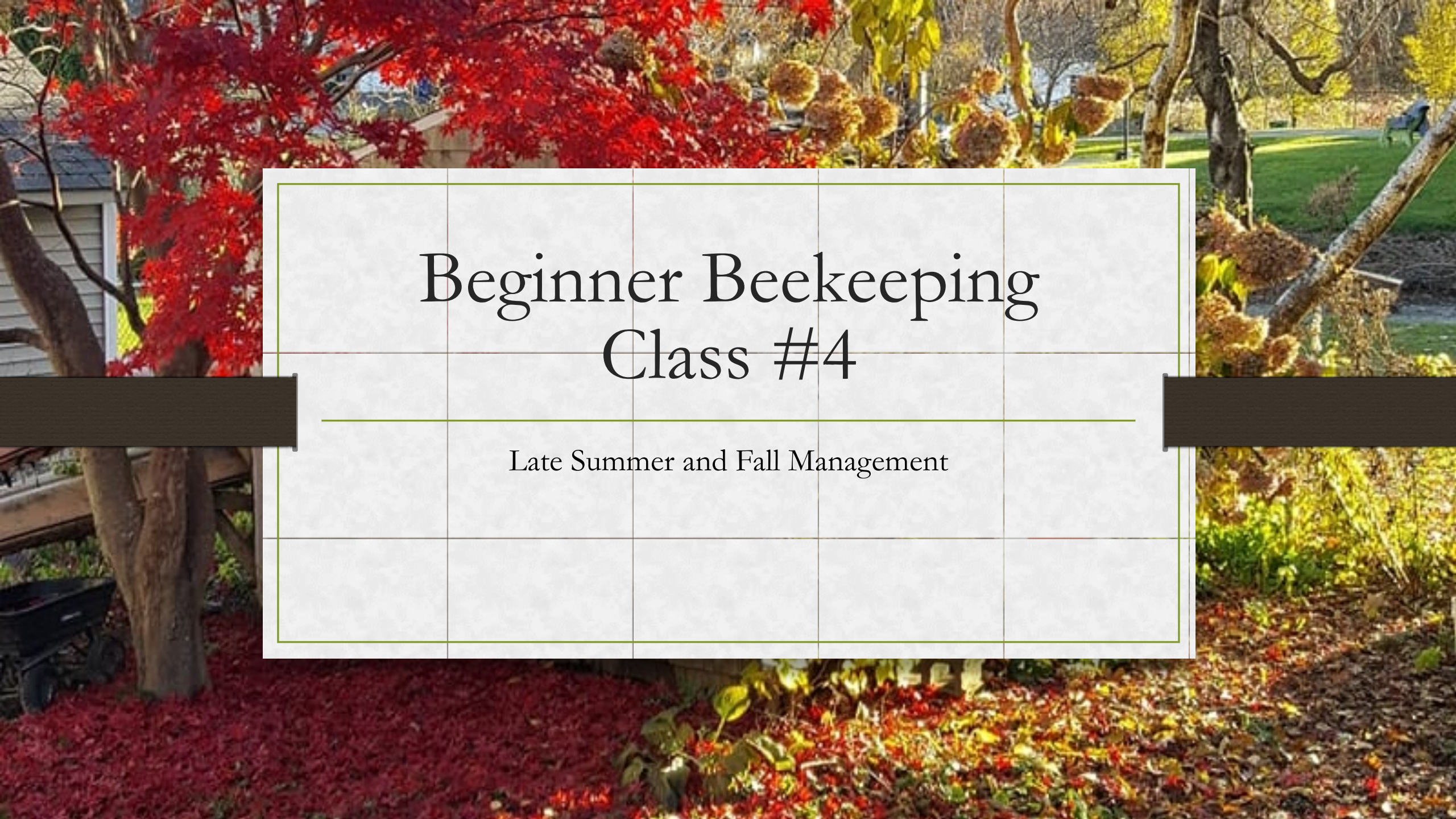




Beginner Beekeeping Class #4

Late Summer and Fall Management

Watch for robbing

In late summer and fall:

- Bees trying to find their way in between boxes, and under screened bottom boards
- Huge flurry of activity with bees dodging up and down at the entrance
- Bees fighting with one another
- ✓ Close down to one small entrance
- ✓ Add a robbing screen



➤ [See: video of a hive being robbed](#)

Monitor your mites all year long

- Economic Thresholds:
- Alcohol shake – 7 mites per 300
 - at 9 you will begin to see symptoms
 - Recommended by the Maine State Apiarist
- Sugar shake – 4 mites per 300 (1/2 cup)

What's your Varroa mite count?



