

How to Maximize the flying time of bees in the Orchard/Crop

Provide a sunny north/northeast facing site for spring pollination.

Provide shade for summer pollination.

Flat or gently sloping ground to the north is best.

Where possible provide shelter from the prevailing cold southerly/south westerly winds.

Bee sites, where possible should NOT be near water points, gateways or high traffic areas.

Truck access to the site in all weather conditions is required.

Clean fresh water available (that has not had spray drift land on it) – bees require fresh water.

Check all labels of sprays for any effects on bees – if required spray any chemicals late in the afternoon after bees have finished flying. This is providing spray has only a 12 hour withholding period for bees.

If a chemical that has a bee withholding period of more than 12 hours is required to be used, then inform the beekeeper and discuss the options with the beekeeper. Removing the bees from the orchard may be the only option.

Regardless of which way the entrance of the bee hive is facing, the bees will pollinate in ALL directions from the hive. Temperature will dictate the distance that bees will fly and pollinate.

Orchard under netting – then bees should be under netting. Bees do not like flying in under netting to pollinate.

When the primary crop is flowering try to remove flowering grasses (clovers, dandelions, etc) from the orchard if possible. This can be done by slashing.

Bees should be bought in at 10% flowering – that way bees work the target crop. If bees arrive too early they will find other nectar and pollen sources and when the target crop flowers the bees may not change to the target crop.