

NUCLEUS BEEHIVES: WHAT AM I BUYING (OR SELLING)?

January, 2017— Apiary Inspectors, NC Dept. of Agriculture & Consumer Services

A nucleus beehive (or “nuc”) is basically a smaller version of a full-sized established hive, containing the nucleus or core of what would enable the nuc to grow steadily during spring and summer. For a 5-frame nuc, the contents recommended to enable successful hive growth include:

1. A laying queen (preferably one that’s already been accepted by her nestmates)
2. Drawn comb in most (if not all) frames
3. Brood of all stages in an amount that would cover the combs of the equivalent of at least two deep (8 1/2” x 16 3/4” wax) frames
4. The equivalent of two deep frames of food (pollen and honey)
5. Pest levels NOT exceeding recommended thresholds* (small hive beetles and varroa mites in particular)
6. No evidence of bacterial disease
7. Enough adult bees to cover the equivalent of at least four deep frames

Variations from these contents would typically be reflected in price adjustments.



*threshold levels for beehive pests change over time—consult your local beekeeping expert or apiary inspector for current details