

Annual **BEEKEEPING** Calendar



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INFOGRAPHIC



COLONY



HONEY



TREATMENT



RISK



PRACTICAL NOTES



RECOMMENDATIONS



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JANUARY

Moisture Control is Important





Colony: Winter cluster



Honey: No flow



Treatment: Licensed synthetic acaricide strips used in December of the previous year



Risk: Moisture, starvation



Practical Notes:

January is typically a mild winter month in the northern part of Cyprus, and bees may take advantage of warmer days to fly. However, colonies remain largely clustered and dependent on stored food.

It is essential to ensure colonies have sufficient food reserves, as starvation is a major risk during this period. Opening hives should be avoided unless absolutely necessary.

Moisture control is equally important, as excess humidity inside the hive can be more dangerous than cold temperatures.



Provide fondant if stores are low.



Ensure proper ventilation without creating drafts.

FEBRUARY

Avoid Frequent Inspections!





Colony: Early brood development



Honey: Very low flow



Treatment: No treatment



Risk: Cold snaps



Practical Notes:

Brood rearing often begins early due to the mild climate, which significantly increases food consumption. Colonies become more sensitive to sudden temperature changes.

Light feeding may be necessary to support early brood development, especially in weaker colonies.

Observe the weather and, if necessary, ensure sufficient water resources are available.

Frequent inspections should still be avoided, as opening the hive during cold spells can damage brood.

Monitoring for Varroa destructor is important, as populations begin to grow alongside the colony.



Ensure enough syrup if needed.



Maintain stable hive conditions.



If the temperature is more than 15 °C, start giving foundation of combs as an early preparation to avoid the formation of swarms.

MARCH

Move Colonies to Citrus Groves!





Colony: Rapid expansion



Honey: Increasing nectar



Treatment: Assess Varroa destructor levels by alcohol wash or powdered sugar shake approximately 10 weeks after the previous December treatment



Risk: Weak colony imbalance



Practical Notes:

March marks a period of rapid colony expansion. Nectar and pollen availability increase, and colonies require more space and resources.

Beekeepers should begin combs. This is also a key time to assess colony strength and brood quality.

Monitor Varroa destructor levels as populations increase with colony growth.

Prepare and transfer the beehives to the citrus three area.



Avoid overcrowding the brood nest.



Supers bee colonies if necessary.

APRIL

Citrus Flow!





Colony: Strong expansion



Honey: Citrus flow begins



Treatment: No treatments



Risk: Swarming



Practical Notes:

April is one of the most critical months in the northern part of Cyprus due to the citrus bloom. Colonies expand rapidly and require sufficient space to prevent swarming.

Adding supers on time is essential to maximize honey production. Regular inspections should focus on swarm cells and colony strength.

No chemical treatments should be applied during this period to avoid contamination of citrus honey.

This is the time to split the colonies and raise a new Queen.



