



Beekeeper's Checklist

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March 2020 Bee Meeting

Signs of the Season



Evening temperatures above 50 degrees



First pollen sources and early nectar flowers appear



Bees seem to be everywhere as they search for food



Bees coming/going faster than can be counted at hive entrance

Activity In The Hive

Brood rearing starts and quickly ramps up.

Drones appear as the colony population increases.

Bees draw comb on new empty foundation.

Swarm queen cells may appear along frame bottoms.

*** Swarm may issue from hive taking 30% - 70% of the bees with the old queen.**

Beekeeper's Checklist

- Continue monitoring food stores. Work to maintain 20lb surplus and feed pollen substitute during cold weeks
- Inspect hives regularly and take quick actions to fix problems
- Check for eggs, larva, and /or brood. If none, your colony is queenless. Order a new queen or combine.
- If your hive has 2 frames of bees, best option is to combine with healthy hive. 3+ frames, add a frame of brood from a stronger hive, maybe new queen.
- Be ready to add boxes to hives when the existing box becomes 75% full of bees
- If you find a queen swarm cell, the only way to prevent swarming is by splitting the hive.
- Consider re-queening as part of swarm prevention and/or IPM varroa mite prevention.
- Splitting can be done in late March or early April. Try for 4 frames of solid brood.
- Consider removing hive entrance reducers or changing to larger opening.

Decisions/ Considerations

- **Will I split my hives? If so, when?**
- **Do I have enough equipment ready to split my hives?**
- **What treatment(s) will I use for varroa control?**
- **Where will I get queens? (purchase, walk-away split, rear my own)**
- **Will I be working to increase hives or increase honey production?**

Resources and References



Texas Honey Bee Education Association (THBEA)

THBEA.com

info@THBEA.com / comments@THBEA.com



Texas Beekeepers Association (TBA)

Texasbeekeepers.org



Texas Apiary Inspection Service (TAIS)

txbeeinspection.tamu.edu