

# Student Manual and Course Catalog

## Academic Years 2021-2023

So welcome to a program designed precisely for you; Valor Honey. Enrollment is easy. You will find an enrollment application on our website. Fill it out and return the completed form via e-mail or to the address below. We will be in contact with you to begin the process of bringing you into an exciting new culture. A culture of purpose, a culture that is critical to our nation, a culture of veterans feeding America!

**Valor Honey**

**1310 Westloop Place Suite A #148**

**Manhattan, Kansas 66502**

**785-775-0140**

**<https://valorhoney.org>**

**[info@valorhoney.org](mailto:info@valorhoney.org)**



**American Honey  
Producers Association**



United States Department of Agriculture  
National Institute of Food and Agriculture



UNIVERSITY OF  
**MONTANA**

**KANSAS STATE  
UNIVERSITY**



*No sweeter  
way to help  
a veteran!*



# About Valor Honey

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## Integrated Therapy

“Every day in the United States 22 veterans commit suicide. Our training is about hope, growth, and finding new life.” —Shari LaGrange-Aulich, Clinical Psychologist

**Welcome to Valor!** We are much more than a training program. We are training for you - transitioning service members and veterans with a desire to find an agricultural future. We are here to help you transition from one culture to another and a significant part of our time together will be directed toward just that. Our goal is to guide you through a learning process that will cause you to be well-grounded with a sense of confidence and wellness that will support your future success. We on the Valor staff are here for you and about creating a learning experience that will prepare you for a new and exciting life. A new life that will be beneficial to you and your family and since you will be creating food or working in an industry that contributes to creating food, you will be engaged in a vocation that is of tremendous value.

We are in Manhattan, Kansas. In time, we will have our own facilities and classrooms. Now we team with Kansas State University, and a honey co-packer for large orders but we are ready for you to begin learning the moment you arrive. In the future we plan to open training centers in every State building a network of veteran beekeepers working under the Valor label to provide honey to retailers across the USA.

So welcome to Valor Honey. Get ready to be immersed in programs that will mold you into a new person while helping you transition through change. And if you have visible or invisible wounds, we will work your needs into our programs.

We are honored to have you among us.

- Wholeness is our way of integrating therapy into our programs. For those of you needing care for visible or invisible wounds, we will assist in arranging the care you need. Our staff is also trained to integrate therapy into the day-to-day training.
- In addition to individual care, we offer you marriage and family programs to enrich your life while you are with us.
- And while you are with us, we will match you with an employer who is willing to bring you on after you complete your certificate so that you can improve your skills on the job. Many farmers are also looking for the next generation to manage and/or own their farms and we will assist with this process when practical. If you wish to begin a new bee operation, we will find a mentor for you to assist you along the way. And we will remain in contact with you to provide you with new opportunities to learn new and emerging approaches. This manual is intended to provide a resource for you regarding our student policy and procedure to make it easier for you to become part of Valor Honey. It is really YOUR program uniquely designed for YOU.

- Welcome to our Family!

## *Legitimately Pure Certified USA Honey*



*A prime output of our unique training program!*



## Special Programs

Students will receive certificates or licenses to enable success in the following areas:

- Commercial (DL) driver's license
- OSHA 10 Safety certificate
- Certification for food processing
- OSHA forklift certificate.

## Online Learning

We team with online training courses available that are well researched and recommended by the Department of Agriculture. The University of Montana and Heroes to Hives are partners and our curriculum is fully integrated with their set of courses. Our robust hands on training will enable an aspiring student to gain a certificate via the internet. Courses offered online for this academic year are described in this manual.



**Our courses include classroom and study time.**



**Our training is mostly hands-On. Here Greg Prepares to Harvest Valor Honey.**



**You will learn small-scale and large commercial uncapping, extraction, and packing skills.**

## Academic Calendar

Our academic calendar changes periodically based on cyclic changes in the farm cycle, weather, and other unforeseeable events. When we are training, our calendar can be accessed online at

<https://valorhoney.org>, as can other information important to you as you proceed through training. We recommend that you visit our website frequently, even daily, to check on the latest schedule.

## Accreditation

Our online programs of instruction are fully accredited and aligned with Kansas State University and the University of Montana. The program is structured to provide you with a certificate in beekeeping and honey production. Some credits can be transferred to Universities or Colleges if you should decide later that you would like to pursue a four-year college degree.