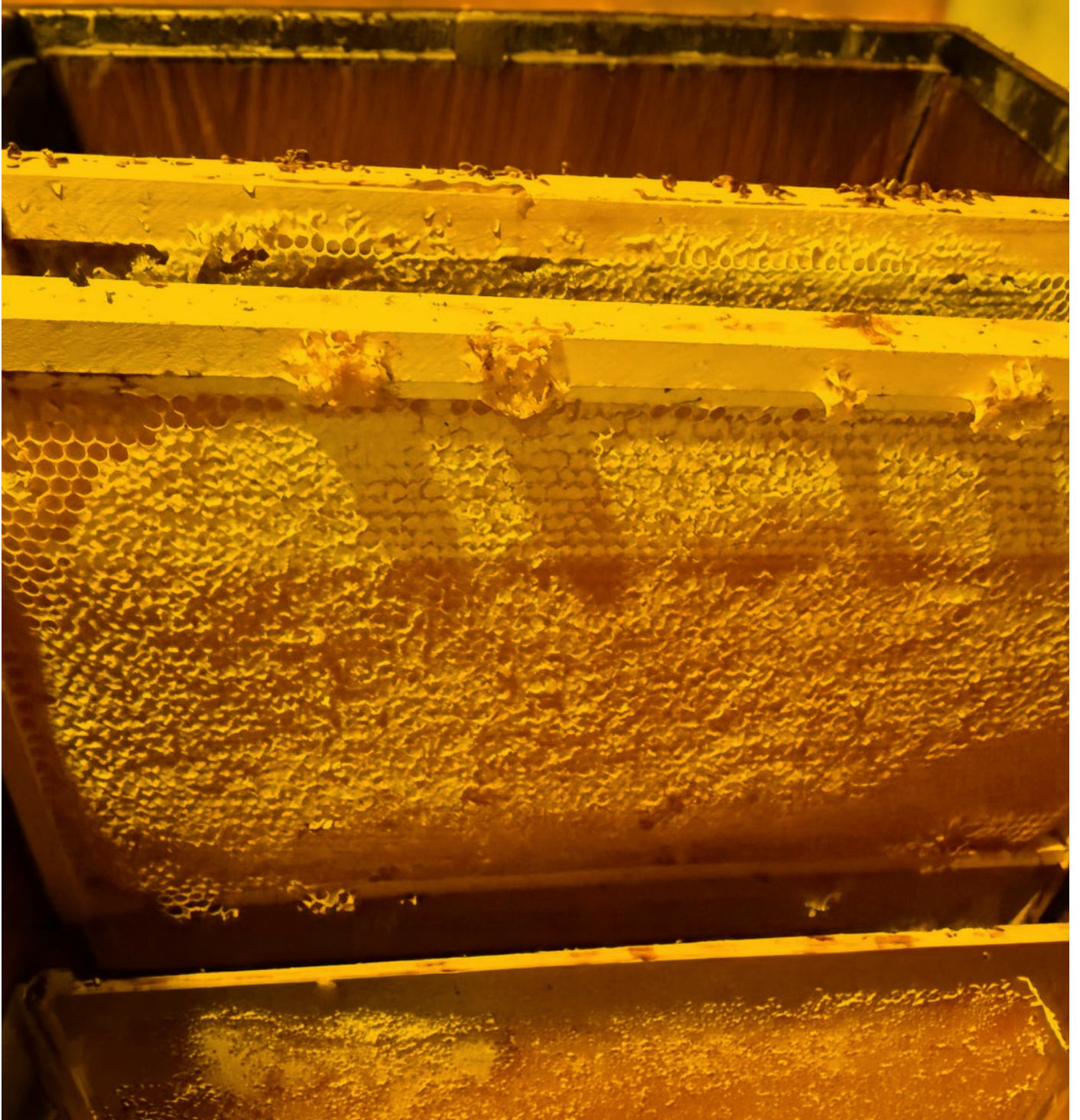
Ensure good ventilation in strong colonies.



Early swarm prevention is key to maintaining productivity.

MAY

Citrus Honey Harvest!





Colony: Peak strength



Honey: Citrus harvest



Treatment: Monitor Varroa



Risk: Pesticides



Practical Notes:

May is the main honey harvest period for citrus honey. Colonies reach peak population and productivity.

After extraction, colonies must be evaluated. Strong colonies can be divided, while weaker ones may require support.

Varroa levels begin to rise after the main flow, making monitoring essential.

Prepare and transfer the beehives to the wildflower area.



Extract only fully capped frames.



Avoid leaving empty supers on hives.



Once honey is copped, you can start harvesting. It is recommended to use a refractometer to measure moisture content.

JUNE

Providing a Clean Water Source is Critical!





Colony: Stress begins because of the hot weather



Honey: The second main nectar flow begins



Treatment: No treatment



Risk: Heat, pesticides



Practical Notes:

June marks the transition into the dry and hot season, and colonies begin to experience environmental stress.

The second main nectar flow begins.

Providing a constant and clean water source becomes critical for colony survival. Shade can significantly reduce heat stress and improve colony stability.



Place water sources near the apiary.



Avoid overheating by improving hive ventilation.



Add combs and/or supers as necessary.

JULY

Second Harvest!





Colony: Stress because of the hot weather



Honey: The second main nectar flow is ongoing; Summer harvest begins



Treatment: Monitoring of Varroa



Risk: Heat + mosquito spraying



Practical Notes:

Hot weather is starting.

Water availability is essential, and hive shading should be prioritized.

