



BeeMail Newsletter

TIPS, TRICKS, REMINDERS, CURRENT EVENTS, RESEARCH & SCIENCE

Learning to Do What's Natural



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TIPS & REMINDERS - *Summer Leafcutter Bees*



It's not too late to order summer leafcutter bees! We ship incubated leafcutter bees that are ready to fly through the end of August. Our leafcutter bees fly best in warm summer weather when daytime temperatures are consistently above 75°F. They love summer heat!

Several customers told us their leafcutter bees had very few bees emerge once placed into their habitat. We contacted a few USDA researchers and spoke with an expert in Canada regarding high temperatures. Here's what we learned:

- Leafcutter bees nest and gather pollen in the lower 100°sF (38°+C) because they can regulate their heat.
- If trying to emerge from their cocoons in this same heat, they can't regulate themselves in the cocoon and die.

What to do:

- Your bees arrive in small leafgardian bags. Prop the bag against your nesting material (holes) and open the bag up to let those bees emerge.
- Close the bag and bring it to a dark spot in your house where temperatures are much lower. Daily, let the bees that emerged in your house out next to the holes. Do this in the morning or evening to lower the dispersion rate of your bees.

What are second generation leafcutter bees? In the heat of summer, leafcutter bee eggs are able to hatch and develop right away, emerging as a new generation of adult bees. If there is enough time, a third or even fourth generation of leafcutter bees can emerge. Large, circular holes in the leaf capped ends are a sign of second generation bees emerging. Over the summer, *leave your leafcutter bee nesting holes out in the bee house to allow new bees to come back out.* About 30% of the new generation will disperse and you may need to augment your leafcutter bee stock in a year or two.

Farming options: If your field of crops are done flowering and your first generation of bees are done flying, you can bring the bees indoors to cooler temperatures (around 70°F). The cool temps will keep second generation bees from developing and you can save these cocoons for next year's crop.

TIPS & REMINDERS - Spring Mason Bees



If you are new to raising mason bees, read our [BeeMail](#) archives to follow our previous tips and reminders.

The secret life of mason bee cocoons. By now, you stored the filled nesting materials in a location that has similar warm temperatures to the outdoor weather, like an unheated garage or

garden shed. Mason bee larvae need the warm summer weather as they feed and develop. If we could peek inside their homes, we'd see that mason bee larvae are going through a developmental race as they pupate, or change into adult bees. There are several stages of development as the grubby white larvae take shape and gain color, grow hair and wings. When you harvest mason bee cocoons in the fall, you should only see their dark brown cocoons, any white larvae are either another type of bee or a solitary hole-nesting wasp that checked themselves in.

Do not put mason bee nesting holes into the fridge

yet! Remember that we are mimicking nature's conditions. It's not cold outside yet and the mason bee larvae and pupae depend on the warm summer weather to develop and grow into adult bees. You will only put cleaned and harvested mason bee cocoons into the fridge in the fall.

Check on your BeeGuardian Bag. Keep an eye on the mason bee nesting holes inside of your BeeGuardian bag. A native bee or native solitary hole-nesting wasp may have found your 8mm mason bee nesting holes to be just right for them, too. Some native bees or wasps can be like summer leafcutter bees and a new generation of bees or wasps are waiting to come out of the protective BeeGuardian bag. Let these bee house guests back outside!

WHY NATIVE BEES ARE BETTER POLLINATORS

Please understand our perspective on honey bees; we believe they are one of the most sophisticated bee in the world. An additional plus is their awesome honey! One important myth that we debunk when speaking to farmers is that "honey bees are the best pollinator." While they do pollinate, you may be surprised to learn that much pollination might not occur in the field, but in the hive!

Dave created a short video explaining some basic facts of how both mason/leafcutter bees gather pollen vs. the honey bees. You should learn some basics you might not have understood as well hear a story of what happened with Dave in a pear orchard.

Click [here](#) to see this video created a few weeks ago.



FARM UPDATES FROM TENNESSEE

Jay, our Director of Farming Operations, has been introducing farms across the country to our gentle hole-nesting bees. This week we will add a Colorado pumpkin farm to our list of crops the bees can pollinate. Click on the image below to see an interactive panorama photo hosted on our Facebook page. (It's quite impressive!)



Crown Bees at [Giving Garden](#)

Published by Jay Williams [?] · July 22 at 5:50am · Franklin, TN · 🌐

Here's an interactive view of our leaf cutter pollination kit in action at The Giving Garden in Franklin, TN! The Giving Garden works to feed low income families in the area with healthy fruits and vegetables. Crown Bees couldn't be more happy to help boost crop production and feed more families!



