Guidelines for the Use of HCBA Extractors

One of the valuable benefits of being a member of the Howard County Beekeeper's Association (HCBA) is the no-charge use of Extracting equipment. In order to maintain our equipment, we ask that our members follow a few simple guidelines. These guidelines are designed to ensure that all of the equipment is ready and in good condition when our members request to use it.

Only HCBA members are allowed to use the extractors. We appreciate your following these guidelines and taking care when using the extractors.

Reserving an Extractor

1. *Extractors MUST be reserved in advance.* **Due to COVID-19, we are maintaining a 48-hour separation between extractor returns and pick-ups.** Go to the HCBA website Member's Only tab (hocoba.com) to access the Extractor Sign-Up pages and reserve an extractor. All extractors are available on a first come, first serve basis.
    a. If another member has reserved the same extractor prior to, ad/or after your desired timeslot, please allow for 2 days between your reservation and the others.
    b. After submitting a reservation for an extractor, the volunteer Equipment Wrangler will receive an email notification.
    c. The reserving of an extractor is not a guarantee that you will be able to use it on the date you reserved it. This is because 'things happen'; people return equipment late, equipment breaks, etc. The HCBA volunteer Equipment Wrangler will always do their best to accommodate you, but please understand that sometimes these things happen and you may need to adjust the dates you planned to extract your honey.
2. *Use periods are for up to 3 days.*
    a. Please book your selected extractor for the (up to) three consecutive days you would like to use the extractor.
    b. Due to demand, we ask that you do not book consecutive time periods (more than 3 days) in the months of June, July, August and September.
3. If there is an issue with the reservation, e.g. the equipment breaks or is not returned on time, the volunteer Equipment Wrangler will do their best to notify you of the situation and make alternate arrangements.
4. A member's failure to return on time or pick up a reserved extractor will be brought to the HCBA Board of Directors (BOD) for disposition which may result in loss of future extractor privileges.

Pick up and Return of Extractors

1. Use periods are for 3 days.
    a. Please book your selected extractor for the (up to) three consecutive days you would like to use the extractor.
    b. Due to demand, we ask that you do not book consecutive time periods in the months of June, July, August and September.
2. Equipment is to be picked up after 10:00 AM and returned by 7:00 PM on the last day of your scheduled use.
3. All equipment is picked up and returned to our storage location at 309 East Watersville Road, Mt Airy, MD 21771
    a. Please follow no contact pick up and return by picking up and dropping off the extractor from the walkway between the Wrangler's front porch and driveway.
    b. Use disposable gloves at all times when handling the equipment.
    c. Prior to your pick up, the Equipment Wrangler will rinse the inside and outside of the equipment with a solution of 1/3 cup plain bleach in one gallon of water. **Therefore, it is extremely important that you thoroughly rinse the inside of the extractor prior to use!**
4. Please use gloves at all times when you are handling the equipment.
5. When picking up the extractor, check for any damage. If you find any, call the Wrangler at to report the damage at 240.338.0739.
6. Should damage occur while you have the extractor, please report it to the volunteer Equipment Wrangler by calling 240.338.0739.
    a. Our volunteer Equipment Wrangler will work with you to determine if repairs are required and any costs associated with those repairs.
    b. If you do not report damage, and damage is found, the damage may be assessed to you and you may have to pay for repairs. Failure to pay any assessed repairs will be brought to the BOD for disposition which may result in loss of future extractor privileges.

Other Items You Will Need

HCBA *only* supplies the extractor, so be sure you also have the following on hand:

1. Capping knife or scratcher
2. Honey bucket with micro-filters (like these: https://www.mannlakeltd.com/shop-all-categories/extraction-bottling/honey-extraction/filters-pails-gates/5-gallon-18-92-l-pail-with-honey-gate-and-filter-set or https://www.brushymountainbeefarm.com/beekeepingsupplies/harvestingextracting/filteringbottling)
3. Jars or other containers for your golden sweetness!

Extracting Honey

Extracting can be one sticky mess…have fun, but remember, you are processing a food product, so take care to handle the honey and equipment in a sanitary way.

1. Use gloves at all times when handling the extractor.
2. **You must thoroughly rinse the inside of the extractor** with hot water prior to starting because the volunteer Equipment Wrangler used a bleach solution to sanitize the extractor prior to your pick up.
3. Be sure the inside of the extractor is dry before you start (to not add excess water into your honey because that could increase the likelihood of fermentation).
4. Extract your honey in an enclosed, 'bee free' area. The **bees will find you** if you extract out-of-doors. Good options are your kitchen, a screened porch, screened dining tent, a garage, etc.
5. You MUST have the honey gate open while you are extracting, with the gate positioned over your filtering bucket. (Keep an eye on the bucket so you don't have an overflow!) Failure to open the honey gate may result in damaging the inner baskets and/or the balanced operation of the extractor.
6. Place extracted frames in a hive box and set near your colonies for the bees to do the frame clean-up for you. Do not leave the frames out with the bees for more than a day (or else you risk wax moth infestation). Store properly.
7. If you plan to use the wax cappings, freeze until you are ready to render the wax to kill any wax moth or small hive beetle larvae.

Cleaning the Extractor

You are to return the extractor clean and ready for the next member.

1. **Do not** disassemble the extractor!
2. **Do not** use cleaning detergents or soap!
    a. **This includes** brillo-type pads, Teflon pads or abrasive sponges and brushes of any kind.
3. Rinse the extractor thoroughly with cold water.
    a. This causes any wax to harden and makes it easier for you to flake off.
4. Next, rinse with very hot water.
5. Spray the inside with a bleach solution made with 3 tablespoons bleach to one gallon water. Allow to sit for 5 minutes.
    a. DO NOT use any other cleaner or detergent! If you do not have bleach, simply call or leave a note to advise the volunteer Equipment Wrangler.
6. Rinse, rinse, rinse - repeat! (You get it – rinse thoroughly!)
7. Wipe down the outside of the extractor with a damp cloth.
8. Allow the extractor to air dry or use a cotton towel.

What to do if There is a Problem

Please handle the equipment with care. Rough handling will damage the extractor. Here is what to do if you have a problem.

1. Should something break or not correctly work, stop using the extractor immediately and contact our primary volunteer equipment wrangler to report the issue. We do have a second contact for back up.
    a. Some situations may be able to be handled over the phone.
        i. Primary Contact: Bob Coyne: 240-338-0739
        ii. Secondary Contact: Dave Dobbs: 443-831-0553
2. If the issue is not repairable, you will be asked to return the equipment. If you still need to extract honey, go to the reservation site and select dates for another reservation.
3. Our volunteer Wrangler will examine the inoperable extractor determine what happened and will contact you.
    a. If it is determined that the damage occurred because of rough handling or if inappropriate actions caused damage, you may be asked to assist with the cost of repairs.