

Honeybee Hive Establishment Costs

Beekeeping is a growing industry in Mississippi and across the United States. Whether the desire is to consume locally sourced/home grown honey or to sell at local farmers markets, many Mississippians are interested in beginning beekeeping.

Several research-based resources are available to help current and future beekeepers. Mississippi State University Extension [Publication 3594 Beginning Beekeeping in Mississippi](#) outlines the equipment needed and provides many factors to consider when starting colonies. Oklahoma State University, the University of Missouri, and several other land-grant universities have excellent publications on honeybee production and budgeting. This publication provides some cost estimates for Mississippians who are interested in getting started with honeybees and honey production.

Costs are separated into six categories: hive costs, hive accessory costs, bee costs, equipment costs, supply needs, and miscellaneous costs. Costs may vary depending on the desired setup. To demonstrate the potential costs, an example budget for the establishment of one honeybee hive has been created, and the estimates are shown in Tables 1 and 2. The budget is based on a Langstroth 10-frame brood box and the necessary equipment for a beekeeper to have a full hive setup by the end of the first year.

With only one hive, significant honey harvesting is unlikely to occur in the first year, but some cost estimates for the needed honey harvesting equipment are discussed later in this publication. An annual operating budget with annual cost and return estimates will be developed in a forthcoming publication.

The establishment costs presented in Table 1 were obtained from several sources including beekeeping suppliers, online, and local Mississippi publications. Many different costs were

obtained for similar pieces of equipment; these costs came from various suppliers. Then, the costs were averaged, and those numbers are listed in Table 1. Thus, since the costs are an average, potential beekeepers might find similar equipment at slightly lower costs or possibly higher prices depending on their preference for a certain item.

Regardless, the expenses shown in Table 1 provide potential beekeepers with a relevant guide and starting point for entry into beekeeping and honey production. Additionally, Table 3 provides a template for beekeepers to develop their own individual budget. The MSU Department of Agricultural Economics website also has a [budget spreadsheet available](#).

The honey harvesting equipment and supply costs presented in Table 2 were obtained by the same method as the cost estimates in Table 1. Multiple sources were used, including in-state and local suppliers, beekeeping suppliers, and online sources. Multiple costs were obtained for similar equipment, and the average of those cost estimates are presented in Table 2. Like the hive costs, beekeepers may find that items are priced less than the estimated cost or potentially more, depending on their preference.

Cost estimates provided in this publication are for establishing one hive. Beekeepers who set up additional hives would have some cost savings per hive since some equipment can be used across multiple hives. Additionally, some of the expenses associated with hive establishment and honey harvesting will be usable over several years and are not annual expenses.

As mentioned previously, a follow-up to this publication is forthcoming and will address annual operating costs and revenue sources as well as spreading these establishment costs over the useful life of the equipment.

Table 1. Honeybee hive establishment budget.

Hive Supplies	Cost
1st Langstroth Deep Brood Box (with frames)	\$58.19
2nd Langstroth Deep Brood Box (with frames)	\$58.19
3rd Langstroth Medium Box (with frames)	\$52.68
4th Langstroth Medium Box (with frames)	\$52.68
Cinder blocks (4)(for Hive stand)	\$10.72
23/32 4x 8 treated plyboard (for Hive Stand)	\$13.75
Total hive supplies cost	\$246.21
Hive Accessories	Cost
Inner Cover	\$27.99
Telescoping Outer Cover	\$49.24
Bottom Board (screened)	\$45.49
Entrance Reducer	\$9.84
Internal Feeder	\$32.32
Mite Count Board	\$34.32
Total hive accessories cost	\$199.21
Bees	Cost
Nuc	\$180.83
Total bee cost	\$180.83
Equipment Needs	Cost
Beekeeper Suit with Gloves and Veil	\$58.76
Hive Tool	\$11.52
Frame Gripper	\$7.99
Bee Brush	\$7.29
Smoker	\$20.39
Frame Holder	\$17.66
Total equipment cost	\$123.61
Supply Needs	Cost
Smoker Fuel	\$14.47
Sugar	\$25.60
Pollen Patties	\$22.78
Miticide Strips	\$34.00
Beetle Traps	\$12.79
Queen Excluder	\$21.21
Frame Wax	\$15.81
Total supply costs	\$146.66
Miscellaneous Needs	Cost
Gravel	\$15.84
Paint	\$7.98
Other	\$150.00
Total miscellaneous costs	\$173.82
Total hive establishment costs	\$1,070.34

Table 2. Cost estimates for honey harvesting equipment and supplies.

Equipment/Supplies	Cost
Bucket/Lid	\$37.25
Capping Scratcher	\$9.99
Uncapping Knife	\$9.96
Uncapping Tub	\$198.47
Sieve	\$24.99
Bottles/Labels	\$44.32
Other	
Other	
Total	\$324.98

Table 3. Honeybee hive establishment budget template.

Hive Supplies	Cost
1st Langstroth Deep Brood Box (with frames)	
2nd Langstroth Deep Brood Box (with frames)	
3rd Langstroth Medium Box (with frames)	
4th Langstroth Medium Box (with frames)	
Cinder blocks (4) (for hive stand)	
23/32 4 x 8 treated plyboard (for hive stand)	
Total hive supplies cost	
Hive Accessories	Cost
Inner Cover	
Telescoping Outer Cover	
Bottom Board (screened)	
Entrance Reducer	
Internal Feeder	
Mite Count Board	
Total hive accessories cost	
Bees	Cost
Nuc	
Total bee cost	
Equipment Needs	Cost
Beekeeper Suit with Gloves and Veil	
Hive Tool	
Frame Gripper	
Bee Brush	
Smoker	
Frame Holder	
Total equipment cost	

Supply Needs	Cost
Smoker Fuel	
Sugar	
Pollen Patties	
Miticide Strips	
Beetle Traps	
Queen Excluder	
Frame Wax	
Total supply costs	
Miscellaneous Needs	Cost
Gravel	
Paint	
Other	
Total miscellaneous costs	
Total hive establishment costs	

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