



# Beekeepers Calendar

Atlantic Tech Transfer Team for Apiculture

February 16, 2019

# September – A beekeepers most important month! The start of a beekeepers year

- Bees
  - Collecting limited pollen and nectar from goldenrod and aster
  - Rearing winter bee nest (begins middle of august)
- Beekeeper:
  - Remove honey supers (by September 15<sup>th</sup>)
  - Consider requeening – last resort, earlier is better
  - Begin fall feeding
  - Fall treatments if applicable
  - Combine weak hives

# Spring management begins in the fall!

- Fall Feeding
  - Pest and disease management
  - Proper sized cluster
  - Combining weak hives
  - Proper wintering techniques
- 
- What you do in August – November will influence the strength of your colonies next spring





# Fall Feeding



# Combining weak hives





# October

- Bees:
  - Slowing down rearing winter bees
  - Some good flying days earlier in the month, but cools down by the end of the month
- Beekeeper:
  - Finish off fall feeding by the middle of the month
  - Finish off fall treatments. Remove mite strips, formic pads etc.
  - Prepare overwintering location (wind breaks)
  - Clean up bee yards

# November

- Bees:
  - Bees begin clustering. Very few flying days
- Beekeeper:
  - Wrap hives when the temp is consistently below freezing
  - Provide upper insulation
  - Entrance reducers and mouse guards
  - Great time to treat with oxalic acid!

# Wrapping





# Insulation



# Mouse guards & entrance reducers





# Upper entrance





# Stacking & bundling hives for warmth





# Stacking & bundling hives for warmth





# Stacking & bundling hives for warmth





# Oxalic Acid









# December

- Bees:
  - Clustering on cold days, cleansing flights on warm days
- Beekeeper:
  - Build equipment
  - Order bees and wooden ware

# January

- Bees:
  - Bees are clustered but leave the hive on cleansing flights on warm days
- Beekeeper:
  - Monitor hives to make sure the lids are still on and hives are still wrapped up
  - Check weight of hives using heft test to identify any hives that may become problematic in the spring
  - Order your bees and equipment!





