

Adaptive Beekeeping for People with Disabilities & Veterans

Ned Stoller, Michigan AgrAbility
Joe Ricker, National AgrAbility
Adam Ingrao, Heroes to Hives

AgrAbility

AgrAbility is a non-profit that helps farmers, loggers, and fishermen with serious medical conditions to keep working.

We are a partnership between the land grant (Michigan State) University Cooperative Extension Service and a non-profit disability services organization (Easterseals Michigan).



Heroes to Hives



OUR MISSION

PROTECT OUR NATION'S FOOD SECURITY AND
SUPPORT THE SUCCESS OF OUR FELLOW SERVICE MEMBERS

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Heroes to Hives is a 9-month beginning beekeeping education course designed to train Service Members through a free online training program that is coupled with on-ground training opportunities (in select States) and to develop a community of support with other veterans. Since 2015, Heroes to Hives has trained over 8,200 Service Members and their dependents from all over the world.

The 2023 Heroes to Hives program will include:

- Over 100 hours of online training in beekeeping through lectures, instructional videos, and handouts
- Small business training by the Small Business Administration's Veterans Business Outreach Center
- Educational module and job seeking tool for preparing veterans for jobs in the commercial beekeeping industry
- Online marketing training
- Training on therapeutic practices in the bee yard



Beekeeping Clubs and Associations



MICHIGAN BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION



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The Michigan Beekeepers Association

The Michigan Beekeepers Association (MBA) is the oldest continuously operating agricultural organization in the state of Michigan and one of the oldest beekeeping clubs in the country. Since 1865, MBA has actively supported honey bee and beekeeping research; advocated for Michigan beekeepers; and provided educational programs, legislative advocacy, and community outreach. MBA coordinates and cooperates with over 20 local organizations and supports commercial and hobbyist beekeepers in Michigan.

Have ideas, or want to get involved? We would love to hear from you. MBA is entirely volunteer-run and depends on beekeepers who are willing to share their time, ideas, voices, or other support. If you would like to help beekeepers in your state, contact your [MBA District Representative](#), or an [MBA Board Member](#) to get involved.

The Michigan Beekeepers Association is an exempt nonprofit organization as described in Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code; EIN:38-2176155.

Assistive Technology

Assistive technology (AT) is any item, piece or product system that is used to maintain or improve the functional capabilities of persons with disabilities.

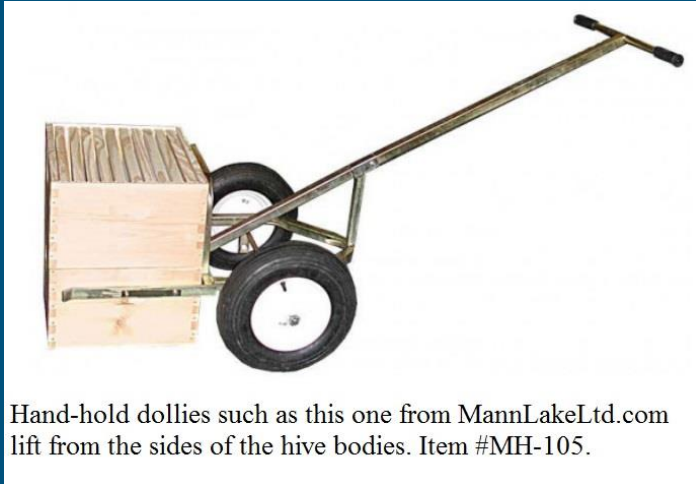


Physical Challenges

- Common beekeepers' medical conditions include arthritis, back injury, carpal tunnel syndrome, and musculoskeletal injury
- Impaired activities are mobility to the hives, bending over to inspect frames, lifting hive bodies, grasping frames, moving hives, gripping hand tools



Whole Hive Moving



Hand-held dollies such as this one from MannLakeLtd.com lift from the sides of the hive bodies. Item #MH-105.



Fork Hand Truck

Item# HTK-2351



This hand truck from HandTrucksRus.com would move whole hives.

Individual Hive Body Lifts: 2-Person Carrier



The two-person hive carrier is a low-cost accommodation that divides the weight in half. It is item #935C at BrushyMountainBeeFarm.com.

Individual Hive Body Lifts: Cranes



<https://www.northerntool.com>_Item# 52837

Hand Tools



Bee Yard Mobility



Woody Glover's bee yard (Stephen Clay McGehee)

<http://volusiabeekeepers.org> ~\$250
<http://www.greenhousemegastore.com/product/5902>



<http://burghbees.com/> ~\$800



Beehive Access



Beehive Access



[www.Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com) item# B00870EJJS



www.NorthernTool.com item# 143666
\$2200

Beehive Access



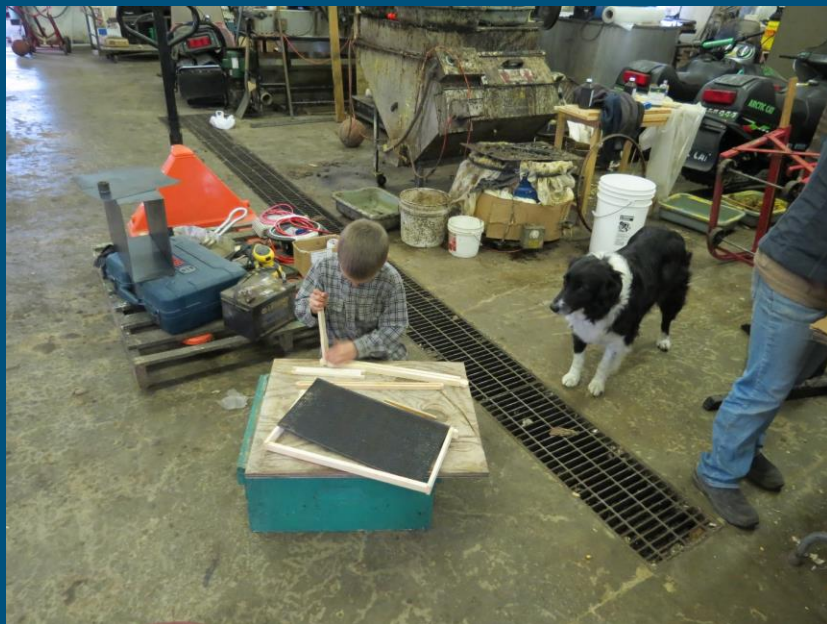
Beehive Access



Beehive Access



Workshop



Workshop



Workshop



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GlobalIndustrial.com sells an ergonomic workbench and tool balancer to support heavy tools. It is item #wg249497.

Workshop



























Conclusion

Assistive technology in the apiary will increase the likelihood of success for a beekeeper with medical impairments. Beekeeping is a very satisfying enterprise, and can be done by workers with medical impairments. Modified tools and equipment enable tasks that would otherwise be impossible or unhealthy for the worker.

