

# 2011 Perspective on NJ Beekeeping

Wintering Essentials

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# NJ Statistics

2009 Inspections = 3247 colonies,

- 382 apiaries
- 17 cases AFB = 0.52%
- 14 cases EFB = 0.43%
- 34 % winter loss 2008-2009
- Bee keeping courses
  - 3 beginner = 240
  - 2 beyond basics = 80
  - Assisted with 2 branch courses
- Presentations
  - 17 presentations last year
- Warned beekeepers Bees were starving in September via Web site

■ 2010 Inspections = 1851 colonies

- 308 apiaries
- 32 cases AFB = 1.72%
- 25 cases EFB = 1.35%
- 35% winter loss 09-10
- Beekeeping courses
  - 3 beginner = 180
  - 2 beyond basics = 40
  - Assisted with 2 branch courses
- Presentations
  - 22 presentations last year

# 2010 Projects

- Bee Spill Plan
- Online Registration of Apiaries
  - Seamless with database.
  - Accurate lists
  - No redundancies
- ETO – 24C Special Local needs
- Formic Acid Quick Strip
- Beekeeping Advisory Group

# Confusion for New Beekeepers

- Get a different story from every beekeeper they ask
- **Basics must be consistent !**
- Some, don't know, don't come to meetings, read and try to apply management from other parts of country.
- Get bad advice from “experienced beekeepers”
- Get bad advice or not applicable from the internet
- Leads to discouragement and confusion.
- Branch meetings with “bickering”

# 4 Essentials for Wintering

## ■ #1 Locations

- Maximum sun. Many beekeepers think any location is just fine.
  - Is diffuse sun from trees that lost leaves OK?
- Protected to north and west. Why?
- Dry
- First place snow melts is best
- Not all properties are good bee yards!

# 4 Essentials for Wintering (cont'd)

- #2 Large Population of Young Winter Bees
  - How do you get this?
    - Queen-right colony
    - Nectar flow, natural or artificial
    - Mites controlled
    - Well fed brood

# 4 Essentials for Wintering (cont'd)

## ■ #3 Food Reserves

- The colonies need food. How much? 60 lbs.
- Need to store it in combs and cap. Too much is not good because the bees need a place for their bodies.
- Some beekeepers say feed all winter.
  - Better to feed at right time of year let the bees process the food and store it.
  - IF they don't need feeding in winter DON'T do IT.
    - Diarrhea,
    - Nosema,
    - Perpetuate poor genetics

# 4 Essentials for Wintering (cont'd)

- #4 Varroa MUST be Controlled
  - You didn't do it last year and wintered, your bees are resistant right? Wrong! This year?
- One mite decreases life span 20 -40 %
  - 2 mites 40 -80%
  - Those bees produce sub-standard brood food for the next generations.
  - Weak, short-lived bees going into winter.

# Results of Poor Mite Control

- Bees with a short lifespan
- A colony whose population dwindles over the winter
- Colony dead with small cluster starved within one inch of honey



# Varroa

- Does resistance mean you don't have to treat?
  - **Resistance a:** the **inherent ability** of an organism to resist harmful influences (such as disease, toxic agents, or infection)
    - **Resistance does not mean no treatment is necessary**
    - **IPM Sounds great.** What is a valid threshold? Do you treat the apiary or just one hive?
    - Powdered sugar, one treatment of Apiguard?
    - Treat in October - November too late
    - Check for mites after Treatment - Did it work?
    - Drone trap - no drawn drone cells

# New Problem

- *Nosema ceranae*
  - I have been finding high spore counts
  - Colony dead with signs of diarrhea - use sun to disinfect combs.
  - UV light will kill *Nosema* spores (Tom Webster-Kentucky State)
  - Monitor level and treat with fumagillin

# Common Mistakes of Beginners

- Do not feed enough in a large enough volume.
  - New colony
  - Late summer to stimulate queen – winter bees
- Do not check for queen-right colony
  - Judge the health of hive by flight
- Poor placement of hive
  - Place hive in shade, or in location late sun
- Do not monitor or treat for mites

# Common Mistakes of Beginners

- Feeding too late in the fall.
- Feeding liquid syrup in the winter
- Storing empty supers over the cluster under the outer cover.

# Further information

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