

## APPLICATION OF THE STRACCI METHOD FOR THE REALIZATION OF ARTIFICIAL SWARMS WITH VIRGIN QUEEN BEES

It is advisable to follow the method by the book, as it results of a constant experimentation and continuous monitoring in the field. This patient work started in the apiary season 1998.

Tools:

- 1) A swarm box;
- 2) a frame with or without provisions, but absolutely without brood;
- 3) two frames with half foundation each;
- 4) a pocket feeder full of candy;
- 5) a roll of parcel tape;
- 6) a bucket;
- 7) a colony of young bees;
- 8) a virgin queen;
- 9) a cup with a little sugar syrup or liquid honey;
- 10) a large empty cup:

Method:

Collect all the material, bring it close to a beehive from which you can pick young bees. Insert the frame with the provisions in the first position, that is, the one closest to one of the two side walls of the swarm box.  
in the second position insert a frame with half foundation (applied at the top of the frame);  
in third position, the feeder full of candy;  
in the fourth position, the other frame with half foundation.  
Take the bucket and open the beehive of young bees,  
Spot the frame with the resident queen bee and transfer it temporarily into a second swarm box,  
then start to shake the frames loaded with bees, one by one, in the bucket.  
Tap the bucket on the ground after shaking each frame.  
Put the empty frames in their apiary together with the frame with a resident queen.

In this way, the old bees will move away and return to the original hive. It will form a pack of young bees that, with a last hit on the ground of the bucket, will aggregate in a corner.

In mild or cool outdoor temperatures, do this procedure without wetting the bees in the bucket;

In hot summer temperatures, lightly moisten the bees using a nebulizer.

Once the package bees has been created, tilt the bucket, accumulating the bees in a corner.

At this stage, using one hand, hold the bucket like a steering wheel, rotating it in the direction of the cup, which you hold in the other hand. Thus, the bees will fall from the bottom of the bucket inside the cup (as shown in the video published on [www.apicolturareginaitalia.eu](http://www.apicolturareginaitalia.eu)).

Pour the cup full of bees on the top part of the frames, especially on the feeder , in close contact with the candy (if some bees will fall on the bottom of the tray , do not worry, they will rise by themselves).

Then, using your hands, spread the bees evenly and quickly, to avoid the crushing of bees and of the queen, when closing the box.

Immediately after, dive the virgin queen into the syrup and place it in the swarm box amid the young bees, near the candy.

In the last step, close the box with the package tape, so as to seal all the gaps between the lid and the box, completing the round so that the tape sticks on the tape.

Do the same operation of sealing the cap with the small entrance of the nucleus.

Keep the nucleus closed for 48 hours with an open ventilation grid.

After two days, place the nucleus where you have decided to place it. Open the small door, but be careful: before doing so, make sure that the boxes have been disposed in such a way that their entrance can be easily identified by the queens coming back from the mating flight.

Therefore it is necessary to mark the entrance of the box with different colors, especially if the colonies are disposed next to each other. This procedure will assist the return of the queens, after the mating flight, to the box to which they belong.

With our selection, on average, within 8/10 days from the insertion of the queen, the same will start to brood (of course, two prerequisites are essential: right number of drones in the apiary and adequate weather conditions).

This method provides a given degree of acceptance of the queens.

But that is not all!

A strong beehive, which, in spring, that is first phase of the reproductive period, is not intended for honey production, can be used to form about 10 colonies of the same type.

This result can be achieved by withdrawing young bees from the hive, on two or three different occasions, after a week between one withdrawal and another.

In this way, the nucleuses formed can be used for the production of the hive in the year following their formation.

Remember: the final result depends above all on an effective beekeeping technique.

We are at your disposal to transmit this experience to you.