

### ***Loading & trucking to almonds***

When loading a 48' straight trailer, start loading from the back. If loading 432 – 6 ways, leave about a foot on the back as a ledge to make it easier to bungee the flap of the net. Most 48' trailers have spread axles and can carry more weight on the back than the front. You will have space left on the front to work from, and the driver can strap his tarps and a spare there. Do not X strap the front or back of a 6 – way pallet load. Double strap the first and last row, then 1 strap per row – front or back of the pallet – it does not matter. No wood goes on top of a 6-way load. If the driver or the beekeeper wants to use “V” boards down the side, that is ok.

If you are loading 4-way pallets, you should start at the back edge, you will need the whole truck for 408 colonies. You will also need 10 or more 2X6's across the top, and “X” straps front and back. You also need the entire bed if loading 468 colonies on 6-ways. If your 6-way pallets are wider than 44” you will have to start at the back edge, and more than 432 will not fit.

Always roll the back net out first, then the front. If your nets are rolled right, start rolling from the edge & roll out towards the center, then drop the sides down. If one half of the net is a boxed net, use it on the front, unless you think there may be a weight issue with the load.

Normally a heavy truck needs hives taken off the front & a box net is hard to pull up to take pallets out. The flap end is much easier. Step deck trailers should load from the step back. If front deck is 11', then 3 rows 2 high will fit, and 10 rows tripled make a nice load that is close to straight across the top. If deck is smaller you can build a bridge at the 11' mark from the front, or stack deck with 2 rows 3 high. Be careful with the net with that one as it is easy to tear a net when tightening straps when top is not level. With step decks you have the option of stacking doubles 4 high. Make sure driver has long drop nets before going 4 high. 53 'trailers should be loaded the same. Do not try to use the extra 5 feet on the back unless you are very light.

Some trucks have air gauges and can tell you the weight before netting. Otherwise they should weigh at nearest truck stop before heading west. There are a few 96” wide trailers out there. 6-way pallets hang over the edge and straps will not go behind the rail. You won't even notice if loading 4 ways. Make sure your truck is air ride. Make sure the nets are folded right before placing on top of the load. New nets are never folded right. Spread the net out, if “D” rings are on the net, make sure they are facing up. 1<sup>st</sup> fold box or flap over on top of net. Then fold each side into the center several times until it is the width you want to roll. Remember where the box or flap is, then start rolling net from the other end so the box end is on the outside of the roll.

We try to get 408 to 432 doubles on a truck. If you are getting more hives on a truck, they may be too light. The bees may lose weight in California depending on the weather. Run a sprinkler hose under the straps on top of the load in case of hot weather or truck trouble. Please do not staple bee nets to covers on top of the load. We don't like staples at all, but some drivers insist. We want to be able to pull the nets from the ground. It would be safer to put an 8X6 tarp (or bigger) under the net across the front of the load. This is more important if you have team

drivers that drive at night when temperatures are lower & for 6-way pallets as the entrances are facing the wind.

Don't send partial pallets, fill in the holes, and make your hives uniform in height.

I am prepared to arrange and pay all the trucking, but you can arrange and pay for your own truck if you want. I will deduct trucking from your check if I pay.

If you are sending full load(s), and you are OK paying more, there are some good bee haulers, if you are interested. I can give you numbers and you can try to line them up, or I can arrange the truck. They charge more than the brokers, but they speak English, suit up, strap & net. It is nice working with them. So much less stress, and I can pay them also but you must let me know what price you agreed on. The brokers have a lot of good drivers too, but it's "The luck of the draw" when it gets hard to find trucks.

Unfortunately, some drivers want to take the cold route, so they can make daytime stops without any bees flying around. This can cause damage to the load. I-10 is plenty cold on the ride out.

Make sure you get your inspection and health certificates from your local FL bee inspector. You may be able to get a fire ant inspection also which can help get your bees through the border in California. Send me a copy of your Florida registration certificate with the driver for the return shipping, or you can email it. Use my name and number on bill of lading as the contact person in California. The destination will be Kern County. The farm will depend on when you ship, and how strong the bees are.

If you are sending hives for 8 frame average pollination, download the "MO" (Maricopa Orchards) bill of lading from the website "beekeepers" page. For 12 frame pollination download the "WO" wonderful orchards bill of lading. They are partly filled out. You may have to change the colony #'s & fill in your information.

As soon as you get a truck on the road, Text me the drivers phone number & number of colonies. I will text the driver with specific instructions for his load. If the driver is early, we have the truck hold up in the mountain pass where it is cooler until 4 PM unless the weather permits unloading before dark. It is not fun to pull nets in the daytime.

You are welcome to come out if you want to see what is going on.

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