

# GOLD STAR HONEYBEES®

## Bee Order Policies 2026



### How are bees shipped through the mail?

Gold Star Honeybees are shipped USPS Priority Mail – because that’s the only way the USPS will ship them. However, even though they are shipped Priority Mail, they will **only travel by ground** transportation because the **USPS prohibits air transportation of bees**. This is the reason that bees cannot be shipped “overnight,” or by “Priority Mail Express.”

**“Hold for Pickup” – Bees are marked “Hold for Pickup”** and will be shipped to your local post office, not directly to your home. Your phone number is printed right on the package, so be alert for a call from your post office asking you to “Please come get your bees!”

**NEW in 2025:** The USPS has instituted a “Live Animal Fee” to cover additional costs of shipping honeybees.

### WHAT IF MY BEES DON’T ARRIVE SAFELY?

This is a very important question so please read carefully:

The USPS has a long history of successfully shipping bees. They have a better than 90% success rate in getting the bees to you safely. But... sometimes bad things happen to good bees, and the bees arrive dead or damaged.

That’s why each 3# package of bees that we ship is insured through the USPS for its **full purchase price**. This carrier insurance is a product that WE purchase on your behalf -- so that YOU have a way to recoup YOUR investment.

**If the bees do not arrive safe and sound, it is YOUR responsibility to file the insurance claim with the USPS.** The payment will **come from the USPS** and it will be **sent directly to you, the recipient**. Gold Star Honeybees does NOT file claims, nor do we provide refunds for bees damaged during shipping.

**\*\*\* PACKAGE BEES ARE A NON-REFUNDABLE PURCHASE. \*\*\***

When you buy bees from us, **our responsibility for their health and well-being ends when the bees are put into the hands of the USPS for shipping**. In order to complete your purchase from our website, you will be required to digitally sign the order.

By completing your purchase, you are certifying that you **understand** and **agree** that the USPS Insurance claim process is your recourse against a shipment that arrives dead or damaged by the carrier.

Claims can be filed online, using the USPS' website

<https://www.usps.com/help/claims.htm>

If you are unable to file a claim online, visit your post office or call 1-800-ASK-USPS® (1-800-275-8777) to have a Domestic Claim Form mailed to you.

## **DON'T WE CARE ABOUT YOUR BEES?**

Lest you think that all the fuss in this policy document means that we here at Gold Star Honeybees don't care about what happens to your bees, let me spend a moment to correct that misconception. Raising bees for packaging is a year-round process. Throughout that year, we think of them as OUR bees. A great deal of time, money and energy are expended in producing beautiful and healthy package bees, and have nearly total control over what happens to them. But once they are delivered to the carrier for shipping – that control ceases and the bees' well-being is then in the hands of the carrier, in this case, the USPS.

It is difficult to see how it could ever be the fault of Gold Star Honeybees when the USPS shipping process fails. It's not. But the fact is that we still DO care – a lot -- (remember, a minute ago these were OUR bees...) and so WE purchase, FOR YOU, extra insurance to cover the full purchase price of what will soon become YOUR bees.

WE choose to ship with the USPS because of their long experience and their high success rate, as well as the availability of insurance for the bees' themselves. But accidents can happen. **It is YOUR responsibility to understand how this process works, and to act in accord.**

**So now that you have this information, it's decision time, and we would like to remind you:**

**If this policy does not make sense to you, or if you do not like it, or if you do not want to have to file a claim in case of dead or damaged bees, or if you disagree with it for any other reason, then please: DO NOT BUY BEES FROM US!**

Simply look elsewhere for bees to purchase, from someone with different policies.

We would prefer that you buy from someone else and be happy rather than be disappointed buying from us because of our firm policies.

We love you, and we love those bees, but we are also subject to all the risks and realities and vagaries of running a small business, all in the hope of still being here years from now, and still being able to continue to offer you beautiful bees. These policies are put in place to protect the bees, to protect you, and to help you recoup your financial investment, if need be, as well as to protect our small business.

We appreciate knowing that you “get it.” Thank you for reading our explanation.

Should you need to file a claim, we are happy to assist by providing any copies of your order paperwork that you may need. For help with this, please write to [bees@goldstarhoneybees.com](mailto:bees@goldstarhoneybees.com) or call us at 207-449-1121.

### **What about getting more bees if something happened to my original package?**

This can be done by purchasing additional bees via the website as usual, or by emailing Gold Star Honeybees at [bees@goldstarhoneybees.com](mailto:bees@goldstarhoneybees.com) or by calling us at 207-449-1121.

### **How to safely transport your bees home from the post office:**

<b>THINGS YOU SHOULD DO:</b>	<b>THINGS YOU SHOULD NOT DO:</b>
Protect the package from direct wind.	Please don't transport bees in the open bed of a pickup, or with all the windows open in your car, or with the air conditioning blowing directly on them.
Protect the package from direct sun.	Please don't set the bee package on the dashboard or back deck of your vehicle.
Protect the package from ANY very extreme heat or cold.	Please don't transport bees in your trunk, or in a closed tote or tightly sealed container of any kind.

\*\*\*Avoid transporting bees in vehicles that transport yard or farm chemicals.

\*\*\*Also avoid vehicles that may contain the residue of a pet's recent flea treatment.

### **What do I do about the rest of the bees if the queen is dead upon arrival?**

- 1) Install the bees in your hive. Install the dead queen in her cage right along with them. She will still be giving off queen pheromones and this will keep the bees cohesive until a replacement arrives.



As always, we thank you for making Gold Star Honeybees a part of your beekeeping journey, and we wish all the best for you and your bees. Bzzzzzt!