

Regulations of the Project „Fort Knox”

This Regulations may sound like a law, but it is more a guide or advice of how to proceed in the Project. Good will, acting on good faith and trust is much more important than these rules.

These are the translated rules of our Polish cooperation project. You may use them, or change them so that they would suit Your local conditions and cooperation.

(Hopefully the language is good enough to understand it

– some English speaking lawyer-beekeeper surely would make this language better)

General Rules

§ 1

Project „Fort Knox”, later on called „Project”, is a programme of exchanging bees and giving reciprocal guarantees by beekeepers who select bees for resistance to the mite *Varroa destructor* and other pests and pathogens of honey bee (*Apis mellifera*).

§ 2

1. Objectives of the Projects are:

- a) supporting local adaptation of Honey bee;
- b) supporting self-sufficiency of Honey bee colonies, especially understood as being independent from constant care of beekeepers;
- c) supporting development of Honey bee resistance to diseases, including varoatosis;
- d) exchanging bees between Participants of the Project aiming in supporting the genetic diversity of honey bee;
- e) creating the system of support by Participants of the Project in selecting bees;
- f) building natural beekeeping community in Poland;
- g) creating possibly broadest collection of Honey bee colonies on the territory of the country, that would not need any interventions as treating varoatosis and other diseases, which will constitute the reserve of genetic material.

2. Objectives of the Project are achieved by the rules constituting this Regulation, by:

- a) selecting bees;
- b) giving guarantees of compensating for the loss in bee colonies;
- c) transferring free of charge Honey bee colonies between participants of the Project.

§ 3

Glossary:

- 1) Donor – Participant of the Project, that transfers Honey bee colony according to § 13 of the Regulations

- 2) Recipient – Participant of the Project, who is given Honey bee colony according to § 13 of Regulations;
- 3) Project Bank - all bee colonies that were introduced to the Project by all the Participants;
- 4) Participant Bank - bee colonies that were introduced to the Project by individual Participant;

Participants of the Project

§ 4

1. Any beekeeper who keeps bees for at least one year may participate in the Project, if he fulfills the requirements of this Regulations. Each Participant has the right to vote in the issues that are mentioned in this Regulations.
2. Participation is based on free will and trust.

§ 5

1. When joining the Project a person submits his written declaration, informing about the number of the bee colonies introduced to Common Bank and the history of these colonies considering the methods of husbandary in which they have been kept so far.
2. In the declaration Participant confirms his acknowledgement of this Regulations and agrees to its rules. The pattern of the declaration is created by the Coordinator of the Project.
3. The candidate must be recommended by active participant of the Project.
4. The Coordinator decides about admission to the Project of:
 - a) candidate;
 - b) the bee colonies the candidate declares;
 - c) the numbers of colonies declared.
5. Before making the decision stated in passage 4, Coordinator presents the candidate with his declaration to the active Participants of the Project. Each participant may object to the candidate, or specific bee colonies transferred to the Common Bank. In that case Participants vote on admission of the candidate to the Project.

§ 6

1. Participants of the Project choose the Coordinator from themselves. If there is no absolute majority of votes two candidates pass to the second round of elections.
2. The cadency of the Coordinator lasts for three years.
3. Participants of the Project may repeal the decision of the Coordinator with the majority vote.
4. Coordinator may be revoked by majority of 3/5 of votes.

§ 7

1. Participant of the Project may withdraw from it at any time based on the statement, but only if his/hers obligation that was laid according to this Regulations on the current year is fulfilled.
2. Participants of the Project may release a person withdrawing from the Project from the obligation mentioned in passage 1.

3. Participant of the Project may be removed from it, with the 3/5 majority of the votes, if he/she does not give the guarantees of using the husbandary methods and does not cooperate according to this Regulations.

Husbandary methods of the Project

§ 8

1. Each Participant may use one's own husbandary methods according to his/hers will with the restrictions to the rules of this Regulations, and making decisions on his/hers best will and knowledge.
2. The restrictions in this Regulations consider only the honey bee colonies which are in the Project Bank, and Participant Bank, and do not bind the Participant in the rest of his/hers apiary.

