

SUCCESSFUL BEEKEEPING

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Commercial Bee Breeder in British Columbia.



Many years ago, in 1980, I decided to make my 4 acre property into a farm, and since it was a bunch of rocks, a good friend of mine suggested I get bees. As always, my friend knew another friend who was just selling a 100-hive outfit. Thus, I became a bee man.

When I started I had a mentor, Leo Fuhr, who was an old granddaddy of all beekeepers in the Okanagan and gave his time and help freely to any young or old novice beekeeper.

My previous knowledge was simply that the queen is called “mother” in my native Czech language and that the best honey I had ever eaten had a 50% content of black ants. Looking back on such a start, I did pretty well running 500 hives for 28 years. 280 for next ten and at age 75 now I have to have 52 hives for pollination of cherries for my best friend who get me into beekeeping, the only excuse not to have them is when I die.

Working with bees became my passion and I surprisingly used many of my engineering abilities in my beekeeping inventions. Now, being old, it is time I repay Leo’s help in the early years and share my inventions and experience with you.

THE WINTER PREP starts by taking honey off and recording the honey production. We keep all records on front of hives written by lumber crayon. Queen and behavior in left top corner. Honey production in middle. The records are washed off in MAY with gasoline. I give one line for half dadant or a third of a deep, 2 lines for a full dadant or 2/3 of a deep, and 3 lines for a full deep. Then we test selected hives (for details materials and exact method; go to www.mitegone.com and explore testing)



3 days maximum of 5 days on 12x16” boards protected by 1/8 wire mesh raised 3/8 “ so bees cannot remove the mites.

You must count only adult female mites on whole board and prorate it into 24 hours. **YOU MUST TEST** just before treatment in moderate climax in August and April.

ANY OTHER TESTING AND IN OTHER TIMES ARE WASTE OF TIME AND DO NOT RELATE TO OUR EXPERIENCE.

TESTING

If you decide to test you must use natural drop
Collected over minimum of



Only other acceptable equipment is screen bottoms with monitoring trays or full size screen pollen traps. In addition to all the equipment you saw add the counting clicker, and clicks for each mite. The counting grid is a stucco wire with 2 inch squares WHEN you get interrupted lay the counter in the square you were in; you can pick up counting even day later. You do not have to count mites in yard cover the board with white butcher paper waxed side down, write on it hive no and count mites back home.

Does not matter if you run 1 or 5000 hives in same area. Collect randomly 20 hives from various yards bring them to test circle and test these same hives in August and April. If

you do not have 20 hives test them all.

I can go on and on but time is limited and you will have to do some reading on your own. It is all there on www.mitegone.com Do not miss the evaluation 2006-2010 it will explain why and what we get for the work, and if you lazy to read give me a call there is 90 min. DVD how to keep bees healthy.

ABOUT WHAT THOSE TESTS TELL YOU:

WE know that in April we had ZERO mites. WHY DO WE TREAT? ANSWER: To prevent damage to our summer bees and mating drones during pollination; where REINFESTATION PRESURE is great from other beekeeper's hives.

- If my August natural drop is below 10 mites I know spring treatment done a good job and standard treatment will bring us back to zero in spring.
- If the drop is over 20 it means we met really bad neighbors and I may increase number of pads by one.
- If the drop is over 50 we probably robbed someone else's collapsing colonies I definitely increase # of pads by one or two, or re-prime the pads in 4 weeks to extend treatment



WEIGHING (SCALING) THE HIVES

Scaling crew comes in. They scale each hive and write the scale weight onto hive in right hand top corner of scaled box

OUR WINTERING WEIGHT for such single 8 frame with 2 frame feeder colony is 65 lbs. We need to know weight and mite count first. The wintering weight for two high is 125 lbs.

We go and give each hive ration tickets for feed; red for each 10 lbs, white for 5 lbs missing from desire wintering weight. We do not overfeed: it saves lot of money and prevents result of overfeeding; where hive is honey bound and queen has no space to produce WINTER brood.

INDISCRIMINATE FEEDING IS A MAJOR CAUSE OF LOOSING COLONIES IN THE WINTER.

.What do the weights and records tells us?

1-A hive with more than average scale weight and not much honey production is usually honey-bound. The queen has no space to lay, produce winter bees, and will not survive.

We take out the appropriate amount of honey frames, replacing them with the empty BROOD comb for the queen to lay in. If required we give her help with a comb of brood from our brood bank.

2-Those with around average scale weight and average production are usually fine, just confirm they have a LAYING QUEEN.

3-Those with a light weight and a lot of honey production are usually BOOMERS with a lot of bees and brood. Without taking some brood away and replacing it with honey from the bank, and giving them a lot of feed they will not survive the winter.

4-Those with a low scale weight, and no honey production; usually have a failing Queen, are drone layers, or are Queen-less. We replace those hives with 8 frame colonies, with tested Queens.

5-All FIXED hives are re-scaled.

WHAT EVER WE DO WE FINISH WITH HIVES READY FOR FEEDING AND ACID TREATMENT.

During the field day we will demonstrate both ways. You can go to www.mitegone.com and see it on video free.

Packing hives for the winter and pros and cons of wintering theories will be discuss in the September.

THE POINT OF THIS STORY IS YOU MUST TREAT NOW TO PROTECT YOUR WINTER BEES.

Until now the amount of brood outnumbered the amount of mites but the Queen is reducing laying to 4-5 combs, now there are more mites than winter brood and the brood gets damaged.

The bees that are born are cripple. Bees do not have hospitals and they throw the damaged bees out of the hive. In October the summer bees die off and there is no one to carry the hive over the winter.

**YOU CAN TREAT IN OCTOBER WITH TEARS OF SANTA MARIA IT IS TOO LATE!
THE DAMAGE WAS ALREADY DONE.**