

Chronological Beekeeping

Brood Chamber 1

- Week 1** Center three (3) frames should be built out. Some eggs should be found in patches in the center frames.
- Week 2-3** 6-8 frames should be drawn out at the end of three (3) weeks. Capped brood should be found in the center 3-4 frames (2/3 of each frame). 6-8 frames should have some syrup and nectar at the top of each frame.
- Week 4** You should notice the first batch of bees hatching. Most of the ten frames in the first brood chamber should be drawn out and eight (8) of the frames should have capped nectar and pollen deposited. Brood should be capped in the center seven (7) frames.
- Week 6** Your bottom brood chamber should start to look crowded with bees. Bees should now be hatching daily and the brood chamber will be full of capped brood (eight (8) frames full).

Brood Chamber 2

Use your judgement here: If bees are rushing out of the top of your hive when you remove the inner cover, then you should put on your second brood chamber and continue feeding sugar syrup.

- Week 8-10** The center five (5) frames in your second brood chamber should be built up. The queen will have moved up into the top chamber and have filled the center three (3) frames with eggs.
- Week 10-14** By the end of 14 weeks, the ten (10) upper frames should have been drawn out. Capped brood will be found in the seven (7) center frames of the top brood chamber. A large crown of honey will be found at the tops of frames. The frames in the bottom brood chamber will have hatched out most of the bees. These frames should be empty except for the crowns of honey and pollen at the top of each frame.

At this point you should rotate the two brood chambers. Move the top one down and the empty bottom one to the top. You can also put a honey super on at this point if all your brood frames have large crowns of honey. You may continue to feed syrup while the bees draw out the foundation in the honey super. Stop feeding as soon as you notice that the bees are starting to store the syrup in the honey super. (Feeding should probably not continue for more than one (1) week after you put your honey super on.) Keep a careful eye on things in your honey super if you continue feeding.

- Week 14-18** Your hive should now be at its peak (60-80 thousand bees). If there has been an exceptional nectar flow, you might possibly have some capped honey in your honey super. **Before extracting**, be sure that the frames in your brood chambers have ample stores for winter.

The queen is making her last surge of egg laying. The bottom brood chamber should now be pretty much hatched out and the queen should be laying eggs in the top brood chamber. You may have to rotate the brood chambers once more if this is the case. Use your judgement. When the top brood chamber is pretty much full of capped brood, you should rotate the two brood chambers because the queen always likes to move upward.

- Week 18-22** Brood continues to hatch, producing new bees to carry the hive through winter. The queen will have cut back on egg laying and brood will only be found in the center three (3) frames of each brood chamber.
- Week 22-26** Very little brood will be found in the brood chambers. The center seven (7) frames in each chamber should have a thick crown of capped honey to carry them over to spring. At the beginning of November, the bees will have started to cluster on the center seven (7) frames of the bottom brood chamber where they should be. They will move upward during the winter months as food supplies below are exhausted.