Our trainers are Master beekeepers, all of whom are veterans.

Valor Honey is incorporated as a Kansas State Charitable Educational Corporation operating under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Service Code. That means that we can operate tax-free, and donations are tax-deductible. We operate largely on donations and honey sales so that we can offer training and wellness at a significantly reduced cost to you. Our operations are guided by a board of directors who work hard to provide the resources and guidance needed to provide first-class operations. You deserve that. Our board has representatives and advisors who have first-hand experience with our programs and working with others in a teaching and healing environment. They all share a strong desire to create an environment and programs for you that are world-class.



## Kansas State University

Valor Honey has a close relationship with KSU. We maintain bee colonies on the agronomy farms and the student farms. We teach workshops for KSU students, veterans, and active-duty service members simultaneously. We also assist KSU entomology professors and students with various needs pertaining to honeybees.

We are working to open a relationship with a Kansas Community College so that we can offer full Veterans Administration benefits to our students. We are also working with the Veterans Administration to become fully qualified as an organization offering GI Bill and Vocational Rehabilitation benefits.

We will offer scholarships in the interim as funds are available.



## The University of Montana

Valor Honey has partnered with the University of Montana since it began bee training in 2013. The U of M was recommended by the US Department of Agriculture as the leading professionally researched online program. In partnership with them, we offer:

Valor 101 – Apprentice 3 Credit hours

Valor 102 – Journeyman 3 credit hours

Valor 103 – Master 4 credit hours

Valor 104 – Commercial 2 credit hours



*A bee team at work; fulfillment, friendship, purpose, healing!*

## **Where is Valor Honey?**

Classroom instruction will occur at the Agronomy Farm classrooms on the Kansas State University campus in Manhattan Kansas, and in other locations as announced. Hands-on training will occur at various Valor apiaries. The apiaries are mostly in Riley and Pottawatomie counties.

## **Confidential Hotline**

During your time at Valor Honey, you will have the ability to contact a representative at any time to discuss any situation you wish to share. Our representative will ensure that your comments are held in the strictest of confidence. We will work to assist with anything you share. The number is 785-775-0140.

## **Safety/Emergency Procedures**

Our training requires strict safety. Working with bees and honey equipment is one of the more challenging vocations; therefore, safety procedures are foremost in our curriculum. We will spend significant amounts of time specifically training about safety techniques and integrating safety training in all our hands-on classes.



# Admissions

## **Admission at Valor is based upon an open-door policy.**

Valor accepts any transitioning service member or veteran who seeks admission. Enrollment in programs and selected courses, however, may depend upon basic skill levels and/or available space. With the "rolling admissions process," acceptance of an applicant is granted as soon as all admissions procedures and requirements have been completed. If a program is at capacity enrollment, eligible applicants will be placed on standby status until an enrollment opportunity exists.

Valor establishes the minimum entrance requirements for applicants. Proficiency in reading, writing and/or mathematics may be required for enrollment in selected courses within a program.

Prospective students may apply at any time within the last 180 days of service or immediately, if a veteran. Credit for work completed at other colleges will be accepted to the extent that it is compatible with Valor curricula.

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*Valor Honey hires and admits employees and students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to Valor employees and students. It does not discriminate based on race, color, or national and ethnic origin in the administration of its employee policies, educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and other school-administered programs.*

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## **Optional Electives:**

**Kansas State University, and the University of Montana offer a number of related business courses that can assist you in becoming fully prepared for your future.**



*This manual incorporates the Kansas State University Student Manual, and The University of Montana Student Manual by reference and practice. The policy and guidelines within each of those manuals pertain to classes held at their respective facilities, institutions, and/or grounds.*

## Valor Honey Course Description

The Beekeeping and Honey Production Course is a Valor Honey course. The course included in this package is Apprentice/Journeyman Level training. We also offer a Master level and Commercial level to students who wish to gain more detailed knowledge.

This 6-month course is designed to prepare students to learn all the basic requirements of beekeeping. This course will enable the student to maintain bees as a means to diversity for the post-training endeavor they will engage in whether it is large scale farming or supplemental income production.

It will also enable the student to be employed by commercial beekeeping entities.

Beekeeping is farming. The US Department of Agriculture classifies honeybees as livestock. They are tremendously important to our nation's food systems in that they pollinate 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of our food supply. Without them we would be forced to a diet of primarily rice, wheat, and corn.