Phoretic Mite

Photo: Honey Bee Health Coalition(honeybeehealthcoalition.org)

Mite Treatments, Chemical



- Apistan (fluvalinate)
- Checkmite (coumaphos)
- ✗ Mites quickly developed resistance – for many years beekeepers accidentally bred stronger mites.
- ✗ Studies are showing sub-lethal negative effects on brood viability and queen health.
- ✗ Please, just don't.

“Natural”* or Soft Treatments

- Each has different limitations, so decide what works best for your life
- Do it for the next generation of beekeepers

*We are providing naturally occurring compounds at unnaturally concentrated doses – please use care



When do we treat for Varroa?

- Surviving hives should be treated in the spring
 - Consider oxalic acid vapor as soon as the queen is released in a new package hive
- All hives should be treated in July
- All hives should be treated in the fall
- Mid-winter treatment (around the solstice) is a good idea

How do we treat for Varroa?

- Buy treatments in original packaging with a label.
- Wear your N95 mask
- Wear nitrile gloves or your beekeeping gloves
- Follow label instructions **TO THE LETTER.**
- Rotate treatments for best efficacy and to prevent the mites from developing resistance to treatment
- Perform a mite count **AFTER** your treatment has finished!

ApiLifeVar

(Thymol, Eucalyptus,
Menthol, & Camphor)



- (not to be confused with ApiVar - Amitraz)
- Fumigant in tablet form
- 3 treatments, 7-10 days apart
- Put wafers on top box top bars
- Close up holes and reduce the entrance
 - Put in your inspection board
 - It can make the bees a bit testy
- Treat with honey supers off (and don't put them back on for a month.)
 - Not good for spring or early summer application
- Use when daytime temps are between 65-95°

➤ See: [Applying ApiLifeVar \(Honey Bee Health Coalition\)](#)

Apiguard (Thymol)

➤ See: [Applying Apiguard \(honeybeehealthcoalition.org/varroa/\)](https://honeybeehealthcoalition.org/varroa/)

- Gel form in a tray – bees clean it out and it gets all over them
- 2 treatments, 14 days apart
- Put above top box top bars with a shim so bees can get into the tray
- Put in inspection board & reduce entrances
- Treat with honey supers off (they can go back on when you're done)
- Don't feed during treatment.
- Treat all colonies in a yard at the same time
- Use when daytime temps are between 65-85°
 - Works best at the beginning or end of the season, not for high summer