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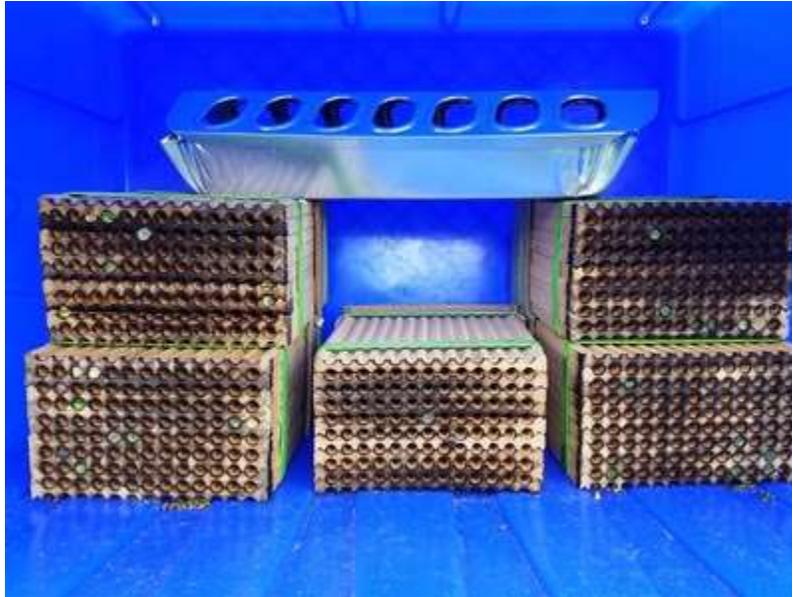
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Our farm pollination kit is designed to make it easy on the farmers and on the bees. The blue tote is shipped filled with nesting materials and instructions. The color blue is attractive to both mason and

leafcutter bees. The metal tray is an easy way to release beecocoons while protecting them from the wind.



Here's a [quick video](#) of Jay installing our one-acre farm kit in the hot summer heat!



Jay has been working hard this summer! He's put together some wonderful instructional videos to make learning how to install the kit

and care for native bees easy and fast. Check out our [Farm Pollination](#) page on our site to watch them all!

CORNELL'S SUPER BEE HOTEL PROJECT



Follow the story of the construction of a bee hotel! Using donated materials from local residents, Cornell Cooperative Extension in Schuyler County is building an educational pollinator hotel in their garden. The hotel will be located in a teaching garden open to the public, where members of the community can pass by and grab a flyer or read about the bees.

Cornell Coop Extension called Crown Bees to find advice on native hole-nesting bees and we were happy to answer the call! Check back often as this [blog post](#) is updated with the bee hotel's progress. Cross your fingers that wild native hole-nesting bees find and move into the bee hotel. The beehotel is going to look like a phone booth and we think this design is a super idea!

BEE PRODUCT RECOMMENDATIONS

[BeeGuardian Bag](#) - Over the summer, protect developing mason bee larvae from harmful parasitic wasps, ants, and carpet beetles with this fine mesh bag. After you harvest mason beecocoons in the fall, reuse the bag to protect leafcutter bees over the winter. Large enough to hold 2 large nesting trays or 400 loose nesting tubes! Also a great bag for incubating leafcutter cocoons next spring!

[Leafcutter Bee Cocoons](#) are still available for August pollination and are on sale for \$29.95 (normally \$35.95). Replenish your leafcutter bee population or give these gentle summer garden pollinators a try!

[Summer Bee Tubes](#) in size 6mm - Nesting holes in the 6mm size are preferred by summer leafcutter bees, beneficial wasps, and other wild native bees. These cardboard tubes are easy to open and come with an

easy way to see if the tube has been filled. Simply check the small hole at the back for leafy nest-building material.

Pollinator Pack for Wild Bees - add a variety of nesting hole sizes and see what wild hole-nesting bees and beneficial wasps are living in your neighborhood! Simply add a Pollinator Pack on top of your nesting trays or tubes and you've created an instant bee hotel.

PLAN A MASON BEE COCOON HARVEST PARTY



Host a mason bee cocoon harvest party this fall! Teach your friends and family how to harvest mason beecocoons. They will learn about gentle hole-nesting bees and you'll get help with the most important task needed to ensure your mason bees' health! This is a great hands-on activity for children and they will get to see some interesting things and learn about the secret life of bees. Don't worry, the mason bees are sleeping soundly in their cocoons and are tucked in for the winter.

Our Talk & Teach page has free presentations and handouts that you can print. We are also planning on creating a harvest party manual that we will share with you soon. You can host a harvest party with your local garden club, homeschool co-op, or school. Have any other great ideas for how to connect with your community with a harvest party? Let us know at outreach@crowbees.com!

You should start to plan your harvest party now and tell your friends to Save the Date. Pick a weekend day in the beginning of October. We'll help you get some more logistics figured out in later BeeMail newsletters. It's hot now but fall will be here sooner than you know!



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