Therefore, this class is an intense primarily hands on course that will prepare the students to:

- Understand the biology of the honeybee
- Understand how the colony of honeybee's functions
- Understand the safety requirements
- Understand the equipment required and usage
- Understand how the colony must be maintained
  - Placement
    - Forage
    - Location

- Sources of bees and Installation
- Routine inspections
- Feeding
- Dealing with vectors and diseases
- Understand how honey is made
- Understand how honey is processed

### Food safety

From the hive to extraction to packing (bottling)

- Understand how honey is marketed
- Understand the legal requirements surrounding beekeeping
- Understanding the economics of beekeeping
  - Business Planning and record keeping
- Budgeting
  
- Understand how to construct woodenware
  - Safety requirements, OSHA 10 Certification
  - How to safely use tools and techniques of the trade
  - OSHA forklift certification
  
- Engage in robust hands-on training across the entire process of beekeeping to enable the student to successfully keep bees upon course completion.

Course students will be encouraged to complete the SAVE Farm Economics and Farm Marketing Courses to enhance their knowledge.

*Kansas State University, Highland Community College, and The University of Montana Student Manuals are incorporated by reference regarding those course portions given by those institutions.*



## Program Details

### Start Date, Course Length and Hours

This 6-month course is not more than 20 hours per week beginning in January and June each year. The curriculum includes 164 hours of incremental classroom instruction covering all aspects of beekeeping at the apprentice level. An additional 460 hours of hands-on instruction is required to meet the standard.

### Curriculum and Instruction

The curriculum was developed to provide apprentice to Journeyman level proficiency in beekeeping. The course will enable the student to succeed in keeping bees and producing honey. Classroom and hands-on instruction is accomplished by using the finest researched texts, videos, and by working side by side with experienced and credentialed beekeeping professionals.

The classroom instruction will occur in Valor Honey Farms classrooms. Hands-on instruction will occur in apiaries containing 150 bee colonies across a 6 county area surrounding Manhattan, Kansas.

## Class Structure

The program uses a cohort model with students learning together. Each cohort of up to 25 students proceeds through the course together. 25 students are manageable, enables in depth instruction, and enables group interaction and strong bonding.

Note: Hands on training must be flexible due to weather limitations. Bees cannot be worked during rain, high winds, and extreme heat or during freezing weather. Winter classes will consist primarily of classroom training, woodenware building and simulation. Some active hive instruction can occur on warmer winter days.

## Cost

The cost is \$(Call 785-556-6799) per student. GI Bill and Vocational Rehabilitation Programs will soon be available. Payment plans can be arranged.

Families are an important part of our program. Spouses and children are welcome to learn and become part of the Valor family.

We have trained over 1500 since 2013 and that includes many family members. The Valor family.... together we make lives more whole and beautiful!



## Syllabus

Course: Apprentice/Journeyman Level  
Beekeeping (Master optional)

This course will prepare you to succeed in beekeeping and honey production. Upon completion you will be able to maintain a small number of bee colonies (up to 50) or work with someone who maintains a large number of colonies. The course is designed to help you to use beekeeping as a diverse element of your next endeavor or as a career endeavor.

You will require the following items to participate in this course.

Text: Storey's Guide to Keeping Honeybees, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, July 10, 2018, Soft cover

Materials: Notebooks to maintain notes

Equipment: Bee suit, gloves, work boots covering your ankles, hive tool, smoker and smoker fuel, bee brush. GI Bill students and non-veteran students will be provided loan items to be returned daily after use. VA VR&E students will receive a starter package to include starter bee colonies that they will own upon receipt.

During this course you will receive the following instruction:

1. Safety (OSHA 10 Certificate and OSHA Forklift Operators Certificate)
2. Honeybee Biology
3. How the Honeybee Colony functions.
4. Equipment required and proper usage of the equipment.

5. How to establish and maintain the honeybee colony.
  6. How honey is made and other products of the hive.
  7. How honey is harvested and processed.
  8. How honey is marketed.
  9. The legal requirements surrounding beekeeping and honey production.
  10. The economics of beekeeping.
  11. How to construct woodenware requirements.
  12. Hands-on instruction at the beehives covering all stages of beekeeping.
- Written tests will be given weekly. Hands-on-training requires demonstration of proficiency assessed by the instructor.
- You will be required to be in class during scheduled activities.
- You are encouraged to select other SAVE course offerings that supplement or complement this course. Farm Economics, Agricultural Law, Marketing, and courses that fit your specific needs can be taken simultaneously. Please inform your primary beekeeping and additional course instructors so that accommodations can be made.
- Upon completion of this course, you will be able to successfully begin basic beekeeping operations managing up to 500 colonies or you will be able to work with a seasoned beekeeper maintaining a large number of colonies.