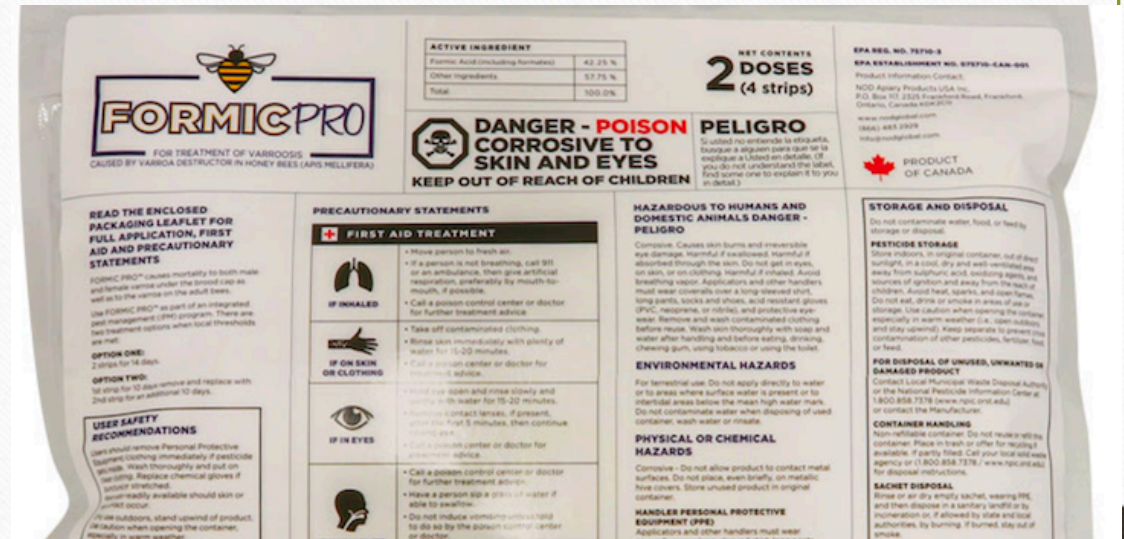


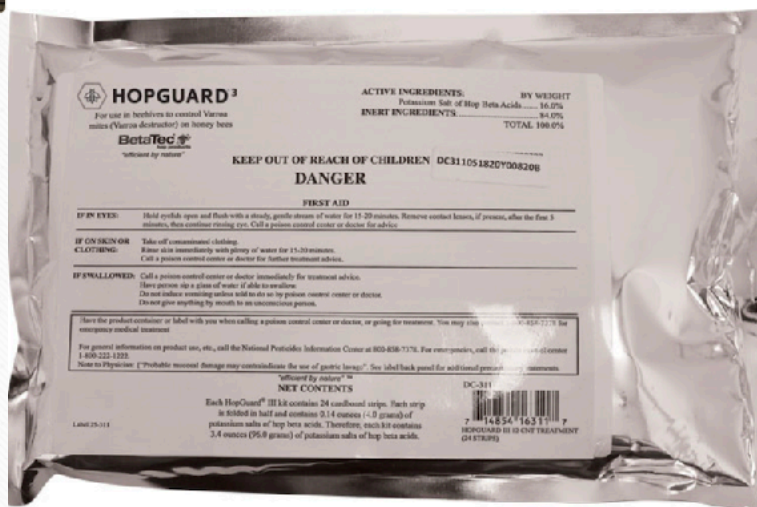
Formic Pro

(Formic Acid gel strips)

➤ See: Applying Formic Pro in High Summer

- 1 treatment, works for 14 days
 - (or 2 treatments 10 days apart)
- Put pads on top bars between brood boxes
- Recommended for hives 6 brood frames strong
- Leave ventilation open & treat all colonies at the same time
- Treat with honey supers on if you want (formic acid occurs naturally in honey – it's also produced by bees and ants as protection)
- Use when daytime temps are between 50-85°
 - Good for early summer, high summer, or early fall
 - Vary your mite treatments for best results





Hopguard III

Potassium salt of hop beta acids

➤ See: [Applying HopGuard \(honeybeehealthcoalition.org/varroa/\)](https://honeybeehealthcoalition.org/varroa/)

- Comes on cardboard strips in a sticky, molasses-like substance
 - Save extra strips in a tupperware container
- 2 strips per brood chamber, place 4" apart on brood frames
- Leave strips in for 30 days
- Can be used with honey supers on
- Works at temperatures above 50°
 - Great for spring or late fall mite knockdown
 - Good for very hot summer days
- Can be used up to three times a year
- The less brood the hive has the more effective the treatment



Oxalic Acid Vapor

➤ See: [Applying Oxalic Acid Vapor \(honeybeehealthcoalition.org/varroa/\)](http://honeybeehealthcoalition.org/varroa/)

- Best used during broodless period – Great for late fall and/or around the winter solstice
 - Needs to be at least a few degrees above freezing
- Not effective from early summer buildup to colony maximum size at midsummer
- Treat with honey supers off
- Tape up all top entrances and block up the front entrance with a rag
- Follow the instructions provided with the tool.



Late Summer & Fall Management



Assess:

- What are the health and strength of my hives?
- Are they strong enough to survive winter
- Do I need to combine weak colonies?
- Winter dead-outs are a drag
- Take your losses in the fall & split strong hives in the spring
- Does the hive have enough resources for winter?

