

Apis m. Esoteria 7

Feed Supplements

Here are two honeybee feed supplements that you can make yourself.

Fondant

Fondant is a “dry” feed for the bees. It is like a thick cake frosting. It is easily storable.

The advantage to this style of feeding vs. syrup is it reduces the amount of moisture in the beehive. The bees must evaporate syrup to make honey and store it. This can create a moisture problem inside the hive in the winter months. Also, if it is too cold the bees will not move to the syrup to eat it.

Fondant can be placed right above the cluster area where most of the bees are and they can move to it and eat during more marginally cool temperature periods.

A disadvantage to fondant is that the small hive beetles love to lay eggs in it. They also eat it but that doesn't matter. To reduce this problem only put a small amount of fondant in the hive at a time. The honeybees will eat it up before the beetle eggs can hatch which takes 11 days.

Recipe

10X powdered sugar

Corn syrup (Kairo Syrup) This is not High Fructose Corn syrup

Mix the powdered sugar and the corn syrup into a thick frosting. It needs to be moldable.

Place it in a zip lock baggie and smash it into a patty not as thick as a hamburger

Place the baggie in the freezer for storage.

Take the baggie out of the freezer when you need bee food. Cut a big X across the baggie. Place it on the top bars over the cluster. Let the bees eat through the X in the baggie.

Alternatively, you can break the patty into smaller pieces and place them on the top bars. The honeybees can consume it more rapidly.

There is a rumor out there that says powdered sugar is not good for bees. It is a rumor. I think it started when they tried 10x powdered sugar as a varroa mite treatment. Lots of powdered sugar going into the cell with young larvae would desiccate the larvae. Beekeepers have used Terramycin mixed in powdered sugar for foul brood for years with no adverse effects on the bee.

Syrup water enhancer (like Honey-B-Healthy)

The other supplement I'll call "homemade" honeybee vitamins". It is a vitamin, mineral, enzyme concoction that should help your honeybees stay healthier as they consume sugar syrup. Or, at least, creates an attractive aroma to the bees.

Recipe

1 ½ cup water

1 ½ cup sugar

15 drops lemon grass oil

15 drops spearmint oil

1 drop lemon oil

15 drops winter green oil

3 Tablespoons non iodized salt

2 Tbsp of liquid lecithin (preferred) emulsifier

Most of these ingredients are available at the health food store, gourmet shop, or online. The Lecithin is used to keep the water and oil mixed up. Otherwise, it separates like salad dressing.

This recipe is about a quart of concentrated supplement>

1 Tablespoon mixed to one quart of sugar syrup. Multiply the amounts to make larger batches.

There may not be enough vitamins and minerals in this recipe. Use the bottle "Honey-B-Vitamin" and "Honey-B-Minerals". There are multiple brands available through the beekeeping supply houses.

Mineral Salt

Honeybees need salt to help make the enzymes that they use to make honey and beebread.

If you use red granulated mineral salt (available from the agricultural feed store) as a weed killer around your apiary and under your hives to keep small hive beetle larvae from surviving, the bees will lick on the wet salt as their source of salt.

Mineral salt versus white salt gives you more minerals which help the bees. White salt has no trace minerals. How much should the bees get, who knows? But you are helping.