

May 28, 2007

SECRET TO GOOD BEEKEEPING – 7 FRAMES OF BROOD

The secret to good beekeeping is to keep the colony almost to the point where the bees will start the pre-swarming activity. This occurs when your colony has 7 frames of brood.

Starting February 15, feed syrup and pollen substitute patties every 10 days to stimulate brood production. Stop feeding at the end of the first week of the dandelion nectar flow (about April 8). Equalize until all your colonies reach 7 frames of brood. When that occurs, add a honey super to each of them to give the bees room to grow, even if there is no nectar flow yet.

GUIDE TO REVIVING THE HIVE FROM WINTER INACTIVITY

| Calendar of Events | |
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| Feb 15-28 | <p>Check hive for first time</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is it Dead? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Check comb for AFB scale (bring it into HBC if you are not sure) ○ Clean out dead bees and equipment and prepare it for a future swarm, nuc or split • Is it alive with 3 or more frames of bees? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Clean bottom board (look for mites first) ○ Centre brood nest (but do not place cluster further than one frame away from inside feeder) ○ Check for Varroa Mites using natural drop test ○ Feed syrup & pollen patty ○ Keep entrance reduced and hive insulated ○ Do NOT pull brood nest apart (too cold – will kill larvae) ○ Check for diseases on first sunny day above 14 degrees Celsius • Is it alive but less than 2 frames of bees? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reduce to a Nuc box (or one standard box, if that is all you have) ○ Feed Caspian solution, 100ml every four days ○ Follow steps above ○ Add frame of brood and bees the first chance you get, but NOT to the detriment of the colony you are taking it from |

NOTE: Be sure to check the hive every 7 to 10 days!

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| Mar 1 to April 15 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue feeding until dandelions • Conduct natural mite drop check (see Bee Note 206 – Formic Acid) • Equalize until all colonies reach 7 frames of brood • When your colony reaches 7 frames of brood <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ add a queen excluder and honey super ○ move two frames of capped brood UP into the centre of the honey super ○ add two empty replacement frames to the OUTSIDE of the brood nest ○ Remove entrance reducer ○ Do not remove hive wraps until about May 15 |
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Honeybee Centre (HBC) notes are written for beekeepers in the Lower Mainland and Fraser Valley of British Columbia, Canada. Although these notes apply to virtually all beekeepers in North America, different climates and government regulations may require slightly different honeybee management practices.