

Beekeeping Tips for November

1. Install entrance reducers to prevent robbing and to keep mice from entering the hive.
2. Remove queen excluders. Use two deep boxes or a deep and medium super.
3. Place wind breaks at the base of the hive. You do not need to remove the screen bottom boards.
4. Treat for mites if necessary. If you use a fumigating product, slide a pan or piece of plywood under the screen bottom board to seal off the screen during the treatment. Follow directions printed on the product package.
5. Check honey stores. Be sure bees have a minimum of two full frames of honey in the brood box. If you don't also have a medium sized super full of honey, check for adequate food supply at least once a month. Lift the back of the hive. If it feels light, feed sugar water or high fructose corn syrup.
6. Every hive should have one or two empty frames; make sure these frames are placed nearest to the outside walls. When the temperature falls below 57 F, the bees will begin to cluster in the center of the hive to stay warm. Thus, honey that is near the outside wall is unlikely to be used by the bees in cold weather, and the bees could actually starve even though they have honey in the hive.
7. Assess colony strength. If a colony is not strong, kill the queen and combine that colony with another hive to assure that bees survive the winter.
8. Start working in the shop. Clean frames and replace old dark comb with new foundation. Check stored frames with drawn comb and be sure there are enough moth crystals (paradichlorobenzene) to protect against wax moths.
9. Assemble and paint new hive bodies. Assemble new frames.