

Beginning organic beekeeping workshop (July 9-30) | Hawaii 24/7

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Richard Spiegel works with his bees. (Photo courtesy of Volcano Island Honey)

MEDIA RELEASE

WHEN: 1-5 p.m. Saturdays – July 9, 16, 23 and 30

WHERE: Volcano Island Honey, Ahualoa (3 classes) and Bee Love Apiaries, Papaaloa (1 class)

FEE: \$200 per person, includes: Four week class, class book and swarm trap.

Basic Beekeeping Supplies: Hat, veil, gloves, hive tool, smoker, bee brush, frame grip and entrance feeder will be provided for use during class. If you want to order the Basic Beekeeping Supplies to keep, there is an additional \$150 supplies charge.

Class is limited to 15 participants. Five class scholarships are available which include the 4-week class, class book, swarm trap and basic beekeeping supplies are available. Scholarship applicants will be chosen based upon likelihood of keeping hives and/or ability to help with public outreach and education.

Registration and scholarship applications are available at

Intermediate Class: For beekeepers with some experience, there will be an Intermediate class in October, which will focus specifically on the needs and concerns of the attendees.

Why Learn About Beekeeping?

Hawaii's declining bee population is not just a beekeeper's problem, it is an agricultural problem. Without an adequate bee population and cadre of skilled beekeepers, agriculture in Hawaii will begin to see a decline in production as wild bee populations crash.

Beekeeping is one of the few agricultural endeavors without a negative environmental footprint- beekeeping is beneficial to agriculture and increases agricultural production.

In Hawaii, wild bees currently pollinate the following major crops: coffee, macadamia nuts, melons, tomatoes, cucumbers, citrus, avocado and guava. The few commercial beekeepers are migratory and move bees into blooms, but pollination services are not commonplace, and there are not enough beekeepers and bees to go around.

Therefore, it is important for agriculturalists and backyard farmers to learn how to keep and manage hives themselves. More managed hives by beekeepers – who are aware and educated about varroa and other diseases – dispersed throughout island orchards and backyards will help the bee population survive.

Class instructors Richard Spiegel of Volcano Island Honey Company and Jennifer Bach of Bee Love Apiaries share a common philosophy about the importance of the connection between bees and the beekeeper, and the bees to the environment as a whole.

The practical and esoteric side of this connection will be explored, and Richard and Jennifer will discuss the importance of holistic beekeeping and agricultural practices in today's environment.

Despite their philosophical similarities, Richard and Jennifer run vastly different apiaries. Volcano Island Honey is a commercial apiary concerned with annual honey production. At Bee Love Apiaries, honey production is not their primary focus.

In a recent article in Edible Hawaiian Islands magazine Jenny says, "We don't want to industrialize our bees. The bees are part of our family."

The Class

This 4-week class is for commercial and backyard farmers and anyone wanting to learn more about beekeeping. The series includes both class room and hands-on learning.

Class topics include:

- * The Bees: History of Honeybees and Their Relationship with Humans
- * Beginning Beekeeping: The Hive, Tools of the Trade, Beekeeping in Hawaii, Managing the Colony, Producing Honey
- * Setting Up: Obtaining Hives, Bees and Queens, Design and Management of Bee Yard
- * Constructing Hives: Top Bar Hives, Langstroth Hives, Pollination Hives.
- * Bee Problems: Honey Bee Disorders, Diseases, Pests, IPM
- * The Swarm: Swarm Dynamics, Catching Swarms
- * Keeping it Natural: Holistic Beekeeping, Biodynamic Standards, Organic Standards.

The Instructors:

Richard Spiegel

Richard Spiegel



Richard began beekeeping as a hobby in 1975 with his late wife Laura. For 16 years, they worked together to develop a way to capture the exquisite nectar of the kiwi flower in its most natural form, giving the honey away to family and friends.

When Laura died in 1993, Richard left his position as executive director of West Hawaii Mediation Services to get his feet back on the ground. He returned to the kiawe forest to work with the bees to sooth his soul and try to create a business based upon a model of compassion — for bees, environment, customers and employees.

Today, Volcano Island Honey Company has been producing Rare Hawaiian Organic White Honey for 27 years and is one of Hawaii's most successful examples of a "green" business that is producing an organic value-added agricultural product.

National Geographic Traveler Magazine calls Rare Hawaiian Organic White Honey "some of the best honey in the world," and says that Volcano Island Honey Company is a "food artisan" company ... that puts "passion" and "heart" into its products.

Key to Volcano Island Honey Company's success is a philosophy which emphasizes continuous improvement in beekeeping techniques, nonviolent and non toxic methods to harvest honey and in all aspects of production.

In the beginning beekeeping class, Richard will share his knowledge from over 30 years of organic beekeeping and honey production in Hawaii, as well as his philosophical ideals about farming and running an environmentally and socially sensitive and responsible business.

Jenny Bach

Jennifer began beekeeping while completing her Bachelors of Science in Biology at the University of Hawaii, Hilo. She has been a beekeeper for nine years and is the owner of Bee Love Apiaries.



Jenny Bach

Bee Love Apiaries removes unwanted honeybees from homes without using poisons or inflicting harm on bees.

Jennifer is also the creator, coordinator and educator for the Honeybee Education Program and Honeybees for Farmers Project.

The program offers free outreach presentations to children of any age and beekeeping courses to high school students.

Jennifer's beekeeping philosophy is rooted in natural and holistic practices. Holistic beekeeping promotes a natural life cycle that benefits the well-being and genetic diversity of honeybees.

Bee guardianship and natural hive design encourages people to find ways to interact with bees that are truly sustainable – for their prosperity as well as ours.

You might be interested in:

1. [Beginning beekeeping classes & hands-on workshop](#)
2. [FOLK hosts honeybee talk \(June 26\)](#)
3. [The bees and the trees \(and tomatoes, cucumbers, melons, mac nuts...\)](#)

