

New Westminster Beekeeper's Association
19 Things to Know about Beekeeping
Module 12 – Winter Tasks

This module was prepared for members of the New Westminster Beekeeper's Association and is intended to be augmented by hands-on experience in the bee yard.

Summary

The winter season for a beekeeper starts about November 1st, after the bees have been fed, treated with antibiotics (if required), and treated for varroa mites. It is a time for reflecting on the past season and to plan for the next.

Beekeeping Tasks

If by October 31st, varroa infestation is not below 1% (3 mites), then an oxalic acid treatment in the first week of December is required. You can treat using the drip method or the vapourizing method. The drip method consists of mixing oxalic acid crystals into thin sugar syrup and using a veterinarian syringe to drip the mixture directly onto the bees.

December 1st

Oxalic Acid Dribble Method – 2 colony recipe

- 3.5 g oxalic acid crystals
- Warm 1:1 syrup (100 ml) (60g water + 60g sugar)
- Dribble 5 CC between frames directly onto bees
- Apply no more than 50 cc per colony



Equipment Tasks

Repair and paint used equipment as required.

Have all equipment fixed and ready for next year no later than February 15th.

Prepare deadouts for irradiation. Ideally, set up the future brood box to receive a nuc or package:

- Inside feeder
- 3 empty frames of drawn comb in the centre
- 1 frame honey/pollen on each side of the empty frames
- The rest can be foundation, drawn comb, or frames of honey/pollen (It does not matter)

Planning for Next Season

Reflect on the past season:

- What did your bees produce?
- Are your bees healthy?
- What did you spend?
- Are you using the hobby to make extra money? If so, there are tax implications.
- What did you like about the hobby?
- What do you want to do next year with your bees?

Beekeeping Record keeping

- This subject has been covered earlier, but now is the time to ensure that all of your records are in order. Those records include dates of any disease or pest treatments, honey yield, and a record of increases and losses.



Planning for next season - based on your reflection, plan for next season now.

- Order and assemble equipment
 - o Complete all equipment related tasks by February 15th.
- Order bees for next year (some suppliers require a down payment)
- Order queens for next year

Equipment and Bee Order Sheet

Item	Supplier	Quantity	Unit Cost	Total Cost
BEEKEEPING EQUIPMENT				
Hive cover				
Inner cover				
Langstroth (Standard) Super				
Dadant (Medium) Super				
Standard Frames – Wooden				
Standard Frames – Plastic				
Medium Frames – Wooden				
Medium Frames – Plastic				
Standard Foundation – Plastic				
Medium Foundation – Plastic				
Bottom Boards				
Entrance Reducers				
Queen Excluders				
Smoker 4x7 with shield				
Bee Brush				
Hive tool – 9 ½"				
Frame feeder				
BEEKEEPING FEED				
Pollen patties – 15% pollen				
Sugar – 20kg bag				
LIVESTOCK				
Packages				
Nucleus Colonies				
Queens				
MISCELLANEOUS				
Uncapping fork				
Double sieve strainer				
Propolis trap				
Pollen trap				
Bee suit – complete (indicate size)				
Bee suit – Farmer's jacket (S,M,L)				
Bee cowhide gloves – indicate size (7-14)				
Oxalic acid crystals				

end