

# Home Orchard Society **mason bee supplies**

We are a non-profit 501c(3) organization dedicated to educating our members and the general public about growing good fruit at home.

For many years, a group of our members have been spending their spare time raising mason bees to sell to other backyard fruit growers. Currently, at nine different sites around Portland and the North Willamette valley, members set out new tubes every spring to increase their mason bee populations, making it possible to sell full tubes to others. These bees are home-grown, adapted to the Pacific northwest climate, and extremely hardy. However, we had harsh spring conditions (again!) for mason bees this year and our supply is limited. And remember, you don't need to rely on full tubes to get your population going/growing...by providing ample nesting space you invite wandering females to lay their eggs at your site, so stock up and set out plenty of empty tubes!

## **If you are interested in ordering from us, please take a moment to read these guidelines**

Please note: Due to the limited hours of our Arboretum Manager your orders will be filled on either a Tuesday or a Saturday after your order is reviewed. Because of these limited hours, please also make every attempt to ask questions or conduct your business with us via email. If you need to speak with someone, email us your number!

## **PLACING YOUR ORDER - Order limit of 15 tubes of dormant bees per person!**

- We only fill orders from December 1st through February 28th, while supplies last.
- This is a volunteer-managed endeavor, please be patient; your business is important to us, and we will return your email as soon as we can.
- Plan ahead for what you need – we were sold out by the end of Jan last year, so order early!

## **For ordering, please use our order form, located in this packet:**

1. **Mail orders**- simply download it, print it, fill it out and send it to us with your payment.  
Please email to confirm supplies are available first.

**Send mail orders to:** **HOS Mason Bees**  
**P.O. Box 607**  
**Oregon City, OR 97045**

2. **LOCAL pickup orders** - Email is best:

**Email** - download the order form, fill it out, and send it as an attachment, with "mason bee order" in the subject line. (You will receive an email confirmation of your order.)

**Email your order to:** **arboretum@homeorchardsociety.org**

## **PAYMENT**

- The Home Orchard Society currently accepts cash, checks, and money orders for our mason bee sales.
- We must receive a check or money order before we can ship your order.
- Cash is acceptable only if you are picking up your order locally.
- Make checks and money orders payable to: **Home Orchard Society**

## **RECEIVING YOUR ORDER:** You have two choices - shipping via mail or in person pick-up:

**SHIPPING** We ship via US Priority Mail only. We do not have an account with UPS or FED-EX.

**PICK-UP** There are two ways to arrange a pick-up:

1. **At the HOS Fruit Propagation Fair;** generally the 1st Saturday in March, in the Portland, OR area.  
Visit our website ([www.homeorchardsociety.org](http://www.homeorchardsociety.org)) for directions and times.
2. **At the HOS Arboretum;** open Tuesdays and Saturdays from 9 - 3 pm year round, on the campus of Clackamas Community College in Oregon City, Oregon.  
Email [arboretum@homeorchardsociety.org](mailto:arboretum@homeorchardsociety.org) to set a pick-up date with the site manager.

**You must pay with cash or check at pick-up time, unless you already mailed your payment.**

# Home Orchard Society Mason Bee Order Form

2011/12

**Your information:**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

**Shipping and Handling Chart**

Subtotal	Shipping Cost
\$0 - 20.00	\$5.50
\$20 - 40.00	\$7.50
\$40 - 60.00	\$11.50
\$60 - 100.00	\$15.50

For larger orders, please email ahead for a custom shipping price.

**Mail orders, send this order with payment to:**

HOS Mason Bees  
 P.O. Box 607  
 Oregon City, OR 97045

**Local pickups, you can email us:**

arboretum@homeorchardsociety.org

\_\_\_\_\_ I want my order shipped to address above

\_\_\_\_\_ Call/email me - I'll pick up my order (check one)

\_\_\_\_\_ HOS Arboretum (Tues/Sat only)

\_\_\_\_\_ HOS Scion Exchange (March)

Item Description	Item Code	Unit Price	Quantity	Total
<b>Bees - NOTE THE CHANGE - LIMIT 15 per ORDER!!!</b>				
Folded 12 inch tubes (12-18 cocoons)	12BT	\$5.00		
6 inch tubes (6-9 cocoons)	6BT	\$2.50		
<b>Empty tubes - no limit.</b> Each	12T	\$0.24		
Coated 12 inch tubes Bundle of 27	2712T	\$6.00		
<b>Bee and Tube Subtotal</b>				
<b>Calculate Shipping</b> (see shipping chart on this page)				
<b>We accept cash or checks for pick-up orders;</b> <b>checks or money orders for mailorders</b>				
<b>Make checks payable to: Home Orchard Society</b>				<b>Total due</b>
				(add up the grey boxes)

