

Fall Feeding Your Bees

By Joe Copeland

Why feed your bees?

- Bees have insufficient stores for winter
- Bees need medication

Protection the hive...

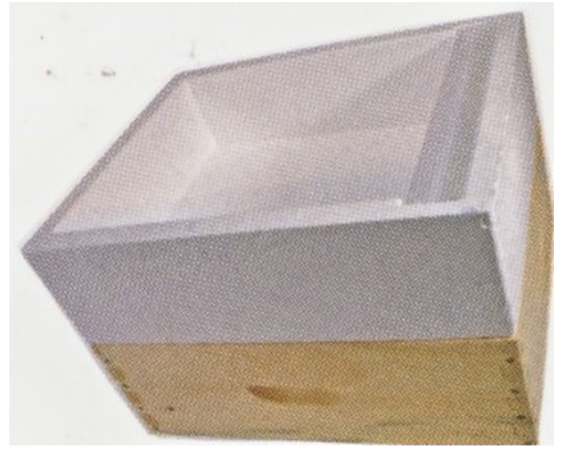
- While feeding, install entrance reducer to help bees protect the hive and reduce robbing
 - Especially important for weaker hives
- Do not feed bees while supers are on
 - You don't want syrup in your honey
- Do not medicate bees while supers are on
 - You don't want any contamination of the honey

Types of Foods for Bees

- Syrup—sugar syrup
- Mush—granulated sugar & small amount of water
- Bee Candy— Made from granulated sugar
- Commercial—powder, liquid and patties

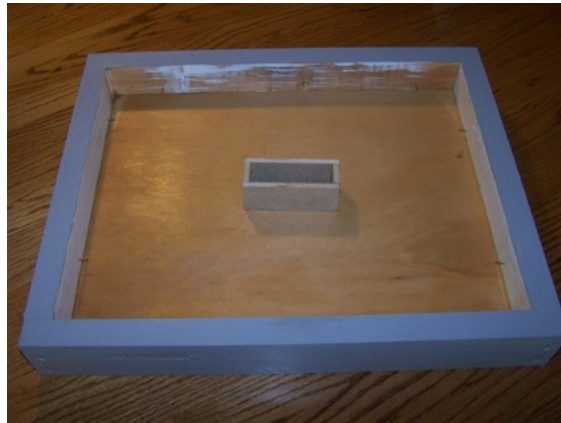
Types of Feeders

- Hive top feeder
- Division board feeder—must remove frames
- Jar or small bucket with holes in lid—requires you have spar hive. Super bodies
- Entrance feeder
 - Inexpensive and easy to use
 - Doesn't require opening the hive
 - Not good for cold weather
 - More susceptible to robbing



Hive Top Feeders

- Very good for feeding syrup
- Minimizes loss of bees
- Don't have to open brood chamber to feed in cold weather
- Can't be used with must
- Holds far amount of feed



Candy Tray

- Place directly on top of brood chamber
- Serves as inner cover
- Serves as space to feed mush
- Allows you to open hive in colder weather and not expose bees to cold winds
- Very useful during mid to late winter feedings



Division Board

- Good for feeding syrup
- Can be used for feeding mush—remove top cover and bee ladder
- Most remove hive inner cover to fill
- Must remove a frame (s) to put in hive



Jar or Bucket with holes in lid

- Used to feed syrup
- Requires spacer
- Place over inner cover
- May use small strips under bucket lid—allows ventilation
- Place syrup in bucket, seal the lid, and place upside down over the hole in the inner cover

Making Sugar Syrup

For Fall , use a mixture of two parts sugar to one part water by volume

Making mush

- Use a ration of 8 parts sugar top 1 part water
- 8 cups sugar to 1 cup water or 4pounds of sugar to one cup of water
- Mix sugar and water thoroughly
- Place in plastic bag or just mix in bag
- Make an X slit in plastic bag and place X over opening in inner cover
- Caln also feed in division board feeder or candy tray
- Remove lid and bee ladders in division board feeders

Making Bee Candy

- Use 10 pounds of sugar and 1 quarter of water
- Bring water to a boil and add sugar over flame
- Heat to 240 degrees F
- Cool without stirring to 200-210 degrees F
- Stir rapidly until an opaque appearance
- Quickly add 1/3 pint honey if you want
- Immediately pour into trays and let cool

CAUTION: be very careful, the heated candy will give you a VERY SERIOUS burn if it contacts your skin



Late Summer/Early Fall

- After you remove the honey supers, check the weight of you hives
- Bees still have fall flowers to increase winter stores
- If hives are very light you may need to boost stores
- Use two parts sugar to one part water by volume
- You want to increase stores but not increase brood

Late Fall/Winter Feeding

- When daily high temperatures falls below 60 degrees F –frosting at night
- Bees start to cluster
- Bees may no longer be able to process syrup to remove water
- Most recommend each hive have at least 60 pounds of stores fore winter
- Again perform the lift test on your hives
- Switch to bee candy or mush
- Use candy or mush until bees can start processing syrup in the spring

Medicating Your Bees

Example Fumagilin-B

- Fall, use 2 parts sugar one part water
- Mix in Fumagilin-B per manufacturers recommendation
- Must not have supers on hives
- Do not expose medicated syrups to sunlight