

Are the bees inspected for mites prior to importing (as out of province bees are)? Will any mite treatment be required when we receive them? I have read some reports that there are little to no mites in NZ - what's your take this?? *They have been pre-treated with Bayvarol in NZ, but CFIA also requires an apistan strip to accompany the packages to Canada. No treatment is needed in the spring. We recommend some fumagillan B, at first, in their feed to keep the stress levels down. Fall treatments for varroa will be needed.*

What breed are the bees? *They are Italians*

While we do have several members that have worked with the packages before, I would certainly appreciate any advice you have to pass along. *FEED IS KEY! We feed and keep feeding them sugar syrup and pollen patties until the end of June. We put our packages into 1 brood box to start and we do not put the second box on until they have filled up most of the first brood box with bees. We also put the second brood box underneath the first one, so the heat stays up with the brood. Warmth and food are essential in the early days of a package. KEEP ON FEEDING!!! :)*

The Queen can be released right away because she has traveled with the package and they are used to her.

*Another thing to mention is that it CAN happen that you get a dead queen inside of your package. If this happens, DO NOT PANIC. It is **very likely** that there is another queen in with the workers and that she has killed the Queen in the cage. Wait 3 to 4 days and then go check for eggs. Be patient because putting another queen in is expensive and she will just end up dead if there is another Queen in there. Besides, if there is a Queen in the package, she will be a really good young Queen which snuck through the excluder in NZ. She is definitely worth keeping. I will give you 4% extra queens if this happens and there are no eggs. Do wait it out though - she is most likely in there. (4% on 75 is only 3 extra queens - I'm being generous)*

Another thing is ONLY SHAKE YOUR PACKAGES ONTO BUILT OUT FRAMES! Do not use only plasticell - they WILL NOT MAKE IT. It is far too cold and there is not enough time or bees to produce enough wax needed. Where is the Queen going to lay her eggs? She needs built out comb.

Also, put your bees in the hive in the dark - use flashlights (red is superb, since bees can't see it). Night-time release gives them all night to get used to their new home and they won't venture out until the next morning. If they are installed during the day, many will fly away and become lost - you NEED all the bees you can get.

Plastic cup of feed that is in the package - if it is a warm night, we will leave it sitting just outside of the bottom entrance, so that they can crawl up and into the hive. If it is a cold night, we will open the top of the feed solution and scoop the bees out and put them into the hive. Do not dump that feed in - they don't really like it. They much prefer sugar water. Try not to get the bees wet and cold. WARMTH is essential.