

PILLOW
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Horizontal Hive

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You can keep bees, naturally!

PILLOW WITH WOOL – HEAVY DUTY

Made by Zaryana in Missouri

durable 100% cotton canvas • raw natural wool from Missouri farms

Thank you for your support! It is helping out daughter Zaryana expand her own apiary so she can start breeding queens and help spread our great genetics of wild disease-resistant treatment-free honey bees. We appreciate you!

We are sending you exactly the same pillow design that we are using in all our Layens hives. Here are a few observations for their use:

- **Raw wool is good.** The pillow is filled with raw sheep wool. The lanolin (form of natural wax which is coating the wool) gives the wool its characteristic "sheep" smell and protects it from moths and mold. This is why we use unwashed and unprocessed wool, and we have not seen the smell disturb the bees in any way. In fact, 19-century American beekeepers widely used raw-wool pillows for insulation and there are only good reports about it in the old books.
- **Duck canvas for utmost durability.** We use the heavy-duty natural cotton canvas (#12 double-thread duck cloth) which is very dense and "bee-resistant" (see below), and will last a very long time.
- **Two pillows for cold climates.** In very cold climates use two pillows per hive: one over the frames, and the other vertically against the divider board in the empty section of the hive.
- **Bees chew through fabric.** The material we use is the only natural fabric that is bee-resistant & will last many years. But pillows may not last forever. Bees have the instinct of polishing the wood inside their nest by biting off pieces of loose rotten wood until they come to the hard, solid surface. When they encounter fabric, they start gnawing at it, eventually making holes. Here are some tips to extend the life of your pillow even more:

- Add the pillow to the hive in the fall after the first frost. At this point the bees are no longer active and few bees venture past the divider board and up where the pillow is covering the frames. Since few bees come in contact with the pillow in late fall (and none in winter), the pillow remains intact.
- In the early spring, bees mostly stay inside the nest and keep together to conserve heat (and the pillow is very valuable for that); the population is small at that point, and few bees go past the divider board. When the weather becomes reliably warm and the hive population grows, there will be more bees in the empty section of the hive and the destructive "polishing" of the pillow will begin.
- So put the pillow in the hive in the fall and remove it in mid-spring before bees become too numerous past the divider board (you don't need it in the hive when the weather is warm anyway) – and the pillow will last many, many years.
- **Dry the pillow after use.** The pillow will absorb some moisture in the winter and may be moist in the spring. Dry it after removing from the hive and store it till the fall in a place inaccessible to mice and rats.
- If your hive lid has a central beam separating it in two halves – like in our 12-, 14- and 25-frame solid-wood hives – spread the wool apart, making the pillow very thin in the center where the beam will come over it.

Wishing you and your bees the best,

— *Dr Leo Sharashkin, Editor, Keeping Bees with a Smile*