# Cleansing Flights



Feb 25 2017



Jan 20 2018



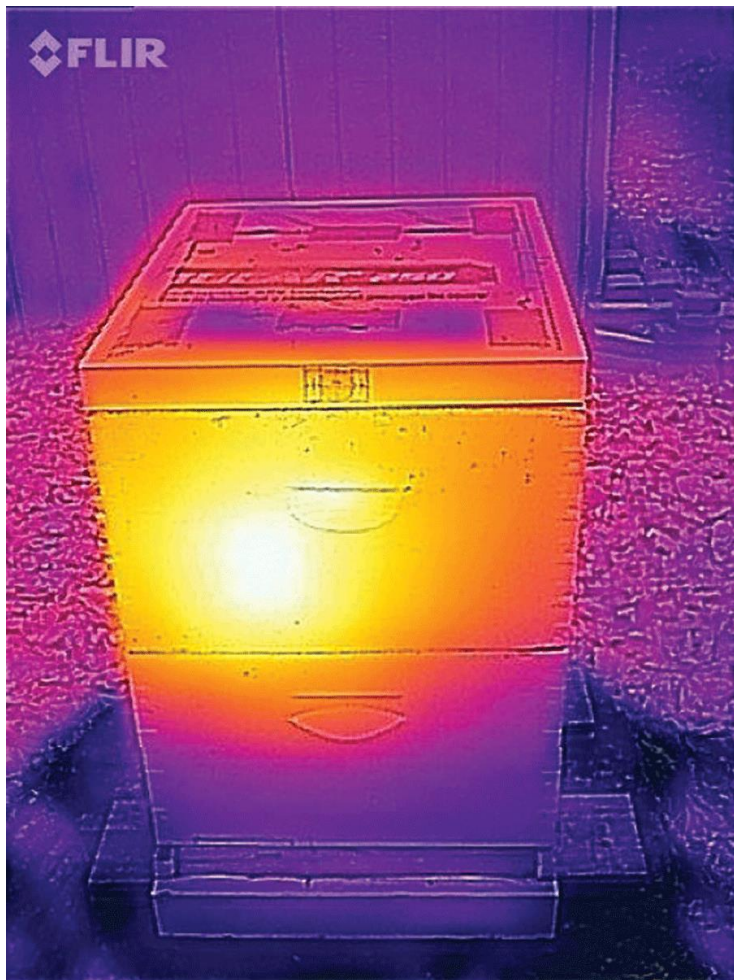
Feb 15 2018

# February

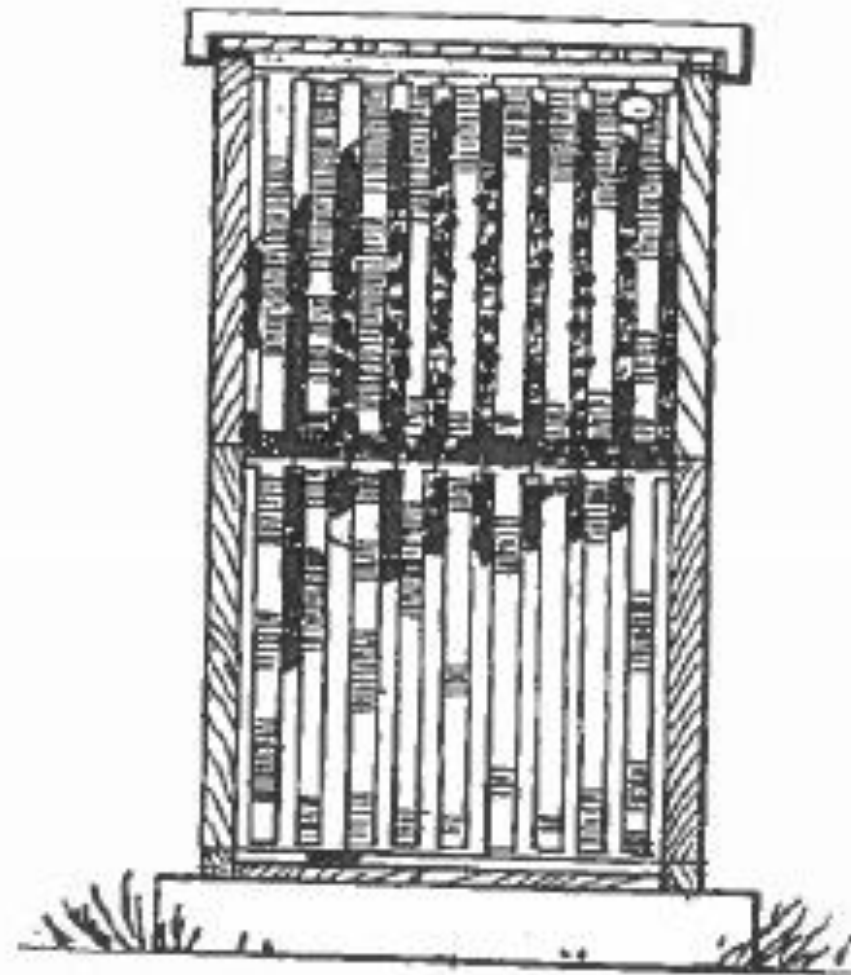
- Bees:
  - Cluster has made it into the top box
  - On warm days, bees will go on cleansing flights
  - Bees will begin raising a small patch of brood
- Beekeeper:
  - Continue testing the weight of hives. Any really light hives, crack the lid and check for starving bees (see pictures later)
  - Begin emergency feeding if necessary!



# Winter Cluster



<http://www.beekeeping.com/winter-management/>



Winter Cluster

Beekeepers Handbook







# Late Winter – Snow is Insulation!





# Late Winter – Snow is Insulation!



# Late Winter – Snow is Insulation!





# Late Winter – Snow is Insulation!



# Late Winter

- Are there adequate food stores for March?
- How can you tell?





# Late Winter

- Are there adequate food stores for March?
- How can you tell?



# Late Winter

- Are there adequate food stores for March?
- How can you tell?





