WINTER
December - January - February

Beekeeper's goal: Strong 8-frame colonies for almond pollination by February 1st.

MAINTENANCE
Good maintenance prolongs the life of hive parts, clothing, vehicles and other apiary equipment.

NUTRITION
Continue supplemental feeding and hydration.

COLONY MANAGEMENT
Order packages, nucs and queens for coming year.
Time hive placement prior to bloom and pick-up after almond bloom.
Be aware that overwintering location can positively or negatively affect the strength of colonies.

KEYS TO SUCCESS
Secure a pollination contract early for the following season.
A signed contract protects both grower and beekeeper.
Determine pollination fees that are realistic relative to your operation costs.
Be dependable with the timing of hive drops and pick-ups.
Be visible to your growers.
Develop contingency plans for the unexpected.
Keep records. Read past year's diary and prepare for the coming year.
Attend national and regional bee meetings.

BECOME PART OF THE SOLUTION

Write a contribution for honeybee research and send your donation to:

Project Apis m.
P.O. Box 3157
Chico, CA 95927

Donations can also be made securely online at www.ProjectApism.org

Thank you!

Project Apis m.
PAm is a 501 (c)(5) non-profit organization

A Seasonal Guide
Best Management Practices For Beekeepers Pollinating Almonds
Spring Summer Autumn Winter

www.ProjectApism.org
SPRING
March - April - May

REQUEEN
Maintain genetic quality to meet your objectives.
Select stocks that are productive and disease and pest resistant.
Encourage high drone densities during mating season to provide well-mated queens and genetically diverse colonies.
Discourage stocks that are excessively defensive.
Consider making colony increases by shaking bees from your healthiest colonies.
Replace comb with new foundation. Develop a comb replacement schedule.
Cull weak colonies. Do not combine weak collapsing colonies with healthy colonies.

INSPECT & MONITOR
Check hives for pests and diseases. Early detection is key.
Use diagnostic services for objective colony assessment.
Follow regional guidelines for action thresholds for Varroa and Nosema control.

SWARMING
Control by making nucs and/or splits.

NUTRITION
Place bees on locations with abundant and diverse floral resources.
Carrying capacities vary. Locate optimum densities for colony placement.
Provide plentiful and clean water.

SUMMER
June - July - August

INSPECT & MONITOR - VARROA
Be aware that strong colonies in mid-Summer can be highly infested with Varroa mites and can crash in late-Summer and Fall.
Check often. Conduct a random sampling of hives.
Use biotech methods to suppress mite populations when surplus honey is being produced.
Exercise judicious treatment and use soft chemicals. Follow recommended label instructions.
Rotate treatments to prevent resistance.
Recheck for efficacy. Don’t assume your treatments are working.

INSPECT & MONITOR - NOSEMA
Check often using a random sampling with microscopic examination.
Be aware that Nosema in the presence of high mite levels can compromise colony health.
Chemical control with Fumagillin. Practice judicious treatment. Follow proper prep, storage and application.

AUTUMN
September - October - November

NUTRITION
Fall is a critical time to maintain bee strength and build baby bees for almond pollination - Feb. 1st.
Forage can be limited in early Fall, supplemental feeding is critical, especially protein, to target strong 8-frame colonies by early Spring.
Water is as important as food. Keep bees well-hydrated.

REQUEEN
Over-wintering colonies fare better if young. Requeen if necessary.

INSPECT & MONITOR
Continue to inspect colonies and apply treatments as necessary to control pests and diseases.

TRANSPORTATION
Prepare colonies for transport to CA orchards.
Have colonies inspected and certified in state-of-origin to mitigate border station delays.
Self-inspect colonies prior to shipment. Keep hives and pallets free from soil, weeds and plant debris.

BUSINESS MANAGEMENT
Maintain a reserve; don’t commit all your colonies to contract.

COLONY MANAGEMENT
Check frames of brood for intended strength to coincide with almond bloom.

POLLINATION CONTRACT
Have your almond pollination contract in place by the end of summer at the latest.
A contract template can be accessed at www.ProjectApism.org under the ‘Downloads’ tab.