# Syllabus

Course: Commercial Beekeeping

This course will prepare you to succeed in commercial beekeeping and honey production. Coupled with the Apprentice Level C, upon completion you will be able to assist in maintaining many bee colonies (300 to 93,000). The course is designed to help you to become an employee of a commercial honey production operation, a commercial honey packing operation, a migratory operation or to begin a commercial operation of your own. You will require the following items to participate in this course.

Printed materials provided to you by instructors.

Materials: Notebooks to maintain notes.

Equipment: Bee suit, gloves, work boots covering your ankles, hive tool, smoker and smoker fuel, bee brush. GI Bill students and non-veteran students will be provided loan items to be returned daily after use. VA VR&E students will receive a starter package to include starter bee colonies that they will own upon receipt.



We are capable of bottling or packing up to 50,000 bottles per shift

During this course you will receive the following instruction:

1. Safety.
2. Commercial Driver's License (CDL) training and licensure, Forklift Operators Certification, and OSHA 10 Certification.
3. Recap of beekeeping essentials and honey production stressing large scale operations.
4. Large-scale honey processing operations and equipment. Harvest, Extraction, Storage.

5. Large scale packing operations and equipment.
    - Pre-packing requirements.
    - Packing and labeling.
    - Packaging for shipment and shipping.
  6. Marketing on a large scale.
  7. Migratory operations.
    - Preparing bee colonies for shipment.
    - Staging bee colonies and management requirements.
    - Loading bees for transport.
      - Legal considerations and forms required.
      - Forklift or Hummer Bee operations.
      - Netting bee colonies.
      - Securing colonies for movement.
      - Transporting to migration site.
      - Management at the site.
  8. Almond or produce contracts.
  9. Placement and management on almond and orchards.
  10. Management while pollinating.
  11. Splitting post-pollination. Packages, Nucleus, 10 frame production, and sale. Queen production and sale.
  12. Returning bees to honey production sites.
- Written tests will be given weekly. Hands-on training requires a demonstration of proficiency assessed by the instructor.
- You will be required to be in class during scheduled activities.
- You must complete the Journeyman Level Beekeeping Course as a prerequisite.
- Upon completion of this course, you will be able to successfully begin commercial beekeeping operations managing 300 colonies or more, pack honey produced, and migrate colonies to pollination sites in other states.

Guest speakers and instructors will be utilized to cover specialized classes.

Our bee colonies are spread over multiple sites in several counties. Your hands-on work will consist of opening and assessing the health of many colonies, splitting them, moving them, feeding them, replacing queens, catching swarms, adding supers, harvesting, extracting, bottling, markeing, handling beeswax, and much more.

You will also be trained in a high-volume packing facility as well as a smaller sideliner extracting and packing facility.

Students in our commercial course may spend time in South Dakota with the nation's largest honey producer. You will also participate in the movement across country to California to participate in almond pollination.

Queen production will occur on a small scale near our apiaries or in Louisiana where a high production commercial activity will train you.

Come ready to study and work. Beekeeping and honey production is tremendously satisfying but it takes much work to become proficient.



A bee team evaluating a colony and preparing to split it in the spring.

## Instructors

Gary L LaGrange. Master Beekeeper, University of Montana Certificate 2015. First kept bees 65 years ago. Founded SAVE and GPHF in 2013. Taught over 1500 students. Member of the North American Beekeepers Association, Kansas Honey Producers. Frequent speaker at national, state, and local beekeeping events. Retired US Army Colonel. Viet Nam Veteran. Degrees in Industrial Relations, MBA, and Law. Born and raised on a farm.

Ted Maciejewski. Master Beekeeper, University of Montana Certificate 2017. Lead Beekeeping Supply and Production operations since 2016. Mentored 60 beekeeping interns and presented classes to hundreds of students. Retired US Army Sergeant First Class. Iraq and Afghanistan Veteran. Manages a small farm of his own.



***Real Honey prepared by our Nation's Heroes.  
Honey that Heals!***