Reducing the number of hive entrances can help prevent robbing during nectar scarcity.

Mosquito control spraying is common during this period, often involving chemicals such as Deltamethrin, which can be harmful to bees.



Avoid unnecessary hive inspections during peak heat.



Monitor colony behaviour for signs of stress.



Night spraying against mosquitos + buffer zones + low-drift application + beekeeper notification

WARNING

Avoid placing beehives within or downwind of mosquito treatment areas during spraying periods.



AUGUST

Second Harvest!





Colony: High stress



Honey: Minimal (in some areas, harvesting of the honey may still be ongoing)



Tedavi: No treatment



Risk: Heat + European hornet



Practical Notes:

August is one of the most challenging months due to extreme heat and drought.

Foraging activity is reduced, and colonies are under stress.

Harvesting should be done carefully, ensuring that enough food remains for the colony.

Water availability is essential, and hive shading should be prioritised.

Using special traps and glue in a way that cannot be accessed by other animals (e.g., in a high place). Reducing the number of hive entrances can help prevent robbing.

Mosquito control spraying is common during this period, often involving chemicals such as Deltamethrin, which can be harmful to bees.

Feeding is often necessary due to limited natural resources. Proper nutrition during this period directly affects colony strength in winter.

Main varroa treatments should be completed after the harvesting during this month to ensure healthy winter bees.



Use appropriate feeding ratios (1:1 syrup).



Complete treatments on time.



Assess the queen's condition and replace her if necessary.

SEPTEMBER

Start Preparing for Winter!





Colony: High stress



Honey: Minimal



Treatment: Oxalic acid in early September (after the honey harvest is completed)



Risk: Heat + European hornet + European bee-eaters



Practical Notes:

Foraging activity is reduced, and colonies are under stress.

Water availability is essential, and hive shading should be prioritised.

Preparations for winter must begin, including feeding and colony assessment.



Do not over-harvest.



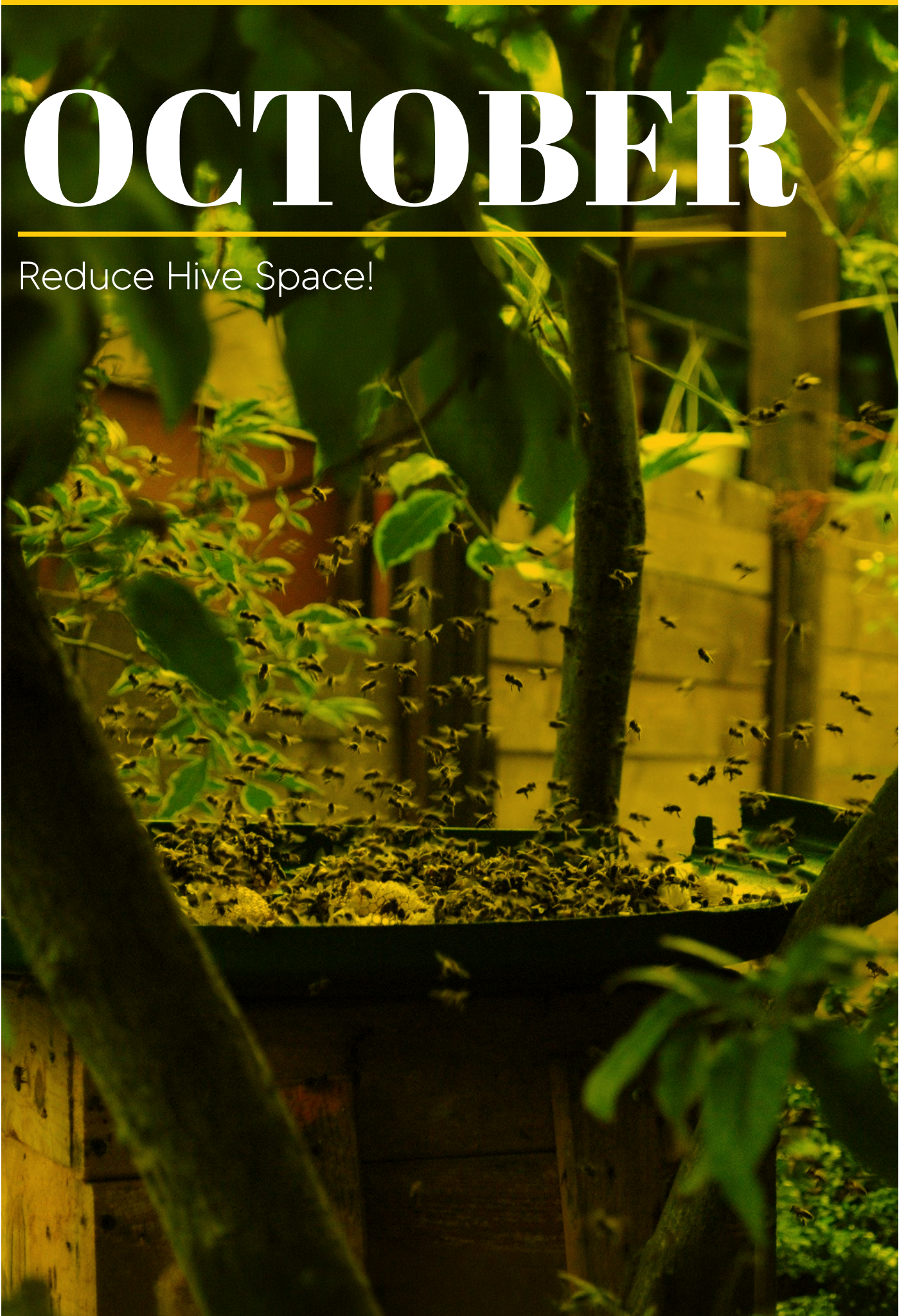
Ensure sufficient food reserves.



