laying queen, brood, and at least 10 frames of adult bees in a Langstroth-style hive or its equivalent. The hive must contain honey and pollen in amounts sufficient to be sustainable into the following year.

STATE AND LOCAL REQUIREMENTS RELATED TO BEEKEEPING ACTIVITY

- Applicants must comply with all state and local requirements related to hive management and other beekeeping activity. A copy of the Virginia Bee Law (Va Code § 3.2-4400 *et seq.*) may be found at <http://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title3.2/chapter44>. Applicants should contact the locality or localities in which the hive(s) will be located to ensure compliance with all applicable ordinances.

DISCLAIMERS

- By submitting an application for Beehive Grant Funds, the applicant agrees to hold free and harmless the Commonwealth of Virginia and its officers, employees, and agents from and against all loss, liability, injury, and damage, including but not limited to injury or death to any person or damage to any property, resulting from or caused by, directly or indirectly, the applicant's beekeeping activity.
- Before a grantee receives payment, his/her grant funds will be applied to any debts owed to the Commonwealth of Virginia.
- VDACS reserves the right to revise these guidelines at any time.

QUESTIONS

- Email inquiries regarding the Beehive Grant Program to VABees@vdacs.virginia.gov.