§ 9

1. Honey bee colonies are introduced to the Project Bank due to their possibly big chance of treatment free survival and coping with Varroa or other pests and pathogenes, regardless of their race, origin or size.
2. Managing bee colonies in the Common Bank, Participant:
 - a) must not treat for Varroa or other pest or pathogens – either with any chemical substance or any other interventions, including withdrawing brood or cutting away drone brood;
 - b) respects the natural development cycle of honey bee, and does not stimulate for development, and propagates bees according to their life cycle;
 - c) chooses the methods of husbandary that interfere in the lowest degree in the life of bees;
 - d) limits the management to minimal numbers of hive inspections, enlargement of the hive space, splitting the hive if necessary and collecting honey according to the letter i);
 - e) uses foundationless frames or foundation made of clean wax without chemical residue with small cell (4.9 – 5.1 mm);
 - f) ensures for the bees maximum freedom in creating their hive environment, regardless of the hive construction, especially by abandoning using the wax foundation in the whole space of the hive or at least enough to rear drones in the numbers the bees need and want;
 - g) creates splits which are biologically self-sufficient and independent of beekeeper's care;
 - h) uses hives that are made from natural components;
 - i) takes the honey crop only if judges with the probability close to certainty that bees would not need feeding sugar for winter. Honey crop is taken in the fall evaluation of the winter supplies, unless there is no possibility of enlarging the volume of the hive, and the honey gathered by the bees during summer may limit the space needed for the queen to lay eggs;
 - j) avoids feeding sugar and other artificial food during the summer season except for prolonging draught and hunger and autumn feeding is limited only to the amount that is needed just to surviving the winter to the cleansing flight and first blooming;
 - k) keeps bees only on stationary apiaries and moves bees only if necessity of moving the apiary to other stationary location. Moving bees is limited only to necessary cases.

l) avoids any ingeration in bee colonies from the end of prepartion for wintering to the cleansing flights, and the evaluation of winter supplies is made not later then before the middle of September.

m) must not kill or shift the queen regardless of their age and the condition of the colony. The exception of that rule is only when queen is not capable of laying eggs or is laying only drone eggs. In this case shifting queen is made according to the § 10 of this Regulations;

n) must not cripple queens in any manner, especially by clipping wings and avoids the marking of the queen;

o) does not use any queen excluders or any other elements in the hive to limit the laying space for the queen;

p) avoids any strenghtening of the bee colonies with bees from other colonies, with the exception of § 10 of the Regulations, and avoids using the Project Bank colonies to strenghten other colonies, with the exception of splitting;

q) may create splits, nucs or new bee colonies in any possible manner that will ensure the buildup of the colony in a rational way for wintering.

§ 10

1. If queen has died or has been lost, or the bees have swarmed, Participant should keep current line of bees, by acting in this order:

a) allowing to raise the queen from eggs or larvas or from the queen cells in the hive;

b) use the queen-daughter if she was raised previously for other colony from outside the Project Bank or the frame with eggs and youngest larva from such queen, if that colony was kept according to the rules of this Regulations.

2. If the solutions from passage 1 are not possible Participant:

a) uses queen-daughter raised from other queen out of the colony from the Project Bank or the youngest larva from such a colony – including from the colony belonging to other Participant;

b) uses queen or brood from other colony kept according to this Regulations outside the Project Bank;

c) exercises different solution agreed with the Coordinator.

3. Participant informs the Coordinator every time the queen from the Project Bank is lost and about applied solutions.

Common Bank and the origin of the obligation to compensate for the loss

§ 11

1. Honey bee colonies being kept by the Participants of the Project build up the Project Bank from which the loss is compensated and Participants are helped. The Project Bank is divided into:

a) the Core of the Project which are the colonies that are in the Project for at least two full years;

b) the Buffer of the Project which are the colonies that are in the Project Bank for the shorter

- period than stated in the letter a);
2. Coordinator may decide that specific bee colonies from the Buffer, may join the Core, before the period stated in passage 1 letter a), especially if the Participant has been selecting them for resistance for diseases before joining the Project.
 3. Each Participant may introduce to the Project Bank any number of bee colonies, smaller by one than the joint number of Participants of the Project, and no more than 8.
 4. Participant may not have more colonies than 3 outside the Core of the Project;
 5. Introducing bee colonies to the Project Bank may take place before 30th of September for the next beekeeping season, and mentioned date is recognized as the beginning and the end of the settlement year cycle. Coordinator keeps the data of the bee colonies in the Project up to date, collecting the data of the number of Participants, number of bee colonies in the Project and the colonies being transferred between Participants according to this Regulations.
 6. Participants inform the Coordinator about each change in their Participant Bank. Data are sent at least once for three months in the date stated by Coordinator.
 7. Coordinator publishes the data on Project numbers once for three months and if that is not possible at least twice a year in the end of the settlement date and after the cleansing flights in the spring when Participants inform him of their survival rates.
 8. Bee colonies in the Project are marked with an initial of Participant or a letter chosen by him/her and the following numbers referring to the number of colonies in the Participant Bank. Everytime the new colony is created for another Participant, the Donor adds his marking to the marking of the colony it was created from. Colonies in the Buffer are marked with symbol "OT" ("BUF")

