

Feeding Bees



When feeding bees, it is the sugar, not the water that the bees need. By mixing the sugar to water at different ratios, the beekeeper can encourage certain behaviors. Below are sugar syrup recipes from Keith Tignor, State Apiarist, and the actions they stimulate within the hive. Also included are candy recipes and instructions for dry sugar feeding used as emergency winter food when temperatures are below 50 degrees Fahrenheit.

Sugar Syrup Recipes

1:2 One Part Sugar to Two Parts Water: Used in the spring to stimulate egg laying. Use only when enough honey is available for feeding the brood:

1 pound sugar to 1 quart water
or
5 pounds sugar to 5 quarts water

Stir sugar into warm water until dissolved.

1:1 One Part Sugar to One Part Water: Used in the spring and summer to encourage comb building:

1 pound sugar to 2 cups water
or
5 pounds sugar to 2½ quarts water

Bring water to a boil and turn off heat. Stir in sugar until dissolved and cool.

2:1 Two Parts Sugar to One Part Water: Used in the fall to increase food stores in preparation for winter:

1 pound sugar to 1 cup water
or
5 pounds sugar to 5 cups water

Bring water to a boil and stir in sugar. Continue stirring over heat until all crystals dissolve. Remove from heat and cool. Each gallon of syrup increases the colony's reserves by about 7 pounds
