

## Raising Bees for Survival: Should You Do It?

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Of course you should! Raising bees for survival has many benefits and the process itself, though time consuming, isn't particularly difficult. For many, the cost of starting a hive is prohibitive, because beekeeping equipment can be pricey. However, if you build it yourself, it can be fairly affordable.

Today we're going to discuss the merits of raising bees for survival and talk a bit about how to get started.

### Nutrition, Health and Medicinal Purposes

The first benefit of raising bees is, of course, for the honey that they produce. It's delicious and now studies have proven that it's also good for you!

Honey is the only 100% natural sweetener that has been studied and proven to have both health benefits and no negative physical side effects (other than making you pudgy if you eat too much!).

In addition to making your tea delicious, the health benefits of honey are well documented. They



include:

- Honey is a natural antibacterial shown to hamper the growth of such bad bugs as E-Coli, Staphylococcus aureus, salmonella and even the bacteria that causes acne. It also protects cuts, burns and other wounds and helps with the healing process.
- Honey is packed with flavonoids - antioxidants that help reduce the risk of cancer, cardiovascular disease, and even aging.
- Honey is an anti-fungal and anti-inflammatory.
- Honey relieves coughs and sore throats.
- Honey helps relieve allergies
- Equal parts of water, vinegar and honey work as an effective natural anti-parasitic.

In addition to honey, bees also produce propolis, a glue-like substance that they use to seal their hives and keep them sanitary. Propolis has antibacterial, anti-microbial and anti-fungal properties

that are at least as strong as the ones found in honey. As a matter of fact, if an intruding bee dies in the hive, it's mummified in propolis in order to preserve the cleanliness of the hive.

Propolis also:

- Helps relieve pain in cancer patients
- Helps lower cholesterol
- Helps treat endometriosis
- Acts as a powerful antioxidant
- Relieves joint pain

The health and nutritional benefits of honey are only the first reason to raise bees for survival but they're not the only ones. Let's move on!

### Honeycombs Have Many Uses

Before the bees can make honey, they have to build a comb to put it in. The honeycomb is made up of hundreds of identical 6-sided cells lined with a wax that bees secrete from their glands. There are many common uses of honeycombs that would be beneficial in a survival situation, including:



- As a luxury edible. Cut a chunk of the comb off and eat it – it's crunchy, honey-coated deliciousness!
- Candles. Beeswax candles burn longer and cleaner than paraffin candles and it's relatively simple to render into wax.
- Honeycombs are what you make beeswax from, as we just revealed. Beeswax is a wonderful ingredient to use when making lotions, lip balms and other moisturizers.
- Weatherproofing – beeswax will be a valuable tool when you need to waterproof something. Just rub it into the leather, thread, wood, or other porous material and voila! It's waterproof, softened, and even preserved!
- Thinned beeswax and mineral spirits make an excellent polish for bullets, gun metal and stocks.
- Beeswax-soaked paper makes an excellent fire starter.

As with all things survival related, honeycomb and beeswax can be used in a multitude of ways limited only by your creativity!

### Barter

In a survival situation, honey, propolis, honeycombs, beeswax and candles are going to be luxury items in great demand. You'll be able to ask a good price for them in trade for something else that you may need. It's likely that in a post-SHTF situation, barter systems are going to be about the only way to get necessities and niceties. It'll be good to have something self-replenishing to trade.

### Crop Pollination

Bees draw pollen from flowers in order to eat and to make honey. During this process, transfer of pollen from one plant to another takes place so your crops are going to be well-pollinated. This keeps them healthy and flourishing.

### This is Great, But How Do I Get Started Raising Bees for Survival?

Starting a hive is surprisingly easy, though we wouldn't recommend doing it before you research it heavily. For the purpose of this article, we just wanted to present you with valid reasons WHY you should raise bees for survival.

For now, though, we would like to say that, even if you live in an urban area, it's possible to raise a small hive and you can get started for \$300-\$500 dollars. If you build your own hives or skeps (portable, dome-shaped hives), starting your colony will cost little to nothing. Most experienced beekeepers prefer hives with suspended, movable frames (aka Langstroth frames) so that it's easy to remove the honey combs. They're pretty easy to build.

You'll also need to research which bees are best to raise for survival. African Honeybees were developed by scientists and have made their way to the US. They are so aggressive that they will literally kill you if you don't kill them first, so you may want to avoid them, since the subject here is survival! Carniolan, Russian and Italian honeybees are some of the most docile bees.

Finally, if you're going to raise bees for survival, you'll want to invest in the proper beekeeping clothing and tools. There aren't many things that you need but a good smoker and a sealed uniform are among them.

After you establish your hive, there's very little maintenance involved as long as your bees stay healthy. Raising bees for survival is a good idea on a number of levels, so we suggest that you seriously consider it. Of course, if you have allergies, be sure to take precautions in order to protect yourself!

We'd love to hear what your thoughts are on this topic. Have you raised bees? Are there other bee-related topics that you'd like to read about? Let us know in the comments section below!



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