§ 12

1. If bees swarm, and the swarm escapes from the hive, colony with young queen is left in the Project Bank.
2. If bees swarm, and the swarm is collected, Participant may decide which colony is left in the Project.
3. In case of event described in passage 1, Participant may split the hive into more colonies, leaving one of them in the Project Bank with the restrictions described in § 14 passage 1.
4. If a swarm escapes and is lost from the Project Bank, and Participant is obliged to make colonies according to this Regulations for other Participants, hive can be split only into a number of colonies equal in size which ensures the compensation of the loss in the Project Bank. More colonies may be created only as an exception if the apiary of the Participant suffered huge loss.
5. When colonies are weaker passages 3 and 4 are applied accordingly.

§ 13

1. If a bee colony collapses, Participant is given for free a new bee colony created from surviving bee colonies from the Project Bank.
2. Bee colony loss during winter or up to 1st of May, effects in the obligation to compensate for the loss in the same year and bee colony lost later than given date, effects in the obligation

to compensate for the loss in the same or next year, depending on the time of year, and possibilities of other Participants of the Project. Decision in that matter is made by the Coordinator.

3. Coordinator decides about the directions of the transfer of the colonies after collecting the data on the loss in the Project Bank, considering the need of:
 - a) localising the bee population and concerning biodiversity;
 - b) ensuring the fairness and honesty in transferring bee colonies.
4. When huge loss in the Project Bank occurs, Coordinator, employing the rules given in the passage 3, may make the decision of suspending or repealing some of the obligations derived from passage 1. Obligations are then fulfilled accordingly to the possibilities of the Project Participants. In that case the colonies may not fulfill the rule formulated in § 14 passage 1.

Making new bee colonies and giving them away in the Project

§ 14

1. Bee colonies in the Project Bank should be created and kept during all the year in a strength allowing them to be self sufficient, as collecting winter supplies is concerned in the average year.
2. Participant may breed queens in any manner possible, but when it is possible she/he should ensure that worker bees raising queens are from the same colony that larvae come from.
3. Participant leaves an „old” queen in his Participant Bank, with the exception of § 10 and 12, and makes new colonies for others with young queens.
4. Colonies should be created in the earliest possible time during the year.

§ 15

1. The Donor and the Recipient agree on the time and other conditions of making a new colony.
2. Transfer is made on the expense of the Recipient. Participants may agree to any way and conditions of reception of the bee colony, but the risk of the transport or sending bees is on the Recipient. Transmission or sending of the bee colony is considered as fulfilling the obligation of compensating for the loss established in § 13.

Project reserve

§ 16

1. Participants, after fulfilling the obligations arising from § 13, may split other bee colonies from Participant Bank with the restrictions of the rules of this Regulations for the colonies remaining in the Project Bank. Participant may use the bees remaining after creating the colony for the compensation of the Project Bank, according to her/his wish in one's apiary
2. Colonies created according to passage 1 become the reserve of the Participant in case colonies of that Participant Bank are lost, and in that case they take their place in the Project

Bank.

3. These bee colonies are withdrawn from the Project reserve if the base colonies in the Project Bank survive up to the cleansing flight or March 30th of the next year.

Final and other rules

§ 17

1. Coordinator decides in any case not ruled in this Regulations and settles problems and doubts that may arise from interpretation of the Regulations, with the restrictions of § 6 passage 3.
2. Coordinator may decide to suspend application of some of the rules of the Regulations if he finds it necessary to uphold continuation of the Project. The decision is made after evaluation of the Project Bank, apiaries of Participants and the course of the season. Under no circumstances the rule stated in § 9 passage 2 letter a) of the Regulations must not be suspended.

§ 18

1. Participants of the Project have their webpage, where they publish data on bee colonies survival, progress of the selection and where they promote the Project. Coordinator decides on the contents published on the webpage.
2. Participants communicate with electronic platform or e-mails.
3. Participants may organize Project meetings to exchange experiences, transfer bee colonies or transport boxes and hives needed to create new colonies. The meeting should be organized not less often than once for 3 years in order to choose the Coordinator.

§ 19

1. The Project does not have any external financing.
2. Participants bear the costs of maintaining their Participant Bank and the transfer of bees.
3. Participants may transfer the money for the Project activities if costs of them have arisen.

§ 20

1. This Regulations should be changed on the Project meeting with absolute majority of votes with at least 50% of Participants present. If there is no objection, changes in Regulations may be made by electronic communication.
2. Proposal of changes in This Regulations may be submitted by at least 2 Participants of the Project or the Coordinator.