

Iredell County Beekeepers Association Beginner Beekeepers Class.

Presenter: David J. Little

Subject: Purposes and Methods of feeding bees.

Purposes and Methods of Feeding Bees.

Purposes for Feeding

Desired effect of Feeding

Types of Feeding

Seasonal Feeding

Special Equipment

Task Related Feeding

Products available

When not to Feed.

Supplements

Dry Feed Verses Wet Feed in Cool or Cold Seasons.

Purpose of Products

Feeding for Medication Application

Methods of Feeding

Formulas or mixture for Feeding

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Why do we feed our bees?

Supplemental

Discretionary

Selective

Purposes for Feeding

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Discretionary

We may need to achieve a particular occurrence with in the colony.

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Discretionary

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Selective

The colony will need treatments to control pests or disease or prevent a disease.

Types of Feeding

Feeding sugar water

Applying sugar boards

Inserting fondant

Applying pollen patties

Put out dry pollen substitute

For the application of certain medications

Open Yard Feeding (for larger yards)

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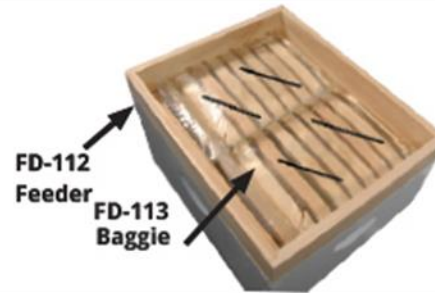
Entrance Feeder



Miller top feeder



Baggie Feeder



Dry Pollen/Syrup Feeder



Pail Feeder



Internal Feeder



Inverted Feeder (jar)



Dry sugar

Special Equipment

**All feedings require special and extra equipment .
Sometimes you can utilize empty hive bodies or
supers that can later be absorbed into the bee yard
operation.**

The use of preferred styles of feeding may vary with each beekeeper, his or her focused use for their colonies.

Boardman entrance feeders are what comes with most hive kits.

Hive top jar feeders bucket top feeders and hive top miller style feeders supply a greater volume of feed requiring less trips to refill.

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Pollen Substitute



Pollen Patties



Dry Pollen

Fondant

Honey B Healthy

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Purpose of Product

Feeding as a general rule is to supplement the lack of or absence of nectar or pollen or to stimulate the queen and wax production.

Some products are designed for ease of use, others are designed high capacity requiring fewer visits to the bee yard.

Some products are designed for hobbyist others are for commercial beekeepers with large amounts of hives.

It is up to you which product fits your application and needs.

Methods of Feeding

Boardman Entrance feeder comes with most kits, low volume simple design cheap.

Miller top feeder High volume more expensive.

Baggie feeder medium volume cheap but requires a shim or spacer.

Pail feeder medium volume moderately inexpensive requires large spacer and inner cover with a hole for bee access.

Open Yard feeding is a last alternative because of the dangers involved. This type feed can cause robbing. It invites every bee for 5 miles to a free meal as well as yellow jackets.

Internal feeder medium volume more costly requires large spacer just like the bucket feeder. Requires an inner cover with access for the bees.

Inverted feeder depends on the volume of the jar used requires special inner cover or lid with a hole large enough for jar lid.

Dry sugar for **emergency winter feeding only**, requires newspaper granulated sugar.

Yard Feeding



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Desired effects of Feeding

Above all else our desired effect should be to keep the bees healthy and supply ample food.

Bees will ignore feed if natural nectar and pollen is available. Feeding is not a substitute during times of plenty the bees always know best.

Feeding can bring on strong periods of brood production causing a stronger hive and some cases too strong.

Feeding to establish a new hive from a NUC or Split.

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Seasonal Feeding

Spring Feeding starts in most cases when the air temp is above 55 degrees for a week. But beware of cold snaps in late February and early March. Usually the cluster has broken and the bees are ready to forage.

Most early feeding is done with 1:1 sugar syrup. Wet feed can be a hazard if applied in cold weather bringing moisture into the hive chilling the bees.

Late Sumer Feeding usually is in late July through September during a time when there is minimal plants are in bloom.

Fall Pre-Winter Feeding is done in Late September into October and Early November. This is for a buildup of winter stores for the colony.

Never over feed.

Task Related Feeding

According to your plan for your bee yard certain tasks may be required.

General early spring feeding applies to the task of stimulating the queen for the spring buildup.

Early stimulation is done to build the hive up quick to make splits for increasing the bee yard.

Slow feeding during the early spring with bucket feeders which have fine screens. This encourages wax production without binding up the hive in the process. If the hive gets crowded or honey bound it will cause swarming.

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If the hive is already adequately supplied with honey no feeding is required.

If the weather is cold the syrup would most likely be wasted causing it to mold and be wasted. It also brings moisture into the hive that could chill the bees and increase the chances of certain diseases.

If you are not wanting to increase the number of hives you want to manage do not encourage brood production with continual feeding.

Dry Feed Verses Wet Feed in Cool or Cold Seasons

Dry sugar, fondant or sugar boards can be applied for emergency feeding. This would take the place of a less safe syrup or wet feed.

Dry pollen yard feed or in a special hive top feeder works well.

Pollen patties applied into the hive between the hive body and the winter super is helpful. This also can encourage early spring build up.

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Use pints for water and pounds for sugar since the sugar comes in packages marked in pounds and volume is easy to measure for water.

So if you know you are going to add 10 pounds of sugar and you want 1:1 then start with 10 pints of boiling water and add the 10 pounds of sugar.

In the fall you will need to build up your hives for winter. You need to increase the mixture to 20 pounds of sugar and 10 pints of water to make 2:1 feed.

Feeding for Medication Application

We are confronted with diseases that can be treated using a feeding process.

Fumagilin-B is used for *Nosema Ceranae* and can be introduced in sugar water in the Fall and Spring.

The same application can be done in a direct application drizzled over the bees so they can get a concentrated immediate dose. This is still a feeding application.

Honey-B-Healthy is a combination of essential oils that is very helpful to the bees and is mixed into the syrup you feed. Caution when using this product feed every hive the same mixture to avoid robbing.

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Make a bee bath

Bees and other beneficial insects — ladybugs, butterflies, and predatory wasps — all need fresh water to drink but most can't land in a conventional bird bath without crashing. "They're like tanks with wings," says bee master Brian Campbell. "They need islands in the water to touch down on."

Line a shallow bowl or plate with rocks.

Add water, but leave the rocks as dry islands to serve as landing pads.

Place the bath at the ground level in your garden. (Put it near "problem plants" — those that get aphids, for example — and the beneficial insects that come to drink will look after them.)

Refresh the water daily, adding just enough to evaporate by day's end.

Questions!