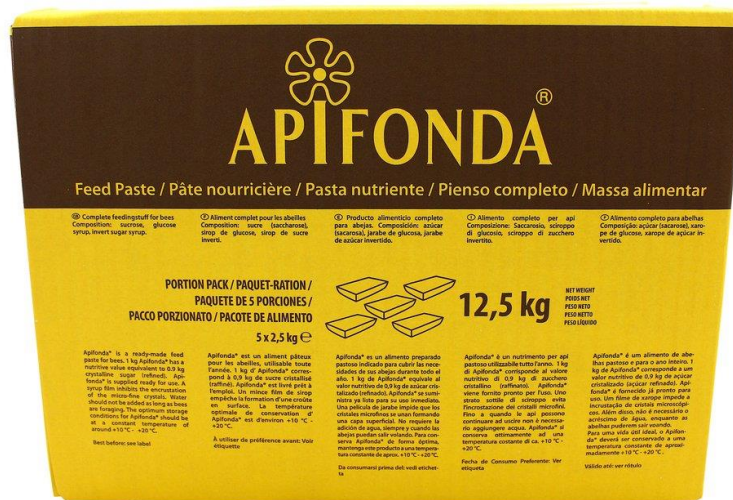
# Late Winter

- Are there adequate food stores for March?
- How can you tell?



# What do you do if their cupboards are bare?

- Emergency feed fondant or dry sugar
- Not ideal, but works in a pinch!



<https://www.countryfields.ca/products/fondant>



Feb 15 2018









Feb 15 2018 – Eggs!



# March

- Bees:
  - Continuing brood rearing
  - Hives light on food stores starve out in March
  - Most of the winter stores are consumed March & April
- Beekeeper:
  - Start spring feeding by the end of the month (3 weeks before the first pollen flow),
  - Mite Strips
  - Clean up dead outs
  - Continue emergency feeding if necessary
  - Quick inspections



# Pollen patties can tell you what's going on in a hive





March 21 2018





March 30 2018









# April

- Bees:
  - Bees are raising brood and building population
  - Some early pollen is available by mid-late April
  - Bees begin rearing brood fast with the first natural pollen
- Beekeeper
  - Continuing spring feeding – April is typically wet with limited flying weather
  - First major hive inspections
  - Install packages
  - Unwrap bees by the end of the month