2011/12

# HOS mason bee supply price list

Item Descriptions

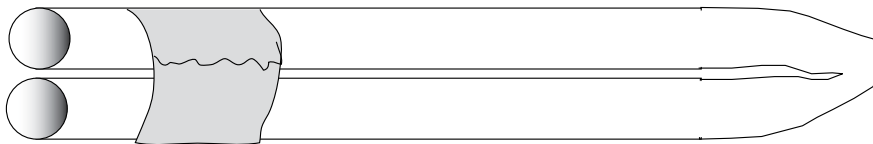
Unit Price / Item Code

## Bees

Our tubes of bees are designed to fit inside PVC houses, but can be tucked anywhere safe and dry (tin cans and small buckets are great too); tubes are paper coated with a thin plastic coating for weather resistance. Please note that these are cocoons inside paper tubes; the cocoons themselves have not been cleaned or sorted. Generally, in each 6 inch tube, the first 2 - 3 cocoons are males, and the remaining 3 - 6 cocoons at the back are females, who emerge last.

An average of 3 - 5 twelve inch folded tubes of bees gives a backyard grower a good start to their population, and is a good number to start a single PVC or wood block house's population. If you have a big place or more than a dozen fruit trees, consider multiple houses, spread 100-150 feet apart.

If you are trying to introduce these bees into wood block housing of some kind, all they need is to be placed alongside the house (and protected from the weather - a tin can hung horizontally works great!). The bees will exit their tubes and start using the new holes for egg laying.



**Folded 12 inch tubes (12-18 cocoons)**

**Each 12BT**

**\$5.00**



(bees will emerge from the end designated with magic marker on the outside)

**6 inch tubes (6-9 cocoons)**

**Each 6BT**

**\$2.50**



**LIMIT of 15 tubes (6" or 12") per ORDER**

## Empty tubes

Empty tubes are cardboard with a thin plastic coating for weather resistance. Tubes need folding in half, as a 12" tube is too deep for bees to use efficiently. We sell bundles of 27 because this is the number of tubes that fit (folded) in one side of a 3" PVC house, or that fills both ends of a 2" PVC house.

If you are buying 3 - 5 tubes of bees, a bundle of 27 empties will serve as nesting space for the first two seasons of your bees. Expect to provide a woodblock or PVC house with one bundle of 27 empty tubes for every 3 - 5 twelve inch folded tubes of bees you purchase.

**Coated 12 inch tubes**

**Each**

**12T**

**\$0.24**

**Bundle of 27**

**2712T**

**\$6.00**

## CARE OF DORMANT MASON BEES

Upon receiving filled tubes of dormant cocoons, remember that you are dealing with living, climate sensitive creatures. Unwrap the shipping materials and place them in a cool, dark place to keep them dormant - a garage, unheated basement, or refrigerator. If it is the season for them to break dormancy (are your pears and cherries in bloom?), place them in their house outside. As we get into mid-February, they can emerge from dormancy in as little as 3-5 hours at room temperature. Generally, three to four days in a row above 55°F will trigger males to start emerging outdoors.

If you receive bees that have begun emerging, release any that are alive outside, and place the rest of the tubes in the refrigerator. Chances are, only one or two males emerged, and the bulk of your bees are still fine. Please call us if it seems like too many bees emerged; we will do our best to replace a shipment. Be aware, especially if you live in a warmer climate, of the possibility of premature emergence, and order your bees as early as possible.

