



LET'S GET TO KNOW SILVA HONEY

Our journey with the honey bee...

The adventure of honey and bees began several years ago with a friendship of an experienced beekeeper. At first, it seemed extremely daunting to think about dealing with thousands of bees confined in wooden boxes, but once you realize that they are one of gods greatest achievements and that they are an amazing creatures, with their own plan, you are only a small part of it, then the real journey and adventure begins.

Our journey began not only with the desire for the amazing honey but with learning how a small little creature that only has a life span of approximately 40 days, can accomplish so many things that our own society is not able to. Bees are a society unto its own colony with a population from winter dormancy of 10,000 to 15,000 bees to a blooming population in a colony that can easily exceed 70,000 during the peak nectar flow. Their life cycle comes complete with different positions in the colony depending on the age of the individual bee. They will hold positions that vary from worker bee to guard bee or nurse bee in their life cycle. With only one queen to maintain the steady supply of brood and the continuing life cycle of the hive, it is truly amazing!

We have followed a rather steep learning curve from maintaining colony health through the control of pests that can destroy a colony to learning the ins and outs of honey extraction. Along the way, there have been painful reminders and swollen fingers, eyes, and other spots on our bodies to help remind us that these are a living culture unto themselves and will defend their colony with their life. The amazing time of year is when we extract honey. We extract with a centrifugal extractor and our honey is never heated or filtered. It is truly pure raw honey as the bees have made it and we do not alter it in any way. The color of the honey will vary depending on the flowers and nectar that is available at that time. Our early honey is very pale and is mostly clover, while honey from later in the summer will be darker since it's a mix of different wildflowers and nectar producers. Raw honey, such as we extract, will crystalize with time but never spoil or deteriorate if properly handled. This means that under no circumstances if it has crystalized, should it be heated over 120 degrees and always heat with the lid on to maintain the amazing aroma from the plants it was derived from.

So, if the idea of honey of your own and being a beekeeper is amazing, just remember, it can and will be an intriguing, yet painful at times, journey to the amazing world of the honey bee. **ENJOY!**

