



beekeeping calendar

GUIDE TO BEEKEEPING IN THE NORTHERN HEMISPHERE.

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August

What Are the Bees Up to?

Swarming becomes rare but still possible. As the weather stays hot, bearding and fanning outside the door is normal. Hot weather can make bees more aggressive, so do hive checks during cooler times of day. Colony is at peak honey production. Queens begin laying eggs for winter bees. Proper ventilation ensures honey can be capped in time for extraction.

The Flowers and The Trees...

Nectar and pollen become shorter in supply. Late-summer and autumn flowers include sunflowers, goldenrod, alfalfa, and squash in vegetable gardens.

Food for Thought: Some beekeepers prefer to pull supers before the goldenrod bloom. Goldenrod is beneficial to bees but produces a bitter-smelling honey that humans tend to dislike.

How's the Weather out There?

Hurricane season is in full swing along the Atlantic coast, and wildfires become more prevalent in the Mountain and Pacific time zones. Do you have defensible space around your hives?

Hot weather means bees still need constant fresh water and ventilation.

BEEKEEPING CHECKLIST

- Move excess honey from hive body to supers, to allow more room for winter bee brood.
- Monitor supers. Remove and replace a few frames if production is heavy.
- Extract honey supers promptly to avoid wax moth and hive beetle larvae.
- Ensure you have sanitized extraction and honey storage supplies on hand and your extraction space is clean.
- Add extracted supers (AKA "wet" supers) back on the strongest hives for cleanup. Remove after a few days.
- Remove queen excluders between supers and hive bodies.
- Perform a hive health check, monitoring for queen health and checking for mites and disease.
- Monitor brood patterns.
- Keep feeding pollen/bee bread if necessary.
- Test and treat for varroa mites, so you can continue to grow winter bees before the cold season curtails brood rearing.
- Always keep clean water available. Consider filling a feeder jar (aka Boardman feeder) with water.
- Modify entrances to avoid robbing. To maintain ventilation, use a robbing screen. Plug upper entrances.



Date to Remember

~ August 21st: National Honey Bee Day (U.S.)



Our treasure lies in the
beehive of our knowledge.
We are perpetually on the
way thither, being by nature
winged insects and honey
gatherers of the mind.

– Nietzsche

September

What Are the Bees Up to?

Robbing becomes more of a threat as nectar is less available; watch for fighting at hive entrances. Comb production slows. Queen's egg laying slows, with considerably less drone brood.

The Flowers and The Trees...

Blossoms decline drastically, which may prompt bees to seek food in compost or chicken feed.

Flowers this month may include saffron and autumn crocus, buckwheat, thistles, and knapweed.

How's the Weather out There?

As that first frost rolls in, consider how you will winterize your hives. Don't forget to leave water out, whether the day is hot or cool.

BEEKEEPING CHECKLIST

- Weigh hives. A full-sized hive should have 70-90 lbs of honey for winter.
- Remove supers that are light with honey.
- Start feeding if hive bodies are light. Increase sugar concentration to 2:1.
- Withhold pollen supplements as to avoid stimulating too much brood rearing.
- Combine healthy colonies that are not queen-right.
- Consider culling weak, diseased colonies to save resources.
- Test again for varroa to be sure your treatments worked.
- Update bee journals for a hive health reference if colonies don't survive the winter.
- Filter beeswax and use or store for soap, candles, and other projects.



Dates to Remember

- ~ September is National Preparedness Month! Did you now archaeologists found unspoiled honey stored in Egyptian tombs?
- ~ September 22nd: Autumnal Equinox