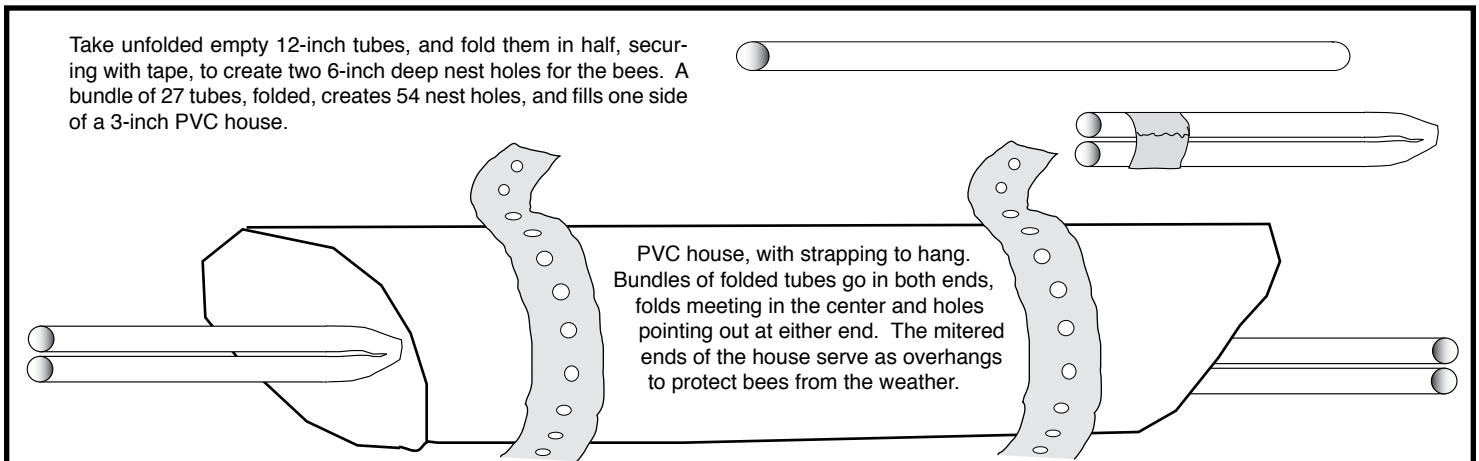
*We do our best to cull out any bee tubes that have been parasitized, damaged, or seem only half full. If you feel like the bees you have received never emerged, or emerged before you even opened the package, we will do our best to see you get replacements. Please let us know about any problems with your order as soon as possible!*

## TUBE FOLDING

The empty tubes that we provide arrive unfolded. A roll of scotch tape and rubber bands are all you need to get them ready to put them out. Mark out the length of a tube, and its center point (6 inches in from either end) on your work surface. With the marks as a guide, use a pair of needle nose pliers or your fingers at the center/6 inch mark, and fold the tube in half so its ends are even with each other. Now add enough scotch tape to hold it together (an inch or so), and keep folding tubes until you have enough.

I've found that twenty-seven is the perfect number of tubes. Twenty-seven 12-inch tubes, once folded, fit inside a length of 3 inch PVC pipe. That means that fifty-four will be how many you need to fill both ends of a 3-inch PVC house. For those of you with the 2-inch pipe, twenty-seven folded tubes will fill both sides of these smaller houses.

For people getting their first mason bees, one or two bundles of 27 empties, plus 2-4 twelve inch folded tubes of bees are a great way to start your population. This ratio of empty tubes to dormant bees ensures that you have enough space for 2-3 years of nesting space as your bees multiply. If you already have nesting spaces (drilled wood blocks are most popular) then 2-4 tubes of cocoons should get you started off with plenty of bees.



## SETTING OUT YOUR NESTS

Once your folded empties and the tubes with bees are snug - in a PVC house, a tin can, a small bucket - put it somewhere out of reach of any little hands, curious pets, or routine tasks (like mowing) that might jostle the nest between March and November of each year. Hang the house so that the tubes are horizontal.

Mason bees like morning sun while they are actively flying (March through early June), summer shade while the young larvae are hatching in the tubes, and shelter from wind and rain. It's hard to get all three of these conditions perfectly, but try. My favorite spots for setting houses are on the south or east sides of buildings, close under the eaves, or attached 5-8 feet up in deciduous trees (on a solid branch).

If you are setting out an empty wood block-type nest, and are adding tubes of dormant bees to get started, place the tubes in something (tin cans are great) to protect the cocoons and the emerging bees while they move in to their permanent home, and attach it below or alongside the wood block.

Often, jays, squirrels and woodpeckers can disrupt nests in summer and fall, searching out the tasty developing bees; you can protect your houses with a covering of hardware cloth. The bees will be able to get through, and the critters are kept out.

Questions? Comments?  
Want to help grow out mason bees for us?  
Contact the Arboretum manager  
[arboretum@homeorchardsociety.org](mailto:arboretum@homeorchardsociety.org)  
P.O. Box 607, Oregon City, OR 97045

**Home Orchard Society**  
**ARBORETUM**