Bee-ginning Our Flow Adventure

Mar 2015 – Phil fascinated by Flow Hive video on Facebook

Should we get one?

YES

Should we learn about bees while we wait?

YES

I LOVE IT !!
Ordered 2 Flow Hives

Why hurry? Never do today what you can put off until tomorrow.

NO

Are you kidding? We don’t know anything about bees!

May 2015 – Took 2 hour Intro to Beekeeping class

Should we get some bees?

NO

May 2015 – Took 2 hour Intro to Beekeeping class

NO

Search internet for answers

Is there honey yet?

NO

Is there honey yet?

NO

Search books for answers

YES

June 2015 – Bought 2 NUCs – Became be-havers

Aug 2015
Found MoCo Beekeepers
YEAH !!!

Received Flow Hive in Feb 2016
What did we get?

- Flow Hive Classic 6 Frame
  - Flow Super
  - 6 Flow Frames = 8 Langstroth
  - 6 Flow Tubes
  - Flow Key
  - Brood Box with 8 Frames
  - Screened Bottom Board (slanted)
  - Gabled Roof
  - Inner Cover, Queen Excluder
Preparing for Harvest

• How can I tell what is happening in there?
  – Can inspect the bottom boxes, but hard to inspect Flow Super
  – Hard to see through the windows

• How do you know it is time?
  – It is HEAVY
  – See honey in frames
  – See capping on side frame
How much honey is in there?
Is the honey ready (capped)?
Equipment

• What tools do I need?
  – Table or stand, containers, Flow tubes, Flow key, Pliers, Solid piece for bottom board, Spray bottle of water, Paper towels, lawn chair and iced tea

• NOT Needed
  – Fume pad and stinky or equivalent, bee brush, capping scratcher, uncapping knife, extractor . . .
What equipment do I need?
It’s a Hot Day!
Flow Tube and Flow Key in Place
How fast can you fill that jar?
Cover to keep out curious visitors
Extracting multiple frames
Video – the first jar!
Video – Watch that honey flow!
Lessons Learned

• Bees did not accept plastic Flow Frames – coated with beeswax to attract bees
• Very flexible – can extract single frame or whole super, but no stopping mid-frame
• Honey comes out fast – take containers large enough to hold a full frame to minimize spillage – Each flow frame can hold approximately 2 ½ quarts of honey
• Cover flow tube and flowing honey to keep out unwanted visitors
• Clean up spills quickly to avoid attracting outsiders
• Block area opened by flow key to discourage bees from congregating in and around opening
Block upper opening to keep bees out
Next Steps

• Need to find way to measure moisture content in honey since can’t easily see if cells are capped. Suggestions?

• Download instructions from internet for conversion of existing supers to flow supers

• Convert existing 10 frame supers to flow supers in time for next honey flow
Success – straight from the hive!