How to combine

- Unite weak colonies to strong.
 - Two weak hives does not equal a strong hive, it equals a bigger weak hive.
 - Don't combine a hive that is weak from disease
- If you have two weak hives, then it is better to create nucleus colonies.
 - The smaller colony has a better chance of survival.
- Remove the queen from the weak hive
- Use a sheet of newspaper to keep the colonies from fighting
- Pick a day when the temp is above 60 and then temps won't fall below 50
 - The colonies need mild temperatures to come together and chew through the newspaper

Newspaper method

➤ See: Combining two hives with newspaper

- Place a single sheet of newspaper over the stronger hive.
 - make sure that the paper overlaps the edges
- Cut a few slits in the newspaper.
 - this allows the bees to become accustomed to the other hives smells
- Add the weaker colony above the newspaper.
 - feed 2:1 syrup



Fall Feeding

Why are we feeding?

- Feed 2:1 syrup in the fall
 - to hives low on stores
 - It should be their fault, not yours
 - We want least 1 deep or 2 mediums of capped honey *on top* at Thanksgiving (with at least 3 weeks to cure.)
 - Stop feeding by mid-October
- Honey is healthier
 - Extract unfinished honey and feed it back

Early fall

Time to pull off supers

- Typical fall harvest happens between Labor Day and September 20th
- Now is the time to get your hive in its winter configuration
- A top hive body of capped brood in late August will emerge and those cells will be filled with fall nectar





Capped Honey

- Harvest frames that are at least 80% capped



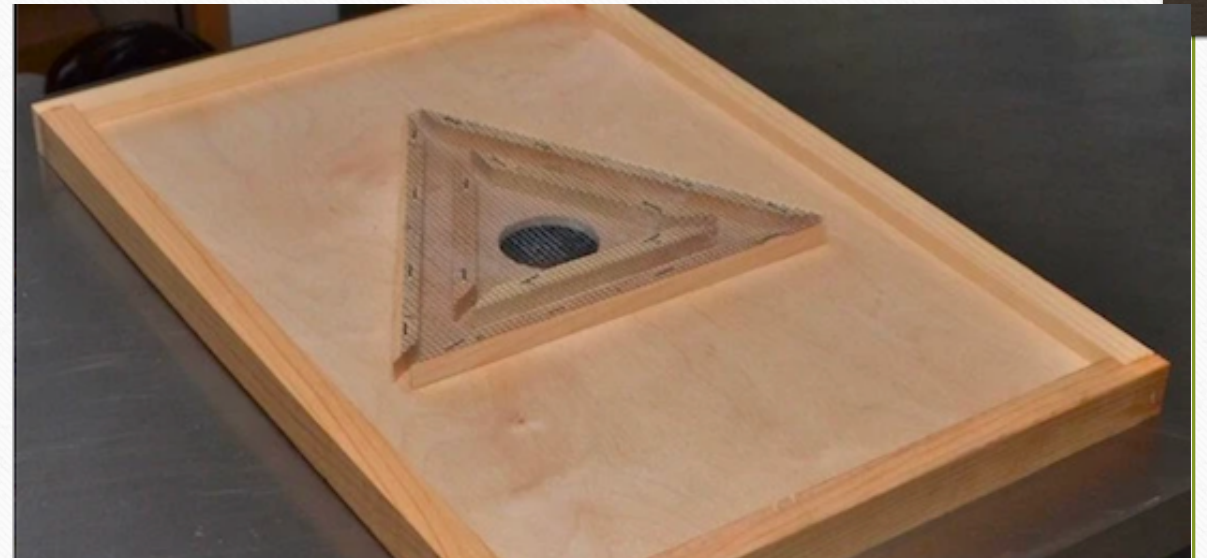
Getting the bees out:

- Shake & brush
 - Dramatic but quick and efficient



Getting the bees out:

- **Fume boards**
 - Works *great* if it's sunny and warm
 - Best for July harvest
 - We recommend Fischer's Bee Quick®
 - **Escape boards**
 - Convenient if you have the extra day or two
 - Very effective when nights are cool
 - Best for September harvest
- ✓ Wear gloves and a veil!