Ensure proper storage of unused comps.

OCTOBER

Reduce Hive Space!





Colony: Preparing for winter



Honey: Low to medium



Treatment: None



Risk: None



Practical Notes:

October is focused on preparing colonies for winter.

Colonies begin preparing to produce winter bees, which are essential for survival.

Feeding the bees with sugar syrup (1:1) to encourage the production of winter bees.

Hive space should be reduced to help bees maintain temperature more efficiently. Food reserves must be checked and adjusted if necessary.



Protect colonies from robbing.



Ensure proper hive insulation.

NOVEMBER

Monitor Hive Weight!





Colony: Dormant



Honey: None



Treatment: None



Risk: Food reserves



Practical Notes:

Colonies enter a quiet period with minimal activity.

Monitoring hive weight is the best way to assess food reserves without opening the hive.



Avoid frequent inspections.



Ensure proper ventilation.

DECEMBER

Keep Disturbance to a Minimum!





Colony: Wintering



Honey: None



Treatment: Application of licensed synthetic acaricide strips



Risk: Starvation and environmental conditions



Practical Notes:

Colonies enter a quiet period with minimal activity. Disturbance should be kept to a minimum.

Monitoring hive weight is the best way to assess food reserves without opening the hive.

Moisture control remains important because of the rainy periods.

Maintenance activities and preparation for the next season.

Hives should be placed above the ground, away from the stream beds.

Apiaries should be carefully located for winter conditions.



Avoid frequent inspections.



Ensure food reserves.

Varroa Treatment Plan



Main problem: Varroa destructor



August: Critical



Goal: Production of healthy winter bees
Oxalic acid in late August after the honey harvest is completed



Most important treatment of the year



September



Goal: Final cleanup
Oxalic acid in early September, after the honey harvest is completed



December



Goal: Maximum effectiveness (no brood)
Licensed synthetic acaricide strips



IMPORTANT RULES

- Do NOT treat during honey flow
- Rotate treatments (prevent resistance)
- Monitor natural mite fall



