Beekeeping Management Calendar for North Florida

Month — **Management Recommendations**

January

1) Feed colonies if light. (Colonies can starve!)

2) Nosema can be a significant colony problem this time of year. Making sure colonies are well fed will reduce Nosema spore counts (one million spores per bee is considered a high spore count). For information on monitoring Nosema in colonies, see *How to Quantify Nosema Spores Infection Rate in a Honey Bee Colony* (https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/in1123).

3) Repair/paint old equipment. For more information, see *Preserving Woodenware in Beekeeping Operations* (https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/aa244).

February

1) Queen issues are especially problematic this time of year. Remedy failing queens as necessary.

2) Feed colonies if light. (Colonies can starve!) Also supply pollen supplements if necessary. For more information on ensuring colony nutrition, see *The Benefits of Pollen to Honey Bees* (https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/in868)

March.

1) Nosema can be a significant colony problem this time of year. Making sure colonies are well fed will reduce Nosema spore counts (one million spores per bee is considered a high spore count). For information on monitoring Nosema in colonies, see *How to Quantify Nosema Spores Infection Rate in a Honey Bee Colony* (https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/in1123).

2) Colonies can be treated with Terramycin (oxytetracycline) or Tylan (tylsoin) for American foulbrood (AFB) prevention or Lincomix (lincomycin) or Terramycin (oxytetracycline) for European foulbrood (EFB). These products require a prescription or a veterinary feed directive from a veterinarian. For more information on rules surrounding prescription antibiotics for honey bees, see "Using Medically Important Antimicrobials in Bees— Questions and Answers" (https://www.fda.gov/AnimalVeterinary/DevelopmentApprovalProcess/ucm589399.htm).

3) Colony populations begin to grow. Add supers and/or control swarming as necessary. For more information on controlling swarms, see *Swarm Control for Managed Beehives* (https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/in970).

4) Make nucs/splits.

April

1) Queen issues are especially problematic this time of year. Remedy failing queens as necessary.

2) Continue to control swarming. For more information, see *Swarm Control for Managed Beehives* (https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/in970).

3) Make nucs/splits as new queens and packages become available.

4) Add supers; the primary nectar flow begins this month.

May

1) Queen issues are especially problematic this time of year. Remedy failing queens as necessary.

2) Continue to control swarming. For more information, see *Swarm Control for Managed Beehives* (https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/in970).

3) Super as necessary

June.

1) Varroa populations begin to grow, so monitor your colonies. Consider treating when Varroa levels reach 3% (3 mites per 100 bees as determined by an alcohol wash or a sugar shake). Treatment options include: Apiguard, Apistan, Apivar, Hopguard, and Mite Away (always follow label instructions). For information on how to monitor for varroa, read "Tools for Varroa Management" (http://honeybeehealthcoalition.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/HBHC-Guide_Varroa_Interactive_v5_31October2016.pdf), and watch "Sampling Methods" (https://youtu.be/IgPfT9FQxLc).

2) Remove and process honey; main flow slows. For more information, see *Bottling, Labeling, and Selling Honey in Florida* (https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/in918).

July

1) Monitor for Varroa. Consider treating when Varroa levels reach 3% (3 mites per 100 bees as determined by an alcohol wash or a sugar shake). Treatment options include: Apiguard, Apistan, Apivar, Hopguard, and Mite Away (always follow label instructions). For information on how to monitor for Varroa read "Tools for Varroa Management" (http://honeybeehealthcoalition.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/HBHC-Guide_Varroa_Interactive_v5_31October2016.pdf), and watch "Sampling Methods" (https://youtu.be/IgPfT9FQxLc).

2) Remove and process honey; main flow stops. For more information, see *Bottling, Labeling, and Selling Honey in Florida* (https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/in918).

August

1) Feed colonies if light. (Colonies can starve!)

2) Monitor for Varroa. Consider treating when Varroa levels reach 3% (3 mites per 100 bees as determined by an alcohol wash or a sugar shake). Treatment options include: Apiguard, Apistan, Apivar, Hopguard, and Mite Away (always follow label instructions). For information on how to monitor for Varroa read "Tools for Varroa Management" (http://honeybeehealthcoalition.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/HBHC-Guide_Varroa_Interactive_v5_31October2016.pdf), and watch "Sampling Methods" (https://youtu.be/IgPfT9FQxLc).

3) Colonies can be treated with Terramycin (oxytetracycline) or Tylan (tylsoin) for American foulbrood (AFB) prevention or Lincomix (lincomycin) or Terramycin (oxytetracycline) for European foulbrood (EFB). These products require a prescription or a veterinary feed directive from a veterinarian. For more information on rules surrounding prescription antibiotics for honey bees, see "Using Medically Important Antimicrobials in Bees—Questions and Answers" (https://www.fda.gov/AnimalVeterinary/DevelopmentApprovalProcess/ucm589399.htm).

4) Monitor and control for small hive beetles. Control options include GardStar and in-hive beetle traps (Hood trap, West beetle trap, Beetle Blaster, etc.). Always follow pesticide label instructions. For more information, see *Small Hive Beetle, Aethina tumida Murray* (https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/in854).

5) It's hot! Ensure adequate colony ventilation.

September

1) Feed colonies if light. (Colonies can starve!)

2) Monitor for Varroa. Consider treating when Varroa levels reach 3% (3 mites per 100 bees as determined by an alcohol wash or a sugar shake). Treatment options include: Apiguard, Apistan, Apivar, Hopguard, and Mite Away (always follow label instructions). For information on how to monitor for Varroa read "Tools for Varroa Management" (http://honeybeehealthcoalition.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/HBHC-Guide_Varroa_Interactive_v5_31October2016.pdf), and watch "Sampling Methods" (https://youtu.be/IgPfT9FQxLc).

3) Nosema can be a significant colony problem this time of year. Making sure colonies are well fed will reduce Nosema spore counts (one million spores per bee is considered a high spore count). For information on monitoring Nosema in colonies, see *How to Quantify Nosema Spores Infection Rate in a Honey Bee Colony* (https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/in1123).

October-December

1) Feed colonies if light. (Colonies can starve!)

2) Monitor for Varroa. Consider treating when Varroa levels reach 3% (3 mites per 100 bees as determined by an alcohol wash or a sugar shake). Treatment options include: Apiguard, Apistan, Apivar, Hopguard, and Mite Away (always follow label instructions). For information on how to monitor for Varroa read "Tools for Varroa Management" (http://honeybeehealthcoalition.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/HBHC-Guide_Varroa_Interactive_v5_31October2016.pdf), and watch "Sampling Methods" (https://youtu.be/IgPfT9FQxLc).

3) You can treat colonies for Nosema disease this time of year. Making sure colonies are well fed will reduce Nosema spore counts (one million spores per bee is considered a high spore count). Some beekeepers also treat colonies with fumagilin with varied effectiveness (always follow label instructions). Recheck spore counts in colonies 2–3 weeks after treatment. For information on monitoring Nosema in colonies, see "How to Quantify Nosema Spores Infection Rate in a Honey Bee Colony" (https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/in1123).

4) Monitor and control for small hive beetles. Control options include GardStar and in-hive beetle traps (Hood trap, West beetle trap, Beetle Blaster, etc.). Always follow pesticide label instructions. For more information, see *Small Hive Beetle, Aethina tumida Murray* (https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/in854).