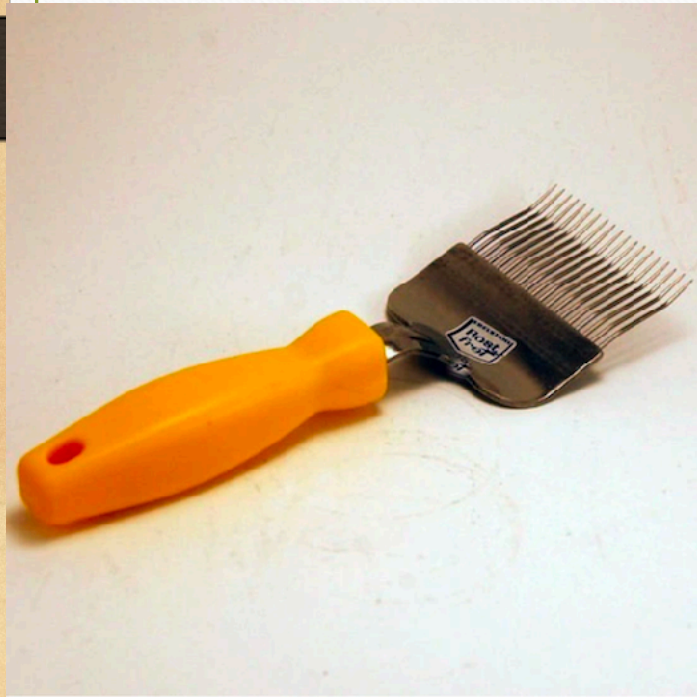


Extracting Honey

- Please don't crush and strain – your bees worked too hard for this.
- Borrow the Club Extractor
 - If you're going to sell honey – apply for a Home Processor License, Dept. of Agriculture
- Consider hiring a pro

... is good for me ...
the honey exchange
... what's good for the ...

Uncapping and spinning



An uncapping fork
is a very useful tool



Honey changes
with the floral
sources the bees
are visiting



Locust, clover & linden, goldenrod, and knotweed

Beeswax

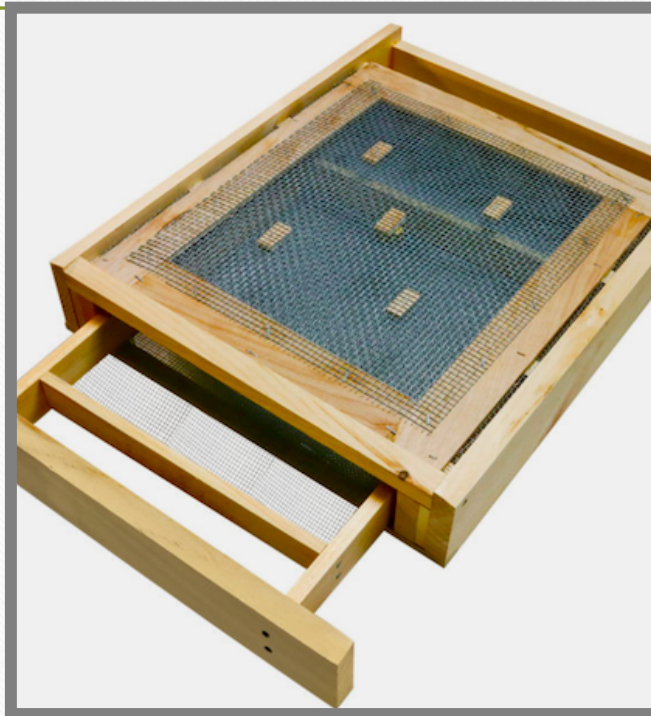


- Don't waste it – put burr comb in the freezer and add it to your cappings wax
- Don't use your good pots for wax – get cheap ones and dedicate them to wax
- Cover sticky wax with water; heat till it's all liquid; pour through an old t-shirt into a bucket; let it settle and cool
- Dry and re-melt the disk *in a double boiler* and filter through paper towels.

➤ [Download a PDF on how to render and clean beeswax](#)

Other hive products to consider:

- Propolis – has amazing health properties
 - Lay plastic mesh on top bars
 - Open the lid just enough to let light in
 - Put plastic mesh in the freezer, then snap out the propolis
- Pollen
 - super food, packed with B Vitamins and digestible protein
 - Useful for reducing seasonal pollen allergy symptoms



Mead

wine made from honey
made in a variety of styles

Support your local
meadery



**Next
Summer!**



Next Week

Winter Management

- ✓
- ✓
- ✓
- ✓
- ✓
- ✓

Winterizing your hive
Treating for Varroa Mites
Winter chores
Hive autopsy if a colony doesn't survive
Getting ready for the next spring
Recommended reading list