Monthly Action Table

MONTH	MAIN ACTIVITY	FEEDING	TREATMENT	RISK
January	Wintering	Fondant	Licensed synthetic acaricide strips	Moisture
February	Brood starts	Light/syrup	Monitoring	Cold
March	Growth	Yes	Monitoring	Imbalance
April	Citrus flow begins	No	✗	Swarming
May	Citrus honey harvest	No	Monitoring	Pesticides
June	Stress begins The second main nectar flow begins	Water	✗	Heat
July	Critical	Water	Monitoring	Pesticides
August	Preparation	Water Feeding / Proper nutrition sugar syrup (1:1)	Oxalic acid in late August (after the honey harvest is completed)	Drought
September	Harvest	Yes	Oxalic acid in early September (after the honey harvest is completed)	Weak colonies
October	Winter prep	sugar syrup (1:1)	✗	Starvation
November	Rest	✗	✗	Moisture
December	Winter	Fondant	Licensed synthetic acaricide strips	Starvation



Key Principles



Strong colonies = healthy colonies

Weak colonies are more vulnerable to disease feed appropriately; replace the queen if necessary



Honey flow determines productivity

April- May = first harvest (citrus flow)

July- August = second harvest (wildflower flow)



Varroa destructor is the main threat

Without control colony collapse

Late August- early September: critical treatment period

December: winter follow-up treatment



Climate is a key factor

Heat is more dangerous than cold

Water supply is essential



Pesticides (VERY IMPORTANT)

Mosquito spraying = hidden danger



Always provide:

Water - Food reserves



Seasonal predators

August- European hornet pressure increases stress on colonies



Reduce entrances; protect hives

September- European bee-eater migration peak active predation



Avoid disturbance; relocate apiaries if needed



Feeding is a strategy, not a weakness

Critical in October and February



Mosquito Control & Pollinator Protection Awareness and Coordination Protocol



Purpose

To prevent pesticide exposure and contamination of bee colonies during activities, especially under conditions (e.g., hot weather) where hive closure is not feasible.



Stakeholders & Roles

BEEKEEPERS

- Register hive locations with local bodies (GPS if possible)
- Maintain updated contact information
- Prepare mitigation measures (shade cloth, water sources, partial entrance reduction)

LOCAL BODIES / LOCAL COMMUNITIES

- Coordinate mosquito control programs
- Maintain a registry and map of apiaries
- Ensure communication between all parties

MOSQUITO CONTROL OPERATORS

- Follow timing, product, and application restrictions
- Check the apiary maps before spraying
- Notify beekeepers in advance

GENERAL PUBLIC / FARMERS

- Avoid private pesticide spraying during high bee activity
- Report on unmanaged standing water (prevention focus)



Timing Rules (Critical Control Point)

- Spray only after sunset and before sunrise
- Avoid spraying when the temperature is still high, and bees are active
- No spraying during peak flowering periods (daytime)





Spatial Protection Measures

- Establish no-spray buffer zones (minimum 100–300 m) around apiaries
- Use mapped exclusion zones in spray planning systems
- Avoid spraying nearby:
 - Flowering crops
 - Water sources used by bees



Application Best Practices

Prefer ground-based Ultra-Low Volume (ULV) spraying over aerial spraying

Spray only under:

- Low wind conditions
- No drift toward hives
- Avoid temperature inversion conditions (prevents long-distance drift)



Product Selection Guidance

- Prioritize larval control methods (e.g. *Bacillus thuringiensis israelensis*)
- Avoid highly bee-toxic insecticides during active seasons

Use products with:

- Low residual toxicity
- Rapid degradation



Hive Protection Measures (When Closure Not Possible)

- Use breathable covers (wet burlap/shade cloth) during spray windows
- Ensure adequate ventilation
- Provide clean water sources near hives
- Reduce entrances slightly (without overheating colonies)



Communication & Notification System

- Mandatory 24- 48-hour advance notice before spraying
- Communication channels:
 - SMS / WhatsApp groups /Email alerts /Local community websites
- Include: Date & time /Location (mapped if possible) /Product used



Incident Reporting & Response

- Beekeepers report suspected poisoning immediately
- Local bodies should:
 - Investigate within 24 hours
 - Collect samples (bees, plants, residues)
- Maintain a shared incident log



Prevention-First Strategy

Focus on:

- Removing standing water
- Public awareness campaigns
- Reduce reliance on adulticide spraying



Monitoring & Review

- Annual review of:
 - Bee mortality incidents
 - Effectiveness of communication
- Adjust protocol based on findings

KEY MESSAGE FOR ALL PLAYERS

“Mosquito control and pollinator protection must work together—not against each other.”









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