

Colony inspections and record keeping



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1

Veil/bee suite, smoker, hive tool



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What do you look for when inspecting a hive?

This depends on the season.

4

1. Early Spring (Jan to Feb):

Is the cluster near the top?

If you see bees under the inner cover then they need food.

Do not take brood frames out unless it is 60F+.

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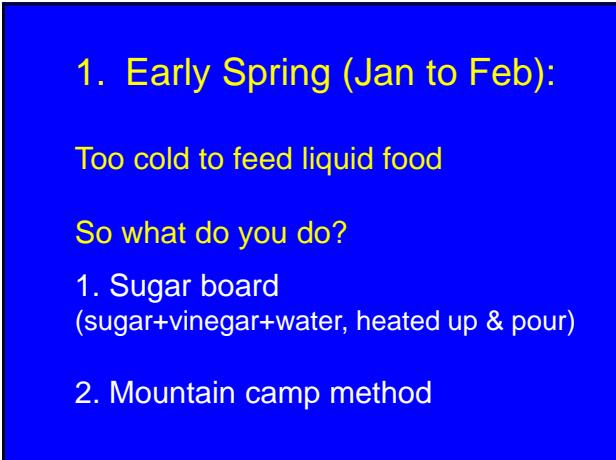
Bee-cluster near top



6



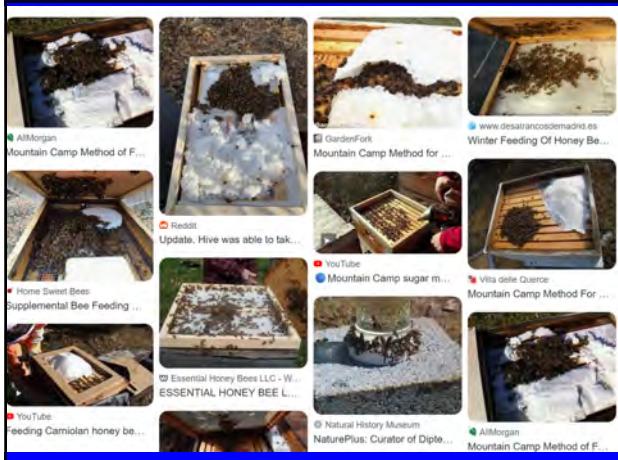
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2. Spring (late March to April):

Three things to check:

1. Dead colonies? Figure out why
Usually mites, dead queen, or low food
2. Chalk brood?
3. Weak colonies: beetle larvae or mouse nests.

11

What is the cause of death?



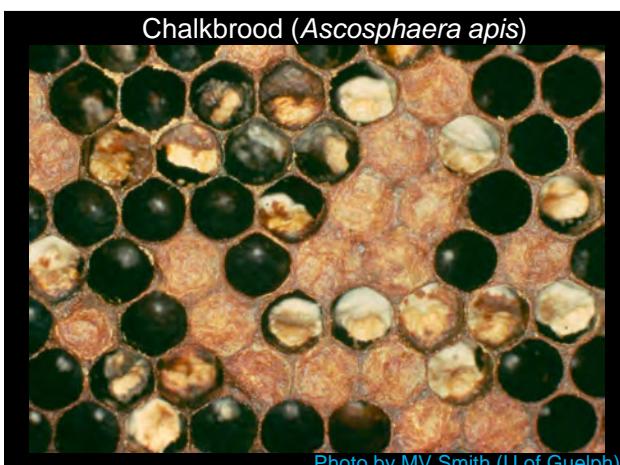
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3. Summer (May to July):

Check these things:

1. Queen status
2. Queen cells? (what are the 3 types?)
3. Brood nest congested? Too many bees?
4. Enough super for honey?
5. Brood disease?
 1. EFB
 2. AFB

18

Queen status



1. If you do not find her, it is fine, as long as You see larvae and no Q cells
2. Are all capped cells workers?
3. Mixed cells suggest low sperm
4. Too many empty cells: inbreeding or brood disease

19

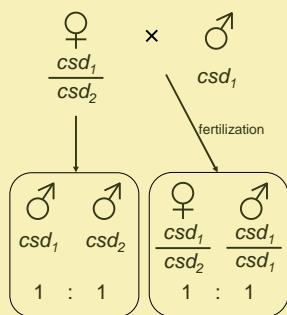
Mixed drone and workers: (drone capping on worker cells)

