

INFOSHEET: ARTIFICIAL BEEFEEDING



Feeding sugar syrup or a sweet liquid alternative can supplement a colony's honey stores to prevent the bees from starving and promote honey production. Feeding can also stimulate the colony to increase egg laying so a colony can have more bees gathering nectar during the main nectar flow.

Bee starvation can happen when all the honey is harvested. The best way to prevent starvation is to simply leave enough honey on the hives, and so there will be no need for artificial feeding.

Bee feeding can help during the dry season when there is restricted water source and/or plants are not flowering for bees to collect nectar. It is very helpful to supplement their diets during the dry season so they can maintain healthy productive colonies.

Like any other farm animal bees need to be looked after if they are going to reward you with their sweet honey.

Here are a few ideas that can help in artificial feeding:

Making a sugar syrup solution

In producing sugar syrup feed solution, mix a ration of 1:1 water to dry granulated sugar. This can be mixed in a jar and placed on a larger container lid upside down with a toothpick to raise the edge and allow the bees to feed without drowning. The jar can then be placed directly inside the hive for them to feed directly.



Sweet food waste and a Bee-feeder box



Alternatively sweet food waste like pineapple skins and matoke peel can be mixed simply with some water in a dish and placed in a bee-feeder box in the apiary.

A bee feeding box helps to keep the “bee feed” off the ground from ants and covered with a wire mesh protecting from birds.

This is a cheap affordable option to sugar syrup as you can use kitchen food waste at no cost.



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