

A photograph of a winter forest. The trees are bare and covered in a thick layer of snow. In the foreground, two dark-colored beehives are visible, also covered in snow. The overall scene is serene and cold.

OVERWINTERING STRATEGIES: GETTING THEM THROUGH THE TOUGHEST OF WINTERS

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GETTING A FRESH START: YOUNG COLONIES SURVIVE WINTER

A July Start often appears as if it isn't building up enough to overwinter successfully. The reason for this smaller amount of bees (at first) is that there is a pause in the brood cycle during July until the new queen emerges from her queen cell, takes her mating flights, and begins to lay eggs which don't mature and emerge as new bees until 21 days later. So a fall start that appears to have only two seams of bees will quickly jump to six or seven frames of bees when the new brood begins to emerge.

These new bees are different than the summer bees. Spring and summer bees only live 6-8 weeks as they quickly work themselves to death. Summer bees literally work their wings off as they become frayed and torn on foliage and whatever else lies in their path. Fall bees live throughout the winter since they don't have much work to do. They merely have to eat to keep the cluster warm, take an occasional cleansing flight, and have minimal brood to care for until spring.

OVERWINTERING STRATEGIES: KEEPING COLONIES ALIVE AND HAPPY

Fall feeding and comb drawing

- **Sugar**
- **Fondant**

Candy board as artificial deep honey chamber

- **½ inch top entrance**
- **Ability to fill as needed**

Keeping brood nest in top chamber near candy board

Wrapping hives

Sunbathing

Windbreaks



MARCH 14th, 2008: BEES UP WITHOUT POLLEN



APRIL 10th, 2008: BEES DOWN WITH POLLEN



CANDY BOARDS CAN BE USED FOR PARTIAL FEEDINGS



JULY STARTS WITH CANDY BOARDS READY FOR ALMONDS



CANDY BOARDS ELIMINATE FEEDING TIME AND LABOR



“GIVE BEES THE OPPORTUNITY AND THEY WILL ALWAYS DIE OUTSIDE OF THEIR HIVES AND THIS IS NORMAL BEHAVIOR EVEN IN CCD HIVES.”

—Mel Disselkoen