Queen not mated well or chilled during mailing or package installation

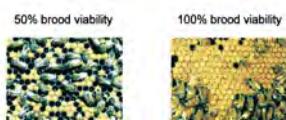


20

Inbreeding causes brood mortality

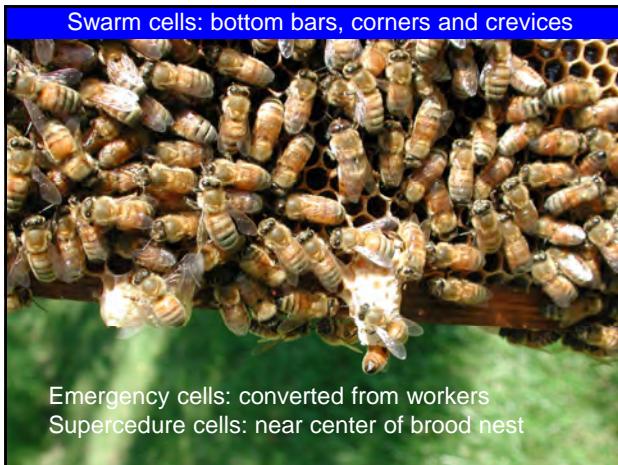


Inbreeding causes a decrease in work force and reduces the fitness of the hive.



Picture from Beye et al. Cell 114 : 419-429

21



22



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Why are workers surrounding another worker?



25

Is the colony too crowded?



Enough empty honey supers?
Enough ventilation?

26



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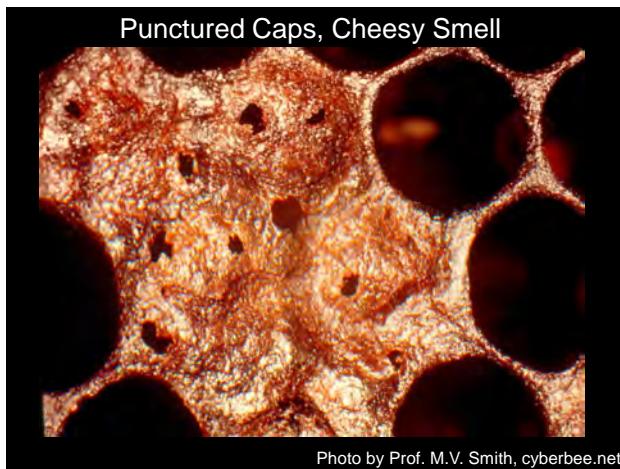
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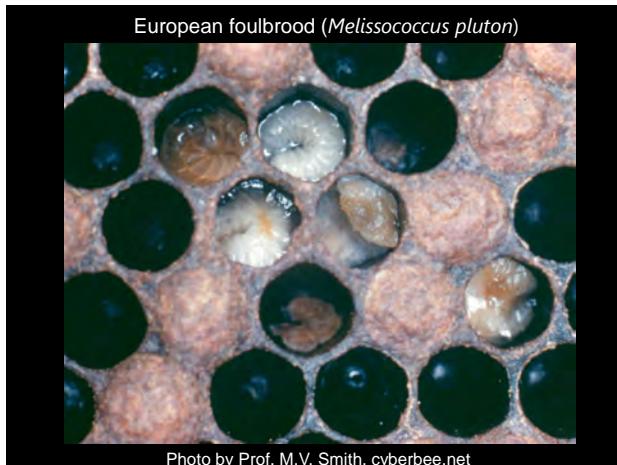


Photo by Prof. M.V. Smith, cyberbee.net

34



Sacbrood (caused by a virus, SBV)

35

4. Fall (Aug to Oct):

Three things to check:

1. Check bees have enough food
(if extracted in July)
2. Queen status again
3. Mite levels and treat (3 times/year)
sugar dusting, EtOH wash
screen bottom board.



37

5. Wintering (~mid October)

Three things to check:

1. Check bees have enough food for winter
2. Remove queen excluders!
3. Add mouse-guard.

38

Record keeping

Necessary because each colony will be different!

Each colony must be _____

Queenless? Brood disease? Needs a super?
Mite numbers? Strong enough to winter without uniting?

39

Record keeping

Using a brick on top of the hive
sharpie marking "afb, Q-"



40



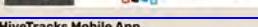
Record keeping

Voice recording on a recorder/cell phone
"Colony #5 has spotted brood, suspected of EFB"

Small notebook

Software tracking

42

Phone Apps (needs clean hands!)	
<p>Hivekeepers for Beekeepers</p>  <p>Smartphone App for Beekeepers</p> <p>Without having to type out any words, you can quickly record the temperament of the girls, the presence of brood, and the presence of the queen, either evidenced by eggs or by seeing her.</p> <p>You just need to tap your screen, and you have a very comprehensive record of your inspection.</p> <p>The records tab will act as a checklist, reminding you to check for all the vital signs of your colony's health and wellbeing.</p>	<p>Beekeeper Lite</p> <p>This app is a great inspection assistant. It allows you to record the details of each colony.</p>
<p>HiveTracks Mobile App</p>  <p>HiveTracks Mobile App</p> <p>ON THE FARM</p>	<p>Hivetool Mobile</p> 

43

What to record? (anything important to you)

44

Thank you for your time!

45

