



# Native Irish Honey Bee Society



Queen Rearing Groups Scheme 2020



## Distribution Of Queens



# **NIHBS QRGs – Year 1 Objectives**

**Raise virgin queens from the NIHBS provided Nucleus colony**

**Each group members to get virgin queens mated in their own Apideas/mating nucs  
(obligation for each group member to produce at least 2-3# mated queens in year 1)**

**Make other virgin queens available FREE to local beekeepers around your mating sites**

**These year 1 queens will all provide top quality amm drones for next year's matings**

**Establish a common record keeping practice and use it to select for improvement**

**Learn timing of queen rearing activity and what works for your area & equipment**

# **NIHBS QRGS – Year 1 Outcomes**

**Group dynamic is established**

- pooling of workload, knowledge, resources, records**
- rotation of tasks so every member performs every step**

**Every group member can now raise queens and get them mated**

- Initially working as a group, then each member doing all the steps themselves**

**Different methods tried and ‘best’ method established for the group and for individuals**

- grafting (paint brush/grafting tool), cupkit system, jenter system**
- Apideas, mini-nucs, full size nucs**

**Establish mating apiaries**

**Know what bees are in your area**

**Flood area with amm drone mothers for year 2**

# **NIHBS QRGS – Mentors**

**NIHBS are providing these talks as instruction on how to rear queens with the resources we are providing to the groups**

**The Group Mentors will assist you with queen rearing using the methods/tips/tricks that he/she uses and which work for them**

**Your mentor will not be raising queens - You are being taught how to do it yourself**

**The 'best' method is the one that you understand, that you can perform and works in your area with your bees and the resources you have to work with**

# **NIHBS QRGS – Mentors**

**NIHBS are providing these talks as instruction on how to rear queens with the resources we are providing to the groups**

**The Group Mentors will assist you with queen rearing using the methods/tips/tricks that he/she uses and which work for them**

**Your mentor will not be raising queens - You are being taught how to do it yourself**

**The 'best' method is the one that you understand, that you can perform and works in your area with your bees and the resources you have to work with**

**Just because some guy wearing shorts on a YouTube video from Alabama says the method will work every time, doesn't mean it's going to work at 15°C in Ireland.**

**It may be difficult at first to have physical group meetings, so plan accordingly**

**Establish the timetable, What-Who-When**

**Maybe only 1 group member can raise the cells from NIHBS Nuc at the start**

**(Covid-19 restrictions – only meet up physically when safe to do so)**

**When cells are sealed they go into incubator**

**Repeat cell raising at agreed intervals – in accordance with member's resources**

**Cells or Virgin Queens distributed to group members**

**When Queens mated & brood inspected – move her on and reuse mating nuc**

**Work with your assigned mentor via WhatsApp or at group meetings via Zoom**

# **Distribution of Virgins Queens outside the group**

**Establish who the neighbouring beekeepers are and their knowledge/capabilities**

**Encourage them to work with the group in favour of amm (honey vs vinegar)**

**They may need help to establish if hive is queenless and with introduction  
have your plan and methods ready to share  
encourage them to carry out the steps themselves (training winners)**

**Virgin queens are to be distributed for FREE**

**Postal cage with queen candy – add attendants if delay before introduction**

**Marking the virgin queens is best practice (establishes our queen survived introduction)**

# Records

**Record where queen are distributed locally**

**Establish a queen numbering system to identify the source / queen line**

**Follow up with recipients to establish results**

**Did virgin queen survive introduction ?**

**Did she get mated ?**

**Was she a drone layer ? if so, provide a replacement**

**Did she survive over her 1<sup>st</sup> Winter ?**

**How long did she live ? Did she swarm ? Was she superseded ?**

**Encourage recipients to insert drone comb throughout next years mating season**

**Gather these queen records centrally – all group members get access to all these records**

# Simple Queen Numbering System

**Requirement: Origin of queen, generation details in an index**

**2 letters for Origin**

**2 digits for queen number from that origin**

**Current generation down from that original queen**

**4<sup>th</sup> queen I ever got from Paddy Kelly = PK04**

**1<sup>st</sup> generation daughter from that queen = PK04(1)**

**3<sup>rd</sup> generation daughter from that queen = PK04(3) etc.**

**Keep It Simple - this is a adequate numbering system for Bee Improvement**

**all the rest of the info on the queen is in the hive notes**

**Remember the scope of this scheme is Queen Rearing not Queen Breeding**

# NIHBS Queen Rearing Groups Scheme 2020

Thank you for your attention

More resources online at

<http://beespoke.info/queen-rearing-groups/>



Native Irish Honey Bee Society



[www.nihbs.org](http://www.nihbs.org)



@nihbs