

# Santa Cruz Beekeepers Guild

## Presentation: Fall Management

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### Introduction

Will present in the context of "Ideal Hive"

One set of ideas, others do it differently - lots of opinions

I'll highlight what Al and I are doing

- No hard or soft chemicals, use manipulation for management, but minimize
  - Developing resistance through adaptation as a long-term strategy
  - We've lost 50% of our hives each year in our 4 years, mostly in Dec
  - We've already lost 2 of 7
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### The Ideal Hive for Winter - Late October to Mid November

- 3 Mediums, 2 brood, one honey
  - 2 Deeps, brood and honey, maybe a super with honey
  - Good brood pattern in lower box(es)
    - Won't be very big - Queen is slowing down
  - Healthy larvae
  - Pollen and honey to sides and above brood (I'll talk about how much a bit later)
  - No mites
  - Cluster a large basketball size
  - Minimize empty space (not eliminate it)
  - Note you may want to allow them some super space near Eucalyptus
    - It blooms Dec-Jan, and you can get a good honey flow with good weather
    - Best to keep an eye on that later in the winter, though
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### Right-Sizing

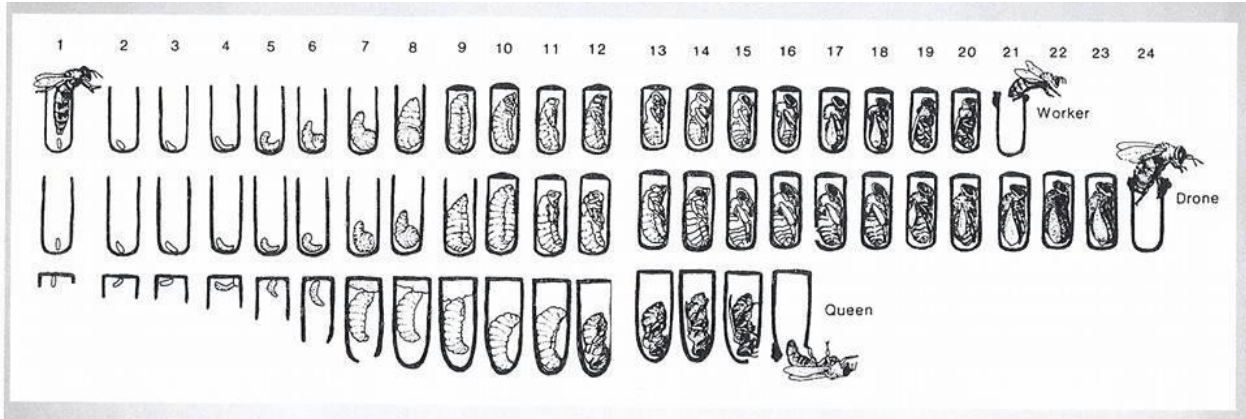
- Manipulate hives to get to ideal hive (more or less)
  - Remove unused hive bodies/frames
  - Add/subtract honey
  - Feed if necessary
  - Weak colony? - Combine it
  - Lots of bees? = bigger hive
  - Few bees? = smaller winter hive (maybe even nuc)
  - Splits for your booming hives, if you have queen source
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### Healthy Bees

- Winter Bees
  - Live Longer (through the winter)
  - Exposed to brood pheromone, less foraging

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- From Lifecycle, 21 days for worker to emerge, so eggs laid in Oct/Early Nov are your winter bees



- Mite Management
  - Manage now
  - Hard Chemicals, Soft Chemicals (MAQS/Formic Acid, Apiguard/Thymol, etc), and/or mechanical (no chemicals, powdered sugar)
  - Drone trapping won't work now (not making drones)
  - Queen confinement? thoughts?

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## Fall Inspections - What to look for

- Will be dead bees outside of hive on ground (not piles but ground covered)
- Mites
  - Actual Mites (if you see any you have a mite problem)
  - Deformed wing
  - 24 hr Mite counts on board
    - >10-20 you probably have an issue
    - 20-100 you have a problem
    - >100 you definitely have a problem, and your bees probably won't make it
- Honey
  - Above and around the brood nest
  - ~25 lbs (7-8 med frames, 5 deep frames) in town
  - 35+ lbs in the mountains
- Remove extra equipment
- Brood
  - Nice solid pattern (though smaller brood nest)
  - Slightly domed or flat caps (not sunken or perforated)
  - Fat larvae, filling the cell (one of my hives doesn't have this, so they're in trouble)
- Keeping bees warm
  - Don't need to around here

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- They survive Minnesota winters
  - Ventilation
    - Keeping them dry is most important - dry from condensation (bee respiration)
    - This means VENTILATION
    - I'll install the mite board with a weak hive, though
  - Combine weak colonies
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Other topics:

- Equipment Storage
  - Prevent wax moth - freeze and bag frames/hive bodies/supers