April 16 2018





April 16 2018





April 16 2018





April 24 2018

















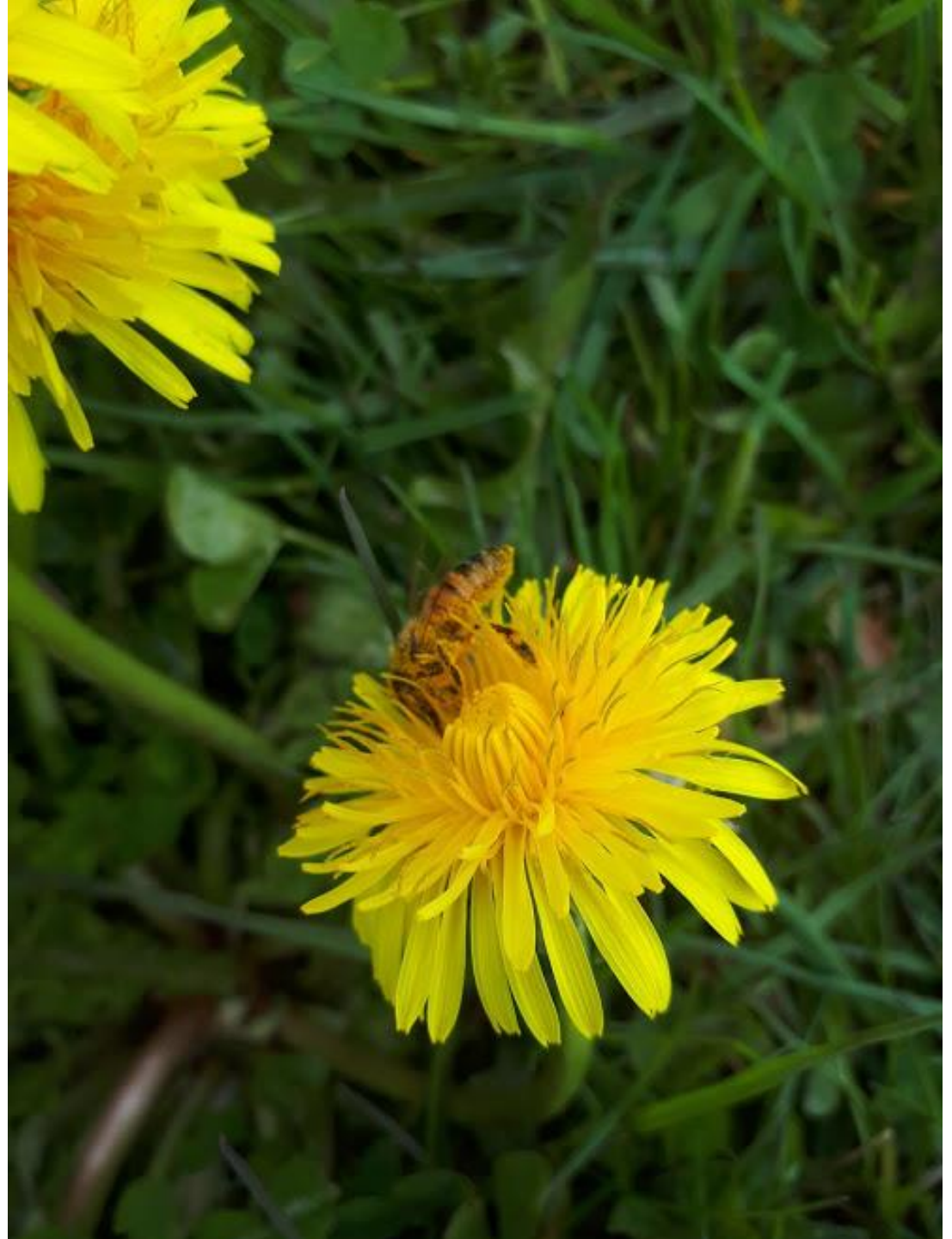




# May

- Bees:
  - Collecting available early pollen and nectar
  - Bees are in their linear growth phase. Swarming by the end of the month
  - First surplus nectar flow by the end of the month
- Beekeeper:
  - Monitor for mites, treat if necessary
  - Splitting hives to increase colony numbers and to reduce swarm pressure
  - Hives will be sent to for blueberry pollination by the end of the month
  - Adding supers to collect nectar and reduce congestion in the brood nest
  - By the end of May, most hives will have spring treatments done and feeding will stop





























# June

- Bees:
  - Busy collecting pollen and nectar from flowers surrounding hives
  - Hives are still growing and there is still potential for hives to swarm
- Beekeeper:
  - Splitting hives to increase colony numbers and to reduce swarm pressure
  - Hives will be returned from blueberry pollination by the end of the month
  - Beekeepers collecting “blueberry honey” will start honey extraction
  - Adding supers to collect nectar and reduce congestion in the brood nest
  - Begin queen rearing











# July

- Bees:
  - Busy collecting pollen and nectar from flowers surrounding hives early July
  - Major honey flow typically over by July 15-20<sup>th</sup>
  - Bees will encounter a “dearth” mid July and could start robbing
- Beekeeper:
  - Final opportunity to split hives for the season
  - Some supering early July
  - Some early honey is removed and extracted
  - Refrain from activities that promote robbing
  - Monitor for mites and brood disease
  - Feed splits and weak colonies





# August

- Bees:
  - Bees will encounter a “dearth” mid July and will continue until mid August
  - By mid-late August, golden rod and aster bloom will break the dearth period (fall flow)
  - Much of this honey will be stored for winter
- Beekeeper:
  - Refrain from activities that promote robbing during the dearth
  - Feed splits and weak colonies
  - Monitor for mites
  - Consider requeening poor producing queens

# Mite wash



Photo from Dr.  
Scott MacFarlane



# Sticky Board



**September** – A beekeepers most important month! The start of a beekeepers year





# Contact Info

Sawyer Olmstead

[solmstead@perennia.ca](mailto:solmstead@perennia.ca)

Or

Robyn McCallum

[rmccallum@perennia.ca](mailto:rmccallum@perennia.ca)

