April and May Chores
First Inspection

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April/May Chores

- Install your packages.
- Feed pollen and candy/syrup.
- Clean our entrances.
- Start removing winter preparations (wrap etc).
- 1st inspection
- Brood box reversal - when nectar flow is starting.
- Start planning for splits on strong hives.
- Start planning your mite management strategy.
- Start getting honey supers ready.
Install your packages.

• It has been colder than what we are used to.
• Were you prepared?
Cold Weather Tips

Pink Stuff - Insulation board.

Feeder Box - Bucket is inside here.

Brood Box - New Package is installed here.
Feed candy/syrup.

- How heavy is your hive? Do they have food to eat?
- Entrance (boardman feeders) are not good!
- Bees do not like to take feed when it is cold.
Feed Pollen

- Pollen is required for the hive to brood up.
- Remember honey/sugar is carbohydrates.
- Pollen is protein.
- UltraBee and MegaBee
- AP23 and Bee Pro
Clean up after Winter

- Clean out the entrances to provide better ventilation.
- Remove winter wrap (when it is warm enough).
- Add winter wrap to hives with new packages to keep them warm.
Brood box reversal.

• The purpose of this is to get the bees back down into the bottom brood box.

• You do this by putting the bottom box on top – a reversal.

• Do not do this when it is cold – unless you have a strong colony.
  – Daytime highs must be above 50 or better yet 60.
  – Nighttime lows must be in the 40’s.

• Unless the colony is strong and has stores or is being fed it may be best to wait until there is a natural minor nectar flow.

• Ideally this happens at least a month before the main flow starts.

• Remove old frames and frames with old pollen.
Start planning for splits.

• After reversal you watch to see how the bees build up.
• If things are moving along well and the population is extremely strong, and the main flow is still a few weeks away think about taking a few frames of brood out and replacing them with foundation.
• Give the frames to hives in need or make a split in a nuc.
Start planning your mite management strategy.

• TEST AND TREAT is the strategy!
• Do you treat packages?
• Treat in the spring. Usually after reversals when there is some nectar coming in. This is temperature sensitive.
• You must begin testing and treating in earnest by July.
• It must continue until the end of the season.
• Formic Acid (MAQS and Formic Pro)
• Oxalic Acid and ApiGuard (Thymol)
• ApiVar (Amatraz)
Start getting honey supers ready.

• How many do you think you will need?
• The rule of thumb is two per hive at a minimum.
• Three is better!
First Hive Inspection

- Should be warm outside.
- Ideally this should happen before you do reversals.
- Check food stores and hive weight.
- Is the hive population strong or weak.
- Check for the presence of the queen.
- Age of the queen can determine replacement.
- You can check for mites and hive beetles if you wish.
- Do you see diseases – foulbrood.
An excellent brood pattern
Common brood pattern.
Poor brood pattern.
Old Pollen
EFB - European Foul Brood
AFB – American Foul Brood
Varroa Mites & Hive Beetles
Marking the Queen